

MEDICINE BOW NATIONAL FOREST

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Revised Land and Resource Management Plan  
Final Environmental Impact Statement

Roadless Area  
Evaluation

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## Roadless Areas

The purpose of this appendix is to describe inventoried roadless areas and the analysis factors used in evaluating individual roadless areas on the Medicine Bow National Forest. It includes a description of the physical and biological features, primitive recreation and education opportunities, resources, and present management situation for each area.

### Background

#### ***Roadless Area Review and Evaluation***

In 1970, the Forest Service studied all administratively designated primitive areas and inventoried and reviewed all roadless areas in the NFS greater than 5,000 acres. This study was known as the Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE). RARE was halted in 1972 due to legal challenge.

In 1977, the Forest Service began another nation-wide Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE II) to identify roadless and undeveloped areas within the NFS that were suitable for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

As a result of RARE II, 27 roadless areas on the Medicine Bow National Forest were evaluated and five areas were recommended to Congress for addition to the National Wilderness Preservation System. Those five areas were Platte River, Encampment River, Huston Park, Laramie Peak, and Snowy Range. Congress acted on those five areas by designating three of them in the Wyoming Wilderness Act of 1984. Laramie Peak and Snowy Range were not designated in the 1984 Act.

#### ***The Endangered American Wilderness Act of 1978***

In 1978, Congress designated the Savage Run Wilderness Area, located in the Medicine Bow Mountain range and consisting of 14,927 acres.

#### ***Wyoming Wilderness Act of 1984***

This act established the Platte River Wilderness 22,363 acres; the Encampment River Wilderness 10,400 acres; and the Huston Park Wilderness 31,300 acres.

## Criteria

In June 1997, Region 2 developed a guidance paper entitled *A Roadless and Unroaded Area Inventory, Purpose, Process and Products*. It outlined the use of a geographic information system (GIS) for conducting the roadless inventory process. GIS was used to identify areas that meet the following criteria:

1. 5,000 acres or more
2. Less than 5,000 acres, but contiguous to an existing Wilderness Area,
3. No classified roads (A classified road was defined at that time as a road constructed or maintained for long-term highway vehicle use. Therefore, inventoried roadless areas (IRA) contain motorized and non-motorized trails and user created roads.)

The following areas were removed from the inventory:

1. Recreation and administrative sites
2. Ski areas
3. Congressionally designated Wilderness Areas
4. Utility Corridors
5. Major harvest units, pre-commercial and commercial thinning units, including sales under contract or with a signed decision
6. All of the lands that are not under National Forest System ownership within the forest proclamation boundary.

An interdisciplinary team and the ranger districts staffs reviewed the maps and made adjustments based on local knowledge. The resulting map became part of the Medicine Bow Revision process and was submitted to the Roadless Area Conservation Rule project in Washington DC. In November 2000, the 31 mapped inventoried roadless areas totaling approximately 320,000 acres became the official Medicine Bow National Forest inventoried roadless areas.

As part of the IRA analysis, this appendix displays current and proposed management area direction for Alternatives A through F. There are several inventoried roadless areas where recreation sites do not appear to have totally been removed. Those areas are: Snowy Range, Libby Flats, Middle Fork, Savage Run Addition, Platte River Addition, Illinois Creek, LaBonte Canyon and Cow Creek. This discrepancy only occurs in Alternative A-Current 1985 Plan for Savage Run Addition, Platte River Addition, LaBonte Canyon and Cow Creek. The remaining four areas where each alternative displays acres in Management Area 8.21-Recreation sites were incorrectly mapped during the inventory process. Middle Fork IRA also contains a 47-acre administrative site that should have been removed in the original inventory. We will need to request a modification to these areas through our National office in Washington DC.

FSH section 1909.12 specifies that inventoried roadless areas must be evaluated on the basis of the area's capability for wilderness designation, availability of areas for wilderness designation, and the need of the areas for wilderness designation.

## Wilderness Capability:

Capability is the degree to which the area contains basic characteristics that make it suitable for wilderness designation, without regard to its availability. Rating characteristics were developed from FSH 1909.12, Chapter 7.

Areas were rated relative to the following criteria:

- ◆ Solitude
- ◆ Naturalness
- ◆ Challenge
- ◆ Recreation opportunity
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Scenic features
- ◆ Size
- ◆ Potential for manageable boundaries

## Availability for Wilderness:

Only those areas determined to be capable for wilderness will be considered for their availability for wilderness (FSH 1909.12, 7.22).

Availability is determined by considering the value of and need for the wilderness resource, compared to the value of and need for other resources. To be available for wilderness, the values of the wilderness resource, both tangible and intangible, should offset the values of resources that formal wilderness designation would forgo.

The following table lists the inventoried roadless areas and summarizes our conclusions on their capability and availability. A full discussion about the analysis of each individual inventoried roadless area can be found later in this appendix.

Table C-1. Roadless areas on the Medicine Bow National Forest.

Area Number	Area Name	Acreage	Capability	Availability
R20601	Strawberry Creek	5,876	Capable	Available
R20602	Singer Peak	10,491	Capable	Available
R20603	Big Sandstone	7,170	Capable	Available
R20604	Little Sandstone	5,481	Capable	Available
R20605	Battle Creek	5,894	Capable	Available
R20606	Little Snake	9,920	Capable	Available
R20607	Solomon Creek	5,756	Capable	Available
R20608	Deep Creek	6,411	Capable	Available
R20609	Bridger Peak	6,694	Capable	Available
R20610	Mowry Peak	6,241	Capable	Available
R20611	Huston Park Addition	8,401	Capable	Available
R20612	Encampment River Addition	4,983	Capable	Available



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Area Number	Area Name	Acreage	Capability	Availability
R20613	East Fork Encampment	7,429	Capable	Available
R20614	Bear Mountain	9,426	Capable	Available
R20615	Pennock Mountain	9,592	Capable	Available
R20616	Rock Creek	18,859	Capable	Available
R20617	Snowy Range	29,637	Capable	Available
R20618	Campbell Lake	7,085	Capable	Available
R20619	French Creek	5,924	Capable	Available
R20620	Libby Flats	11,082	Capable	Available
R20621	Middle Fork	13,232	Capable	Available
R20622	Sheep Mountain	17,614	Capable	Available
R20623	Savage Run Addition	2,370	Capable	Available
R20624	Platte River Addition	7,947	Capable	Available
R20625	Illinois Creek	6,707	Capable	Available
R20626	Soldier Creek	5,989	Capable	Available
R20627	Gunnysack	12,881	Capable	Available
R20628	Buffalo Peak	17,543	Capable	Available
R20629	LaBonte Canyon	16,257	Capable	Available
R20630	Laramie Peak	28,577	Capable	Available
R20631	Cow Creek Mountain	8,269	Capable	Available

Source: GIS (ARC/Info), roadless inventory layer

There are public proposed recommended wilderness areas in Alternative F. This alternative recommended wilderness in all of the Forest Service 31 inventoried roadless areas as well as adding acres to some of the Forest Service inventoried areas plus adding two new areas. The two new areas are Battle Mountain and Vedauwoo. With minimal analysis, we concluded that all of the areas in the public proposed areas would be classified as capable and available.

## Need for Wilderness

Need is determined through an analysis of the degree to which a roadless area contributes to the local and national distribution of wilderness. There should be clear evidence of current or future public need for additional designated wilderness in the general area under consideration. Need is demonstrated through the public involvement process including public input to the environmental analysis and its resultant documentation. Factors specific to individual roadless areas are addressed in the individual write-ups.

For an area to be recommended for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System, there should be clear evidence of current or future public need for additional designated wilderness. To determine need, we considered the following factors:

1. The location, size, and type of other wildernesses in the general vicinity and their distance from the proposed area.
  - ▶ **Nearby wilderness:** The Medicine Bow National Forest manages all or part of 4 wilderness areas with a total of 79,323 acres. There are 45 designated wilderness areas with a total of 3.5 million acres within 250 miles of the Denver Metropolitan area. There are 37 designated wilderness areas with a total of 5.8 million acres within 250 miles of the city of Casper, Wyoming. There are 42 designated wilderness areas with a total of 3.4 million acres within 250 miles of the city of Cheyenne, Wyoming.
2. Present visitor pressure on other wilderness areas, trends in use, population changes, and travel patterns.
  - ▶ For the ten-year period, 1984 to 1993, wilderness use increased slightly on wildernesses within a 250-mile radius of the Denver Metropolitan Area and increased slightly nationally for all wildernesses administered in the National Forest System.
  - ▶ The size and geography of the Medicine Bow National Forest Wilderness Areas are unique in the Rocky Mountain Region of the Forest Service. Unlike the 14,000-foot peaks in Colorado and the Wind River Mountains, these Wilderness Areas are primarily river valleys, and high mountain parks. It's possible to access a Wilderness Area on the Medicine Bow National Forest and hike across it in one day. This makes weekend excursions to the wilderness possible for users within 250 miles.

Table C-2. Wilderness use measured in Recreation Visitor Days (RVDs).

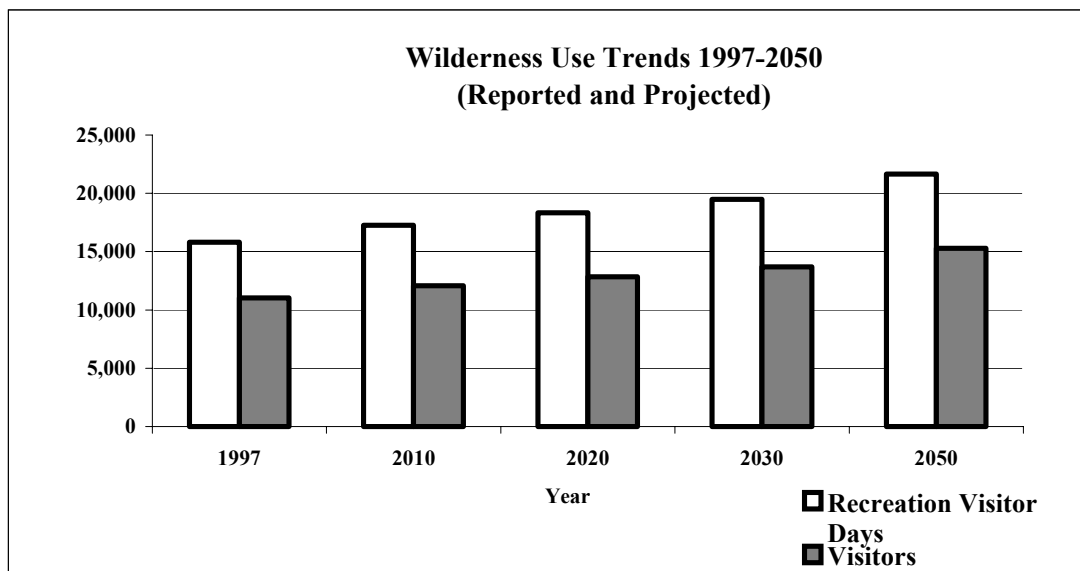
Year	Medicine Bow National Forest (thousand RVDs)	Use of the 45 Wilderness Areas within a 250-mile Radius of Denver (million RVDs)	Nationwide use of Wilderness Areas (million RVDs)
1984	2.9	1.49	10.2
1985	12.4	1.38	12.7
1986	9.5	1.30	12.0
1987	13.0	1.30	13.0
1988	12.3	1.31	11.8
1989	11.9	1.26	11.6
1990	10.7	1.31	12.0
1991	11.0	1.44	12.8
1992	20.4	1.44	13.3
1993	11.7	1.41	NA

Source: R2 Wilderness Needs Report

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- ▶ Generally speaking, the Platte River Wilderness accounts for 2.7% of regional wilderness use, followed by the Encampment River (1%), the Savage Run (.9%), and the Huston Park (.5%)(See 1994 R2 Wilderness Needs Assessment). Use may be low because of the smaller size of these areas compared to other Wilderness Areas in Region 2 and because of the perception that there are limited opportunities in these Wilderness Areas.
- ▶ A continuing increase is expected in wilderness use through 2050 (see chart below). Projections consider current use types in the Wilderness Areas on the Medicine Bow National Forest. It can be expected that horseback riding will account for the highest use increases.

Figure C-1. Wilderness use trends on the Medicine Bow National Forest, 1997 to 2050.



Source: AMS recreation chapter, RIM information is based, not on actual use surveys, but on noticeable trends by field workers.

3. The extent that non-wilderness lands can provide opportunities for unconfined outdoor recreation experiences.

► **Nearby Non-wilderness Opportunities for Unconfined Recreation**

**Experiences:** Under current forest plans in the Rocky Mountain Region, there are two management prescriptions (from the first round of forest plans) which apply to areas specifically managed to provide opportunities for unconfined, nonmotorized recreation experiences. These prescriptions include 3A (emphasis on semi-primitive nonmotorized recreation) and 3B (emphasis on primitive recreation in unroaded areas). There are 49,440 acres on the Medicine Bow National Forest that are managed under 3A prescription in the current Forest Plan. There are three new management area prescriptions (in the new round of forest plans) currently being used that provide opportunities for unconfined, non-motorized recreation experiences. They include 1.3, 1.32, and 1.41. On National Forests adjacent to the Medicine Bow, including the Routt and Arapaho/Roosevelt there are 401,949 acres in 1.3, 1.32, and 1.41. In the Rocky Mountain Region, there are 2,226,550 acres in the 1.3, 1.32, 1.41, 3A and 3B management area prescriptions.

4. The ability of certain biotic species to compete with increasing human development.

In National Forests, many uses occur that alter habitat and create disturbance. Although limits are imposed on these activities by Forest Plan standards and guidelines and by assessment before implementation of projects, continuous or frequent human activity occurs on much of the Forest. These activities may create disturbance (see question 5), cause mortality, and alter habitat for native species.

Some of the main differences between wilderness and non-wilderness are the lack of timber harvest, the greater role of fire, and the lack of roads. Species that benefit from wilderness include the following.

- Species that benefit from fire, including woodpeckers, secondary cavity nesters (like songbirds and owls), fire dependent insects and plants, small mammals and insects that use downed wood, and predators on those species.
- Species that are adversely affected by the pattern of forest fragmentation created by timber harvest. Even when logging emulates natural process, other factors (like visuals and watershed standards) constrain timber sale design and limit the similarity of logged units to patterns created by fire.
- Species that are hunted or trapped are usually more heavily harvested in roaded areas. (This is not always true: wilderness areas can be the focus of horse packing trips that convey a large number of hunters into unroaded areas.) These species include elk, deer, mountain lions, black bears, and American marten.
- Species that use snags for nesting, roosting, or feeding. In the absence of logging and firewood collection (for off-site use), snags are retained better than in non-wilderness.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

- ▶ Species for which the lack of cover on a road exposes them to predation. Without roads on the landscape, these species can move more freely (for example, amphibians moving from upland habitat to breeding ponds, or small mammals within their home range.)
  - ▶ In the long-term, species that use old growth, especially in large patches (like martens and boreal owls).
5. The need to provide a sanctuary for those biotic species unable to survive in less than primitive surroundings.
- Species vary in their need for solitude. Some, like the wolverine, are very sensitive to disturbance during the breeding season. Though males and young animals use roaded areas, mature females do not. A single party of skiers passing the den will cause the female to move the young to another den. Other species that need secure areas while raising young include elk and bears. Some raptors need secure areas for nesting, like Golden Eagles, Ferruginous Hawks, Peregrine Falcons, and Osprey. However, the increase in recreation in some wilderness sites (especially along rivers) may mean that wilderness designation does not reduce disturbance.
6. The area's ability to protect certain landform types and ecosystems.
- ▶ Based on analysis done at the Regional level, certain covertypes have been identified as having only limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region's wilderness system. The spruce/fir and alpine (grass/forb) covertypes are the most well represented in the Rocky Mountain Region. These covertypes and their acreages in the Medicine Bow National Forest wilderness system are listed in the following table.

Table C-3. Covertypes with limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system.

Covertypes	Acreage in Designated Medicine Bow Wilderness Areas	Acreage in Capable/Available, Medicine Bow Roadless Areas
ponderosa pine		39,946
Douglas-fir	1,800	2,827
lodgepole pine	24,400	122,450
Gambel oak		
big sagebrush	12,100	*33,536
pinon-juniper		70
aspen		30,362
grass types (e.g., fescue)		21,421
Limber pine		4,036
cottonwood/willow		214

\*gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

Source: GIS (ARC/Info), roadless inventory and allocation layers,

## Summary of Environmental Consequences

All 31 Inventoried Roadless Areas were determined to be capable and available. The individual needs analyses arrived at varying degrees of need. During the alternative development process, selected areas or portions of roadless areas were allocated to Management Area 1.2, Recommended Wilderness. The following table shows how the inventoried roadless area acres were allocated under the various alternatives. Alternatives A, B and C did not assign any areas on the Forest to management area 1.2, Recommended Wilderness.

Table C-4. Inventoried Roadless Area acres by management prescription for each alternative.

Mgmt RX	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2				60,836	27,963	4,553	254,497*
1.31			8,164	38,981	52,314	19,196	
1.33		45,286	104,076	86,596	64,547	64,590	
1.41							4,027
1.5		395				395	
2.1	3,720	8,115	1,130	14,215	11,239	3,843	521
2.2	728	728	728	728	4,167	25,135	28,464
3.24							7,456
3.31		55,067	74,868	22,849	48,599	15,913	
3.32	46,950		1,488				
3.33			3,265				
3.4		554	189	574	574	3,525	621
3.5		1,627	945	43,584	42,281	143,384	
3.51						1,408	
3.54	5,352	17,614	17,614	17,614	16,826	4,032	17,614
3.56	30,759	12,892	3,599	1,143	6,752		
3.58		5,804	1,620	12,401	12,775	11,631	1,283
4.2		4,010	160	90	42	1,058	174
4.22	10,481						
4.3			11,850		9		
4.31	64,891						
5.11		227					
5.12	12,229	52,922	17,402		337		
5.13	37,897	72,936	19,788	2,326	1,459	19	
5.15		27,672	36,599	8,159	15,527	3,882	
5.21	3,665						
5.4	68,207						4,864
5.41	34,386	12,274	14,643	8,034	14,225	16,958	
5.42		1,395	1,393	1,393			
8.21	322	164	164	164	41	164	164
8.6	47	47	47	47	47	47	47

Source: GIS

\* Alternative F includes 254,497 recommended wilderness from inventoried roadless areas plus acres outside of agency inventoried wilderness for a total of 271,357 recommended wilderness.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Five individual IRAs showing clear evidence of current and future public need for wilderness were allocated to Management Area 1.2 in Alternative D-FEIS. Those areas are Little Snake, Huston Park Addition, Encampment River Addition, Rock Creek and Laramie Peak IRAs. Portions of four areas were recommended in Alternative D-FEIS. Portions of two areas were recommended in Alternative E. Alternative F includes approximately 271,000 acres of the forest in Management Area 1.2, Recommended Wilderness. These areas include acreage from 30 of the Forest Service inventoried roadless areas, additional acres added to some of those roadless areas and two new areas, Battle Mountain and Vedauwoo.

In an effort to disclose how alternatives vary in consistency with the Roadless Area Conservation Rule (RACR) and whether roadless characteristics were retained or not retained, we grouped management areas into three categories:

- Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics,
- Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court, and.
- Category 3 - Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.

The management areas are assigned to categories. The management area allocations themselves will not directly affect the character of these roadless areas until a planned management activity (e.g. road construction, vegetative treatment) is scheduled and implemented.

These categories were developed from the desired condition statements, standards and guidelines, and overall management emphasis for each management area allocation. Category 1 is inconsistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court. Category 2 is consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court. In some cases, management area prescriptions allow activities which may be inconsistent with the prohibitions of the RACR, but do not schedule activities during the life of the Plan, so the Management Area could remain consistent with the RACR for the life of the Plan. For example, in Management Area Prescription 5.41 - Deer and Elk Winter Range, road construction and reconstruction are permitted, but may not be necessary over the life of the Plan, so it allows an action that is inconsistent with the prohibitions of the RACR, but if that action never takes place, the RACR is followed and the roadless character is retained. Management Area 5.41 is assigned to Category 3.

Table C-5. Management area assignments to Categories 1, 2, and 3.

Category	Management Areas
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics,	5.11, 5.13, 5.15, 5.21, 5.4, 8.21, 8.22, 8.3, 8.6
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court,	1.13, 1.2, 1.31, 1.33, 1.41, 1.5, 2.1*, 2.2, 3.24, 3.21, 3.31, 3.54, 3.57,
Category 3 - Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	2.1*, 3.32, 3.33, 3.4, 3.5, 3.51, 3.56, 3.58, 4.2, 4.22, 4.3, 4.31, 5.12, 5.41, 5.42

\* Management Area 2.1 (Special Interest Areas) varies for each area. Proposed Special Interest Areas Ashenfelter, Dry Park, Libby Flats Ribbon Forest, Sunken Gardens, Ribbon Forest, Platte Canyon, Many Ponds and Kettle Ponds are consistent with the RACR and are assigned to Category 2. The remaining proposed Special Interest Areas are assigned to Category 3.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

The following table displays how each alternative allocates the inventoried roadless areas to Categories 1, 2 and 3.

Table C-6. Inventoried roadless areas: acres allocated to Categories 1, 2 and 3 for each alternative.

Category	Acres/ Percent	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1	Acres Percent	110,206 34	101,048 32	56,599 18	10,696 3	17,075 5	4,113 1	5,076 2
2	Acres Percent	8,709 3	126,078 39	205,451 64	232,397 73	220,370 69	134,910 42	312,576 98
3	Acres Percent	200,818 63	92,607 29	57,683 18	76,640 24	82,280 26	180,710 57	2081 <1

Source: GIS (ARC/Info), roadless inventory and allocation layers

## Individual Roadless Area Analyses:

The following summaries include information on the wilderness evaluation criteria for each individual roadless area. See Inventoried Roadless Areas map in the FEIS map packet.



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## R20601 Strawberry Creek 5,876 Acres

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### Overview

**Location and vicinity:** The Strawberry Creek area is located in the North Savery Geographic Area on the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District in Carbon County. It is approximately 32 miles west of

Saratoga (T 14 and 15N., R. 87W.). Access on the east and south side of the area is provided by FDR 830 and by various four-wheel-drive roads (FDR 830.1B and 806.2A).

**Geography:** The Strawberry Creek Roadless Area is situated on the western slope of the Continental Divide in the Sierra Madre Range, along the western boundary of the Forest. Area streams include Dirtyman, East Fork Savery, and Deep Creeks and many of their tributaries. Moderately dissected, mountainous terrain with deeply incised stream corridors and a generally western aspect provide for varied vegetation communities. Mainly crystalline geology has produced numerous rock outcroppings and steep slopes in a transition from sedimentary lowlands in the west to the Continental Divide. Precipitation ranges from 30 inches at the lower elevations to 40 inches at the upper, eastern limits of the Roadless Area and falls mainly as snow between October and April. Summer thunderstorms are common.

**Topography:** Elevations range from approximately 7,800 to 9,100 feet. Ridges and drainages are well defined but somewhat convoluted. This steep, sometimes rocky terrain forms the immediate western slope of the Continental Divide.

**Soils:** Soils in the area range from steeply to gently sloping, and are generally deep and well-drained. Parent geology includes both sedimentary and crystalline rock. Frost-free periods can be as little as 10 or as great as 40 days, depending on elevation and aspect.

**Vegetation:** The area is characterized by non-forested southerly aspects and parks at the lower elevations, and windswept, rocky ridge tops at the higher elevations. Vegetation in the area is comprised of 16% Aspen, 61% Lodgepole pine, 16% shrubs and 1% spruce-fir. Aspen tends to dominate lower elevations in the western and southwestern portions. The area is bordered by 1970's Savery Blowdown to the southeast. This area experienced scattered windthrow from an October 1987 windstorm. Based on District records and observations contained in the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD), there are several known populations of clustered lady's-slipper, a Forest Service sensitive species.

**Current Uses of the Area:** Originally part of the Jack Creek RARE II study area, construction of the Deep Jack Road (FDR 830) through the area in the 1980's separated this (Strawberry) portion from what is now Deep Creek Roadless area (R20608). FDR 830 is a popular firewood cutting area for Forest users from Rawlins. Timber sales have taken place along the southeastern boundary during the 1980s (Jack Creek Mine Timber Sale) and along the southwestern boundary during the 1990s (Pop Springs Timber Sale). The area also receives moderate to high use during fall bow and rifle hunting seasons. There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting in this area. A majority of the area falls within the Hartt Creek Grazing Allotment, a cattle allotment that contains BLM, State and private land as well as National Forest Land. The management plan for Hartt Creek Allotment was developed cooperatively with the BLM, and the management system is a multiple pasture rotation system. A small portion of the Strawberry Creek Unit falls within the Big Sandstone Grazing Allotment. This allotment is also grazed by cattle, but under a season-long system rather than a rotation. Because of the relatively small amount of

prime livestock grazing areas within the Strawberry Unit, use levels by cattle are generally light. This roadless area is an identified elk parturition area, and the very west end is mapped as elk winter range. The WYNDD contains records for several Forest Service sensitive species including Colorado River cutthroat trout, northern goshawk, and pine marten. Tiger salamanders are known to occur in a pond just outside the southwestern boundary of the roadless area. The area is open to mineral exploration under the 1872 Mining Act. The north portion of this area has experienced historic hydraulic and placer mining. In the recent past, this area has had some gold panning and claim staking occur. 1985 Medicine Bow Forest Plan (Alternative A) management area direction is displayed in the following table.

Table C-7. Management area acres for Alternative A.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	915
5.13 Forest Products	2,222
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	2,740

**Appearance:** This area is a combination of sagebrush ridges, timbered ravines with small meadow openings, and some aspen stands. Savery Creek and various other small streams dissect the area. On the southeast edge, the Deep Jack Road is very visible as it is the boundary.

**Surroundings:** The area is bordered on the west by a combination of Bureau of Land Management, State, and private lands; while the remainder is surrounded by NFS lands.

**Key attractions:** Bordered by the 1970s Savery Blowdown area to the southeast. The Jim Creek portion is the 1940s murder site of two Wyoming Game Wardens by an area trapper/pro prospector. The extreme western portion contains the remains of a livestock driveway. A Forest Service Guard Station (the Deep Creek Guard Station) and associated fences and corrals were once located near where the Deep Creek Stock Driveway entered the National Forest. There is no longer any trace of the old guard station and only remnants of old fence remain. Spectacular views may be seen from FDR 830 northerly towards Atlantic Rim, and westerly toward the Green Ridge and Big Sandstone/Deep Creek Canyon areas.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** The opportunity for solitude is low due to the narrow size on the southwest side, the distance from perimeter to core and the accessibility of the entire area by FDR 830.

**Naturalness:** Naturalness of the area is low due to human activities such as firewood gathering, hunting and mining. The presence of livestock and the evidence of their grazing and travel also detract from the naturalness of the area.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** Overall, there are moderate opportunities for primitive recreation. The ROS rating is Roaded Natural and Semi-primitive Motorized. Outdoor recreation opportunities include but are not limited to orienteering, hiking, skiing/snowshoeing, snowmobiling, hunting, camping, fishing, horse riding and photography.

### Special Features

**Education:** There are no unique features for education.

**Scenic Features:** The area affords spectacular views from FDR 830 northerly towards the Atlantic Rim area, and westerly toward the Green Ridge and Big Sandstone/Deep Creek Canyon areas. The area is also known for its spectacular colors during the fall aspen-viewing season.

### Manageability

- ◆ **Size:** The area is small in size and most of the southwest portion is narrower than one mile. This would make the area hard to manage due to its small size and shape.
- ◆ **Boundaries:** The area is bordered by the Forest boundary and multiple ownerships to the west and southwest including: private, State, and BLM lands. This multiple ownership would make defending the boundaries of the area difficult.

**Conclusion:** This area lies on the low end of the range of capability. It has some issues that tend to make it less capable than other areas on the forest, however, it will still be considered capable for wilderness and will be further evaluated for availability and need.

## Availability:

**Recreation:** The area receives moderate to high use during fall bow and rifle hunting seasons. The area is also used for hiking, camping, fishing, horseback riding, photography and orienteering. It receives some use for skiing/snowshoeing and snowmobiling.

**Wildlife:** This area is an identified elk parturition area, and the very west end is mapped as elk winter range. The WYNDD contains records for several Forest Service sensitive species including Colorado River cutthroat trout, northern goshawk, and pine marten. Tiger salamanders are known to occur in a pond just outside the southwestern boundary of the roadless area.

**Water availability and use:** This particular area has one water diversion locally known as the Deep Creek Ditch. The diversion is located in SW1/4NW1/4 of Section 9, T14N, R87W, 6<sup>th</sup> P.M., Carbon County, Wyoming. The water is diverted to private land outside of the National Forest. There are no other adjudications and the streams are in a natural free flowing state.

**Livestock operations:** A majority of the areas falls within the Hartt Creek Grazing Allotment, a cattle allotment that contains BLM, State and private land as well as National Forest land. The management plan for Hartt Creek Allotment was developed cooperatively with the BLM and the management system is a multiple pasture rotation system. A small portion of the Strawberry

Creek Unit falls within the Big Sandstone Grazing Allotment. This allotment is also grazed by cattle, but under a season long system rather than a rotation. Because of the relatively small amount of prime livestock grazing areas within the Strawberry unit, use levels by cattle are generally light.

**Timber:** There are no timber sales planned for this area.

**Minerals:** This area has had historic mineral activity. Portions of the area has had historic hydraulic and placer mining. With in the last ten years there has been some gold panning and claim staking activities. There has been little to no activity concerning mineral leasing.

**Cultural resources:** There are several cultural resource sites located in this area.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** There are outfitter guide special uses in the general area.

**Management considerations:** The area is bordered by BLM, State and private land, but there are no inholdings.

#### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential? No
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports? No timber sales planned
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 7 miles from the Huston Park Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-8. Percent of covertype in the Strawberry Creek Roadless Area.

Covertype	Acres	Percent
Aspen	940	16
Grassland	18	-
Lodgepole pine	3,584	61
Non forested	27	-
Shrubs	960	16
Spruce fir	345	1
Water	1	-

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-9. Limited representation covertypes in Strawberry Creek Roadless Area.

Covertype	Acres in Strawberry Creek Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Lodgepole pine	3,584	3
Gambel oak	*960	3
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	940	3
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	18	<1

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs would be met in this area.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Strawberry Creek roadless area.

Table C-10. Management area prescriptions by alternative for the Strawberry Creek Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.41							4,027
3.24							1,849
3.5				5,876	5,876	5,876	
3.56	915						
5.13	2,222	5,479	2,543				
5.15		397	3,333				
5.4	2,740						

The following table summarizes the Strawberry Creek roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

# ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-11. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in the Strawberry Creek Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	4,961	5,876	5,876	5,876	5,876	0	
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.							5,876
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	915					5,876	

Source: GIS (ARC/Info), roadless inventory and allocation layers

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**R20602 Singer Peak**  
**10,491 Acres**

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**Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Singer Peak RARE II area 02092. The Singer Peak area is located in the Battle Creek and North

Savery Geographic Areas on the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District in Carbon County. It is approximately 19 miles west of Encampment (T 14N., R. 86 and 87W.). Access on the west and north side of the area is provided by FDR 830 and by various four-wheel-drive roads. Deep Creek Road (FDR 801) is the western boundary of the roadless area.

**Geography:** The area is situated on the western slope of the Continental Divide within the Sierra Madre Range. Big Sandstone and Mill Creeks drain this parcel that begins somewhat below the formal Divide and continues west until FDR801. Classified as crystalline low mountains with mixed forest, this rolling terrain is moderately dissected by the local stream system. Openings occur in sagebrush parks, riparian areas, and a few rocky outcrops. Average annual precipitation ranges from 37 inches at the summit of Singer Peak, to 27 inches at lower elevations. About 75% of this precipitation falls as snow between October and April. Summer thunderstorms are common enough to encourage brushy and deciduous vegetation, but add little to stream flow.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 7,698 feet at the western edge of the area to 9,530 feet at the summit of Singer Peak. Singer Peak is the only prominent mountain in the area, and stands somewhat alone in the mostly rolling terrain. Steep slopes, rocky outcroppings and cliffs are limited. Some rounded alpine or snow-storage landforms exist at the southeastern end of the area, close to the Continental Divide.

**Vegetation:** The area is characterized by non-forested southerly aspects and parks at the lower elevations, and windswept, rocky ridge tops at the higher elevations. Vegetation in the area is comprised of 28% Aspen, 5% grassland, 42% Lodgepole pine, 1% non-forested, 7% shrubs, and 17% spruce-fir. District records and observations contained in the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD) indicate several occurrences of one Forest Service sensitive plant species, the clustered lady's-slipper.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally steep, well drained, and moderately deep. Parent material is almost wholly crystalline bedrock. Growing seasons are short due to low soil temperatures and extended winters.

**Current Uses of the Area:** This roadless area was originally part of the Singer Peak RARE II study area. Timber harvest and road construction have occurred along the southern portion of the area under the Silverstone and Mill Creek Timber Sales in the late 1980's and early 1990's. An area immediately outside of this roadless area to the southwest is currently undergoing NEPA analysis in conjunction with the planned Singer Peak Timber Sale. There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting in this area. This roadless area contains an identified elk parturition area, and the west side is elk winter range. The WYNDD contains records for several Forest Service sensitive fish and wildlife species including Colorado River cutthroat trout, northern goshawk, and pine marten. Colorado River cutthroat trout occur in Big Sandstone Creek and it's tributaries. Some snowmobiling occurs in the area.

Table C-12. Management area acres for Alternative A.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	2,967
4.22 Scenic Areas, Vistas, or Travel Corridors	8
4.31 Dispersed Recreation, Low use	189
5.13 Forest Products	3,518
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	3,808

**Appearance:** Area characterized by non-forested southerly aspects and parks at the lower elevations, and windswept, rocky ridge tops at the higher elevations.

**Surroundings:** The Singer Peak roadless area is separated from the Deep Creek roadless area on the north by a four-wheel-drive road (FDR 874), which roughly follows Big Sandstone Creek. It is separated from the Big Sandstone roadless area on the west by the Deep Creek road (FDR 801). It is separated from the Bridger Peak roadless area on the east by the road to the Ferris-Haggarty Mine (FDR 862). FDR 822, a four-wheel-drive road, forms a portion of the southern boundary.

**Key attractions:** Extreme western portion contains a segment of the old Deep Creek Stock Driveway. The only remaining structure associated with the livestock driveway is an old sheep bridge across Big Sandstone Creek, but another surviving feature is the collection of aspen carvings scattered along the route. Most are names and dates of sheepherders who used the driveway from the 1920's to the 1970's.

## Capability

### Environment

**Opportunity for solitude:** The area has high opportunities for solitude due to the moderate size, lack of interior primitive roads and trails, and remoteness of the area.

**Naturalness:** The area has a high degree of naturalness. Naturalness of the area has not been affected to a great degree by human presence and/or activities.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area, however there are opportunities for adventure, self-reliance and orienteering. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** The opportunity for primitive recreation is high in both summer and winter. This rating is based on the high opportunity for solitude, high degree of naturalness and limited development. Outdoor recreation opportunities include but are not limited to orienteering, hiking, skiing/snow shoeing, hunting, camping, fishing, horse riding and photography. The ROS rating is Semi-primitive Motorized, Roaded Modified, and Roaded Natural.



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

### Special Features

**Education:** The opportunity for education programs is low in this area.

**Scenic Features:** Deep Creek Road (FDR 801) is a popular road for observing fall aspen colors within the roadless area along its western and southwestern boundary.

### Manageability

- ♦ **Size:** The area is moderate in size. It is separated from three other roadless areas by narrow Forest Development Road corridors.
- ♦ **Boundaries:** The area surrounds two private in holdings and is adjacent to numerous others.

**Conclusion:** The moderate size of the area, high opportunities for solitude and naturalness make the area capable for wilderness, therefore the area will be further evaluated for availability and need.

## Availability

**Recreation:** Snowmobile use may exist, but is minimal due to heavy timber and no groomed trails.

Wilderness designation would preclude even this minimal use of snowmobiles. This area is used heavily during hunting season for hunting, camping, and some hiking. Some fishing occurs but it is not a major use of this area

**Wildlife species:** There is a population of Colorado River Cutthroat Trout in Mill Creek. In the recent past, WYG&F has gone in there with heavy equipment to maintain the fish barrier. Wilderness designation would preclude this method of maintaining the fish barrier. This roadless area contains an identified elk parturition area, and the west side is elk winter range. The WYNDD contains records for several Forest Service sensitive fish and wildlife species including Colorado River cutthroat trout, northern goshawk, and pine marten. Colorado River cutthroat trout occur in Big Sandstone Creek and its tributaries.

**Water availability and use:** Big Sandstone and Mill Creeks are perennial streams and offer year-round benefits. There are no water uses that would preclude wilderness designation, and designation would not cause any present uses to be lost. No fish stocking occurs in any of the streams in this roadless area. Current uses include habitat for native fishes and aquatic insects, and watering for wildlife and livestock. Area streams also fulfill some aesthetic and spiritual purposes. Due to the location and terrain, future changes in use of the waters and streams are unlikely.

**Livestock operations:** There are no structural improvements within this area which would be precluded if the area were to be designated as wilderness.

**Timber:** Steep terrain, riparian, poor access, aspen, and unmerchantable timber--especially at the higher elevations, has discouraged past timber harvest and associated road construction in most of the area. These same conditions will affect future timber harvest in the area and therefore wilderness designation would have little effect on use of the timber in this roadless area. In the early 1990's the Nighthawk Timber Sale was laid out within the southwest part of the roadless area. Though ground work on the sale was nearly completed,

the District decided that the NEPA covering the proposal was out-of-date and decided to drop the entire proposal.

**Minerals:** This area has a very mixed geology. The lower elevation western portion has sedimentary rocks while the east portion reaches almost to the Continental Divide with a mix of metamorphic and igneous rock. Presently there are no proposed or active mineral operations in this roadless area. Though mineral operations have occurred in the past as shown by the presence of patented lode claims near Singer Peak and along the west boundary in the Deep Creek drainage. The eastern portion of this area is just west of the Ferris/Haggarty Mine that was the largest copper mine in the Grand Encampment Mining District. This area has some potential for oil and gas in the west half of this area, which has been included in oil and gas leases in the 1970's and early 1980's.

**Cultural resources:** This area has had limited cultural resource survey work. There has been some survey work associated with the Night Hawk Timber Sale and evaluating historic Stock Drive Ways through this area. Much of the area has not been surveyed or inventoried due to the remoteness of the area and lack of site-specific projects occurring in the area. There is potential for both prehistoric and historic cultural resources.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting in this area. At this time there are no existing or proposed non-recreation special uses in this area.

**Management considerations:** The area surrounds two private inholdings and is adjacent to numerous others.

#### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures?  
There is a fish barrier on Mill Creek to protect Colorado River cutthroat trout. WYG&F has used heavy equipment to maintain the barrier; wilderness designation would preclude this maintenance method.
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
No proposed or active mineral operations in this roadless area.  
There is some potential for oil and gas in the west half of the area.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation?  
No.
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports? No  
Timber harvest unlikely due to steep terrain, riparian, poor access, aspen, and unmerchantable timber.  
No current/proposed mining.  
Motorized use is allowed on designated open roads; there is heavy fall hunting use.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No.

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 2 miles from the Huston Park Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-13. Percent of covertypes in the Singer Peak Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres	Percent
Aspen	2,940	28
Grassland	569	5
Lodgepole pine	4,419	42
Non forested	91	1
Shrubs	688	7
Spruce fir	1,784	17

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-14. Limited representation covertypes in Singer Peak Roadless Area

Covertypes	Acres in Singer Peak Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Lodgepole pine	4,419	4
Gambel oak	*688	2
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	2,940	10
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	569	3

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** Almost entirely within the WYNDD Sandstone Creek site (B2), noted for genetically pure Colorado River Cutthroat Trout, tiger salamander, and three sensitive plants.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Singer Peak roadless area.

**ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION**

Table C-15. Management prescriptions by alternative for the Singer Peak Roadless Area.

<b>Mgmt Rx</b>	<b>Alt A</b>	<b>Alt B</b>	<b>Alt C</b>	<b>Alt D DEIS</b>	<b>Alt D FEIS</b>	<b>Alt E</b>	<b>Alt F</b>
1.2							10,491
1.33		1,141		7,118			
3.31		33	4,035		10,491		
3.5				3,373		10,386	
3.56	2,967						
4.2		103				103	
4.22	8						
4.31	189						
5.13	3,518	5,840	3,059				
5.15		3,373	3,396				
5.4	3,808						
5.41						1	

The following table summarizes the Singer Peak roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-16. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in the Singer Peak Roadless Area.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Alt A</b>	<b>Alt B</b>	<b>Alt C</b>	<b>Alt D DEIS</b>	<b>Alt D FEIS</b>	<b>Alt E</b>	<b>Alt F</b>
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	7,326	9,213	6,456				
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.		1,174	4,035	7,118	10,491		10,491
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	3,164	103		3,373		10,491	

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**R20603 Big Sandstone**  
**7,170 Acres**

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**Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Big Sandstone RARE II area

02093. The Big Sandstone area is located in the North and South Savery Geographic Areas on the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District in Carbon County. It is approximately 30 miles northwest of Encampment (T 14N., R. 87 and 88W.). Access on the east side of the area is provided by FDR 801 and on the north by FDR 876 and by various four-wheel-drive roads. Deep Creek Road (FDR 801) is the eastern boundary of the roadless area.

**Geography:** The Big Sandstone Roadless Area is situated on the western slope of the Continental Divide within the Sierra Madre Range. The dramatic Big Sandstone Creek and Deep Creek canyons are within this Roadless Area, along with some heavily forested upland terrain. The canyons run in a generally east-west direction becoming progressively steeper and deeper, with steep side slopes and meandering streams in the relatively gentle valley bottoms. Big Sandstone Creek (which includes flow from Deep Creek) drains into Savery Creek, which drains into the Little Snake River and, hence, is part of the Colorado River system. The two canyons have cut hundreds of feet into the rolling, moderately dissected mountain slopes, creating numerous, steep small ridges and drainages extending to the valley bottom. Position on this windward side of the Sierra Madre brings 30 to 40 inches of precipitation, with approximately 70% of it falling as snow between October and April. Summer thunderstorms are common, causing the growth of dense, brushy plant communities on southern and lower western aspects.

**Topography:** Elevations range from approximately 7,100 feet at the bottom of the canyon at the Forest boundary to 8,000 feet on the surrounding uplands at the west end of the Roadless Area. Gradual erosion of the uplifted terrain has left rolling sedimentary mountains with crystalline strata exposed in the canyon bottoms. The terrain is generally well drained, with few wetlands, ponds, or lakes.

**Vegetation:** The area contains the northernmost extent of Gambel oak within its natural range. Along with relic stands of Douglas fir, this area contains the only known ponderosa pine stand on the western slope of the Sierra Madre Range. Vegetation in the area is comprised of 44% Aspen, 2% Douglas fir, 18% Lodgepole pine, 35% shrubs, and 1% spruce-fir. The riparian areas on the bottom of both Big Sandstone and Deep Creek canyons include Narrow leaf cottonwood forests, willow/sedge plant communities and some silver sagebrush flats. Active beaver colonies create an ever-changing mosaic of beaver ponds in parts of the canyon. According to District records and the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD), there are no known occurrences of Forest Service sensitive plants in the area; but Big Sandstone canyon contains some species, such as black Hawthorne, common hop, and plantain goldenweed, that are uncommon on the District.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally deep and well drained by the moderately steep mountain and canyon slopes. Adequate precipitation and availability of nutrients has produced several vigorous types of plant communities. Several old landslides on the walls of Big Sandstone Canyon testify to the instability of the steeper terrain.

**Current Uses of the Area:** The area is bordered by Green Ridge on the north. The Green Ridge area is considered to have some of the highest site indexes (growing conditions) for lodgepole pine in the Rocky Mountains. The Pop Springs Timber Sale (1994-2000) was

recently completed in this area. The Singer Peak Analysis is currently looking at another potential timber sale outside and to the southeast of the remaining roadless area. The Deep Creek Road (FDR 801) is a popular firewood cutting area for Forest users from Baggs and Rawlins. It is a very popular big game hunting area. There are several permitted outfitters and guides using this area during big game season, including overnight camping. Some snowmobile use is occurring. Much of this roadless area has been identified as an elk parturition area, and also is crucial elk winter range. The WYNDD contains several records for Forest Service sensitive fish and wildlife species including the Colorado River cutthroat trout and northern goshawk. Colorado River cutthroat trout are associated with Big Sandstone Creek and its tributaries

Table C-17. Management areas acres in Alternative A, Big Sandstone Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	3,315
5.13 Forest Products	1,626
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitat	710
5.41 Deer and Elk Winter Range	1,520

**Appearance:** The dramatic Big Sandstone Creek and Deep Creek canyons are within this Roadless Area, along with some heavily forested upland terrain. The canyons run in a generally east-west direction becoming progressively steeper and deeper, with steep side slopes and meandering streams in the relatively gentle valley bottoms. Big Sandstone Creek (which includes flow from Deep Creek) drains into Savery Creek and then into the Little Snake River. The two canyons have cut hundreds of feet into the rolling, moderately dissected mountain slopes, creating numerous, steep small ridges and drainages extending to the valley bottom. From down in Big Sandstone and Deep Creek canyons, no roads or power lines are visible, giving the area great scenic appeal and a feeling of remoteness.

**Surroundings:** The western boundary is Bureau of Land Management, State and private lands. The remainder is surrounded by forest including some private parcels on the east and south boundaries. This roadless area is separated from the Little Sandstone roadless area to the south by the Sandstone Divide road (FDR 872). It is separated from the Singer Peak roadless area to the east by the Deep Creek road (FDR 801).

**Key attractions:** The area encompasses two spectacular canyons formed by Big Sandstone Creek and Deep Creek.

## Capability

### Environment

**Opportunity for solitude:** The area has moderate opportunities for solitude due to the numerous two track roads located in the general vicinity. ATV travel in the area has increased over the last decade and the area is heavily used during bow and rifle big game hunting seasons. The area has moderate to high opportunities for solitude on the canyon bottoms and side slopes during all but hunting season.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Naturalness:** The naturalness of the total area is moderate but the canyon bottoms and side slopes have moderately high naturalness since there is not a developed trail and there are no roads or power lines in sight from most places. The only man-made structures are two range study plots in the bottom of Big Sandstone Canyon, and these are slated for removal in the near future. The only factor that detracts somewhat from the natural aspect of the canyons is the presence of livestock and the evidence of their grazing and travels.

**Challenge -** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area, however there are opportunities for adventure, self-reliance and orienteering. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities -** The opportunity for primitive recreation in this area is moderate. The ROS rating is Semi-primitive Motorized and Roaded Modified. Winter recreation includes some snowmobile use, and possibly snowshoe and/or cross-country skiing. Summer and fall use includes fishing, hiking, camping, ATV use, horse riding, and hunting. There is also some opportunity for photography of wildlife and landscapes including the fall colors.

### Special Features

**Education:** The opportunity for education programs is low in this area.

**Scenic Features:** Deep Creek Road (FDR 801) is a popular road for observing the two spectacular canyons and fall aspen colors within the roadless area along its eastern boundary. Big Sandstone Canyon offers a beautiful display of fall colors for hikers and horseback riders.

### Manageability

- ◆ **Size:** The area is small in size, and is separated from two other roadless areas by narrow Forest Development Road corridors.
- ◆ **Boundaries:** There are two private inholdings adjacent to the area.

**Conclusion:** Similar to experiences found in portions of both Encampment River and Platte River Wilderness areas, the steep topography of the two canyons allows for both solitude and primitive recreation experiences thus making this area capable for wilderness. It will be further evaluated for availability and need.

## Availability

**Recreation:** There are no maintained trails within the area's boundaries. Primary recreation use is during hunting season and the fall colors season. There is some camping, picnicking, and photographic use of the area.

**Wildlife species:** This is a very popular big game hunting area. There are several permitted outfitters and guides. Much of this roadless area has been identified as an elk parturition area, and also is crucial elk winter range. The brushy canyon slopes also provide good fawning areas for mule deer. The riparian areas on the bottom of both Big Sandstone and Deep Creek canyons include Narrowleaf cottonwood forests, willow/sedge plant communities and some silver sagebrush flats. Active beaver colonies create an ever-changing mosaic of beaver ponds in parts of the canyon. The WYNDD contains several

records for Forest Service sensitive fish and wildlife species including the Colorado River cutthroat trout and northern goshawk. Colorado River cutthroat trout are associated with Big Sandstone Creek and its tributaries. No fish stocking occurs in any of the streams in this roadless area.

**Water availability and use:** Both Big Sandstone and Deep Creeks provide yearlong flows in all years due to a consistent snow pack and deep soils. This water eventually contributes to flow in the Little Snake and subsequently, the Colorado Rivers. Numerous beaver ponds help slow the delivery of water and insure late-season stream flow, along with providing important ecological benefits. Water uses within the Roadless Area include wildlife watering, recreational use, and watering of permitted livestock. No development of water resources has occurred. On-site and downstream water availability is critical for maintaining a healthy forest.

**Livestock operations:** The unit falls within two livestock grazing allotments: Big Sandstone and Little Sandstone. Big Sandstone Creek forms the boundary between them. Big Sandstone Allotment is grazed by cattle from mid June to mid October under a season-long system. Little Sandstone is also grazed by cattle, but is managed under a three-pasture deferred rotation system.

**Timber:** The steep terrain and dominance of aspen in many stands has discouraged past timber harvest in the area. Without roads, the only feasible and possibly economical way to harvest timber would be by helicopter logging.

**Minerals:** This area is west of the hard rock Grand Encampment Mining District, though it has had limited oil and gas exploration in the 1970's.

**Cultural resources:** Due to the remoteness of the area and lack of site-specific projects, there has been little cultural resource inventory work completed in this roadless area. There is potential for both prehistoric and historic cultural resources.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** The area occurs within two permitted allotments, the Big Sandstone Cattle and Horse allotment and the Little Sandstone Cattle and Horse allotment. There are several permitted outfitter/guides for big game hunting in the area.

**Management considerations:** Existing motorized and non-motorized travel routes and future travel routes are important management considerations in this area.

#### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? Yes. Due to the steady water production instead of rapid production in the spring after snow melts, this area is critical to maintaining water in the local system as well as providing water downstream long after water from other areas has traveled downstream and out of the local basins.
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential? No
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports? No
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 7 miles from the Huston Park Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-18. Percent cotype in Big Sandstone Roadless Area

Covertype	Acres	Percent
Aspen	3,187	44
Douglas fir	143	2
Lodgepole pine	1,286	18
Non Forested	20	-
Shrubs	2,486	35
Spruce fir	50	1

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-19. Limited representation covertypes in Big Sandstone Roadless Area.

Covertype	Acres in Big Sandstone Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Douglas-fir	143	5
Lodgepole pine	1,286	1
Gambel oak	*2,486	7
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	3,187	10

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** Almost entirely within the WYNDD Sandstone Creek site (B2), noted for genetically pure Colorado River Cutthroat Trout, tiger salamander, and three sensitive plants.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Big Sandstone roadless area.

**ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION**

Table C-20. Management area prescriptions by alternative for the Big Sandstone Roadless Area.

<b>Mgmt Rx</b>	<b>Alt A</b>	<b>Alt B</b>	<b>Alt C</b>	<b>Alt D DEIS</b>	<b>Alt D FEIS</b>	<b>Alt E</b>	<b>Alt F</b>
1.2							7,170
1.31				6,172		6,642	
3.31		4,050	5,053				
3.5				400	5,998		
3.56	3,315						
3.58		572		585	759		
5.13	1,626	2,048	14				
5.15		501	1,519	14	413		
5.4	710						
5.41	1,520		585			528	

The following table summarizes the Big Sandstone roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-21. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in the Big Sandstone Roadless Area.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Alt A</b>	<b>Alt B</b>	<b>Alt C</b>	<b>Alt D DEIS</b>	<b>Alt D FEIS</b>	<b>Alt E</b>	<b>Alt F</b>
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics	2,336	2,549	1,533	14	413		
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court		4,050	5,053	6,172		6,642	7,170
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	4,835	572	585	985	6,757	528	

## R20604 Little Sandstone

### 5,481 Acres

#### Overview

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Little Sandstone RARE II area 02094. The Little Sandstone area is located in

the South Savery Geographic Areas on the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District in Carbon County. It is approximately 30 miles northwest of Encampment (T 13 and 14N., R. 87 and 88W.). Access on the east of the area is provided by FDR 801, and on the north by FDR 872 and by various four-wheel-drive roads.

**Geography:** The area is situated on the western slope of the Continental Divide within the Sierra Madre Range. Passing from east to west the topography becomes progressively steeper with deeper canyons associated with the drainages (Little Sandstone Creek and its tributaries). Landforms are classified as sedimentary canyons with open deciduous forest (aspen) and rangeland. Average annual precipitation is 26 inches, with most coming as snow from October to April. Summer thunderstorms occur almost daily and add rainfall sufficient to promote grass and woody deciduous species. The western or lower boundary transitions to sage and brush rangeland near the Forest boundary.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 7,150 feet to 8,040 feet. The area is mostly sloping canyon walls with smaller side drainages creating convoluted, rugged terrain. Aspect is generally westerly, with opposing canyon walls facing north and south. More level terrain is located around the canyon periphery.

**Vegetation:** The area is characterized by high amount of non-forested southerly aspects and large parks. Vegetation in the area is comprised of 40% Aspen, 1% cottonwood, 1% Douglas fir, 6% Lodgepole pine, and 52% shrubs. The Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD) indicates occurrence of one Forest Service sensitive plant species, the clustered lady's-slipper.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally steep and well drained, ranging from shallow to moderately deep. Growing seasons are longer than most of the Sierra Madre due to lower elevations, warmer soil temperatures, and shorter winters.

**Current Uses of the Area:** This area was originally part of the Little Sandstone RARE II study area. Timber harvest and road construction have occurred along the eastern and southern boundaries of the area under the Silverstone, Mill Creek, and Guard Station Timber Sales in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The Singer Peak Analysis is currently looking at another potential timber sale outside and to the northeast of the remaining roadless area. The area is popular for both archery and rifle big game hunting. There are several permitted outfitters and guides who use this area. Much of this roadless area is an identified elk parturition area, and also is crucial elk winter range. The WYNDD contains records for one Forest service sensitive wildlife species, the northern goshawk.

Table C-22. Management areas for Alternative A for the Solomon Creek Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	2,524
5.13 Forest Products	11

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitat	1,835
5.41 Deer and Elk Winter Range	1,112

**Appearance:** Passing from east to west the topography becomes progressively steeper with deeper canyons associated with the drainages (Little Sandstone Creek and its tributaries). The western or lower boundary transitions to sage and brush rangeland near the Forest boundary.

**Surroundings:** This roadless area is bordered on the west by a relatively short section of Bureau of Land Management and private lands. It is separated from the Big Sandstone roadless area to the north by the Sandstone Divide road (FDR 872). It is surrounded by other NFS lands to the east and south.

**Key attractions:** Bordered by the Deep Creek Road (FDR 801) to the east, FDR 801 is a popular road for observing the changing of aspen leaves in the fall.

## Capability

### Environment

**Opportunity for solitude:** The opportunity for solitude is moderate to low since there are quite a few two-track roads through the area, though there are not a lot of recreational users except during hunting season. ATV use is not uncommon off roads during hunting season where topography and vegetation allow.

**Naturalness:** The naturalness of the area is low due to two-track roads, stock ponds and fencelines within the unit.

**Challenge -** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities -**The opportunity for primitive recreation in this area is moderate. Winter recreation includes some snowmobile travel and snowshoe and/or cross-country skiing. Summer use includes fishing, hiking, mountain biking, camping, horseback riding, ATV use, and hunting. There is also some opportunity for photography of wildlife and landscapes including the fall colors.

### Special Features

**Education:** The opportunity for educational programs is very low in this area.

**Scenic Features:** Deep Creek Road (FDR 801) is a popular road for observing fall aspen colors within the roadless area along its eastern boundary.

### Manageability

- ◆ **Size:** The area is small, narrow and oblong. The widest portion is probably less than 2.5 miles with some areas less than a mile across.
- ◆ **Boundaries:** The boundary on the east is Forest Development Road 801 (Deep Creek) with the boundaries on the north and south being two track roads.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Conclusions:** This area lies on the low end of the range of capability. It has some issues that tend to make it less capable than other areas on the forest, however, it will still be considered capable for wilderness and will be further evaluated for availability and need.

### Availability:

**Recreation:** Winter recreation includes some snowmobile travel and snowshoe and/or cross-country skiing. Summer use includes fishing, hiking, mountain biking, camping, horseback riding, ATV use, and hunting. There is also some opportunity for photography of wildlife and landscapes including the fall colors.

**Wildlife:** Much of this roadless area is an identified elk parturition area and also is crucial elk winter range. The WYNDD contains records for one Forest Service sensitive wildlife species, the northern goshawk.

**Water availability and use:** Average precipitation is 26 inches, with most coming as snow from October to April. Summer thunderstorms occur almost daily and add rainfall sufficient to promote grass and woody deciduous species.

**Livestock operations:** There are cattle allotments in this roadless area.

**Timber:** Timber harvest and road construction has occurred along the eastern and southern boundaries of the area under the Silverstone, Mill Creek and Guard Station Timber sales in the late 1980's and early 1990's. The Singer Peak analysis is currently looking at another potential timber sale outside and to the northeast of the remaining roadless area.

**Minerals:** There is little to no known potential for locatable mineral resources. Within the boundary of this area there has been as many as 1,400 acres under an Oil and Gas Lease. The western half of this area is underlain with coal beds with less than 3,000 feet of overburden. A portion of the western portion of this area is reserved from coal development by a 7-13-1910 Executive Order withdrawing this coal from lease or entry.

**Cultural resources:** At this time there are no known cultural resource sites and the potential for these sites is unknown.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** There are several permitted outfitters and guides in the area.

**Management considerations:** The area has had timber harvest and road construction close to the boundaries. This area is also crucial winter range for elk and is a known elk parturition area.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
Two reports list the area as having high O&G potential; another lists the area as having moderate potential. The western half of the area has coal beds with less than 3,000 feet of overburden; however part of this area is withdrawn from mineral entry.

4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
There have been timber sales along the eastern and southern boundaries of the area. The area has potential for oil and gas exploration/development. The area supports summer and winter motorized recreation opportunities.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 5 miles from the Huston Park Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-23. Percent covertime in Little Sandstone Roadless Area.

Covertime	Acres	Percent
Aspen	2,174	40
Cottonwood	50	1
Douglas Fir	47	1
Grassland	23	-
Lodgepole pine	324	6
Shrubs	2,861	52

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-24. Limited representation covertypes in Little Sandstone Roadless Area.

Covertime	Acres in Little Sandstone Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Douglas-fir	47	2
Lodgepole pine	324	<1
Gambel oak	*2,861	9
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	2,174	7
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	23	<1
Cottonwood/willow	50	23

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs would be met in this area.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Little Sandstone roadless area.

Table C-25. Management area prescriptions by alternative for the Little Sandstone Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							5,481
1.31				4,035		5,150	
3.31		3,439	4,043				
3.5					3,724		
3.56	2,524	135					
3.58		1,470		1,439	1,757		
5.13	11	438					
5.4	1,835						
5.41	1,112		1,439	8		331	

The following table summarizes the Little Sandstone roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-26. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in the Little Sandstone Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	1,846	438					
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.		3,439	4,043	4,035		5,150	5,481
Category 3 - Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.			1439	1447	5,481	331	

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**R20605 Battle Creek**  
**5,894 Acres**

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**Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Battle Creek RARE II 02095. The Battle Creek area is located in the South Savery

Geographic Area on the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District in Carbon County. It is approximately 21 miles southeast of Encampment (T 13N., R. 87W.). State Highway 70, provides access on the north side of the area on the east side by FDR 807, on the south side by FDR 879, and by various four-wheel-drive roads.

**Geography:** The area is situated on the western slope of the Continental Divide within the Sierra Madre Range. Parent material is mainly sedimentary, with low mountains supporting both mixed forest and rangeland plant communities. Moderate dissection of mountain slopes by shallowly incised stream drainages has created mostly gentle, rolling terrain, with some larger gulches and canyons. Average annual precipitation is approximately 27 inches, with the majority coming as snow between October and April. Summer thunderstorms occur almost daily, creating a vegetation community different than others on the Forest. Deciduous brush and tree species mix with sage, meadow, and coniferous plant communities depending on aspect and elevation.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 7200 feet to 8400 feet. Few steep slopes exist on the gently rolling terrain, but streams have cut deep gulches in some drainages. No prominent mountain peaks exist in the area, and rock outcroppings are rare. The landscape has a westerly exposure.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 54% Aspen, 1% cottonwood, 1% non forested, and 43% shrubs. The Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD) contains no records for Forest Service sensitive plant species in this area.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally well-drained, moderately-deep to deep types derived from sedimentary bedrock. Growing seasons are short, but somewhat longer than much of the district due to low elevations, less snowpack, and greater frost-free periods.

**Current Uses of the Area:** This area is designated as a wildlife management area. It contains an identified elk parturition area, and is elk crucial winter range. Records contained in the WYNDD indicate the presence of two Forest Service sensitive wildlife species including the northern goshawk and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse. It is a popular hunting area. Livestock grazing does occur on the north and east portion of the mountain on lands administered by the Forest Service. The area on top of Battle Mountain is generally not grazed along with a portion on the west and south side of the mountain. Both areas are portions of pastures in two-pasture deferred-rotation grazing systems involving cattle and sheep. Private lands are involved in the management of both allotments, and state land is involved in the management of the allotment to the north.



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-27. Management areas for Alternative A, Battle Creek Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	3,169
4.22 Scenic Areas, Vistas, or Travel Corridors	218
5.12 General Forest and Rangelands – Range Vegetation Emphasis	731
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	948
5.41 Deer and Elk Winter Range	829

**Appearance:** Moderate dissection of mountain slopes by shallowly incised stream drainages has created mostly gentle, rolling terrain, with some larger gulches and canyons. The area is a combination of aspen and open parks.

**Surroundings:** The Stemp Springs subdivision borders this roadless area on the west. Intrusions from the subdivision could lead to conflict between private interests and wilderness users.

**Key attractions:** The fall colors, elk calving in the area, and a good view of the Colorado Mountains, including Hahn’s Peak and Bears Ears are the primary attractions.

## Capability

### Environment

**Opportunity for solitude:** This area’s ability to provide for solitude and primitive recreation is low due to its accessibility and small size.

**Naturalness:** This areas naturalness is low due to the presence of non-indigenous plants, introduced trout, and evidence of impacts from livestock, motorized recreation, and mining.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** Overall, there are few opportunities for primitive recreation. The ROS rating for this area is Semi-primitive Motorized with a small section of Roaded Modified. Wyoming Highway 70 runs along the north edge providing high access opportunities. Due to its accessibility this area’s ability to provide for solitude and primitive recreation is low.

### Special Features

**Education:** This area has little opportunity for education programs.

**Scenic Features:** No unique scenic features exist in the area.

### Manageability

- ♦ **Size:** Due to the small size and lack of natural barriers, management would be difficult.
- ♦ **Boundaries:** The southern portion of this area is almost entirely separated from the northern part by an existing road corridor. This makes the boundaries of the area hard to manage.

**Conclusion:** This area lies on the low end of the range of capability. It has some issues that tend to make it less capable than other areas on the forest, however, it will still be considered capable for wilderness and will be further evaluated for availability and need.

### Availability

**Recreation:** The area is used for fishing, hiking, and camping. The main attraction for the area is hunting, both archery and rifle season. There may be some winter use by snowmobile.

**Wildlife:** This area is designated as a wildlife management area. It contains an identified elk parturition area and is elk crucial winter range. Records contained in the WYNDD indicate the presence of two Forest Service sensitive wildlife species including the northern goshawk and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse.

**Water availability and use:** Average annual precipitation is approximately 27 inches, with the majority coming as snow between October and April. Summer thunderstorms occur almost daily. The runoff generated from the snowpack is used as irrigation and recreation.

**Livestock operations:** Livestock grazing does occur on the north and east portion of the mountain on lands administered by the Forest Service. The area on top of Battle Mountain is generally not grazed along with a portion on the west and south side of the mountain. Both areas are portions of pastures in two pasture deferred rotation grazing systems involving cattle and sheep. Private lands are involved in the management of both allotments and state land is involved in the management of the allotment to the north.

**Timber:** There is no known proposed timber sale for this area.

**Minerals:** There is little to no known potential for locatable mineral resources. Within the boundary of this area there has been as many as 2,400 acres under an Oil and Gas Lease. Western half of this area is underlain with coal beds with less than 3,000 feet of overburden. A portion of the area is reserved from coal development by a 7-13-1910 Executive Order withdrawing this coal from lease or entry.

**Cultural resources:** There is one known cultural resource site located in the area, the potential for these sites is unknown.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** This area is used by permitted outfitter guides for hunting purposes.

**Management considerations:** A management consideration would be the Stemp Springs subdivision which borders this roadless area on the west. Intrusions from the subdivision could lead to conflict between private interests and wilderness users.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
Two reports list the area as having high O&G potential; another lists the area as having moderate potential. The western half of the area has coal beds with less than 3,000 feet of overburden; however part of this area is withdrawn from mineral entry.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
No proposed timber sales. The area has potential for oil and gas exploration/development. The area supports summer and winter motorized recreation opportunities.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation?  
Possible access/trespass problems due to the Stemp Springs subdivision on the western border of the area.

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 3 miles from the Huston Park Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-28. Percent covertype in Battle Creek Roadless Area.

Covertype	Acres	Percent
Aspen	3,209	54
Cottonwood	64	1
Grassland	18	-
Non Forested	69	1
Shrubs	2,530	43

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-29. Limited representation covertypes in Battle Creek Roadless Area

Covertypes	Acres in Battle Creek Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Gambel oak	*2,530	8
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	3,209	11
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	18	<1
Cottonwood/willow	64	30

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** Overlaps part of the WYNDD Cottonwood Rim Site (B4); which is noted for Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse and Northern Goshawk.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Battle Creek roadless area.

Table C-30. Management area prescriptions by alternative for the Battle Creek Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							5,894
1.31				3,418			
2.1						1,304	
3.31			3,414				
3.5			4				
3.56	3,169	4,295	1,094	1,094	4,175		
3.58		1,381		1,382	1,382	414	
4.2		218				218	
4.22	218						
5.12	731				337		
5.13						19	
5.4	948						
5.41	829		1,381			3,939	

The following table summarizes the Battle Creek roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-31. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in the Battle Creek Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	948					19	
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.			3,414	3,414			
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	4,946	5,894	2,480	2,480	5,894	5,875	5,894

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**R20606 Little Snake**  
**9,920 Acres**

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**Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** The area was previously analyzed as the Huston Park RARE II area 02087. The Little Snake area is located in the Upper Little Snake

River and South Savery Geographic Areas on the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District in Carbon County. It is approximately 23 miles southwest of Encampment (T 13N. R. 86 and 87W.). Access on the west side of the area is provided by FDR 807; the south side by FDR 851, and north side of the area is by FDR 811, which is a four-wheel drive road. The parcel is contiguous with the existing Huston Park Wilderness Area.

**Geography:** The area is situated on the western slope of the Continental Divide within the Sierra Madre Range. Mainly crystalline geology gives way to sedimentary bedrock within the Little Snake River drainage. Low mountain landforms provide gently rolling terrain with frequent rock outcroppings. Moderately dissected mountain slopes, incised by varied tributaries of the Little Snake River, produces rugged terrain with both mixed coniferous and aspen forest types. Lower in elevation, sedimentary geology has resulted in more rolling land supporting rangeland and aspen communities. Average annual precipitation ranges from 37 inches at higher elevations to 25 inches at the lower end. Most of this precipitation comes as snow between October and April, but summer thunderstorms are very common.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 7,480 feet to 9,180 feet. A wide variety of terrain is found in this area, including flat meadows, steep drainages and side slopes, and rolling hills. Fletcher Peak (8,643 feet) is the only prominent peak in the area.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 57% Aspen, 2% grasslands, 13% Lodgepole pine, 7% shrubs, and 22% spruce-fir. The Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD) contains no records of Forest Service sensitive plant species for this area.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally steep, well drained, and moderately deep. Exceptions can be found in slumped terrain, where drainage is poor, or in the lower elevations where silt and clay layers can also affect drainage. Growing seasons are generally short, although at lower elevations, earlier spring melt-out occurs.

**Current Uses of the Area:** The Roaring Fork Analysis is currently looking at a possible timber sale outside and to the southwest of the roadless area. Analysis is also looking at the possible use of prescribed burning both outside and inside the roadless area. The area is a popular deer and elk hunting area. There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting in this area. The area also contains an identified elk parturition area, and the western portion is considered elk winter range. The WYNDD contains records for two Forest Service sensitive fish and wildlife species including the Colorado River cutthroat trout and northern goshawk. Colorado River cutthroat trout occur in tributaries of the Little Snake River. The area is mapped as potential bighorn sheep summer range by the WGFD. Any bighorns using this area are seasonal migrants coming from the Encampment River herd. ATV's currently use the Roaring Fork Trail all the way to the wilderness area cutting this area in half. The West Sheep Mountain supply ditch, which is off of the Roaring Fork, is located in the roadless area. It is permitted under a Ditch Bill easement.

Table C-32. Management area acre for Alternative A, Little Snake Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	6,036
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	3,883

**Appearance:** Low mountain landforms provide gently rolling terrain with frequent rock outcroppings. Moderately dissected mountain slopes, incised by varied tributaries of the Little Snake River, produces rugged terrain with both mixed coniferous and aspen forest types. Lower in elevation, sedimentary geology has resulted in more rolling land supporting rangeland and aspen communities

**Surroundings:** This area adjoins a State of Wyoming School Trust Section (Section 36, T13N, R86W). The western portion of this roadless area is connected to the larger eastern portion by only a narrow strip along the boundary of the Huston Park Wilderness Area. It is separated from the Solomon Creek roadless area to the east by a four-wheel-drive road. The entire northern border of this roadless area abuts the south edge of the Huston Park Wilderness Area.

**Key attractions:** The Key attractions are the Roaring Fork and main fork of the Little Snake River. This area has extensive stands of aspen that typically have great fall foliage color.

## Capability

### Environment

**Opportunity for solitude:** Being of moderate size and contiguous to the Huston Park Wilderness area, the overall opportunity for solitude in the area is moderate with the best opportunities lying between the Roaring Fork Little Snake River and the West Branch North Fork Little Snake rivers. Solitude in this area is affected by the popularity of the site for big game hunting.

**Naturalness:** The degree of naturalness in this area is high. There are private and state in holdings and the Cheyenne Board of Public Utilities has an easement for a water diversion system in the northeast boundary of the roadless area.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area, however there are opportunities for adventure, self-reliance and orienteering. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** Overall, the area offers moderate opportunities for primitive recreation. This rating is based on the moderate opportunity for solitude and high degree of naturalness. The ROS rating for this area is Semi-primitive Motorized with a small section labeled Roded Modified.

### Special Features

**Education:** This area contains limited opportunities for educational programs, primarily due to its distance from major population centers.

**Scenic Features:** Conifer stands on the north slopes, grasslands and aspen stands on the south slopes, and bracken fern areas provide some of the scenic features of the area.

### Manageability

- ♦ Size: 9,920 acres is a moderate size roadless area. The fact that the area is contiguous to the Huston Park Wilderness area would help make it more manageable.
- ♦ Boundaries: The area is adjacent to the Huston Park Wilderness Area. Some private in holdings are on the edge of the area and would not conflict with the wilderness designation, whereas others bisect the area and create smaller areas within this large area. Some of these smaller areas may not provide the same degree of wilderness values.

### Availability

**Recreation:** This area includes an access trail to the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail and the Huston Park Wilderness area. Hunters, ATV users, hikers, campers, and other outdoor enthusiasts utilize this area throughout the year. Wilderness designation would preclude the use of ATV's and other motorized or mechanized items in the area.

**Wildlife species:** The area is a popular deer and elk hunting area. There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting in this area. The area also contains an identified elk parturition area, and the western portion is considered elk winter range. The WYNDD contains records for two Forest Service sensitive fish and wildlife species including the Colorado River cutthroat trout and northern goshawk. Colorado River cutthroat trout occur in tributaries of the Little Snake River. The area is mapped as potential bighorn sheep summer range by the WGFD. Any bighorns using this area are seasonal migrants coming from the Encampment River herd. There is no fish stocking of any streams in this roadless area.

**Water availability and use:** Stream flow in the area is perennial, owing to a consistent snowpack and generally deep soils. Water developments include diversions on some streams for the Cheyenne Water Project (Stage II), which is a trans-basin diversion to the North Platte River basin. In-stream flow rights exist on most of the larger diverted streams, preventing total dewatering. Other water rights may exist for this project, which means right-of-ways may be claimed within the area. Some stock ponds may exist in smaller draws.

**Livestock operations:** This area lies within Roaring Fork and Victoria Sheep and Goat Allotments. They are managed under a once-over grazing system and are stocked from 6/25-9/10 and 7/1-9/15, respectively.

**Timber:** The dominance of aspen in area has discouraged past timber harvest.

**Minerals:** This area has little potential for hard rock mineral development. There has been some oil and gas exploration in this area without further development occurring.

**Cultural resources:** Due to the remoteness of the area and lack of site-specific projects, there have been little cultural resource inventory surveys. There is potential for both prehistoric and historic cultural resources.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting, backpacking and fishing trips in this area. Currently, there are no other authorized or proposed special use authorizations for this area.



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Management considerations:** Numerous peninsular extensions of roads and private in-holdings within this area make portions of this area less likely to meet Wilderness boundary and size criteria.

The portion most likely to still meet Wilderness criteria would be the portion between the West Branch North Fork Little Snake River and the Roaring Fork Little Snake River (including parts of sections 14, 15, 21-24, 26-28, 33-35 T13N R86W).

The remaining portions of the area would probably not meet the minimum size requirements for Wilderness or would probably not provide solitude due to their small size. These 2 remaining portions include the portion west of the Roaring Fork Little

SNAKE River (including parts of sections 18-20, 28-30, 31-33, T13N, R86W; and sections 13, 22-27, T13N R87W) and the portion between the West Branch North Fork Little Snake River and the boundary adjacent to the Solomon Creek Roadless Area (parts of sections 25, 26, 35, 36 T13N, R86W; sections 1-2, 11 T12N R86W; section 31 T13N R85W; and section 6 T12N R85W).

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? If needed in the future, this area could serve as a possible expansion of Cheyenne Stage 2 pipeline.
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No.
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential? Little potential for hard rock mineral development. There has been some oil and gas exploration in the area but no development.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No.
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports? Timber – no; too much aspen Mining – low potential for hard rock; no oil and gas development Recreation – motorized rec. opportunities.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? Possible conflict with permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting, backpacking and fishing trips in this area.

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies adjacent to the Huston Park Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the cover types represented in this roadless area.

Table C-33. Percent covertype in Little Snake Roadless Area.

Covertype	Acres	Percent
Aspen	5,615	57
Cottonwood	34	-
Grassland	181	2
Lodgepole pine	1,278	13
Shrubs	660	7
Spruce fir	2,147	22

**Limited Representation Covertypes:**

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-34. Limited representation covertypes in Little Snake Roadless Area

Covertype	Acres in Little Snake Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Lodgepole pine	1,278	1
Gambel oak	*660	2
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	5,615	18
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	181	1
Cottonwood/willow	34	16

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** (those areas south of existing wilderness) Some overlap with WYNDD's Little Snake River sites (B3) noted for genetically pure populations of the Colorado River Cutthroat Trout. Aspen, wet meadows, and fellfields contain many uncommon plants.

**Augmenting the size of existing Wilderness:**

The four Wildernesses on the Medicine Bow are quite small compared to those found in other mountainous areas of the west (Platte River, 22,749 GIS acres; the Encampment River 10,400 GIS acres; Huston Park, 30,726 GIS acres; and Savage Run, 14,940 acres). The natural fragmentation of the terrain here and associated federal ownership pattern combined with extensive resource extraction before the establishment of Wildernesses limited the size of areas that met Wilderness criteria.

The small size of the existing areas constrains the Forest's ability to allow natural processes like fire to follow a natural course. In addition, the current size may be too small to support populations of wide-ranging species within the boundaries.

The benefits of recommending roadless areas that are adjacent to existing Wilderness as Proposed Wilderness are as follows: The Little Snake would add 9,920 acres to the existing 30,726 acres (a 32% increase). Though there is a long boundary along the wilderness, the roadless area contains inclusions of private land.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Little Snake roadless area.

Table C-35. Management area prescriptions by alternative for the Little Snake Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2				6,594	3,956		8,858
1.33			9,877				
1.5		395				395	
3.24							1,062
3.31		2,069					
3.4						655	
3.5				3,280	3,386	7,753	
3.56	6,036	6,418	43	46	2,577		
5.15		1,036					
5.4	3,883						
5.41						1,116	

The following table summarizes the Little Snake roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-36. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Little Snake Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	3,883	1,036					
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	6,036	2,465	9,877	6,594	3,956	395	9,920
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.		6,418	43	3,326	5,963	9,524	

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**R20607 Solomon Creek**  
**5,756 Acres**

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**Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Huston Park RARE II 02087. The Solomon Creek area is located in the Upper Little

Snake River Geographic Area on the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District in Carbon County. It is approximately 35 miles southwest of Encampment (T 13N., R. 85 and 86W.). Access on the northeast is FDR 809 and on the west side of the area is FDR 851.

**Geography:** The area is situated on the western slope of the Sierra Madre Range, with the eastern boundary less than a mile from the Continental Divide. The area is classified as crystalline low mountains with mixed forest types and moderately dissected mountain slopes. Rocky outcroppings and steep slopes are limited in size and number. Some openings exist in sagebrush and riparian meadows, but forest cover is fairly complete. Average annual precipitation ranges from 23 inches at lower elevations, to about 43 inches at upper elevations. The majority of this precipitation comes as snow between October and April. Summer thunderstorms are common but add little to the area stream flow.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 7,500 feet to 9,678 feet. There are no prominent mountain peaks within the area, but several large ridges do stand out. The side slopes of these ridges and drainages form rugged, mostly forested terrain with steep, rocky streams. General aspect is to the southwest, but all aspects are represented.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 46% Aspen, 1% grasslands, 22% Lodgepole pine, 1% shrubs, and 30% spruce-fir. The Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD) contains no records of Forest Service sensitive plant species for this area.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally well drained, and moderately deep. Growing seasons are short due to low soil temperatures and an extended winter.

**Current Uses of the Area:** This roadless area is popular for its deer and elk hunting. There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting in this area. The area contains identified elk parturition areas, and is mapped as potential summer range for bighorn sheep by WGFD. The high percent of forested vegetation limits the quality of potential bighorn sheep habitat. Ewe/lamb escape habitat is marginal, and any animals that would occur would be summer migrants coming from the Encampment River herd. Colorado River cutthroat trout is the only Forest Service sensitive fish or wildlife species for which there are records contained in the WYNDD. Potential habitat exists for several other species that use subalpine-forested habitats. The area directly to the east is currently being looked at under the Soldier Summit Analysis for possible spruce beetle treatments to lessen mortality from what appears to be an impending epidemic. This area has segments of the Savory and Elkhorn Stock Driveways. Though these areas were historically used for trailing mainly domesticated sheep some portions of the trails receive ORV use. Portions of these stock driveways were used up until the mid-1990s, they have re-vegetated but may be threatened by ORV use as ATV popularity increases.

Table C-37. Management area acres for Alternative A, Solomon Creek Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	2,715
5.13 Forest Products	90
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	2,951

**Appearance:** The area is fairly rugged, dissected as it is by Little Snake River, Rose Creek, Solomon Creek, Green Timber Creek and their tributaries. It is largely forested, with a mosaic of aspen and conifer forest types. There are no strikingly dominant natural features such as mountain peaks, lakes, etc. within this area.

**Surroundings:** A State of Wyoming School Trust Section (Section 16 T12N, R85W) is located on the upper portion of Rose Creek. This roadless area is separated from the Little Snake roadless area to the west by a four-wheel-drive road.

**Key attractions:** The variety of streams including Little Snake River, Rose Creek and Solomon Creek are some of the attractions with a mosaic of aspen and conifer forest areas.

## Capability

### Environment

**Opportunity for solitude:** Although small in size, this area has high opportunity for solitude. Prior to the completion of the Cheyenne Stage II water diversion project and the associated roads, this was some of the most remote country in the Sierra Madre. Due to the ruggedness and high amount of unbroken forest, it still presents a challenge to travel and has therefore retained much of its remote feel.

**Naturalness:** Due to the high amount of unbroken forest, this area's naturalness is high. A part of the Savery-Fireline Stock Driveway goes through this area. Though once heavily used by sheep ranchers early summer and early fall, it has only been used by a few bands of sheep each year in recent times. There are two old sheep bridges associated with this driveway that are within this unit, one on Solomon Creek and one on the Little Snake River. The bridges do not have roads to them, and so do not make much visual impact upon the naturalness of the landscape. Instream flow protection is in place and provides for a relatively natural flow pattern within.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area, however there are opportunities for adventure, self-reliance and orienteering. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** Opportunities for primitive or semi-primitive recreation are high within this area, particularly for those wishing to travel on foot or horseback. This rating is based on the unbroken forest, high solitude and high degree of naturalness. The ROS rating for this area is Semi-primitive Motorized.

**Special Features-**

**Education:** There is little opportunity for education programs in this area.

**Scenic Features:** Aspen forests provide for brilliant colors in the fall.

**Manageability-**

- ♦ **Size:** Although small in size this area would be manageable because of its remoteness.
- ♦ **Boundaries:** This roadless area adjoins the Elkhorn roadless area (R21107) across the Stateline in Colorado. There is private land adjacent to the southwest boundary and a state section along the southeast boundary.

**Conclusions:** The high degree of solitude and naturalness, along with the high opportunity for primitive recreation, combine to make the area capable for wilderness. It will be further evaluated for availability and need.

**Availability**

**Recreation:** There are approximately three and a half miles of motorized trail within the area near the southern edge. Hunters, ATV users, hikers, horseback riders, campers, and other outdoor enthusiasts utilize the area. This motorized use would be displaced if the area were designated as wilderness.

**Wildlife species:** This roadless area is popular for its deer and elk hunting. There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting in this area. The area contains identified elk parturition areas, and is mapped as potential summer range for bighorn sheep by WGFD. The high percent of forested vegetation limits the quality of potential bighorn sheep habitat. Ewe/lamb escape habitat is marginal. Predation of young animals is one of threats to this bighorn sheep herd so escape habitat is important. Colorado River cutthroat trout is the only Regional Forester sensitive fish or wildlife species for which there are records contained in the WYNDD. Potential habitat exists for several other species that use subalpine-forested habitats.

**Water availability and use:** While most area streams provide perennial flow, some water developments above the area do divert flow for several months during snow melt. This water is sent across the Continental Divide to Hog Park Reservoir and the North Platte River Basin. Water rights may allow for additional water diversions in this area. Recreation, wildlife, some livestock watering, and replacement flow (for Cheyenne's municipal diversions downstream) uses currently provide for water benefits.

**Livestock operations:** This area lies within two allotments, Victoria and North Fork Sheep and Goat Allotments. They are managed under a once-over grazing system and are stocked from 7/1-9/15 (Victoria) and 7/1-8/30 (North Fork).

**Timber:** The steep, highly bisected terrain and dominance of aspen have discouraged past timber harvest and associated road construction in the area.

**Minerals:** The area has had placer mining along its southwest boundary, though little recent activity has occurred and no current plan of operations are in effect.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Cultural resources:** Due to the remoteness of the area and the lack of site-specific projects, there have been little cultural resource inventory surveys completed. There is potential for both prehistoric and historic cultural resources.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** The area is a part of general deer and elk license areas. The Solomon Creek area can be used by several big game outfitter guides, currently, there is one permitted outfitter who uses this area. FDR 809, 809.1B and 809.1C are part of the Cheyenne Board of Public Utilities FLPMA Easement for a transcontinental water diversion system. There are currently no plans to extend this water system into the Solomon Creek area. There is a U.S.G.S. stream gauge located within this area.

**Management considerations:** This area could be better managed as a roadless area or Wilderness if the boundaries on the northeast side (section 32, T13N, R85W) and southwest side (sections 1, 2, 11-13, T12N, R86W) are changed to eliminate the private land in holdings. In the vicinity of FDR 809 there are several utility/pipeline corridors that may encroach upon the northeast area.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? Currently, water is diverted over the Continental Divide into the North Platte River drainage as part of the Cheyenne Stage 2 project. This use must continue.
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No.
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential? No. There is little recent placer mining activity and no current operations in effect.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No.
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports? No timber harvest due to steep terrain and lack of demand for aspen. No minerals activity. There are motorized recreation opportunities and currently 3.5 miles of motorized trail.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? There are possible conflicts with permitted outfitters and guides. Two forest development roads are currently part of the Cheyenne Board of Public Utilities FLPMA Easement for the water diversion system. They are closed to public use.

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately .5 miles from the Huston Park Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the cover types represented in this roadless area.

Table C-38. Percent covertype in Solomon Creek Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres	Percent
Aspen	2,634	46
Douglas fir	18	-
Grassland	76	1
Lodgepole pine	1,260	22
Shrubs	55	1
Spruce fir	1,711	30

**Limited Representation Covertypes:**

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-39. Limited Representation Covertypes in Solomon Creek Roadless Area

Covertypes	Acres in Solomon Creek Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Douglas-fir	18	1
Lodgepole pine	1,260	1
Gambel oak	*55	<1
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	2,634	9
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	76	<1

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs met in this area.

**Environmental Consequences:**

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Solomon Creek roadless area.

Table C-40. Management area prescriptions by alternative for the Solomon Creek Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							5,726
3.4						1,979	30
3.5				5,754	5,756	3,777	
3.56	2,715	2,005	2,462				
5.13	90						
5.15		3,750	3,294	2			
5.4	2,951						



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

The following table summarizes the Solomon Creek roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-41. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Solomon Creek Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	3,041	3,750	3,294	2			
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.							5,726
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	2,715	2,005	2,462	5,754	5,756	5,756	30

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**R20608 Deep Creek  
6,411 Acres**

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**Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Jack Creek RARE II area 02091. The Deep Creek area is located in the North Savery Geographic Area on the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger

District in Carbon County. It is approximately 33 miles southeast of Saratoga (T 14N., R. 86 and 87W.). Access on the west is FDR 830 and south side of the area is FDR 874 and by various four-wheel-drive roads.

**Geography:** The area is situated on the western slope of the Continental Divide within the Sierra Madre Range. Landforms are classified as crystalline bedrock – low mountains, with mixed coniferous-aspen vegetation. Moderately dissected mountain slopes create substantial ridges, with frequent rock outcroppings. Rocky areas, meadows, sage, and brushy sites create Forest openings. Precipitation ranges from 32 inches at the lower elevations to 45 inches at the highest. Most comes as snow from October to April, but summer thunderstorms are common. The snow pack often lasts until mid-summer, and drifts can still be found in August some years.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 8,500 feet to 10,170 feet. No prominent peaks exist within the area. Ridges and drainages form moderately rugged terrain, with few flat areas. Cirques on the upper slopes testify to glacial influences. The area has a general southwest exposure, from the Continental Divide to the area's western boundary.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 11% Aspen, 3% grasslands, 50% Lodgepole pine, 2% non forested, 7% shrubs, 27% spruce-fir. Both District records and the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD) indicate the presence of one Forest Service sensitive plant species, the clustered lady's-slipper. Several populations are known to occur. The area has been reviewed in recent years as a potential Research Natural Area candidate.

**Soils:** Generally well-drained, moderately deep soils cover most of the area. Growing seasons are very short, with low soil temperatures and extended snow coverage.

**Current Uses of the Area:** This area was originally part of the Jack Creek RARE II study area. The construction of the Deep-Jack road (FDR 830) through the area in the 1980's separated the Strawberry portion from what is now the Deep Creek roadless area. FDR 830 pioneered major vehicular access into this previously remote country. It is well used by firewood cutters, hunters, other summer and fall recreationists, as well as for a variety of multiple uses. This roadless area is popular for it's deer and elk hunting during both archery and rifle seasons. There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting in this area. The area has been identified by WGFD as an elk parturition area. Even though the area contains potential habitat for a number of Forest Service sensitive wildlife species, the WYNDD contains records for only Colorado River cutthroat trout. They occur in the tributaries of Big Sandstone Creek including Deep Creek and Douglas Creek.

Table C-42. Management area acres for Alternative A, Deep Creek Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	773
4.31 Dispersed Recreation, Low use	494
5.13 Forest Products	3,265
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	1,879

**Appearance:** Moderately dissected mountain slopes create substantial ridges, with frequent rock outcroppings. Forest openings are created by rocky areas, meadows, sage, and brushy sites.

**Surroundings:** This roadless area is separated from the Strawberry Creek roadless area to the west by the Deep-Jack road (FDR 830). It is separated from the Singer Peak roadless area to the south by a four-wheel-drive road (FDR 874), which roughly follows Big Sandstone Creek.

**Key attractions:** There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting, backpacking and snowmobile touring. Remoteness and the rugged nature of the landscape can also be considered as key attractions.

## Capability

### Environment

**Opportunity for solitude:** The remote nature of the area, as well as the rugged landscape make the opportunity for solitude high, except possibly for hunting season when there would be a greater chance of meeting other people.

**Naturalness:** The remoteness and rugged nature of the landscape make the naturalness of the area fairly high. Most presence of man is in the form of old mining sites from around the turn of the century.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area, however there are opportunities for adventure, self-reliance and orienteering. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** Overall, there are moderate opportunities for primitive recreation. The ROS rating is Semi-primitive Motorized. Outdoor recreation opportunities include but are not limited to orienteering, hiking, skiing, snowmobiling, hunting, horse riding, camping, fishing, and photography.

### Special Features-

**Education:** There is little opportunity for educational programs due to the accessibility.

**Scenic Features:** This area borders the Continental Divide and has beautiful autumn colors.

**Manageability-**

- ♦ **Size:** Because of its small size, this roadless area would be moderately difficult to manage.
- ♦ **Boundaries:** The boundaries on the west and northwest would be hard to manage due to Forest Development Road 830. This road is a heavily used road for firewood gathering and hunting.

**Conclusions:** Although there may be some concerns over manageability, the high opportunity for solitude and naturalness make the area capable for wilderness. It will be further evaluated for availability and need.

**Availability**

**Recreation:** Snowmobile use may exist, but is minimal due to heavy timber and no groomed trails. This snowmobile use would be precluded if the area were designated wilderness. This area is used heavily during hunting season for hunting, camping, and some hiking. Limited fishing occurs.

**Wildlife species:** The area has been identified by WGFD as an elk parturition area. Even though the area contains potential habitat for a number of Forest Service sensitive wildlife species, the WYNDD contains records for only Colorado River cutthroat trout. They occur in the tributaries of Big Sandstone Creek including Deep Creek and Douglas Creek. There is no fish stocking on any of the streams within this roadless area.

**Water availability and use:** Area streams are fed from a high-elevation snowpack along the Continental Divide and many provide year-round flow. There are no water uses that would preclude wilderness designation, and designation would not cause any present uses to be lost. Current uses include habitat for native fishes and aquatic insects, and watering for wildlife and livestock. Area streams also fulfill aesthetic and spiritual purposes. Due to the location and terrain, future changes in use (such as cross-basin diversions) are unlikely.

**Livestock operations:** There are no structural improvements within this area which would conflict with Wilderness designation.

**Timber:** Steep terrain, riparian, poor access, aspen, and unmerchantable timber--especially at the higher elevations, has discouraged past timber harvest and associated road construction in most of area.

**Minerals:** Presently there are no proposed or active mineral operations in this roadless area. Though mineral operations have occurred in the past shown by the presence of patented lode claims northeast of Singer Peak and north and east of this roadless area. The southeast portion of this area is just northwest of the Ferris/Haggarty Mine that was the largest copper mine in the Grand Encampment Mining District.

**Cultural resources:** This area has had limited cultural resource survey work. Much of the area has not been surveyed or inventoried due to the remoteness of the area and lack of site-specific projects occurring in the area. There is potential for both prehistoric and historic cultural resources.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Authorized and potential land uses:** There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting in this area. At this time there are no existing or proposed non-recreation special uses in this area. There is potential for future special use proposals for access to private land.

**Management considerations:** This roadless area surrounds one private in-holding and is adjacent to numerous others. The size of this roadless area could be more than doubled and would be a better candidate for wilderness designation if FDR 874 were closed. This road is a rough two-track 4-wheel drive road, which accesses a parcel of private land. If this parcel were ever to be acquired by the Forest Service, road closure would be a viable option. The eastern portion of this area is a narrow neck of land just north of the Ferris/Haggarty Mine Claim block. This neck, located between private land, may be too narrow for manageable roadless characteristic.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No.
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential? Currently, there are no proposed or active mineral operations in the area.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No.
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports? Timber harvest unlikely due to steep terrain, riparian, poor access, aspen, and unmerchantable timber. No proposed or active mineral operations in the area. There are motorized recreation opportunities, including snowmobiling.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 4 miles from the Huston Park Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-43. Percent covertype in Deep Creek Roadless Area.

Covertype	Acres	Percent
Aspen	729	11
Grassland	207	3
Lodgepole pine	3,188	50
Non Forested	118	2

Covertypes	Acres	Percent
Shrubs	465	7
Spruce fir	1,701	27

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-44. Limited representation covertypes in Deep Creek Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres in Deep Creek Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Lodgepole pine	3,188	3
Gambel oak	*465	1
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	729	2
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	207	1

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** Almost entirely within the WYNDD Sandstone Creek site (B2), noted for genetically pure Colorado River Cutthroat Trout, tiger salamander, and three sensitive plants.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Deep Creek roadless area.

Table C-45. Management area prescriptions by alternative for the Deep Creek Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							1,606
1.33		44		1,580			
2.1				4,455			
2.2						4,455	4,804
3.31		886	1,498		4,536		
3.5				375		1,955	
3.56	773						
4.31	494						
5.13	3,265	3,932	3,022		347		
5.15		1,549	1,890		1,527		
5.4	1,879						

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

The following table summarizes the Deep Creek roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-46. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Deep Creek Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	5,144	5,480	4,913		1,874		
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.		930	1,498	1,580	4,536	4,455	6,411
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	1,266			4,831		1,955	

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**R20609 Bridger Peak**  
**6,694 Acres**

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**Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as Bridger Peak RARE II area 02088. The Bridger Peak area is located in the Battle Creek

Geographic Area on the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District in Carbon County. It is approximately 13 miles southeast of Encampment (T 14N., R. 85 and 86W.). Access on the east is FDR 412, on the northwest is FDR 862 and the south side of the area is Wyoming State Highway 70.

**Geography:** This area is situated on the western slope of the Continental Divide within the Sierra Madre Range. A two-track road that runs along the Divide from Battle Pass to Bridger Peak, and then on to the old Rudefeha Mine site forms the eastern boundary of the area. This landscape is considered as crystalline bedrock/high hills, with mainly coniferous vegetation. Rounded alpine or snow storage slope landforms exist at higher elevations along the divide. Large glacial cirques form a slightly “scalloped” open ridge, with mixed forest and alpine meadow vegetation. Wind-affected or “krummholtz” trees are common in this area, with twisted, lee-side branches and distorted shapes. Lower in elevation, groves of small aspen are interspersed with meadows, mixed conifer, and some riparian vegetation. Several historic burns are still prominent due to their conversion of forest to high-elevation meadow with remnant stumps and logs. Average annual precipitation ranges from 50 inches at the divide, to about 32 inches at the lower, western boundary. Most of this precipitation comes as snow between October and April, but summer thunderstorms are common. Snowfields and drifts remain until mid-summer most years.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 8,530 feet to 11,004 feet. Two prominent landmarks exist within the area, Bridger (11,004 feet) and Quartzite (9,863 feet) Peaks. Frequent rocky outcroppings and boulder or talus fields break up the moderate slopes from the Divide down to the area’s western boundary. Streams coming off the divide generally do not have prominent, downcut valleys until very low in the area, near Haggarty Creek. Channels are usually moderately steep and rocky, with cascades and waterfalls.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 8% Aspen, 21% grasslands, 22% Lodgepole pine, 5% non-forested, 1% shrubs, and 44% spruce-fir. District records and observations contained in the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD) confirm the presence of one Forest Service sensitive plant species, the clustered lady’s-slipper. There is every indication that a spruce beetle epidemic is beginning to take place in the Lost Creek/Upper Battle Creek vicinity along the southern edge of the roadless area. The acres of spruce-fir within the roadless area have a moderate to high risk of a potential beetle epidemic. Under a “worse case scenario” all Engelmann spruce greater than 5” in diameter within these stands could be killed during the possible beetle epidemic.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally well drained, with moderately deep or deep profiles. Low average soil temperatures and extended winters create short growing seasons, and frost-free periods are short.



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Current Uses of the Area:** There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting, scenic horse trips, backpacking, fishing and snowmobile touring. The WYNDD contains records for several Forest Service sensitive fish and wildlife species including Colorado River cutthroat trout, western boreal toad, and northern goshawk at lower elevations. The area has been mapped as potential summer range for bighorn sheep by WGFD.

The Silverstone Timber Sale (Timber Sale) occurred along the Battle Highway (Hwy. 70) corridor directly to the south of the area in the late 1980s and early 1990s. During October 1997 an unusual windstorm out of the east caused scattered windthrow primarily along the Battle Highway. Completed in 2000, the Lost Creek Salvage timber sale salvaged approximately one million board feet of timber along the Battle Highway directly south of the roadless area. Also salvaging blowdown in this area, a small house log sale (Haskins Creek) was completed in 2001. Spruce beetle trap lines have been monitored in this blowdown. There was a marked increase in beetles trapped this past summer compared to the previous year.

Table C-47. Management area acres in Alternative A, Bridger Peak Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.32 Backcountry Recreation Summer Nonmotorized with Winter Snowmobiling	5,351
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	523
4.22 Scenic Areas, Vistas, or Travel Corridors	456
4.31 Dispersed Recreation – Low Use	58
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	306

**Appearance:** The area offers some visual variety due to the contrast between the cliffy, rocky Quartzite Peak area, the open subalpine bowl on upper Lost Creek, and the forested slopes, interspersed with meadows in the Haskins Creek and Smith Creek watersheds.

**Surroundings:** The Bridger Peak roadless area is separated from the Singer Peak roadless area on the west by the road to the Ferris-Haggarty Mine (FDR 862). It is separated from the Mowry roadless area to the north by a four-wheel-drive road that follows the continental divide (FDR 412).

**Key attractions:** Located in the northeastern part of the area, Bridger Peak, at 11,004', is the highest point within the Sierra Madre Range. This same area contains the remains of the western portion of the tramway that once carried copper ore from the Rudefeha Mine to the smelter in Riverside. One of the tramway towers is still standing on the south side of Bridger Peak. Alpine and glacial landforms, along with extensive views from the upper elevations, provide memorable scenery.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** Moderate to low opportunity for solitude. Not many people hike within this area other than during hunting season, but traffic on WY 70 can be heard and/or seen from many locations within this unit. The roads that bound the unit on the west and northeast sides have quite a bit of summer traffic. FDR 412 accesses Bridger Peak, a scenic destination stop, and is also the Continental Divide National Scenic trail. FDR 862 accesses several private parcels with improvements. Summer use of this roadless area is likely to increase due to the construction of summer cabins on private parcels bordering it. After the mining boom in the early 1900's ended, people seldom visited this area during the winter months. The development of more powerful, and specialized snowmobiles in recent years has changed that. Snowmobiles now commonly utilize the area.

**Naturalness:** The naturalness of the area is low with manmade changes on the landscape, which occurred around the turn of the century during the mining boom detracting from the naturalness of the area today. The sight and sound of traffic from within the unit also influences the natural feel of the area.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** Overall, there are moderate opportunities for primitive recreation. Outdoor recreation opportunities include but are not limited to orienteering, hiking, skiing, snowmobiling, horse riding, hunting, camping, fishing, and photography.

### Special Features-

**Education:** The area's potential for education is mainly related to visible glacial influences.

**Scenic Features:** Quartzite Peak, scenic vista looking southward from the upper end of Lost Creek (the Lost Creek Bowl) is excellent.

### Manageability-

- ◆ **Size:** The area is relatively small, and manageability would be more difficult because of this.
- ◆ **Boundaries:** This area has considerable private land along its exterior boundary. The amount of private land bordering this area could result in future conflicts between private owners and National Forest users. There is also a private inholding of approximately 80 acres located within the center of this area.

**Conclusions:** This area lies on the low end of the range of capability. It has some issues that tend to make it less capable than other areas on the forest, however, it will still be considered capable for wilderness and will be further evaluated for availability and need.

## Availability:

**Recreation:** Outdoor recreation opportunities include but are not limited to orienteering, hiking, skiing, backpacking, snowmobiling, horse riding, hunting, camping, fishing, and photography.

**Wildlife:** The WYNDD contains records for several Forest Service sensitive fish and wildlife species including Colorado River cutthroat trout, western boreal toad, and northern goshawk at lower elevations. The area has been mapped as potential summer range for bighorn sheep by WGFD. Ewe/lamb escape habitat is marginal, and any animals that would potentially occur would be summer migrants coming from the Encampment River herd.

**Water availability and use:** Average annual precipitation ranges from 50 inches at the divide, to about 32 inches at the lower, western boundary. Most of this precipitation comes as snow between October and April, but summer thunderstorms are common. Snowfields and drifts remain until mid-summer most years.

**Livestock operations:** The roadless area encompasses the Blake sheep grazing allotment.

**Timber:** The Silverstone Timber Sale (T.S.) occurred along the Battle Highway (Hwy. 70) corridor directly to the south of the area in the late 1980's and early 1990's. During October 1997 an unusual windstorm out of the east caused scattered windthrow primarily along the Battle Highway. Completed in 2000, the Lost Creek Salvage T.S. salvaged approximately one million board feet of timber along the Battle Highway directly south of the roadless area. Also salvaging blowdown in this area, a small house log sale (Haskins Creek) was completed in 2001.

**Minerals:** This area has a High potential for locatable minerals. This area is due south of the RUDEFEHA or Ferris-Haggarty Mine, the largest historic mine in the Grand Encampment Mining District. The occurrence of Patented lode claims all along the border of this area would support the fact that there have been mineral investigations in the area in the past. The Forest Service Land Status Atlas includes several lode claims that were never patented within the area. One in particular is located just south of Bridger Peak. This area has no potential for leasable minerals.

**Cultural resources:** This same area contains the remains of the western portion of the tramway that once carried copper ore from the Rudefeha Mine to the smelter in Riverside. One of the tramway towers is still standing on the south side of Bridger Peak. This area has several cultural resource sites in the area.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting, scenic horse trips, backpacking, fishing and snowmobile touring. There is a high potential for that authorization to access a 120-acre in-holding in the middle of this area will occur. It does not currently not have roaded access.

**Management considerations:** There was a marked increase in beetles trapped this past summer compared to the previous year. This roadless area is within the Battle Townsite Analysis Area currently being looked at for possible hazardous fuels reduction projects.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
The area has high potential for locatable minerals.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
There have been timber sales and salvage sales near the area. The area has high potential for locatable minerals. The area supports winter motorized recreation opportunities.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation?  
There are possible conflicts with beetle management objectives and hazardous fuels reduction projects.

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately .5 miles from the Huston Park Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-48. Percent covertype in Bridger Peak Roadless Area.

Covertype	Acres	Percent
Aspen	544	8
Grassland	1,404	21
Lodgepole pine	1,449	22
Non Forested	337	5
Shrubs	46	1
Spruce fir	2,918	44

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-49. Limited representation covertypes in Bridger Peak Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres in Bridger Peak Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Lodgepole pine	1,449	1
Gambel oak	*46	<1
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	544	2
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	1,404	7

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs met in this area.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Bridger Peak roadless area.

Table C-50. Management area prescriptions by alternative for the Bridger Peak Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							6,694
1.33		1,885		6,694			
3.31		2,734	6,694		6,694		
3.32	5,351						
3.5						6,117	
3.56	523						
4.2		577				577	
4.22	456						
4.31	58						
5.13		297					
5.15		1,200					
5.4	306						

The following table summarizes the Bridger Peak roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-51. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Bridger Peak Roadless Area.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Alt A</b>	<b>Alt B</b>	<b>Alt C</b>	<b>Alt D DEIS</b>	<b>Alt D FEIS</b>	<b>Alt E</b>	<b>Alt F</b>
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	306	1,498					
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.		4,619	6,694	6,694	6,694		6,694
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	6,388	577				6,694	

## R20610 Mowry Peak 6,241 Acres

### Overview

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Mowry Peak RARE II area 02089.

The Mowry Peak area is located in the Northeast Sierra Madre Geographic Area on the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District in Carbon County. It is approximately 13 miles west of Encampment (T 14N., R. 85 and 86W.). Access on the east is by FDR 434, FDR 412 on the west, FDR 443 on the northeast side, and by various four-wheel-drive roads.

**Geography:** This area is situated on the eastern slope of the Sierra Madre Range. Land types include both coniferous forest-crystalline high hills, and quaternary-mantled low mountains with mixed forest. Mainly gentle mountain slopes, and rounded alpine, snow-storage slopes form the terrain, with some evident glacial influence near the Continental Divide on the west end of the area. Average annual precipitation ranges from 50 inches at the summit of Vulcan Mountain, to 37 inches at the lower elevations. Most of this falls as snow from October to April, but summer thundershowers are common.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 9,050 feet to 10,784 feet. Prominent features include Vulcan Mountain (10,784 feet), near the middle of the area, and the upper reaches of Cow Creek and South Spring Creek canyons. The headwater areas for these creeks contain glacial cirques and a scattering of small natural lakes. All aspects are represented, but the general slope of the area is to the northeast.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 4% grasslands, 6% Lodgepole pine, 1% non-forested, 3% shrubs, and 86% spruce-fir. The Wyoming Natural Diversity Database contains no records of Forest Service sensitive plant species for this area, however, there are records for the clustered lady's slipper to the east of it.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally well drained, and deep. Most are derived from glacial deposits, but higher on the divide they have developed in place from crystalline bedrock. Growing seasons are short due to low soil temperatures and extended winters.

**Current Uses of the Area:** There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting, scenic horse trips, backpacking and snowmobile tours. The WYNDD contains no records of Forest Service sensitive fish or wildlife species occurring within this roadless area, however, there are records for the western boreal toad and northern goshawk to the east. The larger expanses of high elevation spruce-fir forest contain potential denning habitat for Canada lynx.

Table C-52. Management area prescriptions for Alternative A, Mowry Peak Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	15
4.31 Dispersed Recreation – Low Use	4,773
5.13 Forest Products	1,346
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	106

**Appearance:** The appearance is of forested slopes incised by Cow Creek and South Spring Creek and with small open alpine areas on Vulcan Mountain and the north flank of Bridger Peak.

**Surroundings:** The Mowry Peak roadless area is separated from the Bridger Peak roadless area to the south by a four-wheel-drive road that follows the continental divide (FDR 412).

**Key attractions:** This roadless area contains Vulcan Mountain, a very visible high point along the Sierra Madre eastern front. Snow covered much of the year; the twin summits of Vulcan Mountain rise slightly above treeline and are surrounded by krummholz forest. A number of sizeable lakes and reservoirs including Silver, South Spring, and Cow Creek Reservoir are found within the area. The area also encompasses a number of small, glacial lakes along its southern and southwestern portions. The southern portion also contains the remains of a tramway which dates back to the turn-of-the-century copper mining days, including a power station (near Silver Lake) that once carried ore from the Rudefeha Mine sixteen miles to the smelter in Riverside. An interpretive trail that travels on or near the old aerial tramway route has been proposed for this area.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** The area's overall opportunity for solitude is low due to ATV use. This area once afforded excellent opportunities for solitude both winter and summer, however that has been changing over the last 10-15 years. Old roads through the area that fell into disuse when the mining boom of the early 1900's went bust have now become unauthorized ATV routes in the summer. ATV riders seeking new challenges have tended to extend trails from these old roads. Also, snowmobiles are now powerful and specialized enough to venture into this area. Much of this impact is focused in upper Cow Creek Canyon, which could now be said to offer low opportunities for solitude. Other portions of this unit still provide good opportunities for solitude during all but hunting season.

**Naturalness:** The naturalness of the area is low due to man-caused alterations to the area that were made during the early 1900's including turn of the century mining which detracts much from the naturalness of the landscape. The two track roads also detract from the naturalness of the landscape.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** Overall, there are moderate opportunities for primitive recreation. The ROS rating is Roaded Modified and Semi-primitive Motorized. Outdoor recreation opportunities include but are not limited to orienteering, hiking, skiing, snowmobiling, hunting, camping, horse riding, fishing, and photography.

### Special Features-

**Education:** The opportunity for educational programs in this area are good with information to be taught about mining in the early 1900's.

**Scenic Features:** Vulcan Mountain, small glacial lakes at the headwaters of South Spring Creek and Cow Creek.



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

### Manageability-

- ◆ **Size:** The relatively small size of the area makes manageability more difficult.
- ◆ **Boundaries:** Bridger Peak and Deep Creek Roadless areas lie adjacent to this area. Also, this area is bordered in two places by State of Wyoming School Trust lands, and by private land in other locations. This land is not part of the roadless area. Further there are several inholdings surrounded by this roadless area. At this time there is a low probability that the Forest Service will attempt to acquire this land to reduce conflicts between private landowners and forest users. Finally, there are several user created ATV/ORV trails that do not show on Forest Service maps, but which contribute to the motorized access to the area. One of these routes follows the access/maintenance road along the Historic Aerial Tramway from the Boston Wyoming Smelter in Riverside Wyoming to the Rudefeha Mine.

**Conclusion:** This area lies on the low end of the range of capability. It has some issues that tend to make it less capable than other areas on the forest, however, it will still be considered capable for wilderness and will be further evaluated for availability and need.

### Availability:

**Recreation:** Outdoor recreation opportunities include but are not limited to backpacking, orienteering, hiking, skiing, snowshoeing, hunting, camping, horse riding, fishing, and photography. An interpretive trail that travels on or near the old aerial tramway route has been proposed for this area.

**Wildlife:** The WYNDD contains no records of Forest Service sensitive fish or wildlife species occurring within this roadless area, however, there are records for the western boreal toad and northern goshawk to the east. The larger expanses of high elevation spruce-fir forest contain potential denning habitat for Canada lynx.

**Water availability and use:** Average annual precipitation ranges from 50 inches at the summit of Vulcan Mountain, to 37 inches at the lower elevations. Most of this falls as snow from October to April, but summer thundershowers are common. A number of sizeable lakes and reservoirs including Silver, South Spring, and Cow Creek Reservoir are found within the area. The area also encompasses a number of small, glacial lakes along its southern and southwestern portions.

**Livestock operations:** The Spring Creek, Calf Creek, and Cow Creek cattle grazing allotments are encompassed in the roadless area boundary.

**Timber:** No sales are currently planned. Treatments including a sale may be used to treat insect infestations if needed.

**Minerals:** This area has a High potential for locatable minerals. This area is due east of the Rudefeha or Ferris-Haggarty Mine, the largest historic mine in the Grand Encampment Mining District. The occurrence of Patented lode claims all along the western border and within the area support the fact that there has been mineral investigations in the area in the past. The central eastern portion of this roadless area has active unpatented mining claims with a request to sample these claims. This area has no potential for leasable minerals.

**Cultural resources:** The southern portion contains the remains of a tramway which dates back to the turn-of-the-century copper mining days, including a power station (near Silver

Lake) that once carried ore from the Rudefeha Mine sixteen miles to the smelter in Riverside. The Mowry Peak Roadless area is home several scattered cabins and exploration pits. In the saddle between the two peaks of Vulcan Mountain sits an old mining cabin and the remains of a mine. This cabin and mining equipment are estimated to date back to the early 1900's and the copper days.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** There are several permitted outfitters and guides who use the Brush Creek/Hayden District. This use is not concentrated in the Mowry Peak Roadless Area.

**Management considerations:** There are three small tracts of private land completely contained within the area's boundary. Only one tract has access via a four-wheel drive road.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential? The area has high potential for locatable minerals.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No.
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports? No planned timber sales. High potential for locatable minerals.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 2 miles from the Huston Park Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-53. Percent coertype in Mowry Peak Roadless Area.

Coertype	Acres	Percent
Aspen	15	-
Grassland	259	4
Lodgepole pine	365	6
Non Forested	72	1
Shrubs	182	3
Spruce fir	5,349	86

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-54. Limited representation covertypes in Mowry Peak Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres in Mowry Peak Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Lodgepole pine	365	<1
Gambel oak	*182	1
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	15	<1
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	259	1

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs met in this area.

### Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Mowry Peak roadless area.

Table C-55. Management area prescriptions by alternative for the Mowry Peak Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							6,241
2.1					314	314	
3.31		3,271			5,927		
3.5				6,241		5,799	
3.56	15						
4.3			3,357				
4.31	4,773						
5.13	1,346	2,970	2,712				
5.15			172			128	
5.4	106						

The following table summarizes the Mowry Peak roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

# ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-56. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Mowry Peak Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	1,453	2,970	2,884			128	
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.		3,271			5,927		6,241
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	4,788		3,357	6,241	314	6,112	

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## R20611 Huston Park Addition 8,401 Acres

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### Overview

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Huston Park RARE II area 02087. The Huston Park Addition area is located in the Encampment

River and Battle Creek Geographic Areas on the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District in Carbon County. It is approximately 7 miles southwest of Encampment (T 13 and 14N., R. 85 and 86W.). Access on the east side of the area is provided by Forest Development Road 550 (the Hog Park road), and on the north by Wyoming State Highway 70, and by several four-wheel-drive roads. Parcels are adjacent to the existing Huston Park Wilderness Area.

**Geography:** These parcels generally were formed from crystalline bedrock, developing into low, moderately dissected mountains. Mixed coniferous and coniferous-aspen forest cover dominates the vegetation community, with openings provided by some sage, brush, and meadows. Parcels are scattered around the Huston Park Wilderness, with varied aspects and elevations. Rock outcroppings are frequent, with some being quite large. Average annual precipitation is 35 inches, coming mainly as snow. Summer thunderstorms are common but add little to the precipitation totals.

**Topography:** Parcels average approximately 9,000 feet in elevation. Terrain ranges from fairly flat meadows and forest to moderately steep slopes and drainages.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 13% Aspen, 4% grasslands, 24% Lodgepole pine, 4% shrubs, and 55% spruce-fir. Observations contained in the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD) indicate the presence of one Forest Service sensitive plant species, the clustered lady's-slipper. There is every indication that a spruce beetle epidemic is beginning to take place in the Lost Creek/Upper Battle Creek vicinity adjacent to the northern most potential "additions". Mostly dominated by spruce-fir forests, these additions along with most of the other potential additions, as well as Huston Park Wilderness itself, have a moderate to high risk of a potential beetle epidemic. Under a "worse case scenario" all Engelmann spruce greater than 5" in diameter could be killed during the possible beetle epidemic.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally well drained, and moderately deep. Growing seasons are extremely short due to long winters and a persistent snowpack.

**Current Uses of the Area:** There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting, scenic horse trips, and backpacking trips within Huston Park Wilderness area that use portions of these areas. These roadless area additions, together with the main body of Huston Park Wilderness itself, have a variety of wildlife and wildlife habitat values. The area is mapped as potential summer range for bighorn sheep by WGFD. The high percent of forested vegetation and the limited amount of ewe/lamb escape habitat lower the value of this area as bighorn sheep summer range. The area has been examined by both WGFD and Forest service biologists in order to evaluate the feasibility of a variety of vegetation treatments to improve migration corridors and quality of summer range, both of which have been affected by plant successional processes over time. The animals that do use the area are seasonal migrants coming from the Encampment River herd. District records and observations contained in the WYNDD indicate the presence of several Forest Service

sensitive fish and wildlife species including Colorado River cutthroat trout, western boreal toad, and northern goshawk. The larger expanses of high elevation spruce-fir forest contain potential denning and foraging habitat for Canada lynx.

Table C-57. Management area acres for Alternative A, Huston Park Addition Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	1,195
4.22 Scenic Areas, Vistas, or Travel Corridors	2,240
5.13 Forest Products	1,619
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	3,346

**Appearance:** Forested slopes and ridges with scattered rock outcrops.

**Surroundings:** The Huston Park addition would expand the Huston Park Wilderness Area. The Little Snake roadless area, which was analyzed separately, occurs adjacent to the Existing Wilderness Area boundary. Other areas along the south side of Huston Park Wilderness that are part of the Huston Park Addition are separated from the Solomon Creek roadless area to the south by a four-wheel-drive road (FDR 809.1B).

**Key attractions:** One of the addition areas would include the National Forest portion of the Battle Lake shoreline. Several of the addition areas have Forest horse and foot trails that access the Huston Park Wilderness area, including the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. The addition area in the vicinity of the North Fork of the Encampment River would have all of the Green Mountain Falls included in a Roadless area. It is currently the edge of the existing wilderness area. This is a very popular early season hike to see the waterfall; the Green Mountain Falls trail does receive some mountain bike use between the trailhead and the footbridge across the North Fork. The Huston Park Addition is composed of seven areas ranging from very small to over 1500 acres. Several of these areas are quite picturesque or reach higher elevations that provide good views.

## Capability

### Environment-

Opportunity for solitude: Good opportunity for solitude in most of this area.

Naturalness: The area has a high degree of naturalness.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area, however there are opportunities for adventure, self-reliance and orienteering. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** There are many opportunities for primitive recreation. The ROS rating for this area is Semi-primitive Non-motorized. Users find opportunities for fishing, hiking, horse riding, camping, cross-country skiing, hunting, and photography. There are several guide and outfitter services that provide big game hunting, scenic horse trips, back packing, and fishing outings. Opportunities for access to the area diminish in the winter.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

### Special Features-

**Education:** There is some opportunity for educational programs in this area.

**Scenic Features:** The area has numerous scenic features including Baby Lake, the portion of the North Fork of the Encampment River, and various other streams.

### Manageability-

- ◆ **Size:** The size of the parcels vary from 21 to 3,183 acres. Several of the areas are several hundred to over a thousand acres.
- ◆ **Boundaries:** Most of these areas could be easily added to Huston Park especially the southern parts. The portion on the North Fork of the Encampment River and the area between The Baby Lake and Red Mountain trailheads are the exceptions. The North Fork area (1730 acres) has several private in-holdings with poor to no vehicular access that may create conflicts in the future. It is also very close to the proposed Green Mountain Ski Area. The area located between the Baby Lake and Red Mountain Trail Heads is bounded on the north by private land, possibly creating a boundary that is unmanageable, as the Forest Service does not have access across this land. This area is also a very popular high marking play area for snowmobiles.

**Conclusions:** The parcels are contiguous with the existing Huston Park Wilderness Area, present good opportunities for solitude and a high degree of naturalness, and therefore have been determined to be Capable and will be further evaluated for availability and need, particularly with some boundary line adjustments.

## Availability

**Recreation:** This area contains seven hiking trails including the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail receives heavy use during the summer and fall.

**Wildlife species:** There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting, scenic horse trips, and backpacking trips within Huston Park Wilderness area that use portions of these areas. These roadless area additions, together with the main body of Huston Park Wilderness itself, have a variety of wildlife and wildlife habitat values. The area is mapped as potential summer range for bighorn sheep by WGFD. The high percent of forested vegetation and the limited amount of ewe/lamb escape habitat lower the value of this area as bighorn sheep summer range. The area has been examined by both WGFD and Forest service biologists in order to evaluate the feasibility of a variety of vegetation treatments to improve migration corridors and quality of summer range, both of which have been affected by plant successional processes over time. The animals that do use the area are seasonal migrants coming from the Encampment River herd. District records and observations contained in the WYNDD indicate the presence of several Forest Service sensitive fish and wildlife species including Colorado River cutthroat trout, western boreal toad, and northern goshawk. WYNDD also contains records for one Forest Service sensitive plant species, the clustered lady's-slipper. The larger expanses of high elevation spruce-fir forest contain potential denning and foraging habitat for Canada lynx.

**Water availability and use:** Perennial stream flow is provided through a deep, consistent snowpack and deep soils. Water quality is very high. Recreation, wildlife, and livestock watering uses are currently fulfilled in the area.

**Livestock operations:** The addition includes several grazing allotments. North Fork Sheep and Goat Allotment is managed under an once-over grazing system and is stocked from 7/1-8/30 annually. Encampment Cattle and Horse Allotment is managed under a season-long grazing system and is stocked from 6/21-10/10 annually. Blake Sheep and Goat Allotment is managed under an once-over grazing system and is stocked from 7/1-9/10 annually.

**Timber:** Steep terrain and unmerchantable timber have discouraged past timber harvest and associated road construction in most of the possible additions. The high elevation of many of the possible additions makes them unsuitable for timber management.

**Minerals:** This area lies in the south portion of the Grand Encampment Mining District. This historical mining district reaches from the Colorado-Wyoming state-line to the northern part of the Hayden Ranger District. The Huston Park Additions are located predominantly on the north, east and south of the existing wilderness area. Private patented mining claims occur mainly on the north and south of the existing wilderness. There has been little exploration or assessment work completed in this area for many years. Just to the north of the addition areas near Battle Lake, several properties had extensive exploration assessment work completed in the late 1950's and early 1960's, little if any work since.

**Cultural resources:** Due to the remoteness of the area and lack of site-specific projects, there has been little resource inventory completed. There is potential for both prehistoric and historic cultural resources.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** Access to private in holdings could result in a conflict. The North Fork of the Encampment River portion of this area could be impacted by the Green Mountain Ski area development.

**Management considerations:** The North Fork Area (1730 acres in the northeast portion of this area) contains several private in holdings, which would complicate Wilderness management of this portion of the area. The remaining parcels are immediately adjacent to the existing Huston Park Wilderness area and much more easily managed as part of the Wilderness area.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures?  
No. However, WGFD and Forest service biologists have evaluated using a variety of vegetation treatments to improve migration corridors and the quality of bighorn sheep summer range in this area.
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
No—there has been little exploration or assessment work in this area for many years
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation?

One portion of this addition is located in the North Fork of the Encampment River drainage. The majority of nine private lode claims are located within this portion of the addition. These lode claims are found in six inholdings that do not have titled access. Several of them do not have any roaded access.



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

The Continental Divide National Scenic Trail is the boundary of one of that addition parcels. A portion of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail does traverse through an addition parcel located in the southeasterly part of Huston Park Wilderness area.

5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?

Timber harvest unlikely due to high elevation, steep terrains, and unmerchantable timber.

Little mineral potential.

6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies adjacent to the Huston Park Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-58. Percent covertype in Huston Park Addition Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres	Percent
Aspen	1,069	13
Grassland	309	4
Lodgepole pine	2,003	24
Non Forested	26	-
Shrubs	350	4
Spruce fir	4,642	55

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-59. Limited representation covertypes in Huston Park Addition Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres in Huston Park Addition Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Lodgepole pine	2,003	2
Gambel oak	*350	1
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	1,069	4
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	309	1

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** (those areas south of existing wilderness) Some overlap with WYNDD's Little Snake River sites (B3) noted for genetically pure populations of the Colorado River Cutthroat Trout. Aspen, wet meadows, and fellfields contain many uncommon plants.

#### **Augmenting the size of existing Wilderness:**

The four Wildernesses on the Medicine Bow are quite small compared to those found in other mountainous areas of the west (Platte River, 22,749 GIS acres; the Encampment River 10,400 GIS acres; Huston Park, 30,726 GIS acres; and Savage Run, 14,940. Extensive resource extraction before the establishment of Wilderness Areas limited the size of areas that met Wilderness criteria.

The small size of the existing areas constrains the Forest's ability to allow natural processes like fire to follow a natural course. In addition, the current size may be too small to support populations of wide-ranging species within the boundaries.

The benefits of recommending roadless areas that are adjacent to existing Wilderness as Proposed Wilderness are as follows: The Huston Park Additions would add 8400 acres to the existing 30,726 acre wilderness (a 27 % increase). Unlike the "additions" to the three other wildernesses, these areas would add downstream portions of drainages adjacent to the wilderness. The additions to the north and east are quite narrow.

## **Environmental Consequences:**

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Huston Park Addition roadless area.

Table C-60. Management area prescriptions by alternative for the Huston Park Addition Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2				3,108	4,127	498	8,383
1.31				1,304			
1.33			3,800	1,488	1,488	1,488	
3.31			1,654	1,654	1,730	1,654	
3.32			1,488				
3.4						316	17
3.5						3,079	
3.56	1,195	38		4			
4.2		2,561	76	76		76	
4.22	2,240						
5.13	1,619	2,363	1,372	757			
5.15		3,438	10	10	1,055	1,289	
5.4	3,346						

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

The following table summarizes the Huston Park Addition roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-61. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Huston Park Addition Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	4,965	5,802	1,382	767	1,055	1,289	
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.			5,454	7,554	7,345	3,640	8,383
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	3,435	2,599	1,564	80		3,472	17

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## **R20612 Encampment River Addition 4,983 Acres**

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### **Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Encampment River RARE II area 02086. The Encampment River Addition area is located in the Encampment

River Geographic Area on the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District in Carbon County. It is approximately 7 miles south of Encampment (T 13N., R. 83 and 84W.). Access on the west side of the area is provided by Forest Development Road 550 (the Hog Park Road), on the east by FDR 409, and by the Rim Road (FDR 496) on the south. The Addition consists of several parcels that are adjacent to the existing Encampment River Wilderness.

**Geography:** Landforms are generally classified as crystalline low mountain and crystalline canyon, with mixed coniferous-aspen forest. Forest openings are mainly caused by rocky terrain. Steep slopes increase in occurrence as the Encampment River Canyon is approached, with small cliffs and numerous rock outcroppings. Aspect on the parcels varies, with slopes generally inclined towards the Encampment River Canyon. Many streams have downcut into steep slopes, creating rugged, convoluted terrain. Average annual precipitation is estimated at 30 inches, with most falling as snow.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 8,530 feet to 9,200 feet. Topographic variation is associated with the ridges and canyons formed by area streams. Steep side slopes, rock outcroppings, and small cliffs are found in the lower elevations, with more “benched”, flatter terrain away from the Encampment River Canyon.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 6% Aspen, 3% grasslands, 71% Lodgepole pine, 12% shrubs, and 8% spruce-fir. Observations contained in the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD) indicate the presence of one Forest Service sensitive plant species, the clustered lady’s-slipper.

**Soils:** Soils in the area range from shallow to moderately deep, and are usually on steep slopes and therefore well drained. Growing seasons are short, with low soil temperatures and extended winters.

**Current Uses of the Area:** The Encampment River area is a very popular big game hunting area. There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting and scenic horse pack trips in these areas. These roadless area additions, together with the main body of the Encampment River Wilderness Area (ERWA), have a variety of wildlife and wildlife habitat values. The area is mapped as winter/yearlong bighorn sheep range. There are two known lambing grounds in the Encampment River canyon. One is on NFS lands in the ERWA, the other is just off the Forest on BLM lands. WGFD and Forest Service biologists have examined the area in order to evaluate the feasibility of vegetation treatments designed to improve this yearlong bighorn sheep range. The small parcels that are part of the Encampment River Addition on the north side of the ERWA are crucial elk winter range. District records and observations contained in the WYNDD indicate the presence of several Forest Service sensitive wildlife species including the tiger salamander, western boreal toad, and northern goshawk. The Box Canyon and Dudley Creek additions along the eastern boundary of the wilderness area contain proposed harvest units under the Tie Camp Analysis. North Soldier Creek has a head gate and ditch in SW1/4 Section 10, T13N, R84W, 6<sup>th</sup> P.M.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-62. Management area acres for Alternative A, Encampment River Addition Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	281
4.22 Scenic Areas, Vistas, or Travel Corridors	669
5.13 Forest Products	3,774
5.21 Water Yield	4
5.41 Deer and Elk Winter Range	252

**Appearance:** This area contains steep slopes near the Encampment River Canyon and many steep, rugged smaller canyons. Small cliffs and rock outcroppings abound. Mixed conifer and aspen forests dominate the vegetation.

**Surroundings:** The parcel (2083) of the Encampment River Addition located on the west side of the ERWA between North and South Soldier Creeks would be separated from the Huston Park Wilderness Area by a narrow corridor along the Hog Park Road (FDR 550). The addition of two parcels on the east side, one in the vicinity of Box Canyon (1056) and the other in the vicinity of Dudley Creek (357), would result in the ERWA being separated from the East Fork of the Encampment River roadless area to the east by a narrow corridor along the Rim Road (FDR 496). The Dudley Creek state section lies in the middle of this area. The state has had timber sales on this state section in the past.

**Key attractions:** Steep canyons, include Box Canyon, rocky cliffs, and views of the Encampment River Canyon are some of the key attractions.

## Capability

### Environment

Opportunity for solitude: Opportunities for solitude are high except during hunting season.

Naturalness: The area has a high degree of naturalness.

**Challenge -** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities -** There are many opportunities for primitive recreation. The ROS rating for this area is Semi-primitive Non-motorized. Users find opportunities for fishing, hiking, boating (kayaking), horse packing, camping, cross-country skiing/snowshoeing, hunting, and photography in the area.

### Special Features

Education: There are no outstanding educational opportunities associated with the new parcels.

Scenic Features: There are no unique scenic features associated with the new parcels.

### Manageability

- ♦ **Size:** The parcels range in size from 10 to 2,083 acres.
- ♦ **Boundaries:** Most of the areas could be easily added to the Encampment River Wilderness area.

**Conclusions:** The parcels are contiguous with the existing Encampment River Wilderness Area, present good opportunities for solitude and a high degree of naturalness, and therefore have been determined to be Capable and will be further evaluated for availability and need.

### Availability

**Recreation:** This area includes an eleven-mile long hiking trail that follows the Encampment River. There are two access trails to the Wilderness and the Encampment River Trail in the area. There are several guide and outfitter services that provide big game hunting, scenic horse trips, back packing, and fishing outings.

**Wildlife species:** The Encampment River area is a very popular big game hunting area. There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting trips in these areas. These roadless area additions, together with the main body of the Encampment River Wilderness Area (ERWA), have a variety of wildlife and wildlife habitat values. The area is mapped as winter/yearlong bighorn sheep range. There are two known lambing grounds in the Encampment River canyon. One is on NFS lands in the ERWA, the other is just off the Forest on BLM lands. WGFD and Forest Service biologists have examined the area in order to evaluate the feasibility of vegetation treatments designed to improve this yearlong bighorn sheep range. The small parcels that are part of the Encampment River Addition on the north side of the ERWA are crucial elk winter range. District records and observations contained in the WYNDD indicate the presence of several Forest Service sensitive wildlife species including the tiger salamander, western boreal toad, and northern goshawk. WYNDD also contains records for one Forest Service sensitive plant species, the clustered lady's-slipper.

**Water availability and use:** Perennial stream flow is provided in most channels by the consistent snowpack. Water quality is very good. Recreation, wildlife, and some stock watering beneficial uses are currently being fulfilled.

**Livestock operations:** This area lies within two grazing allotments. The Encampment Cattle and Horse Allotment lies to the west; the Wood Mountain Cattle and Horse Allotment lie to the east. Both are managed under a season-long grazing strategy. Encampment is stocked from 6/21-10/10 annually; Wood Mountain is stocked from 7/15-9/30 annually.

**Timber:** Steep terrain and unmerchantable timber has discouraged past timber harvest and associated road construction in most of the additions.

**Minerals:** The north portions of these areas have received some interest in the last 10 years investigating the occurrence of very pure quartz crystals. Also just to the north of this area outside the National Forest Boundary there has been some hard rock gold exploration. The rest of the areas have low potential for hard rock mineral development.

**Cultural resources:** Due to the remoteness of the area and lack of site-specific projects, there have been little cultural resource inventory surveys completed. There is potential for both prehistoric and historic cultural resources.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Authorized and potential land uses:** There are several water diversions from Soldier Creek and the main fork of the Encampment River in this area.

**Management considerations:** Designation of northwestern (Soldier Creek) most addition would prevent use of mechanical treatments to reestablish non-forested bighorn sheep migration corridor from Encampment River Wilderness to Huston Park Wilderness.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
No—the area has low potential for hard rock mining. However, there is potential for some hard rock mining (quartz) in the north part of the area.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
Timber harvest unlikely due to steep terrain and unmerchantable timber.  
Low hard rock mining potential.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies adjacent to the Encampment River Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-63. Percent cotype in Encampment River Addition Roadless Area.

Covtype	Acres	Percent
Aspen	285	6
Grassland	169	3
Lodgepole pine	3,544	71
Shrubs	576	12
Spruce fir	407	8

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-64. Limited representation covertypes in Encampment River Addition Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres in Encampment River Addition Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Lodgepole pine	3,544	3
Gambel oak	*576	2
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	285	1
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	169	1

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

#### Wildlife Needs and Augmenting the size of existing Wilderness:

The four Wildernesses on the Medicine Bow are quite small compared to those found in other mountainous areas of the west (Platte River, 22,749 GIS acres; the Encampment River 10,400 GIS acres; Huston Park, 30,726 GIS acres; and Savage Run, 14,940 acres).

Extensive resource extraction before the establishment of adjacent Wilderness Areas limited the size of areas that met Wilderness criteria.

The small size of the existing areas constrains the Forest's ability to allow natural processes like fire to follow a natural course. In addition, the current size may be too small to support populations of wide-ranging species within the boundaries.

The benefits of recommending roadless areas that are adjacent to existing Wilderness as Proposed Wilderness are as follows: The Encampment River Additions would add 4,980 acres to the Medicine Bow's smallest existing Wilderness, now composed of 10,400 acre (a 47% increase). As in the additions being considered for the Platte River and Savage Run, these additions would add the headwaters of creeks that are now outside a protected area. Currently, activities in the headwaters could compromise the water quality of downstream stretches. Inclusion of these headwaters would create a more logical ecological unit for both aquatic and terrestrial species

### Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Encampment River Addition roadless area.

Table C-65. Management area prescriptions by alternative for the Encampment River Addition Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2				3,698	2,349	4,055	4,623
1.31				357			
3.4		357		359	359	359	359
3.56	282						
3.58		205	291	16	16	16	
4.22	667						
5.13	3,772	4,336	2,539	455			



# ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
5.15			2,152	97	2,258	552	
5.21	4						
5.41	252	84					

The following table summarizes the Encampment River Addition roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-66. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Encampment River Addition Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	3,777	4,336	4,691	552	2,258	552	
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	4			4,055	2,349	4,055	4,623
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	1,201	646	291	375	375	375	359

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**R20613 East Fork Encampment  
7,429 Acres**

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**Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed, as the Coon Creek RARE II area 02085. The East Fork Encampment area is located in the

Encampment River Geographic Area on the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District in Carbon County. It is 12 miles southeast of Encampment (T 13N., R. 83 and 84W.). Access on the west side of the area is provided by Forest Development Road 496 and on the east by 416, 421 and four-wheel-drive roads.

**Geography:** This Roadless Area is considered mixed forest, crystalline low mountains, with moderately dissected mountain slopes. Gently sloping and rounded terrain, with few steep areas and consistent forest cover typifies the East Fork. Rock outcroppings are common but generally small in size. A general southern exposure exists, with undulating ridges created by side drainages to the East Fork Encampment River adding variety. Precipitation ranges from 45 inches at upper elevations to 32 inches at lower elevations. Openings are mainly associated with riparian or wet meadows along the stream channels, but some, such as East Fork Meadows, are fairly large.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 8,530 feet to 9,944 feet. Gently rolling terrain is typical, with no prominent peaks within the area. The East Fork Encampment River is the largest stream in the area, with a rounded canyon and moderate gradient.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 69% Lodgepole pine, 2% shrubs, and 29% spruce-fir. Observations contained in the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD) indicate the presence of one Forest Service sensitive plant species, the clustered lady's-slipper. Old stumps and overgrown logging roads in most of the area are evidence of turn-of-the-century tie hack logging. The selective logging of this time changed what were predominantly even-aged lodgepole pine stands to the current multistoried mixed conifer stands.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally well drained, and moderately deep. A short growing season has been created by the low soil temperatures and extended winters.

**Current Uses of the Area:** There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting, backpacking and fishing trips. The WYNDD contains records for several Forest Service sensitive wildlife species including the western boreal toad, boreal owl, golden-crowned kinglet, three-toed woodpecker, and pine marten. The East Fork of the Encampment River served as the control watershed in a variety of timber harvest, water yield, and wildlife research studies associated with the Coon Creek Pilot Project and conducted by scientists from Forest Service Research. Wildlife research associated with the Coon Creek Pilot Project includes studies of breeding birds and their habitat, small mammals and their habitat, cavity nesting birds, and pine marten and their habitat. Other studies conducted in this area by scientists and graduate students from the University of Wyoming include a boreal owl study, a fire history study, and a study of the effects of recent timber harvest and road construction on historic vegetation patterns. The East Fork of the Encampment Trail (#472) has ATV use occurring from the East Fork Meadows to the upper trailhead. There is also ATV use from the Rim Road to the East Fork trail on the Wish Bone Park Trail. Timber harvest and associated new road construction are proposed along the eastern boundary of this roadless area under the Tie Camp Timber Sale analysis.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-67. Management area acres for Alternative A, East Fork Encampment Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
4.22 Scenic Areas, Vistas, and Travel Corridors	7
5.13 Forest Products	2,476
5.21 Water Yield	3,651
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	1,294

**Appearance:** Old stumps and overgrown logging roads in most of the area are evidence of turn-of-the-century tie hack logging. The selective logging of this time changed what were predominantly even-aged lodgepole pine stands to the current multistoried mixed conifer stands.

**Surroundings:** This roadless area is situated between the Encampment River Wilderness Area (ERWA) and the Coon Creek experimental watershed. If two parcels on the east side of the ERWA, which are part of the Encampment River Addition, are added to the ERWA, the ERWA would be separated from this roadless area by a narrow corridor along the Rim Road (FDR 496).

**Key attractions:** Key attractions include the historic Tie Hack Trail along the East Fork Encampment River, along with the ancient log cabins that housed the Tie Hacks. East Fork Meadow is a relatively large, scenic meadow that is a destination for many fisherman and hikers on the East Fork Trail.

## Capability:

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** Opportunity for solitude is high, but is decreasing with the increased use of ATV's in the area and the pioneering of new unauthorized ATV trails by users.

**Naturalness:** Overall naturalness of the area is moderate. A stream gage and weir pond structure has been maintained in the upper East Fork drainage as part of the Coon Creek Pilot Project. Also, a stream bank stabilization project in East Fork Meadows utilized heavy rock for riprap, creating an un-natural appearance.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** This area has high opportunities for primitive recreation in the form of hiking, horseback riding, backpacking. If motorized use of the East Fork Trail and feeder trails (Wishbone Park Trail, Coon Creek Trail, Montie's Draw Trail) were to be discontinued, the opportunities would be excellent. The ROS rating for this area is Semi-primitive Motorized with small sections labeled Roaded Modified and Roaded Natural.

### Special Features-

**Education:** The main opportunity for education relates to the historic tie hack activities throughout the area.

**Scenic Features:** There is unbroken forest with riparian areas. There are also several scattered logging camps.

**Manageability-**

- ♦ Size: This area is moderate in size.
- ♦ Boundaries: The south boundary of this area is the state line and the east boundary is Forest Development road 496.

**Conclusions:** The area has a high degree of solitude and a moderate degree of naturalness and will therefore be further evaluated for availability and need.

## Availability

**Recreation:** This area includes an eleven-mile long hiking trail that follows the Encampment River. There are two access trails to the Wilderness and the Encampment River Trail in the area. There are several guide and outfitter services that provide big game hunting, scenic horse trips, back packing, and fishing outings.

**Wildlife species:** The Encampment River area is a very popular big game hunting area. There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting trips in these areas. These roadless area additions, together with the main body of the Encampment River Wilderness Area (ERWA), have a variety of wildlife and wildlife habitat values. The area is mapped as winter/yearlong bighorn sheep range. There are two known lambing grounds in the Encampment River canyon. One is on NFS lands in the ERWA, the other is just off the Forest on BLM lands. WGFD and Forest Service biologists have examined the area in order to evaluate the feasibility of vegetation treatments designed to improve this yearlong bighorn sheep range. The small parcels that are part of the Encampment River Addition on the north side of the ERWA are crucial elk winter range. District records and observations contained in the WYNDD indicate the presence of several Forest Service sensitive wildlife species including the tiger salamander, western boreal toad, and northern goshawk. WYNDD also contains records for one Forest Service sensitive plant species, the clustered lady's-slipper.

**Water availability and use:** Perennial stream flow is provided in most channels by the consistent snowpack. Water quality is very good. Recreation, wildlife, and some stock watering beneficial uses are currently being fulfilled.

**Livestock operations:** This area lies within two grazing allotments. The Encampment Cattle and Horse Allotment lies to the west; the Wood Mountain Cattle and Horse Allotment lie to the east. Both are managed under a season-long grazing strategy. Encampment is stocked from 6/21-10/10 annually; Wood Mountain is stocked from 7/15-9/30 annually.

**Timber:** Steep terrain and unmerchantable timber has discouraged past timber harvest and associated road construction in most of the additions.

**Minerals:** The north portions of these areas have received some interest in the last 10 years investigating the occurrence of very pure quartz crystals. Also just to the north of this area outside the National Forest Boundary there has been some hard rock gold exploration. The rest of the areas have low potential for hard rock mineral development.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Cultural resources:** Due to the remoteness of the area and lack of site-specific projects, there have been little cultural resource inventory surveys completed. There is potential for both prehistoric and historic cultural resources.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** There are several water diversions from Soldier Creek and the main fork of the Encampment River in this area.

**Management considerations:** Designation of the northwestern (Soldier Creek) most addition would prevent use of mechanical treatments to reestablish non-forested bighorn sheep migration corridor from Encampment River Wilderness to Huston Park Wilderness.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
No—the area has low potential for hard rock mining. However, there is potential for some hard rock mining (quartz) in the north part of the area.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
Timber harvest unlikely due to steep terrain and unmerchantable timber.  
Low hard rock mining potential.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation?  
Possible conflict with ATV use on the East Fork Trail

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately less than 1 mile from the Encampment River Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-68. Percent covertime in East Fork Encampment Roadless Area.

Covertime	Acres	Percent
Grassland	1	-
Lodgepole pine	5,110	69
Non Forested	28	-
Shrubs	157	2
Spruce fir	2,133	29

**Limited Representation Covertypes:**

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-69. Limited representation covertypes in East Fork Encampment Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acreage in East Fork Encampment Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Lodgepole pine	5,110	4
Gambel oak	*157	<1
Big sagebrush		
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	1	<1

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** Considerable overlap with the WYNDD Coon Creek site (B3), noted for presence of the Boreal Toad (a candidate for federal listing). Forested areas contain Boreal Owls, clustered ladyslippers, and other sensitive plants and animals. There are seeps and wet meadows. Some of the WYNDD site was logged in the early 1900's.

**Augmenting the size of existing Wilderness:**

The four Wildernesses on the Medicine Bow are quite small compared to those found in other mountainous areas of the west (Platte River, 22,749 GIS acres; the Encampment River 10,400 GIS acres; Huston Park, 30,726 GIS acres; and Savage Run, 14,940 acres). The natural fragmentation of the terrain here and associated federal ownership pattern combined with extensive resource extraction before the establishment of Wildernesses limited the size of areas that met Wilderness criteria.

The small size of the existing areas constrains the Forest's ability to allow natural processes like fire to follow a natural course. In addition, the current size may be too small to support populations of wide-ranging species within the boundaries.

The benefits of recommending roadless areas that are adjacent to existing Wilderness as Proposed Wilderness are as follows: The East Fork Encampment would be connected to the Encampment River Wilderness only if the Encampment Additions are proposed as wilderness. There would be gaps between the areas, but some areas would be separated only by a road. The 7,429 acres would increase the size of the combined existing Wilderness and addition (combined 15,531 acres) by 7,429 acres by 47.8%.

**Environmental Consequences:**

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the East Fork Encampment roadless area.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-70. Management area prescriptions by alternative for the East Fork Encampment Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							4,100
1.31				7,403	7,403	7,403	
2.2							2,291
3.24							1,012
3.31			1,296				
3.4		8		26	26	26	26
4.22	7						
5.13	2,476	7,421					
5.15			6,132				
5.21	3,651						
5.4	1,294						

The following table summarizes the East Fork Encampment roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-71. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in East Fork Encampment River Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	7,422	7,421	6,132				
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.			1,296	7,403	7,403	7,403	7,403
Category 3 - Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	7	8		26	26	26	26

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## R20614 Bear Mountain 9,426 Acres

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### Overview

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Bear Mountain RARE II area 02084. The Bear Mountain area is located in the Beaver Creek Geographic Area on the Brush Creek/Hayden

Ranger District in Carbon County. It is approximately 12 miles southeast of Encampment (T12 and 13N., R. 82W.). Access on the west side of the area is provided by Forest Development Road 415, the Jerry Park Road (FDR 407), and on the east by four-wheel-drive roads.

**Geography:** The Bear Mountain landscape has been described as mainly crystalline geology/low mountains with mixed coniferous-aspen forest vegetation. Near the Forest boundary on the northeast edge of the area, geology changes to sedimentary parent material, with vegetation switching to mainly deciduous species and sagebrush at lower elevations. Moderate dissection and shallow incision of mountain slopes in this area create gently rolling terrain with some steeper slopes and rock outcroppings. Cunningham Park and the sagebrush/aspen slopes on the northeast side of the area provide large openings and spatial variety to the mostly forested slopes of Bear Mountain. Average annual precipitation in the area ranges from 40 inches at the summit of Bear Mountain, to 17 inches on the lower sagebrush slopes near the northeast boundary. About 75% of this precipitation comes as snow between October and April, with the remainder as either late spring snowstorms or summer thunderstorms. The snowpack tends to melt out early on the northeast side of the area, and is utilized as winter range by wildlife.

**Topography:** This roadless area is on the southeast corner of the Sierra Madre Range. Elevations range from 7,900 feet to 9,990 feet at the summit of Bear Mountain. Bear Mountain and the valleys and, in some instances small canyons, through which flow the forks of Big Creek, are the principal topographic features. Terrain varies from the flat valley bottom that is Cunningham Park to steep side slopes rising above the larger creeks. The North Fork of Big Creek drains the western slopes of Bear Mountain, while Little Beaver, North Bear, Little Bear, and Trent Creeks provide the main drainage routes on the north and northeast sides of the area. Incision of these stream channels creates varied aspects and therefore, plant communities.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 16% Aspen, 1% Douglas fir, 59% Lodgepole pine, 1% non-forested, and 23% shrubs. The Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD) contains no records of Forest Service sensitive plant species for this area. Due to the range in elevation, the roadless area is unique among others delineated on the Sierra Madre in that it contains plant communities that range from non-forested sagebrush, to montane forest, to subalpine forest. The eastern-most portion contains unique, relic stands of Ponderosa pine.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally well drained, and deep. Growing seasons are relatively short due to low soil temperatures and extended winters.

**Current Uses of the Area:** This roadless area is popular for big game hunting during both the archery and rifle seasons. There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting and scenic horseback riding trips. A large part of the area is elk winter range, it contains some crucial elk winter range, and is adjacent to a larger elk crucial winter range area. It has been identified as an elk parturition area by WGFD. The WYNDD contains



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records for only one Forest Service sensitive wildlife species, the northern goshawk. The McNulty and Blackhall timber sale analyses have a number of proposed harvest units along the northern, western, and northwestern boundary of this roadless area.

Table C-72. Management area acres for Alternative A, Bear Mountain Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	1,469
5.13 Forest Products	740
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	5,899
5.41 Deer and Elk Winter Range	1,318

**Appearance:** The area is largely forested at higher elevations, and lower elevations have expanses of sagebrush interspersed with forested areas. The rolling ridges and drainages, along with varied plant communities, provide scenic variety. Aspen and other deciduous species are common in the riparian areas, and provide vivid coloration in the fall.

**Surroundings:** The area is surrounded on the north, east and south largely by sagebrush covered, relatively flat, land. The land to the west is more forested and similar in topography to the area itself. This roadless area is surrounded by other NFS lands except on the northeast side where it is bordered by mostly private lands, with some small parcels of state and BLM lands. It is not located near any other roadless areas.

**Key attractions:** Cunningham Park and the narrow canyons of the Middle Fork of Big Creek and the North Fork of Big Creek provide quality fishing opportunities.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** The moderate size of the area, little topographic screening, moderate vegetative screening and distance from perimeter to core and some permanent off-site intrusions combine to give the area a moderate rating for opportunities for solitude.

**Naturalness:** This area has an overall moderate degree of naturalness. There is a high degree of naturalness in the narrow canyons of the Middle Fork and the North Fork of Big Creek. Other areas have a somewhat less natural appearance. Cunningham Park was once a homesteader's hay meadow and still has an operating irrigation system in place. On Trent Creek, near the Forest Boundary there is an irrigation diversion structure and ditch, and a small area that was once an irrigated hay meadow. Several pasture division fences as well as a few drift fences and travel management fences are contained within the area. Musk thistle and Canada thistle, non-native invasive weed species are present, but do not cover extensive areas. Non-native trout have been introduced to provide improved fishing opportunities. Other evidence of human presence or activity includes grazing livestock and their impacts, stock ponds, and signs of dispersed recreation use.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area, however there are opportunities for adventure, self-reliance and orienteering. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities**—Overall, there are moderate opportunities for primitive recreation. The ROS for the area is Semi-primitive motorized with small portions of Roaded Modified, Roaded Natural, and Semi-primitive Motorized. Recreation opportunities include hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, horse riding, mountain biking, and a small amount of ATV use near the western perimeter. Motorized access to the Forest Boundary on Trent Creek, Bear Creek, Little Bear Creek and Deer Creek is limited due to steepness and forest cover on the National Forest side and locked gates on private land outside the Forest boundary.

### **Special Features—**

**Education:** This area has little or no unique opportunity for education programs.

**Scenic Features:** There are no unique or special visual features in the area.

### **Manageability—**

- ♦ **Size:** The area is moderate in size.
- ♦ **Boundaries:** The area boundary follows the Forest boundary on the north and east where there is no public access, and well-developed roads identify the southern and western boundaries. A portion of the north boundary is three sides of a State of Wyoming School Trust Section that has had extensive timber harvest.

**Conclusions:** This is an excellent example of a low elevation roadless area and should be further evaluated for availability and need.

## **Availability:**

**Recreation:** About 2.0 miles of the 5.1-mile Big Creek Trail is located within the area. This trail is used primarily for hiking and horseback riding.

**Wildlife species:** This roadless area is popular for big game hunting during both the archery and rifle seasons. There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting and scenic horse back trips. A large part of the area is elk winter range, it contains some crucial elk winter range, and is adjacent to a larger elk crucial winter range area. It has been identified as an elk parturition area by WGFD. The WYNDD contains records for only one Forest Service sensitive wildlife species, the northern goshawk. Deer, elk and black bear inhabit the area, and there are brook trout and brown trout in the larger streams. An unusual low elevation population of pikas is found in the canyon of the Main Fork of Big Creek (outside the roadless area) and may also extend into the Middle Fork of Big Creek canyon within the roadless area.

**Water availability and use:** The consistent snowpack provides for perennial flow in most area streams, although the streams draining the northeastern slopes produce little flow in summer months. Aesthetic, spiritual, recreation, wildlife, and stock watering uses are considered beneficial uses of area water.

**Livestock operations:** The eastern portion of this area lies in Big Creek Cattle and Horse Allotment. It is managed under a deferred rotation grazing system and is stocked from 6/16-9/15 annually. The western portion lies in Beaver Creek Cattle and Horse Allotment. It is managed under a season-long grazing system and is stocked from 7/1-10/10 annually.

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**Timber:** Steep terrain, unmerchantable timber, and poor access across private land from the east has discouraged past timber harvest and associated road construction in most of the area.

**Minerals:** Historically, there has been mineral exploration of this area. More recently there has been mineral exploration and drilling activity in the vicinity of FDR 498.1B and 1C. This area is just south of this roadless area. This area had patented mining claims within its boundary but has been acquired by exchange.

**Cultural resources:** Due to the remoteness of the area and lack of site-specific projects, there has been little cultural resource inventory completed. Presently, there are known prehistoric sites, homestead cabins, historic sawmill sites, and old mining cabins and developments. The potential is medium to high for prehistoric and historic cultural resources.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** Currently, there are several permitted water diversions along the east boundary of this area.

**Management considerations:** Part of this area is within a special closure area that forbids use of motorized vehicles except for snowmobiles operating on snow.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
No.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
Timber harvest unlikely due to steep terrain and unmerchantable timber.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 4 miles from the Encampment River Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the cover types represented in this roadless area.

Table C-73. Percent covertype in Bear Mountain Roadless Area.

Covertype	Acres	Percent
Aspen	1,471	16
Douglas Fir	130	1
Grassland	6	-
Limber Pine	18	-
Lodgepole pine	5,535	59
Non Forested	81	1
Shrubs	2,170	23
Spruce fir	15	-

**Limited Representation Cotypes:**

Certain cotypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-74. Limited representation cotypes in Bear Mountain Roadless Area.

Covertype	Acres in Bear Mountain Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Douglas-fir	130	5
Lodgepole pine	5,535	5
Gambel oak	*2,170	6
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	1,471	5
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	6	<1
Limber pine	18	<1

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** Slight overlap at the SW edge of the roadless area with Big Creek Park (B2), noted for the presence of eight sensitive plants including the very rare Colorado tansy-aster.

**Environmental Consequences:**

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Bear Mountain roadless area.

Table C-75. Management prescriptions by alternative in the Bear Mountain Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							9,426
1.31				9,426	9,426		
3.31			9,426				
3.5						9,426	
3.56	1,469						

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Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
5.13	740	6,517					
5.15		2,398					
5.4	5,899						
5.41	1,318	510					

The following table summarizes the Bear Mountain roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-76. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Bear Mountain Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	6,639	8,916					
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.			9,426	9,426	9,426		9,426
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	2,787	510				9,426	

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**R20615 Pennock Mountain**  
**9,592 Acres**

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**Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Pennock Mountain RARE II area 02073. The Pennock Mountain

area is located in the Pennock Mountain Cedar Creek Geographic Area on the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District in Carbon County. It is approximately 12 miles northeast of Saratoga (T.17 and 18N., R.82W.). Primary access to the area is provided by a four-wheel-drive road (Forest Road 292) on the south, and numerous four-wheel-drive roads that approach the area on the north and west sides from State, Federal (BLM) and Private lands.

**Geography:** Pennock Mountain is a peninsular mountain extension on the northwest side of the Snowy Range portion of the Forest, with mainly crystalline geology. The Pennock Mountain Roadless Area consists of all NFS lands north and west of Cedar Creek and Cedar Pass. Sagebrush rangeland surrounds and extends into the roadless area, creating open, rocky ridges with forest on north and east aspects. Upper elevations are almost entirely forested. Slopes are relatively steep, and the terrain is dissected by the deeply incised drainages. Annual precipitation averages approximately 40 inches, but strong prevailing winds tend to sublimate and re-distribute the snow. Heavy drifting occurs around rock outcrops and mixed conifer stands. With the drying effect of prevailing winds, much of the vegetation is composed of fragile, low-growth sub-alpine and xeric plant communities. Summer thunderstorms are common but add little precipitation for stream flow. While several perennial streams exist, many more drainages are ephemeral or intermittent.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 8,200 feet to 10,042 feet on Pennock Mountain. Pennock Mountain is characterized by a series of steep forested canyons interspersed with sagebrush ridges and hillsides. Rock outcroppings are frequent and substantial in size.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 19% Aspen, 41% Lodgepole pine, 24% shrubs, and 16% spruce-fir. There are no known species of sensitive plants in the area, however, potential habitat for clustered lady's-slipper does occur.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally derived from granitic gneiss on highly dissected and steeply incised rolling hills. This soil type tends to be highly erosive when disturbed.

**Current Uses of the Area:** The most popular recreation use is big game hunting and horseback riding. There is an ever-increasing use of the area by ATV's. This area receives guide and outfitter special use in the form of big game hunting and horse trail rides. Most of the Pennock Mountain roadless area is crucial elk winter range and an elk parturition area. The Wyoming Game & Fish Department Pennock Big Game Winter Range Unit lies adjacent to this roadless area to the west. Limited wildlife surveys have been conducted on Pennock Mountain, resulting in no records in Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD) for listed or Forest Service sensitive species. Results of District surveys indicate nesting northern goshawks at the southern edge of the Pennock Mountain roadless area in the vicinity of Cedar Pass. The area contains three grazing allotments, all currently grazed with cattle. The Lake Creek allotment is permitted to run yearling heifers, while Sawmill Creek and Cedar Creek allotments are permitted for cow/calf pairs.

Table C-77. Management area acres for Alternative A, Pennock Mountain Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	1,808
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	1,950
5.41 Deer and Elk Winter Range	5,834

**Appearance:** The mountain itself is a moderately steep-sided, sharp hogback shape. Changes in topography and exposure account for intermixed vegetation types ranging from dense forest to large expanses of sagebrush. At the lower and middle elevations the north facing slopes are forested. The lower and middle elevations having southerly and westerly aspects tend to be non-forested. Interspersed aspen stands contribute to vegetation diversity of the area as well as enhancing the scenic value, especially during the fall color season.

**Surroundings:** Pennock Mountain is an isolated mountain that extends north of the main Medicine Bow Range. It lies between Kennaday Peak and Coad Mountain with Elk Mountain further to the north. Sagebrush plains surround these two mountains as well as Elk Mountain, the northern most extension of the Medicine Bow Mountains. Lands surrounding Pennock Mountain are characterized by mixed ownership, which is dominated by private lands.

**Key attractions:** A variety of wildlife species occur, however, the most unique wildlife feature is the importance of this, as well as adjacent areas, as big game winter range and elk parturition areas. Pennock Mountain itself is the primary scenic landmark in this roadless area. Pennock Mountain, together with Coad and Elk Mountains to the north, rise from the valley floor plains to high elevation summits providing dramatic landscape scenery when viewed from a distance. Vistas from the ridges and peaks of Pennock Mountain take in vast areas of plains as well as other mountain ranges in south-central Wyoming and Northern Colorado. At the north side of Pennock Mountain is the Oberg Pass segment of the historic Overland Trail. The isolated nature of Pennock, Coad and Elk Mountain from the main body of the Medicine Bow Mountains contributes to the scenic value of the Upper North Platte River valley. They also provided distant landmarks to travelers along those historic trails.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** Overall there is a low opportunity for solitude in the area. This rating is based on the size of the area, moderate topographic screening, distance from perimeter to core, little vegetative screening and some permanent off-site intrusions, which include views of Interstate 80 to the north, Old Baldy Golf Club, and various ranches to the west and south. Limited opportunities exist to escape human visual intrusions by using forested draws and areas. Seasonally, primarily during hunting season, opportunity for solitude is low with numerous hunters using the area for both bow and rifle seasons during September and October.

**Naturalness:** This area has a low degree of naturalness. Canada thistle is a nonindigenous plant that grows in the area. Signs of grazing by both domestic and wild ungulates are

evident. Evidence of human presence or activity includes a number of fences, stock ponds and signs of dispersed recreation use. There is evidence of user created ATV trails throughout the Pennock Mountain Roadless Area.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (e.g., those provided by limited access, steep terrain, and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities -** Overall, there are low opportunities for primitive recreation. This rating is based on the factors described under Opportunities for Solitude and moderate diversity of opportunity and limited development.

### **Special Features -**

**Education:** Due to the poor or limited access, this area does not lend itself to onsite education opportunities.

**Scenic Features:** No special scenic features. The primary scenic values are provided by the vegetative and topographic diversity of Pennock Mountain. Its isolation from the main Medicine Bow Mountains provides background and middle ground scenic viewing.

### **Manageability-**

- ♦ **Size:** While large enough to be managed as wilderness, consistent views of human development detract from its wilderness character. Most views include off-site ranching, road development, or timber harvest.
- ♦ **Boundaries:** The roadless area boundary follows the Forest boundary on the west. The northern boundary of this roadless area is separated from the Congressional Forest Boundary by a strip of private lands approximately  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile wide. Similarly, about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles of the eastern boundary of the roadless area is separated from the Congressional Forest Boundary by a one-mile-wide strip of private lands. Cedar Creek and forest development roads delineate the remainder of the eastern and southern boundaries.

**Conclusion:** This area lies on the low end of the range of capability. It has some issues that tend to make it less capable than other areas on the forest, however, it will still be considered capable for wilderness and will be further evaluated for availability and need.

## **Availability:**

**Recreation:** The most popular recreation use is big game hunting and horseback riding. There is an ever-increasing use of the area by ATV's with an increasing number of user created ATV trails. This area receives guide and outfitter special use in the form of big game hunting and horse trail rides.

**Wildlife:** Most of the Pennock Mountain roadless area is crucial elk winter range and an elk parturition area. The Wyoming Game & Fish Department Pennock Big Game Winter Range Unit lies adjacent to this roadless area to the west. Limited wildlife surveys have been conducted on Pennock Mountain, resulting in no records in WYNDD for listed or Forest Service sensitive species. Results of District surveys indicate nesting northern goshawks at the southern edge of the Pennock Mountain roadless area in the vicinity of Cedar Pass.



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Water availability and use:** Annual precipitation averages approximately 40 inches, but strong prevailing winds tend to sublimate and re-distribute the snow. Heavy drifting occurs around rock outcrops and mixed conifer stands. Summer thunderstorms are common, but add little precipitation for stream flow. While several perennial streams exist, many more drainages are ephemeral or intermittent.

**Livestock operations:** The area contains three grazing allotments, all currently grazed with cattle. The Lake Creek allotment is permitted to run yearling heifers, while Sawmill Creek and Cedar Creek allotments are permitted for cow/calf pairs. Evidence of human presence or activity includes a number of fences and stock ponds.

**Timber:** There are no planned timber sales for this area.

**Minerals:** This area has had little mineral work. There appears to have been some historic copper, gold and silver prospects on the head waters of South Fork Creek. No mineral commodities have been identified. Leasable mineral potential is unknown.

**Cultural resources:** There are some cultural resource sites located on the south border of this area.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** There are permitted outfitter guides in this area including hunting, fishing, and horseback riding and packing.

**Management considerations:** The area has State, BLM, and private lands on its boundaries, thus making access from non-federal lands a management consideration.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential? Some historic prospecting for copper, gold, silver. Leasable mineral potential in unknown.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports? No planned timber sales. Possible potential for locatable minerals. ATV use in increasing.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 18 miles from the Savage Run Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-78. Percent covertime in Pennock Mountain Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres	Percent
Aspen	1,854	19
Grassland	17	-
Lodgepole pine	3,917	41
Shrubs	2,304	24
Spruce fir	1,505	16

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-79. Limited representation covertypes in Pennock Mountain Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres in Pennock Mountain Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Lodgepole pine	3,917	3
Gambel oak	*2,304	7
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	1,854	6
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	17	<1

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs met in this area.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Pennock Mountain roadless area.

Table C-80. Management prescriptions by alternative for the Pennock Mountain Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							9,592
3.5		1,627	878	882		879	
3.56	1,808						
3.58				7,085	7,041	7,089	
5.4	1,950						
5.41	5,834	7,965	8,714	1,625	2,550	1,624	

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

The following table summarizes the Pennock Mountain roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-81. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Pennock Mountain Roadless Area..

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	1,950						
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.							9,592
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	7,642	9,592	9,592	9,592	9,592	9,592	

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## R20616 Rock Creek

### 18,859 Acres

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#### Overview

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Rock Creek RARE II area 02072. The Rock Creek area is located in the Snowy Range Eastern Front Geographic Area on the Laramie and Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger Districts in Carbon County. It is approximately 2 miles south of Arlington (T.17, 18 and 19N., R. 78 and 79W.). Primary access to the area is provided by Forest Roads 111 and 101(all-weather roads) and unsurfaced Roads 113, 129 and 130. There are also a number of trails that enter the area on all sides. Interstate 80 is near the northern boundary of the area.

**Geography:** A dramatic and steep canyon, cut into crystalline, metasedimentary and metavolcanic rock types, dominates the area. The highly resistant crystalline bedrock has been deeply cut by Rock Creek lower in the basin, with glaciated terrain in the upper elevations. Large rock outcroppings, cliff bands, and boulder formations are frequent. Annual precipitation ranges from near 40" at higher elevations to less than 20" near the northern, lower end of the Rock Creek Canyon. Precipitation falls mainly as snow between October and April. High winds and low-density snow typically cause heavy scouring and drifting throughout the winter. Summer thunderstorms are common but do not add substantially to flow in Rock Creek, which is dominated by a snowmelt pattern (high spring and low summer and fall flows).

**Topography:** Elevations range from 7,800 feet to 11,125 feet. The principal feature of the area is Rock Creek Canyon-a rugged, precipitous canyon that traverses the area from north to south. The canyon depth increases to approximately 1,500 feet at the mouth, with sparsely vegetated, high rock walls. Rapids and waterfalls are found throughout the stream system. Crater and Firebox Lakes are the only lakes within the area, and Rock Mountain (9,720 feet) is the only major peak. Terrain outside the canyon is typically rolling, rocky outcrops interspersed with forest and alpine meadow.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 2% Aspen, 2% Douglas fir, 4% grasslands, 3% Limber pine, 65% Lodgepole pine, 4% on-forested, 6% shrubs and 18% spruce-fir. Observations contained in the WYNDD indicate the presence of one Forest Service sensitive plant species, the clustered lady's-slipper.

**Soils:** The soils in this area are loams and clay loams with high stone and gravel content. This makes the soil very porous and well-drained. Soils in the area are generally steep, well drained, and moderately deep. Parent materials include crystalline, metasedimentary, and metavolcanic rock. Frost-free periods are extremely short and low average soil temperatures limit vegetative growth. The soil has severe erodibility, which when coupled with melting snow or precipitation, can cause lots of soil movement.

**Current Uses of the Area:** This roadless area is popular for big game hunting during both the archery and rifle seasons. It contains both elk winter/yearlong range and elk crucial winter range. It has been identified by WGFD as an elk parturition area. The WYNDD contains records for several Forest Service sensitive wildlife species including the wood frog, western boreal toad, northern goshawk, and boreal owl. The WYNDD also contains an historic record for Canada lynx near Rock Mountain. That part of this roadless area on Brush Creek/Hayden District is included in the Snowy Range Sheep Allotment. This

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

allotment is currently vacant and has been for the past four years. There is currently a special use authorized communication site on Rock Mountain. Mountain biking along with hiking are popular activities on the trail that runs the length of the canyon from north to south.

Table C-82. Management area acres for Alternative A, Rock Creek Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	290
4.31 Dispersed Recreation, Low Use	7,362
5.13 Forest Products	1,245
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	8,722
5.41 Deer and Elk Winter Range	1,239

**Appearance:** The area is comprised of forested expanses interspersed with grassy meadows and deep drainages. Rock Creek Canyon is a deep, precipitous canyon with waterfalls and rapids, and it traverses the area from south to north.

**Surroundings:** To the south and west, the character of surrounding areas is similar to the Rock Creek Area. To the north and east, the area slopes off to plains.

**Key attractions:** In addition to the Rock Creek Canyon and the creek itself, attractions include the presence of deer, elk, cougar, and black bear.

## Capability:

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** Overall, there are moderate opportunities for solitude in the area. This rating is based on the relatively large size of the area, moderate topographic and vegetation screening, moderate distance from the perimeter to the core of the area and the presence of some permanent off-site intrusions.

**Naturalness:** Overall the naturalness of the area is moderate. The naturalness of the area is interrupted by non-indigenous Canada thistle and other introduced species. In addition there are four-wheel-drive roads, active uranium prospects, staked placer claims, evidence of old prospecting, an old tie camp, bridges on Carlson and Stud Creeks, an electronic reflector on Rock Mountain, fences, grazing livestock, trails and signs of dispersed recreation use.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area. Challenging activities in the area include hiking and mountain biking on the established trails, with winter adding another dimension of isolation and extreme weather.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-**Overall, there are moderate opportunities for primitive recreation. The ROS for the area is Semi-primitive Non-motorized with sections of Semi-primitive Motorized and Roaded Modified.

**Special Features-**

**Education:** The area presents some opportunities to study the effects of fire on an ecosystem, because of the old Three Mile burn area. Also, the University of Wyoming has a geological and soil study area here.

**Scenic Features:** Rock Creek Canyon is the main scenic feature of this area.

**Manageability-**

- ◆ **Size:** The relatively large size of the area and its isolated location enhance its wilderness character.
- ◆ **Boundaries:** The area boundary follows the Forest boundary on the east side, and the remaining boundary largely follows natural topographic features principally the features created by the western edge of Rock Creek Canyon. The southern boundary was designated to exclude the location of well-defined roads.

**Conclusions:** Similar to experiences found in portions of both Encampment River and Platte River Wilderness areas, the steep topography of the canyon allows for both solitude and primitive recreation experiences, therefore the area is capable and will be further evaluated for availability and need.

**Availability:**

**Recreation:** Visitors to the area fish, hike, mountain bike, picnic, camp, horse pack, hunt, and take photographs. There are many opportunities for recreation in this area. Visitors that use All-Terrain Vehicles previously traveled cross country in the southern portion of this area. The 2000 Travel Management decision that prohibits off road use is redirecting ATV use to designated roads. Since there are no designated roads in this area, atv use in this area would be illegal. The area contains five trails including Rock Creek Trail, which is a National Scenic Trail.

**Wildlife species:** This roadless area is popular for big game hunting during both the archery and rifle seasons. It contains both elk winter/yearlong range and elk crucial winter range. It has been identified by WGFD as an elk parturition area. The WYNDD contains records for several Forest Service sensitive wildlife species including the wood frog, western boreal toad, northern goshawk, and boreal owl. The WYNDD also contains an historic record for Canada lynx near Rock Mountain. WYNDD also contains a record for one Forest Service sensitive plant species, the clustered lady's-slipper.

**Water availability and use:** Most of the water in the area is contained in the tributaries and creeks along Rock Creek. Recreational fishing occurs in this area, and this area is the main water source for the town of Arlington. A consistently deep snowpack provides for perennial flow in most area streams. Water uses in the area currently provide aesthetic, spiritual, wildlife, and recreational benefits. No water developments presently exist within the area, and no consumptive use takes place on-site.

**Livestock operations:** Livestock grazing in the area could return if market conditions with the sheep industry improved to the point of making this economically feasible. Thus far however, we have had nobody show any interest in obtaining a grazing permit on Snowy Range Sheep Allotment. None of the area is currently fenced except on the forest boundary.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

The southern end of the area is part of a current active cattle allotment. Also, there is the possibility of stray cattle grazing on the edges of the area.

**Timber:** There are no timber operations currently in the area, but there are suitable timberlands in the area. Some current timber sales overlap into small portions of the area (Lost Lake and County Line Timber Sales.). The steep terrain of area has discouraged past timber harvest within the area.

**Minerals:** There is moderate potential for mineral location in this area. There is a former exploration site on the southern end of the proposed area, and some current uranium exploration in the area, but no current active mining. This area has low potential for hard rock mineral development because much of this area is sedimentary rock. There may be a low potential for oil and gas development

**Cultural resources:** Due to the remoteness of the area and lack of site-specific projects, there has been little cultural resource inventory completed. There are several old mines and miner cabins near the bottom of the canyon. There is potential for both prehistoric and historic cultural resources.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** This area is used by horse outfitters as well as hunting outfitters and guides. The community of Morgan is located adjacent to the NFS parcel that is not part of the inventoried roadless area. Current motorized access onto NFS lands occurs from the northeast through Morgan, not from the west through the inventoried roadless area.

**Management considerations:** There is an extensive system of non-classified roads and unauthorized ATV trails in the southern portion of the area. There are no classified roads in the area. During this analysis, a block of NFS lands not included as part of the inventoried roadless area may become isolated from motorized access if this roadless area is designated as wilderness. Current motorized access to this block is across private lands northeast of the forest boundary. Access to this isolated parcel has not occurred across this roadless area in the past, so future access is not necessarily a consideration. There is an electronic reflector on Rock Mountain that seldom requires access for maintenance. Mountain biking is a current use in the area. This use is inconsistent with Wilderness designation.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential? Low potential for hard rock development and oil and gas development.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports? Suitable timberlands in the area, but steep slopes in the north limit tree removal. Southern portion has potential for timber harvesting. Mineral development potential is low. There is extensive ATV use adjacent to the area.

6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? If this area becomes wilderness, a portion of the forest may become isolated by lack of motorized access. Area is currently isolated and that has not been a problem

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 17 miles from the closest Wilderness Area to the south; Savage Run Wilderness Area. Distances to the closest Wilderness Areas north and west are 250 miles north to the Cloud Peak Wilderness Area and approximately 200 miles to the west-northwest to the Popo Agie Wilderness Area.

**Public Desire:** The Rock Creek area has been the focus of local, national and international interest. This area is one of the most primitive areas on the forest. It is on the north end of the Medicine Bow Mountain Range just south of Interstate 80 with reasonable access from Casper, Laramie and Cheyenne, which account for the highest concentration of people in the State of Wyoming. The Forest Supervisor has received a petition signed by organizations and individuals, thousands of signed postcards and personal letters and emails requesting that the Rock Creek area be recommended for wilderness. In a 1998 survey of county residents, 45% of the Albany county respondents desired wilderness designation in the next ten years. {University of Wyoming, 1998} Laramie is located in Albany County.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-83. Percent cotype in Rock Creek Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres	Percent
Aspen	395	2
Douglas fir	295	2
Grassland	698	4
Limber Pine	554	3
Lodgepole pine	12,313	65
Non Forested	8	-
Shrubs	1,184	6
Spruce fir	3,401	18
Water	9	-

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-84. Limited Representation covertypes in Rock Creek Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres in Rock Creek Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Douglas fir	295	10
Lodgepole pine	12,313	10
Gambel oak	*1,184	4
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	395	1
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	698	3
Limber pine	554	14

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** Only remaining sites with boreal toads in the last few years are located in this area.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Rock Creek roadless area.

Table C-85. Management prescriptions by alternative for the Rock Creek Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2				18,859	17,530		11,358
1.33		6,896	8,857				
2.2							6,218
3.31					53		
3.5						13,806	
3.56	290						
3.58		2,177	1,329			2,395	1,283
4.31	7,362						
5.13	1,245	4,105					
5.15		5,681	8,673		1,273	574	
5.4	8,722						
5.41	1,239					2,084	

The following table summarizes the Rock Creek roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

# ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-86. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Rock Creek Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	9,967	9,786	8,673		1,273	574	
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.		6,896	8,857	18,859	17,583		17,576
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	8,892	2,177	1,329			18,286	1,283

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## R20617 Snowy Range

### 29,637 Acres

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#### Overview

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Snowy Range RARE II area 02074.

The Snowy Range area is located in the North Fork, Snowy Range Eastern Front, Bow River, Brush Creek and French Creek Geographic Areas on the Brush Creek/Hayden and Laramie Ranger Districts in Carbon and Albany Counties. It is approximately 45 miles west of Laramie and 25 miles southeast of Saratoga (T.16 and 17N., R.79 and 80W.). Access is provided on the south by Wyoming Highway 130 (Snowy Range Highway) and on the north and east by all-weather Forest Development Road 101. Forest Development Road 103, a four-wheel-drive road is the west boundary. Four-wheel-drive roads 326, 105, 241, and 200 also approach the area.

**Geography:** The Snowy Range Roadless Area is the highest roadless area on the Medicine Bow National Forest and contains the 12,013' Medicine Bow Peak, the highest point on the forest. Climate in this area is greatly affected by elevation, with short growing seasons and a snow pack often persisting well into spring. Annual precipitation averages approximately 50 inches, with about 75% falling as snow. Snowstorms can occur at virtually any time of year, but are most frequent from October through May. With the Medicine Bow area having the highest average wind speed in the continental United States, heavy drifting is common. Snow pack depth is commonly over 10 feet, with drifts reaching 30 feet or more in the lee of rock outcrops. The influence of glaciations on the Snowy Range Roadless Area is extensive, with ice-carved peaks, glacial lakes, moraines, and till deposits.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 10,000 feet to 12,013 feet on Medicine Bow Peak. The Snowy Range is actually part of the Medicine Bow Mountains, a sparkling, sugar-white outcrop of quartzite along its crest. The north half of the range contains granite and gneiss that are older than 2.6 billion years, overlain by metamorphosed sedimentary rocks, quartzite and schist. The crest of the range is composed of quartzites that have been turned on end to form spectacular cliffs. The southern part of the range contains much younger granite around 1.4 billion years old. The area includes the spectacular rock cliffs, faces, cirques and escarpments of the main Snowy Range and open grassy alpine and subalpine meadows with numerous glacial lakes. The area includes some of the headwater drainages of the Medicine Bow River, Turpin Creek, North and South Brush Creeks, Rock Creek, French Creek and the Little Laramie River.

**Vegetation:** There are several vegetation features that make this higher elevation area unique on the Medicine Bow National Forest. The largest expanses of alpine tundra on the forest occur in this roadless area. Wind is one of the principal factors producing the high-elevation timberline, where the forest gives way to alpine tundra. Within this transition zone occur patches of stunted, wind-shaped trees known as krummholtz or "crooked wood." Wind and the scouring effects of blowing snow crystals cause the characteristic flag-form and basal patches of the krummholtz. There are also some linear forest patches, known as ribbon forest, which are caused by snow deposition patterns in this windy environment. Vegetation in the area is comprised of 3% forbs, 29% grasslands, 6% Lodgepole pine, 8% non-forested, 7% shrubs, 45% spruce-fir and 2% water. The WYNDD indicates occurrence of one Forest Service sensitive plant species in this roadless area, the clustered lady's-slipper. There is every indication that a spruce beetle epidemic is beginning along the

western and southern boundary of the area. The acres of spruce-fir within the roadless area have a moderate to high risk to a potential beetle epidemic. Under a “worse case scenario” all Engelmann spruce greater than 5” in diameter within these stands could be killed during the possible beetle epidemic.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally shallow and rocky with rounded to rugged alpine landforms. Frost-free periods are quite short, with higher elevation northern aspects having very few frost-free days.

**Current Uses of the Area:** This area has very high summer and winter recreational use. Types of use include sightseeing, hiking, backpacking, mountain biking, fishing, rock climbing, skiing, snowmobiling, camping, picnicking, hunting, photography and horse back riding. The south portion of the area has a high concentration of trails and receives the most use, due in part to the Snowy Range Scenic Byway, which is the southern boundary. The winter recreation is not as concentrated as summer use but is widespread. Snowmobile trails are well dispersed in this area, but the Medicine Bow Peak area does receive a large portion of the winter use. The Snowy Range Roadless Area contains four large pastures of the Snowy Range Sheep and Goat Allotment. There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting, scenic horse trips, backpacking, fishing and snowmobile touring. There is a special use permit authorizing a television rebroadcast/repeater in the Silver Lake Bench Mark area just outside the perimeter.

This area has four special use reservoirs and one water conveyance ditch. These are close to the west side of the area and include; North and South Twin, Dipper and Quealy Lakes and the ditch is associated with the Quealy Lake. The WYNDD contains records for several Forest Service sensitive wildlife species including the western boreal toad, boreal owl, wood frog, pine marten, and dwarf shrew. There are also records for the white-tailed ptarmigan, which may no longer occur. The area is potential ewe/lamb summer range for bighorn sheep, however, the general closing in of the forest through plant successional processes has drastically reduced migration opportunities from lambing areas and yearlong range at lower elevations in the Douglas Creek area and along the North Platte River. The higher elevations in this roadless area support a well-developed subalpine forest, which contains a relatively high proportion of potential denning habitat for Canada lynx. The Medicine Bow Peak Special Interest Area is included in this inventoried roadless area.

Table C-87. Management area acres for Alternative A, Snowy Range Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
2.1 Special Interest Areas	1,130
3.32 Backcountry Recreation, Summer Nonmotorized with Winter Snowmobiling	17,826
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	4
4.22 Scenic Areas, Vistas, or Travel Corridors	1,850
4.31 Dispersed Recreation, Low Use	2,878
5.13 Forest Products	992
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	4,756
8.21 Developed Recreation	202*

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Appearance:** There is dramatic visual variety in the area. On a clear day you can see forever, with dramatic features both near and far. Spectacular rock faces, permanent snowfields, and rugged peaks give way to grassy meadows that support many species of wild flowers in the short summer season. There are many small lakes in the meadows and at the bases of rock escarpments.

**Surroundings:** The area includes the highest elevations in the Snowy Range and it tapers off on all sides to subalpine forest. To the south, the Libby Flats Roadless Area has alpine meadows and islands of krummholtz vegetation that give way to deeply incised forested drainages. The Snowy Range Scenic Byway is the southern boundary and increases the use due to easy access from this highway.

**Key attractions:** The whole area is recognized as a scenic landmark with the rock features, the meadows and lakes, the wild flowers and the spectacular views easily accessed by the Snowy Range Scenic Byway. Varied and challenging recreation opportunities abound. Snowmobiling in the Snowy Range is some of the finest in Wyoming and a popular destination spot in the Rocky Mountain West.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** The area has moderate opportunities for solitude due to the size of the area, topographic screening, vegetative screening and distance from perimeter to core. This rating also reflects the effects of some permanent off-site intrusions, which include views of towns in the distance, paved roads, developed sites, and views of clearcuts from past timber harvest. The northern portion of this area provides the greatest opportunity for solitude.

**Naturalness:** Overall, the area has a moderate degree of naturalness. Naturalness of the area has been affected by human activities. Rainbow, brook, brown, and cutthroat trout have been introduced into streams and lakes throughout the Snowy Range Roadless Area to improve fishing opportunities. The area occurs within the Snowy Range sheep allotment. These allotments have been vacant for the last 4 years and have received non-use 7 of 10 years before that. There currently is no proposal for grazing, however, that situation could change sometime in the future if/when mutton, lamb, and wool markets are more favorable. Signs of developed recreation are present, including Mirror Lake Picnic Ground, Lake Marie parking area, Medicine Bow Trailhead, Deep Creek Campground, and Sheep Lake Trailhead, which are all along the periphery of the roadless area. Human presence or activity is also evident in several other places. Alterations of the physical landscape authorized through special use permits include: Sucker Lake Reservoir, North and South Twin Reservoirs, Dipper Lake, Quealy Lake and also portions of the Upper and Lower Medicine Bow Diversions below Quealy Lake into Cascade Lake. There is a television broadcast tower located on the ridge above Wyoming 130 in the NW¼NW¼ Section 35, T.16N., R.80W., which is primarily visible from the southwest part of this area. Both old and recent mineral activities occur in or adjacent to this roadless area. Several old log cabins occur in the area including the Vivian cabin located along FDR 103 near the headwaters of South Brush Creek, and the old Quealy Lake cabin near Quealy Lake. There are sixteen developed hiking trails in the area, which access many of the scenic features in the roadless area, but probably represent a minor detraction from the naturalness of the area. Other human

intrusions viewed from higher elevations include clearcut units from past timber sales. Highways and towns can be seen from the highest elevations. These are less evident on the north side. Opportunities to reduce the visibility of these intrusions, e.g., by changing the boundary of the roadless area, are limited.

**Challenge-** There are many opportunities for challenging experiences. The most notable include technical rock-climbing on the cliff faces and ridges in the area, snowboarding and skiing steep rocky terrain and open glacial cirques, alpine-style climbing of steep snow fields, high elevation hiking and ski-touring, and snowmobile hill climbing. Weather often compounds the challenge by offering high winds and extreme wind chill, ground blizzards, avalanche danger, limited visibility, and thunderstorms. Opportunities for self-reliance are varied, with a high degree of self-reliance required for winter sports around Medicine Bow Peak and a lower amount for fair-weather activities in the proximity of the Scenic Byway and other high-use areas.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** Overall the area has a high opportunity for outdoor recreation opportunities. The opportunity for primitive recreation is higher in summer, as the number and distribution of snowmobiles in winter lowers the opportunities. The summer non-motorized status in the vicinity of Medicine Bow Peak and the north side of the Snowy Range improves the availability of primitive recreation experiences. The ROS for the area is Semi-primitive Non-motorized with areas of Rural, Semi-primitive Motorized, Roaded Modified, and Roaded Natural.

#### **Special Features-**

**Education:** The opportunity for educational programs is high with access into the area by Wyoming Highway 130. These opportunities include wildflower and alpine plant identification, the Glacier Lakes Ecosystem Experiments Site (GLEES), glaciated alpine features and organized outdoor education.

**Scenic Features:** The opportunity for scenic features are great in this area with Medicine Bow Peak's panoramic vistas, extensive wild flowers, alpine lakes and ribbon forests located in this area. You can view Rocky Mountain National Park to the south (including Long's Peak) and Laramie Peak to the north.

#### **Manageability-**

- ♦ **Size:** The area is not next to an existing wilderness area. The area is manageable because of the relatively large size, which enhances its wilderness quality, but the elevations permit views of even fairly distant roads and development.
- ♦ **Boundaries:** As currently delineated, boundaries would be hard to manage. Much of this sizeable area has long distances from perimeter to core. The area is bordered on the south by the Snowy Range Scenic Byway and on the west by FDR 103, both of which are easily located on the ground. However, these routes are heavily used for recreation and there are many access points along both these routes, providing many opportunities for trespass. Therefore, to make the south and west edges manageable; the boundaries would need to be adjusted. The remaining boundaries are not easily located on the ground. They would need to be adjusted and located along topographic features to be manageable. No adjacent wilderness or private lands contribute to manageability.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

- ♦ **Snowmobile Use:** The Snowy Range area is historically a popular snowmobile destination area, regionally, if not nationally. The Snowy Range roadless area is surrounded by groomed trails that enhance the public's ability to access the entire area. The area also has ungroomed marked trails bisecting it. This area has been used for snowmobiling since snowmobiles were invented.

**Conclusion:** The area, with minor boundary changes, can meet the criteria and has been determined to be Capable for Wilderness and will be further evaluated for availability and need. The exclusion of snowmobile use from this roadless area would be difficult.

### Availability:

**Recreation:** There is an extensive trail system made up of 16 trails with many connecting to form loops for a total of 94.7 miles. This area has the highest concentration of trails and use in the Forest. These trails are used for hiking, mountain biking, backcountry skiing/snowboarding, horseback riding, snow-tubing, fishing, and snowmobiling. The area is also used for photography, sightseeing, picnicking, camping and hunting. There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing the following: big game hunting, scenic horse trips, backpacking, fishing and snowmobile touring.

**Wildlife species:** The area is summer range for deer, big horn sheep, moose and elk. Brook, rainbow, golden and cutthroat trout have been introduced to the many lakes and streams in the area. There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting, scenic horse trips, backpacking, fishing and snowmobile touring. The WYNDD contains records for several Forest Service sensitive wildlife species including the western boreal toad, boreal owl, wood frog, pine marten, and dwarf shrew. There are also records for the white-tailed ptarmigan, which may no longer occur. WYNDD also contains records for one Forest Service sensitive plant species, the clustered lady's-slipper. The area is potential ewe/lamb summer range for bighorn sheep, however, the general closing in of the forest through plant successional processes has reduced migration opportunities from lambing areas and yearlong range at lower elevations in the Douglas Creek area and along the North Platte River. The higher elevations in this roadless area support a well-developed subalpine forest, which contains a relatively high proportion of potential denning habitat for Canada lynx.

**Water availability and use:** A consistently deep snow pack provides for an abundance of perennial streams and alpine lakes. On site water uses include recreation, wildlife and livestock watering and irrigation storage reservoirs.

**Livestock operations:** The Snowy Range Sheep and Goat Allotment has been vacant for the last four years and received non-use for seven of the ten years prior to that. There are currently no proposals for grazing these allotments, however there may be in the future.

**Timber:** The high elevation of the area makes it unsuitable for timber management.

**Minerals:** There has been mineral exploration for diamonds west of this area; because of the proprietary nature of this exploration there is no public information available. The green quartzite found in the south part of this area has been withdrawn from mineral entry.

**Cultural resources:** There is potential for both prehistoric and historic cultural resources.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** There are several non-recreation special uses in the area including reservoirs, ditches and communication sites. At this time there are no other proposals. There are several outfitter and guiding operations including snowmobile touring, backpacking, horseback trips, fishing and big game hunting. There is continued public interest for outfitting special use permits in this area.

**Management considerations:** If the Snowy Range Roadless Area became wilderness, the elimination of motorized winter recreation would present a challenge to both management and law enforcement. The occurrence of the area in a mapped lynx habitat area may limit future management activities.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
No.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
Unsuitable for timber harvest due to steep terrain.  
A large portion of the area is withdrawn from mineral entry.  
There is summer and winter nonmotorized use in the area.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? Possible special use conflicts with maintaining/servicing communication sites and water diversion structures.

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 6 miles from the Savage Run Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-88. Percent covertype in Snowy Range Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres	Percent
Aspen	4	-
Forbs	819	3
Grassland	8,698	29
Lodgepole pine	1,723	6
Non Forested	2,504	8
Shrubs	2,116	7
Spruce fir	13,228	45
Water	541	2

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-89. Limited representation covertypes in Snowy Range Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres in Snowy Range Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Lodgepole pine	1,723	1
Gambel oak	*2,116	6
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	4	<1
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	8,698	41

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** Includes the WYNDD sites North Twin Lakes (B5) and Snowy Range (B3). North Twin Lakes is a complex of alpine lakes, forest, meadows, wetlands, and talus. It was selected by WYNDD primarily as a habitat improvement project for spawning habitat for Colorado River cutthroat trout (though it is not in the native range of the species.) The Snowy Range WYNDD site is noted for historic occurrence of White-tailed Ptarmigan; the only breeding population of Brown-capped Rosy-finch in Wyoming, and likely habitat for the pygmy shrew. Of more significance is the community of plants, including 10 regionally endemic or state rare species. These include one of only two populations of alpine kitten tails in Wyoming and the only occurrence of golden saxifrage in the Medicine Bow Range.

### Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Snowy Range roadless area.

**ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION**

Table C-90. Management prescriptions, by alternative, for the Snowy Range Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							18,674
1.31			2,799	2,213			
1.33		23,497	24,910	21,854	22,111	20,167	
2.1	1,130	5,525	1,130	5,431	5,027	1,216	
2.2					472	4,309	7,280
3.24							3,533
3.31			591				
3.32	17,826						
3.5						3,736	
3.56	4						
4.2		277	70			70	12
4.22	1,850						
4.31	2,878						
5.13	992			2			
5.15		201			1,991	2	
5.4	4,756						2
8.21	202	137	137	137	*35	137	137

\* Between draft and final, mapping was more concise. After a review by district personnel, it was determined that the recreation boundary near Lewis Lake had been incorrect so this area was remapped and determined to be smaller than originally mapped.

The following table summarizes the Snowy Range roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-91. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Snowy Range Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	5,949	338	137	138	2,027	138	138
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.		27,892	28,301	28,368	26,476	24,562	29,486
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	23,688	1,407	1,200	1,130	1,134	4,936	12

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**R20618 Campbell Lake**  
**7,085 Acres**

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**Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Snowy Range RARE II area 02074. The Campbell Lake area is located in the Brush Creek and Bow River Geographic Areas on

the Brush Creek/Hayden Ranger District in Carbon County. It is approximately 32 miles northwest of Centennial (T16, 17N., R80W.). FDR 103 provides access on the east and the area contains various four-wheel drive roads.

**Geography:** The Campbell Lake area covers mainly sedimentary low mountain landforms, changing to crystalline low mountain in the eastern portion. Elevations (as below) average about 10,000 feet, putting much of the area near the local upper tree line. Glacial effects on the landform are more subtle than on the rocky crest of the Snowy Range to the east, with mainly rolling or hilly terrain and occasional lakes and wetlands. Rocky outcrops are frequent and dominate some sites visually and ecologically. Climate is similar to much of the middle Rocky Mountains, with an extended winter and short, temperate summers. Precipitation falls mainly as snow from October to April, with frequent summer thunderstorms. Average annual precipitation is estimated at 35 inches, with 75% falling as snow. Prevailing westerly winds are strong and cause extensive snow drifting in winter, along with occasional blowdowns of lodgepole pine.

**Topography:** Elevations on the wide, rolling ridge range from 9,670 feet to 10,750 feet. This area is a northwest extension of the main Snowy Range between Medicine Bow and Kennaday Peaks, and is characterized by a delightful mix of predominantly spruce-fir forest and open parks and meadows with numerous glaciated lakes. The area includes some of the upper drainages of the Medicine Bow River, Turpin Creek, and north and south Brush Creeks. While the peaks of the Snowy Range are close at hand, no well-defined peaks exist within the area itself.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 18% grasslands, 1% Lodgepole pine, 6% non-forested, 13% shrubs, and 62% spruce-fir. There are no records for occurrences of any Forest Service sensitive plant species contained in District records or the WYNDD. There is every indication that a spruce beetle epidemic is beginning along the southern boundary of the area. The acres of spruce-fir within the roadless area have a moderate to high risk to a potential beetle epidemic. Under a "worse case scenario" all Engelmann spruce greater than 5" in diameter within these stands could be killed during the possible beetle epidemic.

**Soils:** The area has a mix of two moderately deep soil types. Steep, well-drained and more level, poorly drained soil polygons are intermixed according to land slopes. Growing seasons tend to be very short, with extended winters and temperate summers creating mainly cool to cold soil temperatures.

**Current Uses of the Area:** There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting, scenic horse trips, backpacking, fishing and snowmobile tours in this area. Livestock grazing involves grazing of cattle on the Lincoln and North Brush C&H Allotments from July through September. The extreme eastern end of this analysis area is part of the vacant Snowy Range Sheep Allotment. The WYNDD contains records for several Forest Service sensitive wildlife species including the wood frog and northern

leopard frog. High elevation spruce-fir forests provide potential habitat for a variety of Forest Service sensitive species, including potential denning habitat for Canada lynx.

Table C-92. Management area acres in Alternative A, Campbell Lake Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
4.22 Scenic Areas, Vistas, or Travel Corridors	2,885
4.31 Dispersed Recreation – Low Use	2,011
5.13 Forest Products	548
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	1,639

**Appearance:** There is dramatic visual variety in the area: High elevation subalpine forests give way to very large grassy meadows that support many species of wild flowers in the short summer season. There are many small lakes in the meadows and at the bases of rock escarpments.

**Surroundings:** The surrounding area includes many of the higher elevations in the Snowy Range. Separated by FDR 103, to the east the Snowy Range Roadless area is the highest roadless area on the Forest.

**Key attractions:** The whole area is recognized as a scenic landmark: the rock features, the meadows and lakes, the wild flowers and the spectacular views. The area is summer range for deer, elk and a few bear. Brook, rainbow, golden and cutthroat trout inhabit the many lakes and streams in the area.

## Capability:

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** The size of the area, topographic screening, vegetative screening and distance from perimeter to core all provide moderate to high opportunities for solitude.

**Naturalness:** Naturalness of the area is moderate with evidence of human presence or activity including seven small reservoirs, precipitation and weather stations, both old and recent mineral activity, several old log cabins, grazing livestock, trails, ditches and signs of dispersed recreation use. Rainbow, brook, brown, and cutthroat trout have been introduced in streams and lakes to improve fishing opportunities. Views from higher elevations include recreation developments, highways and towns.

**Challenge-** There are many opportunities for challenging experiences—most notable is the challenge offered technical rock-climbers on the rock faces in the area. Other foot travelers such as backpackers and anglers will have moderately challenging experiences due to the high elevation, climate, and topography. Winter is especially challenging due to relative isolation and the potential for extreme weather.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-**The opportunity for primitive recreation is moderate. The ROS for the area is Semi- primitive Non-motorized and Roaded Modified. The area offers users hiking, biking, hunting, snowmobiling, camping, skiing/snowshoeing, fishing, and photography opportunities.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

### Special Features-

**Education:** There are very little opportunities for education programs due to the access to the area.

**Scenic Features:** Pothole lakes

### Manageability-

- ◆ **Size:** The relatively large size of the area enhances its wilderness quality, but the elevations permit views of even fairly distant roads and development.
- ◆ **Boundaries:** FDR 103 forms the eastern boundary. The remaining boundaries do not follow distinct topographic features or roads; they generally border areas that have relatively heavy four-wheel-drive road development. Portions of the south boundary are private land that could result in conflicts between private landowners and Forest users.

**Conclusion:** With minor boundary changes, to reduce private land conflicts, this area is capable and will be further evaluated. The remoteness and high elevation enhance its capabilities to become a wilderness.

## Availability:

**Recreation:** There are about 3½ miles of popular ATV trails through the area. This use would be precluded if the area were to be designated wilderness. Primarily fishermen use this area along with some hunters during the fall.

**Wildlife species:** There are several permitted outfitters and guides providing big game hunting, scenic horse trips, backpacking, fishing and snowmobile tours in this area. The WYNDD contains records for several Forest Service sensitive wildlife species including the wood frog and northern leopard frog. High elevation spruce-fir forests provide potential habitat for a variety of Forest Service sensitive species, including potential denning habitat for Canada lynx.

**Water availability and use:** The consistent snowpack provides for perennial stream flow, following a snowmelt-dominated pattern. Uses provide aesthetic, spiritual, recreational, wildlife, and livestock benefits. Several small lakes have been impounded and serve as agricultural reservoirs.

**Livestock operations:** The two allotments have historically been grazed as one since they have had the same permittee for a long time. The area contained in the allotments is being designed to graze in a deferred-rotation grazing system. The entire land area of these allotments extends beyond that of this analysis area. With their large size, some areas are rested from livestock use during alternate years.

**Timber:** The high elevation of the area makes it unsuitable for timber management.

**Minerals:** There have been historic mineral activities just south of this area. This is shown by occurrence of the patented mining claims located there. There has been little recent mineral activity in this area.

**Cultural resources:** Due to the remoteness of the area and lack of site-specific projects, there has been little cultural resource inventory completed. There is potential for both historic and prehistoric sites in this area.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** Campbell Lake Dam and Arrastre Lake Dam are authorized special uses that will require access for maintenance/repair. There is also a water diversion located in the northeast part of this area; it originates from Quealy Lake Creek into the West Fork of the Medicine Bow River that follows through Cascade Lake.

**Management considerations:** There is some snowmobile use in this area and the travel management decision will be a management consideration.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
No.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
Timber harvest unlikely due to high elevation.  
Little minerals activity.  
Summer and winter motorized recreation.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation?  
Campbell Lake Dam and Arrastre Lake Dam are authorized special uses that require access for maintenance/repair.  
Possible conflict with the outfitters/guides providing snowmobile trips.  
Possible conflict with maintenance of the water diversion structure originating from Quealy Lake Creek in the northeast part of the area.

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 9 miles from the Savage Run Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-93. Percent covertype in Campbell Lake Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres	Percent
Grassland	1,255	18
Lodgepole pine	41	1
Non Forested	450	6
Shrubs	950	13
Spruce fir	4,384	62
Water	7	-

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-94 Limited Representation Covertypes in Campbell Lake Roadless Area

Covertypes	Acres in Campbell Lake Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
lodgepole pine	41	<1
Gambel oak	*950	3
big sagebrush		
grass types (e.g., fescue)	1,255	6

\*gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs met in this area.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Campbell Lake roadless area.

Table C-95. Management prescriptions by alternative in the Campbell Lake Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							7,085
1.33		7,085					
3.31				7,085	7,085		
3.5			63			7,085	
4.22	2,885						
4.31	2,011						
4.3			2,051				
5.13	548						
5.15			4,971				
5.4	1,639						

# ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

The following table summarizes the Campbell Lake roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-96. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Campbell Lake Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	2,188		4,971				
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.		7,085		7,085	7,085		7,085
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	4,897		2,113			7,085	



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**R20619 French Creek**  
**5,924 Acres**

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**Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Libby Flats RARE II area 02075. The French Creek area is located in the French Creek Geographic Area on the Brush Creek/Hayden and

Laramie Ranger Districts in Carbon and Albany Counties. It is approximately 8 miles west of Centennial (T.15 and 16N., R.79 and 80W.). Highway 130 provides primary access to the area on the north and west sides, road 236 on the south, and road 336 on the east.

**Geography:** French Creek canyon runs from a high elevation, alpine area, down the west slope of the Snowy Range and Medicine Bow Mountains. Glaciers have carved a dramatic canyon in the crystalline bedrock of the area, with steep cliffs and canyon walls. At lower elevations, the canyon broadens and loses some of its rock cliffs and outcrops, also becoming vegetated with mixed conifer forest. French Creek is a steep, rocky stream with cascades and waterfalls that reduced its ability to carry locally cut railroad ties, which subsequently decreased impacts from this source. Average annual precipitation ranges from over 45 inches at the upper elevations to about 22 inches at the lower end. This precipitation falls mainly as snow from October to April, with a minor amount from summer thunderstorms. High winds can cause heavy drifting of the snow pack and scour snow from exposed ridges.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 8,500 feet to 10,500 feet. The principal feature of the area is French Creek Canyon, with its steep cliffs, rock rivers, and occasional Aspen groves. Width and terrain in the canyon bottom varies, with both wide, smooth stretches and more narrow, constricted areas. Canyon walls are also variable, but most are glacier-polished and fairly smooth, with both rocky and vegetated sections.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 19% grasslands, 30% Lodgepole pine, 5% non-forested and 45% spruce-fir. There are no records for occurrences of any Forest Service sensitive plant species contained in District records or the Wyoming Natural Diversity Database (WYNDD). There is every indication that a spruce beetle epidemic is beginning to the northwest of the area. The acres of spruce-fir within the roadless area have a moderate to high risk to a potential beetle epidemic. Under a “worse case scenario” all Engelmann spruce greater than 5” in diameter within these stands could be killed during the possible beetle epidemic.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally gently sloping, well-drained shallow to moderately deep soils derived from crystalline parent materials. Growing seasons are short, with low soil temperatures and short frost-free periods. Rock outcroppings are common, especially at higher elevations.

**Current Uses of the Area:** The area is part of the Snowy Range Sheep Allotment. It has been vacant for the last four years, and has had non-use 7 of the 10 years prior to that. There are also two cattle allotment grazed in deferred rotation grazing systems. The area contains seven trails that vary in environment ranging from alpine to old growth forest. Visitors to the area fish, hike, mountain bike, picnic, camp, horse pack, hunt, observe wildflowers, and take photographs. Winter uses include snowmobiling, skiing, and snowshoeing. There are various outfitter and guide services that provide horse packing, big game hunting, backpacking, and fishing. Near Wyoming State Highway 130 there is an observation tower and an interpretive wildflower trail that attracts many travelers to the area. The area contains

mature lodgepole pine and spruce-fir forest, which provide habitat for a variety of wildlife species. A number of stands in northern portion were marked to be harvested under the Silver Lake Timber Sale. Units were subsequently dropped from the proposal. The only sensitive wildlife species occurrences contained in WYNDD are for the western boreal toad.

Table C-97. Management area acres for Alternative A, French Creek Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	26
4.22 Scenic Areas, Vistas, or Travel Corridors	1,373
4.31 Dispersed Recreation, Low Use	526
5.13 Forest Products	3,014
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	985

**Appearance:** The appearance of this area is varied with French Creek Canyon, with its steep cliffs, rock rivers, and occasional Aspen groves. Width and terrain in the canyon bottom varies, with both wide, smooth stretches and more narrow, constricted areas. Canyon walls are also variable, but most are glacier-polished and fairly smooth, with both rocky and vegetated sections.

**Surroundings:** The surrounding area has a variety of scenic attractions from Silver Lake with its camping, hiking, fishing, picnicking capability, to Lake Marie and Mirror Lake with hiking trails, and photographic beauty. The area travels from above tree line to low elevation meadows.

**Key attractions** – In the fall, the Aspen changing colors is a major attraction along with fishing in French Creek, elk and deer hunting on horseback, and hiking.

## Capability:

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** The opportunity for solitude is moderate in this area.

**Naturalness:** The naturalness of the area is low to moderate due to the Snowy Range Scenic Byway bordering the area on the north.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** Overall, there are moderate opportunities for primitive recreation. The ROS for the area is Primitive Non-motorized with sections of Semi-primitive Motorized and Roaded Modified. The area contains seven trails that vary in environment ranging from alpine to old growth forest. Visitors to the area fish, hike, mountain bike, picnic, camp, horse pack, hunt, observe wildflowers, and take photographs. During the winter uses include snowmobiling, skiing, and snowshoeing. There are groomed and ungroomed trails bordering the area. There are various outfitter and guide services that provide horse packing, big game hunting, backpacking, and fishing outings. Near Wyoming

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

State Highway 130 there is an observation tower and an interpretive wildflower trail that attracts many travelers to the area.

### Special Features-

**Education:** There is an opportunity for educational programs in this area, including but not limited to, wildflower identification, tie hack interpretation, and Civilian Conservation Corp interpretation.

**Scenic Features:** Scenic features such as steep canyon walls and rocky terrain are dramatic but not unique. Similar scenery can be found in adjacent areas.

### Manageability-

- ◆ **Size:** The area is not next to an existing wilderness area. Most of the southwest portion is narrower than one mile.
- ◆ **Boundaries:** The two long narrow fingers curving southwest from this area add acres and miles of boundary with little gain in real potential suitable wilderness.

**Conclusions:** This area lies on the low end of the range of capability. It has some issues that tend to make it less capable than other areas on the forest, however, it will still be considered capable for wilderness and will be further evaluated for availability and need.

## Availability:

**Recreation:** Visitors to the area fish, hike, mountain bike, picnic, camp, horseback ride and pack, hunt, observe wildflowers, observe fall colors, and take photographs. Winter uses include snowmobiling, skiing, and snowshoeing. There are groomed and ungroomed snowmobile trails in the area. This roadless area is located close to the Scenic Byway, highway 130, which has seen increased use over the years.

**Wildlife:** The only sensitive wildlife species identified in the area is the western boreal toad. Big game is abundant in the area.

**Water availability and use:** Average precipitation ranges from over 45 inches at the upper elevations to about 22 inches at the lower end. The precipitation falls mainly as snow from October to April with minor amounts from summer thunderstorms. High winds can cause heavy drifting of the snow pack and scour snow from exposed ridges. The melt eventually flows to the North Platte River and is used for irrigation and recreation.

**Livestock operations:** The area is part of the Snowy Range Sheep Allotment which has been vacant for four years and had non-use 7 of the 10 years prior to that. There are also two cattle allotments grazed in deferred rotation.

**Timber:** A number of stands in the northern portion initially intended to be harvested in the Silver Lake Timber Sale but the units were subsequently dropped from the proposal. There is no known timber sale proposed for this area, but there is a real potential for spruce beetle epidemic in the area, which may need to be treated.

**Minerals:** The mineral potential for locatable minerals is low.

**Cultural resources:** There are several cultural resource sites located in this area.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** There are various outfitter and guide services permitted in the area including horse packing, big game hunting, backpacking and fishing.

**Management considerations:** There is a potential for a spruce beetle epidemic in this roadless area.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
Potential for locatable minerals is low. Potential for leasable minerals is low to nonexistent.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
No sales planned in the area.  
Little to no potential for minerals exploration/development.  
The area supports summer and winter motorized recreation opportunities.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 3 miles from the Savage Run Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-98. Percent covertime in French Creek Roadless Area.

Covertime	Acres	Percent
Aspen	26	-
Forbs	20	-
Grassland	1,142	19
Lodgepole pine	1,764	30
Non Forested	274	5
Spruce fir	2,689	45
Water	9	-

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-99. Limited representation covertypes in French Creek Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acreage in French Creek Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Lodgepole pine	1,764	1
Aspen	26	<1
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	1,142	5

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs met in this area.

### Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the French Creek roadless area.

Table C-100. Management prescriptions by alternative for the French Creek Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							5,924
1.33		4,737		5,924	5,924		
3.31		491	1,466				
3.5						5,924	
3.56	26						
4.22	1,373						
4.31	526						
5.13	3,014	696	3,403				
5.15			1,055				
5.4	985						

The following table summarizes the French Creek roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

**ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION**

Table C-101. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in French Creek roadless area.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Alt A</b>	<b>Alt B</b>	<b>Alt C</b>	<b>Alt D DEIS</b>	<b>Alt D FEIS</b>	<b>Alt E</b>	<b>Alt F</b>
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	4,000	696	4,459				
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.		5,228	1,466	5,924	5,924		5,924
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	1,925					5,924	

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**R20620 Libby Flats**  
**11,082 Acres**

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**Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** This area was previously analyzed as the Libby Flats RARE II area 02075.

The Libby Flats area is located in the Middle Fork and North Fork Geographic Areas on the Brush Creek/Hayden and Laramie Ranger Districts in Albany County. It is approximately 2 miles west of Centennial (T.15 and 16 N., R. 78 and 79W.). Snowy Range Highway 130 provides access along the northern boundary of the area. A number of unimproved Forest roads approach the area from the south, including FDR338 and FDR307.

**Geography:** Libby Flats is classified as alpine crystalline high hills, with rounded alpine landforms at lower elevations. Much of the area is a high elevation plateau with spruce-fir forest and subalpine meadows, frequent rocky outcrops, and frequent wetlands and areas of poor drainage. Extremely high winds often blow across the upper elevations of this area, creating a uniquely adapted vegetation community of tree islands and krummholtz. On the lee (east) side of the plateau, vegetation trends towards spruce-fir and then lodgepole forest types, which are also wind-affected. Glacial deposits can be found in many areas, along with glacial striations on bedrock knolls. Average annual precipitation ranges from 45 inches at upper elevations to under 30 inches at the lower, eastern end of the area. Most of this precipitation comes as snow and is prone to heavy drifting. Silver Run and Libby Creeks drain most of the area, with steep, rocky channels creating many cascades and waterfalls.

**Topography:** Much of the area is considered as subalpine zone, with gentle and rolling terrain at higher elevations. Rock outcrops are common, especially near streams and lakes. More rounded alpine forms exist in the eastern portion of the area, but there are no prominent mountain peaks. Elevations range from 9,000 feet to 10,850 feet. More deeply incised drainages occur as the area drops off to the east. Small lakes and large parks are included in the area. The area includes the upper drainages of Libby Creek and Silver Run Creek flowing east, and French Creek flowing west.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 5% forbs, 12% grasslands, 29% Lodgepole pine, 8% shrubs, and 46% spruce-fir. There are no records for occurrences of any Forest Service sensitive plant species contained in District records in the WYNDD. There is every indication that a spruce beetle epidemic is beginning to the west of the area. The acres of spruce-fir within the roadless area have a moderate to high risk for a potential beetle epidemic. Under a "worst case scenario" all Engelmann spruce greater than 5" in diameter within these stands could be killed during the possible beetle epidemic.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally well drained, shallow to moderately deep with frequent rock outcrops. Growing seasons are extremely short due to low average soil temperatures, an extended winter, and a very short frost-free period.

**Current Uses of the Area:** The area includes an observation area. Sightseeing is common here, since the typical high elevation timber and plant types reside here. Also, there are beautiful views of the Snowy Range Mountains, some of the alpine lakes in the area, and the rolling hills of Libby Flats. Livestock grazing is permitted in the area however there currently is no permittee. The area is part of the Snowy Range Sheep Allotment, which has been vacant for the last four years, and has been vacant 7 of the 10 years prior to that. Thus

far we have had little to no interest in grazing the area with domestic sheep. The area is not suitable to graze with cattle for the most part due to high elevation, soil moisture, and short growing seasons. The WYNDD contains records for several Forest Service sensitive wildlife species including the western boreal toad, northern goshawk, boreal owl, dwarf shrew, pygmy shrew, three-toed woodpecker, and northern leopard frog. There is also a questionable record for the fisher, which generally is not considered to occur in the MBNF. High-elevation spruce-fir forests provide potential denning habitat for Canada lynx. The area contains the Snowy Range Research Natural Area (RNA) and the Libby Flats Ribbon Forest Special Interest Area.

Table C-102. Management area acres in Alternative A, Libby Flats Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
2.1 Special Interest Areas	492
2.2 Research Natural Areas	728
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	7
4.22 Scenic Areas, Vistas, or Travel Corridors	530
4.31 Dispersed Recreation – Low Use	2,536
5.13 Forest Products	48
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	6,731
8.21 Developed Recreation	9

**Appearance:** The alpine Krummholz stands at the higher elevations are unique and striking. East of the plateau, terrain slopes off to deeply incised drainages and heavily forested areas. The Snowy Range Research Natural Area, established to study old-growth Engelmann spruce, is within the area boundary. The area is also characterized at higher elevations by large parks and gentle rolling terrain.

**Surroundings:** The Snowy Range Roadless Area is north of the area, plains are visible past the forested areas to the east, and the remainder of the area is surrounded by forest. Highway 130 runs to the north of the area.

**Key attractions:** Deer, elk, black bear and several species of introduced trout inhabit the area. The open areas, and views from those areas, in the higher elevations are important scenic attractions. Many visitors observe the Alpine and Mountain views from the Observation Tower that is on the northern edge of the area.

## Capability:

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** The size of the area, topographic screening, vegetative screening and distance from perimeter to core all provide moderate opportunities for solitude. This rating also reflects the effects of some permanent off-site intrusions.

**Naturalness:** Overall the area has a moderate degree of naturalness. Trout have been introduced to improve the opportunity for fishing. Evidence of human presence or activity



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

includes scattered signs of past and recent mineral prospecting and exploration, several abandoned cabins and grazing livestock and their impacts. Views from the area often include human developments.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area, however there are opportunities for adventure, self-reliance and orienteering. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains such as limited access and harsh weather conditions are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-**The opportunity for primitive recreation is moderate. This rating reflects the factors listed in Opportunities for Solitude, moderate diversity of opportunity and limited development in the area. The ROS rating is Semi-primitive Motorized, Rural, and Roaded Modified. Winter recreation includes intensive snowmobile travel, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing. Summer and fall use includes fishing, hiking, camping, ATV use, mountain biking, horse packing, hunting, and photography.

### Special Features-

**Education:** The Snowy Range Research Natural Area is a great educational opportunity to study alpine ecosystems and areas with high average winds. Opportunities include alpine and sub-alpine vegetation (krummholtz and tree islands), and glacier-affected land forms.

**Scenic Features:** The unique phenomenon of Krummholz trees is ever-present in this area. The full view of Libby Flats and the surrounding forests and mountains can be seen from the Observation Tower just off of the Snowy Range Highway. Large, high elevation parks lend distant views of Rocky Mountain National Park, the crest of the Snowy Range with jagged peaks and snowfields, and expanses of the Laramie Plains. Close range scenery includes wind-affected vegetation and alpine meadows with wetlands, lakes, and wildflowers.

### Manageability-

- ◆ **Size:** The relatively sizable area enhances its wilderness quality, however its proximity to the developed Snowy Range Highway and recreation facilities may offset that quality. View of timber cutting might offset that too.
- ◆ **Boundaries:** The boundary of the area is easily identified in most places by roads. The Snowy Range Highway is near the entire northern boundary, and the southern boundary follows a number of undeveloped roads. The western boundary is not so well defined.

**Conclusion:** The size of the Libby Flats area, and moderate opportunities for solitude and naturalness make this area capable for wilderness and it will be further evaluated for availability and need.

## Availability:

**Recreation:** There are opportunities for fishing, hiking, camping, horseback riding, mountain biking, and various snow sports during the winter season. Sightseeing, photography and wildflower viewing are also common here because of the stunning views.

**Wildlife species:** There are various wildlife species in this area, including black bear, deer, elk, bighorn sheep, and moose. The area has possible habitat for many FS sensitive species, including the boreal owl, wood frog, pine marten, and pygmy shrew.

**Water availability and use:** Silver Run Lake and Bear Lake are the major lakes in the area, with various other small sources in the area. There are various creeks which all flow out into the North and Middle Forks of the Little Laramie River. There is opportunity for fishing in these waterways.

**Livestock operations:** A small portion of one cattle allotment is on the eastern border of the proposed area.

**Timber:** There is very little opportunity for timber harvesting in the area. A small part of Silver Run Timber Sale overlaps into the Libby Flats area.

**Minerals:** There is no evidence of minerals or proposed mining activities in the area.

**Cultural resources:** There are no apparent cultural, historic, or prehistoric resources in the area.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** There are some permitted recreation residence cabins in this area, which are used in summer and winter.

**Management considerations:** There are some unclassified roads in the area. There is good trail access, and easy access to the scenic features of the area due to the Snowy Range Highway (Hwy. 130).

#### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
No.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
There is minimal opportunity for timber harvest. There is minimal mineral development potential. Summer and winter motorized recreation is the largest use of this area. It is a destination location for snowmobilers.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation?  
Possible conflict with access to permitted summer cabins in the area.

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 4 miles from the Savage Run Wilderness Area.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-103. Percent covertype in Libby Flats Roadless Area.

Covertype	Acres	Percent
Aspen	7	-
Forbs	508	5
Grassland	1,349	12
Limber pine	20	-
Lodgepole pine	3,187	29
Shrubs	894	8
Spruce fir	5,116	46

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-104. Limited representation covertypes in Libby Flats Roadless Area.

Covertype	Acres in Libby Flats Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Lodgepole pine	3,187	3
Gambel oak	*894	3
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	7	<1
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	1,349	6
Limber pine	20	<1

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** Contains the WYNDD Libby Flat area (B3), noted for its regional endemics and a wide array of medium and low priority plants. It is one of the few areas of extensive subalpine meadows on the Medicine Bow NF, areas of forbs and grasses with interspersed ponds and bogs. Historical records of white-tailed ptarmigan (proposed R2 sensitive) and boreal toad (R2 sensitive) occurred in the area. Other sensitive animals in the area include wood frog and hornyhead chub. Pygmy shrews have been found just outside the boundary. Nine S1 (state species of high concern) and three S2 species of plant have been recorded on the site. The ban on summer off-road use on the forest will alleviate concern about the damage to plants that had been occurring.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Libby Flats roadless area.

**ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION**

Table C-105. Management prescriptions by alternative for the Libby Flats Roadless Area.

<b>Mgmt Rx</b>	<b>Alt A</b>	<b>Alt B</b>	<b>Alt C</b>	<b>Alt D DEIS</b>	<b>Alt D FEIS</b>	<b>Alt E</b>	<b>Alt F</b>
1.2							10,183
1.31			5,365	4,653	4,221		
1.33			4,966			3,539	
2.1	492	492		492		492	
2.2	728	728	728	728	728	728	728
3.31		3,331		5,186	6,091		
3.5						6,294	
3.56	7						
4.2		113	14	14	43	14	162
4.22	530						
4.31	2,536						
5.13	48	2,744					
5.15		3,666					
5.4	6,731						
5.41						6	
8.21	9	9	9	9		9	9

The following table summarizes the Libby Flats roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-106. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Libby Flats roadless area.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Alt A</b>	<b>Alt B</b>	<b>Alt C</b>	<b>Alt D DEIS</b>	<b>Alt D FEIS</b>	<b>Alt E</b>	<b>Alt F</b>
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	6,789	6,419	9	9	1	9	9
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	1,220	4,550	11,059	11,059	11,039	4,759	10,911
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	3,073	113	14	14	42	6,314	162

## R20621 Middle Fork

### 13,232 Acres

#### Overview

**Location and vicinity:** The Middle Fork area is located in the Middle Fork Geographic Area on the Laramie Ranger District in Albany County. It is approximately 2 miles southwest of Centennial (T.14 and 15N., R.78 and

79W.). Primary access to the area is provided by Primary Forest Road 500 on the south, road 338 (Ehlin Road) on the north and west, and 307 on the east. There are many 4-wheel drive roads to the west.

**Geography:** The Middle Fork area is on the western border of the Snowy Range section of the Medicine Bow National Forest. The Middle Fork of the Little Laramie River runs through the area. Fall Creek, June Creek, Curitan Creek, and many of the other small creeks in the area drain into the Middle Fork. The Many Ponds proposed Research Natural Area overlaps the Middle Fork Roadless area.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 8,200 feet to 10,005 feet. The principal feature of the area is the Middle Fork of the Little Laramie River. There are some higher areas near Centennial Ridge to the Northeast. The lower areas are the basins and drainages that flow into the Little Laramie River. The terrain generally becomes steeper and rockier as the terrain moves south toward Hell's Canyon and Albany.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 5% Aspen, 6% Douglas fir, 3% grasslands, 1% Limber pine, 67% Lodgepole pine, 13% shrubs, and 4% spruce-fir. There is one species of sensitive plants in the area.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally well-drained sandy loams with a lot of gravel content. These soils are shallow in depth, and they have severe erosivity.

**Current Uses of the Area:** The area is used for recreational snowmobiling. There is some exploratory mining activity north of this area.

Table C-107. Management area acres for Alternative A, Middle Fork Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	716
4.22 Scenic Areas, Vistas, or Travel Corridors	247
4.31 Dispersed Recreation, Low Use	1,590
5.21 Water Yield	10
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	8,301
5.41 Deer and Elk Winter Range	2,318
8.6 Administrative Sites	47

**Appearance:** The area does not have any main roads running through it, but many roads run adjacent to the borders.

**Surroundings:** The town of Albany lies on the Southern border of the area, and the town of Centennial lies very close to the northern border. There are some active mining sites in the

area, and the eastern border is aligned with the forest boundary. Private and non-forest land lies across the border.

**Key attractions:** The key attraction in the area is Hell's Canyon, which lies toward the middle of the area. Also, the historic mining camps in the area show how early mining operations on the forest were conducted.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** There is moderate opportunity for solitude in this area. The town of Albany lies on the southern edge of the area, and the town of Centennial lies very close to the northern border. There are some active mining sites in the area, and the eastern border is aligned with the forest boundary. These factors could increase the possibility of noise and decrease visual quality, which detracts from the overall solitude.

**Naturalness:** The area's naturalness has been affected by human activity. There are many non-system user created roads in the area used by snowmobilers and ATV operators. Historic mining operations have left areas where the naturalness has been decreased. The view in certain parts of the area includes towns, houses, and other man-made, non-natural elements. The naturalness increases toward the western portion of the area. Overall, the naturalness is moderate.

**Challenge-**There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area, however there are opportunities for adventure, self-reliance and orienteering. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** The opportunity for primitive recreation is moderate. Recreational opportunities include hiking, camping, fishing, horseback riding and winter sports, with access provided near Centennial on the North and near Albany on the South.

### Special Features-

**Education:** There is an opportunity to see areas where mining operations were previously conducted, and to learn the effects of mining on the surrounding ecosystems.

**Scenic Features:** Hell's Canyon and Fall Creek Falls are two very scenic locations in the area. There are many other examples of scenic canyons in the area

### Manageability-

- ♦ **Size:** The moderate size of the area makes it manageable, but the long eastern border allows more interface with the Centennial Valley. This permits possible undesirable views of roads and houses.
- ♦ **Boundaries:** The narrow section toward the middle of the area (Hell's Canyon) basically divides the area into two smaller areas, of which the northern part is bigger. The access to the area is good, with many roads running near or along the borders of the area. The entire eastern border of the area is on the Forest Boundary, which limits access to the discretion of the landowner across the border.

**Conclusion:** The moderate opportunity for solitude and naturalness makes the Middle Fork area capable for wilderness and it will be further evaluated for availability and need.

## Availability:

**Recreation:** During the winter, this is an area that gets a good deal of use. Telemark and cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobiling are common in this area in the winter. The snowmobile use would be precluded if the area were to become a wilderness. Other times of the year, deer hunting, fishing, camping, and hiking are common pursuits.

**Wildlife species:** Deer and elk have their winter ranges here. There are sensitive species in the area, including the goshawk, pine marten, boreal toad, wood frog, and pygmy shrew.

**Water availability and use:** As the name implies, the main water source in this area is the Middle Fork of the Little Laramie River. It is used for fishing.

**Livestock operations:** There is cattle grazing on the eastern edge of the area.

**Timber:** Timber harvesting in this area has been minimal due to the limited access. The northern tip of the area was previously investigated for possible timber harvesting, but was deemed unsuitable.

**Minerals:** This area has historically contained a lot of mining activity, as evidenced by the many old mines and remnants in the area. Mining is currently being conducted in the area (mainly gold and platinum). There is definite future possibility of more mining in the area.

**Cultural resources:** There is a strong possibility of historic artifacts in the area due to the old mining operations in the area. The cabins used by miners in the area along Centennial Ridge are being explored for their historical value.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** The mining operations in the area are authorized and permitted.

**Management considerations:** There is a proposal to build a single track motorized trail in the area. There are already many non-system off-road trails in the area. This motorized use of the area would be precluded if the area were to be made into a wilderness.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
The area has a history of hard rock mining. Currently gold and platinum are being mined and future activity is likely.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
Timber harvest is unlikely due to limited access.  
Mining for locatable minerals is ongoing.  
Summer and winter motorized recreation, with plans for developing a single track motorized trail.

6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 5 miles from the Savage Run Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-108. Percent coertype in Middle Fork Roadless Area.

Coertype	Acres	Percent
Aspen	724	5
Douglas fir	817	6
Grassland	353	3
Limber pine	179	1
Lodgepole pine	8,913	67
Non Forested	12	-
Shrubs	1,725	13
Spruce fir	513	4

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-109. Limited representation covertypes in Middle Fork Roadless Area.

Coertype	Acres in Middle Fork Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Douglas fir	817	29
Lodgepole pine	8,913	7
Gambel oak	*1,725	5
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	724	2
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	353	2
Limber pine	179	4

*\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined*

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs met in this area.



## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Middle Fork roadless area.

Management prescriptions by alternative for the Middle Fork Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							12,663
1.33			9,908	9,348	9,348		
2.1				3,836	3,83	517	521
3.31		1,894					
3.33			3,265				
3.5						7,483	
3.56	716						
4.2		161					
4.22	247						
4.31	1,590						
5.13		11,129	11				
5.15						225	
5.21	10						
5.4	8,302						
5.41	2,318					4,960	
8.6	47	47	47	47	47	47	47

The following table summarizes the Middle Fork roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-110. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Middle Fork Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	8,360	11,177	59	48	47	273	48
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.		1,894	9,907	9,347	9,342	518	13,180
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	4,872	161	3,265	3,836	3,837	12,441	3

## R20622 Sheep Mountain 17,614 Acres

### Overview

**Location and vicinity:** The Sheep Mountain area is located in the Sheep Mountain Geographic Area on the Laramie Ranger District in Albany County.

It is approximately 30 miles west of Laramie (T.14 and 15 N., R. 77W.). Access is provided by Highways 130 and 11 to the north and west and Highway 230 to the south. All-weather Forest Road 311 approaches the southwestern boundary of the area, and a number of four-wheel-drive roads approach the eastern boundary. Access is limited because the area is surrounded almost entirely by private land.

**Geography:** The area around Sheep Mountain is relatively flat plains. The entire roadless area is the mountain itself. There are no rivers associated with the area, but the mountain in the divide between the Little Laramie River and Laramie River Drainages. The highest point on the mountain (9,560 feet) is on the main Sheep Mountain Trail. It is unique because it is an overthrust, or a mountain formed by the upthrusting of material within the earth, which reverses the usual order of fossils found in the Earth.

**Topography:** The primary feature of the area is Sheep Mountain – a hog back ridge that is separate from the main mountain range. The ridge is approximately ten miles long and three to four miles wide, and elevations range from about 8,000 to 9,560 feet. There are abruptly steep foothills with rocky outcrops. The areas along the north and east are relic landslides and prone to further movement if disturbed by mass earth movements such as earthquakes or slumping. The area includes some of the upper drainages of the Little Laramie River (draining to the west and northwest) and the Laramie River (draining to the east and southeast).

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 5% Aspen, 1% Douglas fir, 12% grasslands, 51% Lodgepole pine, 1% non-forested, 6% Ponderosa Pine, 23% shrubs, and 1% spruce-fir. There is one species of sensitive plants in the area (Hoary Willow).

**Soils:** Soils are generally shallow, gravelly coarse loams on the upper part of Sheep Mountain, and the soils become deeper and finer as they get closer to the bottom and into the riparian areas. The soils were formed from granite parent material, and have moderate erosion potential.

**Current Uses of the Area:** The area is Game Refuge, so its primary purpose protection and propagation game animals and birds. Opportunities for recreation include mountain biking, horseback riding, and hiking along the trails on Sheep Mountain. Hunting is not permitted. There is no use of this area in the winter. Trails on the mountain are steep and moderately difficult.

Table C-111. Management area acres for Alternative A, Sheep Mountain Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.54 Special Wildlife Areas (Sheep Mountain)	5,352
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	755
5.41 Deer and Elk Winter Range	11,507

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Appearance:** The area is a steep-sided hogback ridge with sagebrush at the lower elevations, aspen-filled drainages and rolling hills with lodgepole pine stands on the long, wide top of the mountain.

**Surroundings:** The area slopes off to plains on all sides but the west. To the west, the Snowy Range portion of the Forest is visible across the large valley of the Little Laramie River drainage. The mountain slopes off into flat private rangelands.

**Key attractions:** The area was established as a Game Refuge in 1924. It is important winter range for deer and elk. Other than the distinctive position of the ridge itself and the phenomenal view of the Laramie Valley from the Mountain, there are no special scenic landmarks on the area.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** The relatively large size of the area, moderate topographic and scattered vegetative screening and distance from perimeter to core provide for moderate opportunities for solitude. Lights from the City of Laramie, highways and ranches are visible intrusions. Airplanes fly over the area regularly.

**Naturalness:** The natural integrity of the area is relatively intact and the area has a moderate to high degree of naturalness. Brook trout have been introduced in Fence Creek to provide fishing opportunity. Evidence of human activity or presence includes a trail through the middle of the area, an irrigation ditch, old mining digs, an overhead telephone line, two miles of water transmission line, fences, signs of dispersed recreation use and four-wheel – drive roads.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area, however there are opportunities for adventure, self-reliance and orienteering. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains such as limited access and harsh weather conditions are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-**The factors listed in Opportunity for solitude, moderate diversity of opportunity and very limited development give the area an overall moderate rating for opportunity for primitive recreation. Mountain bikers, hikers, and horseback riders use the trails in the area because of its scenery and challenge.

### Special Features-

**Education:** Sheep Mountain has many opportunities for education. Winter grazing by deer and elk creates observation opportunities. Sheep Mountain has been the subject of many archaeological and research queries. Also, the University of Wyoming conducts vegetation studies in the area.

**Scenic Features:** Sheep Mountain has no extraordinary scenic features, other than itself. The Mountain itself, because of its position offset from the rest of the Snowy Range and its appearance, is a unique scenic feature.

**Manageability-**

- ♦ **Size:** The relatively large size of the area enhances its wilderness character.
- ♦ **Boundaries:** The boundary of the area largely follows the Forest boundary. The bottom of the mountain also defines the boundary. Access is limited, however, because of surrounding private land—this would possibly make the area less manageable.

**Conclusion:** The relatively large size of the area and moderate opportunities for solitude and naturalness make the Sheep Mountain area capable for wilderness and it will be further evaluated for availability and need.

**Availability**

**Recreation:** There are two public access areas on Sheep Mountain, both of which lead to the Sheep Mountain Trail. Hunting, horseback riding, mountain biking, and hiking are common recreational pursuits here.

**Wildlife species:** The area is very important winter range for mule deer and elk from the area. The area derives its name from the fact that it was historically a Bighorn Sheep area, but they are no longer found there. Raptors such as golden eagles and prairie falcons nest, roost, and forage on and around Sheep Mountain.

**Water availability and use:** There are a few small ponds in the area. Most of the water in the area is in the various perennial creeks and streams that flow off of the mountain into the valleys on each side. There is very little recreational use in these water sources other than fishing in the beaver ponds.

**Livestock operations:** There has not been any livestock grazing in this area for over 50 years.

**Timber:** There are no current timber operations on Sheep Mountain. There were various operations conducted in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, evidence of which may still be seen.

**Minerals:** Uranium and titanium were mined in the 1950s. Calvin Coolidge proclaimed the area as a refuge, but the statute establishing it as such was not created until 1964. Mining has been prohibited on Sheep Mountain since Congress enacted the law making it a Game Refuge.

**Cultural resources:** There is potential for cultural resources in the area of unique interest. Native American artifacts and resources are known to be in the area.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** The area is designated as a game refuge. Also, there are water transmission lines that supply the City of Cheyenne which pass through this area.

**Management considerations:** If the area became a wilderness, the low accessibility to the area would enhance the wilderness character and naturalness of the area, but the proximity to private land may present management problems. There are only two accesses to the area, both of which are trailheads that can only be hiked into. The trails are somewhat developed in this area.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? Yes. There is a water diversion ditch in the area.
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? Yes. There is no human use permitted during critical periods.
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
This is not relevant as the status of the refuge does not permit mining.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation?  
No.
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
There are no current timber operations.  
Mining is prohibited.  
Mountain biking is one of the summer recreation opportunities.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 14 miles from the Platte River Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-112. Percent covertype in Sheep Mountain Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres	Percent
Aspen	866	5
Douglas fir	198	1
Grassland	2,115	12
Lodgepole pine	8,987	51
Non Forested	106	1
Ponderosa pine	1,141	6
Shrubs	4,025	23
Spruce fir	172	1

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-113. Limited representation coverts in Sheep Mountain Roadless Area.

Coverttype	Acres in Sheep Mountain Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Ponderosa pine	1,141	3
Douglas fir	198	7
Lodgepole pine	8,987	7
Gambel oak	*4,025	12
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	866	3
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	2,115	10

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** Contains the WYNDD Sheep Mountain site (B3), noted for the quality of the plant communities and a cluster of state-rare elements.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Sheep Mountain roadless area.

Table C-114. Management prescriptions by alternative for the Sheep Mountain Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
2.2						13,581	
3.54	5,352	17,614	17,614	17,614	16,826	4,032	17,614
3.56	755						
5.41	11,507				788		

The following table summarizes the Sheep Mountain roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-115. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Sheep Mountain Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.							
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	5,352	17,614	17,614	17,614	16,826	17,614	17,614

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	12,262				788		

## R20623 Savage Run Addition 2,370 Acres

### Overview

**Location and vicinity:** The Savage Run Addition area is located in the Platte River, Savage Run Geographic Area on the Laramie Ranger District in Albany County.

It is approximately 12 miles southwest of Centennial (T.14N, R80 and 81W.). Access is provided by Primary Forest Roads 500 and 511 on the east and the north, and by Primary Road 512 on the south. Various other four-wheel drive roads provide access to the area.

**Geography:** The Savage Run Additions are all extended areas already adjacent to Savage Run Wilderness Area. None of the proposed additions are more than one half of a mile away from the original wilderness area, and they are geographically similar to the rest of the area except for the riparian areas and canyons close to the North Platte River.

**Topography:** Elevations range from about 7800 feet to 9960 feet. The area consists of drainages of the Savage Run Creek, Cottonwood Creek, North Mullen Creek, and South Mullen Creek. There are many steep valleys that the creeks and their tributaries run through, and the additions only add to the drainage area of the Wilderness area that already exists. The northern areas are steep and rock in terrain, and the area flattens out as you move toward the south.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised 3% Aspen, 3% Douglas fir, 7% grasslands, 57% Lodgepole pine, 10% shrubs, and 20% spruce-fir. There is one species of sensitive plants in the area.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally well-drained and high in gravel content. These gravelly loams and sandy loams have high erosion potential, and there are many rock outcroppings and steep slopes in the area.

**Current Uses of the Area:** The proposed areas are being used in much the same way as the rest of the Savage Run Wilderness area, hiking, hunting, horseback riding, and camping. There is no timber operation or mining operation in any of the areas.

Table C-116. Management area acres for Alternative A, Savage Run Addition Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	61
5.13 Forest Products	1,482
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	706
5.41 Deer and Elk Winter Range	106
8.21 Developed Recreation	15

**Appearance:** The areas are comprised of dense old-growth forested lands, with steep-sided canyons and rolling flat lands in the southwestern part of the area.

**Surroundings:** All of the additional areas lie next to the existing Savage Run Wilderness.



**Key attractions:** Recreation is the main use of this area. The key attractions in this area are the hiking / horseback trails in the area, and the opportunity for peace and solitude that is inherent in a wilderness area. Dispersed camping and hunting are also common pursuits for visitors to this area.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** With the small sizes of most of the areas, there is no added opportunity for solitude with the addition of the proposed areas.

**Naturalness:** The naturalness of the areas is not increased by the addition of the proposed areas. The addition of these areas would push the borders of the Savage Run area closer to established roads, which would decrease the naturalness of the area.

**Challenge-** There would be an insignificant change in the degree of challenge offered in the Savage Run Wilderness by the addition of these areas. There currently exists many opportunities for challenging experiences in the Savage Run Wilderness—most notable is the challenge offered technical rock-climbers on the rock faces.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** There are three maintained trails and associated trailheads that run through the Savage Run Wilderness, but only one of these are affected by the additions: the Cottonwood Trail will be lengthened by about ½ mile.

### Special Features-

**Education:** There would be no new educational opportunities afforded by the addition of these areas. There currently are various educational opportunities in the area. The lodgepole pine stands in the area are over 200 years old, which presents opportunities to learn about old-growth stands.

**Scenic Features:** The proposed new areas do not add to the scenic value of this wilderness area.

### Manageability-

- ◆ **Size:** The sizes of the areas are so small that they would have minimal impact on the manageability of the area because of their small size, however boundary management would be more difficult.
- ◆ **Boundaries:** There are 10 small areas that cumulatively comprise the proposed additions. These areas range from 8 acres to 910 acres. Adding these areas to the wilderness would make the boundaries harder to manage as they would put the boundaries closer to existing roads.

**Conclusion:** This area lies on the low end of the range of capability. It has some issues that tend to make it less capable than other areas on the forest, however, it will still be considered capable for wilderness and will be further evaluated for availability and need

## Availability:

**Recreation:** Three short segments (less than 1/2 mile) of developed trails are present in the area. The area offers the same recreation opportunities that are available in the adjacent

wilderness. The small size of the ten segments that comprise this area strongly limits the ability of the area to add significantly to the quality of the recreation experiences available. Day use horse back trips from the A-A Ranch occur in a few of the western portions of the area.

**Wildlife species:** The area is mostly spring- summer- fall range for deer, big horn sheep, moose and elk. Lower elevation sites in the western portion of the area are also winter yearlong range for big game. A resident population of big horn sheep frequently uses the area west of Boat Creek. Brook and rainbow trout ( non-native species) are present in the perennial streams. Several Forest Service sensitive wildlife species including the western boreal toad, boreal owl, wood frog, pine martin and dwarf shrew are highly likely to utilize the area. Except for bald eagles, no Threatened or Endangered species are known to utilize the area. The area is not within a Canada lynx analysis unit or linkage area.

**Water availability and use:** A relatively deep snow pack provides for an excellent supply of water for the headwaters of South and North Mullen Creeks. A portion of the addition area includes segments in the upper reaches of these drainages. The north facing slopes of Cottonwood Creek are also part of the area. On site water uses include recreation, wildlife and fisheries habitat and livestock watering.

**Livestock operations:** The area is entirely within the Platte River Cattle Allotment. Cattle graze in the allotment area during the summer and early fall months. Much of the addition area has heavy tree cover with limited forage that is capable for being use by livestock. With the exception of a small area near Pete's Cabin Park, livestock use in the addition area is infrequent.

**Timber:** Most of the north slope of Cottonwood Creek in the southern segment of the area contains suitable lodgepole pine timber. Suitable timber is also present in the area that includes a portion of the North and South Mullen Creek drainage. It is estimated that approximately 80-90% of the area contains land suitable for timber management. Timber harvesting has occurred immediately adjacent to the boundary of this area in several locations near Cottonwood, South Mullen and North Mullen Creeks.

**Minerals:** Prospecting for hard rock minerals has occurred not only historically but is currently underway in the western segments of this area. Recently, unpatented mining claims have been staked near the North Platte River. One patented mining claim that was mined many years ago borders a segment of the addition area near Boat Creek. None of the area has been withdrawn from mineral entry. No oil or gas leases exist nor has any recent exploration been done adjacent to the area.

**Cultural resources:** There is potential for prehistoric sites in the lower elevation ridges and rangeland sites of the area. Remnants of old trails and mining activities can occasionally be discovered in the area.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** No special uses exist in the area nor have any been recently proposed. Livestock grazing is permitted in the area. Outfitter guiding associated with day use horseback riding, backpacking and hunting/fishing is limited and transient in nature.

**Management considerations:** Inclusion of this area as wilderness will create a boundary that is highly irregular and difficult for the public and land managers to identify.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
Unlikely.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
Some timber stands are suitable for harvesting and adjacent to areas already harvested.  
A small demand for minerals is evident by the recent staking of claims near Boat Creek.  
No new developed recreation sites are planned in the area.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies adjacent to the Savage Run Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-117. Percent covertype in Savage Run Addition Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres	Percent
Aspen	75	3
Douglas fir	81	3
Grassland	158	7
Lodgepole pine	1,351	57
Shrubs	227	10
Spruce fir	476	20

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-118. Limited representation covertypes in Savage Run Addition Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres in Savage Run Addition Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Douglas fir	81	3
Lodgepole pine	1,351	1
Gambel oak	*227	1
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	75	<1
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	158	1

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs met in this area.

#### Augmenting the size of existing Wilderness:

The four Wildernesses on the Medicine Bow are quite small compared to those found in other mountainous areas of the west (Platte River, 22,749 GIS acres; the Encampment River 10,400 GIS acres; Huston Park, 30,726 GIS acres; and Savage Run, 14,940 acres). The natural fragmentation of the terrain here and associated federal ownership pattern combined with extensive resource extraction before the establishment of Wildernesses limited the size of areas that met Wilderness criteria.

The small size of the existing areas constrains the Forest's ability to allow natural processes like fire to follow a natural course. In addition, the current size may be too small to support populations of wide-ranging species within the boundaries.

The benefits of recommending roadless areas that are adjacent to existing Wilderness as Proposed Wilderness are as follows:

The Savage Run Additions would add only 2,368 acres to the 14,940 acre existing Wilderness (a 15.8% increase). However, the areas would pick up the headwaters of several creeks. Currently, activities in the headwaters could compromise the water quality of downstream stretches. Inclusion of these headwaters would create a more logical ecological unit for both aquatic and terrestrial species.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Savage Run Addition roadless area.

Table C-119. Management prescriptions by alternative for the Savage Run Addition Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							2,307
1.33			556				
3.4		63	63	63	63	63	63
3.5						561	

# ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
3.56	61						
3.58				285	285	285	
5.13	1,482	1,188	1,112	1,112	1,112		
5.15		480		558	472	1,112	
5.4	706						
5.41	106	639	639	351	437	349	
8.21	15*						

The following table summarizes the Savage Run Addition roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-120. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Savage Run Addition Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	2,198	1,668	1,112	1,671	1,584	1,112	
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	5	1	556				2,307
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	167	702	702	699	785	1,258	63

## R20624 Platte River Addition 7,947 Acres

### Overview

**Location and vicinity:** The Platte River Addition area is located in the Platte River, Savage Run Geographic Area on the

Laramie Ranger District in Albany and Carbon Counties. It is approximately 16 miles southwest of Centennial (T.12 and 13N. R. 79 and 80W.). Wyoming Highway 230 provides access on the south and the west via Road 492. Primary Forest Road 512 also provides access on the north side, and Road 898 provides access on the East. Four-wheel drive roads on all sides of the area are the primary vehicular access to the area.

**Geography:** The Platte River Additions are areas adjacent to the Platte River Wilderness. Some of the main geographic features are the Platte Ridge, in the central part of the area, and the North Gate Canyon, which the North Platte River runs through. There are no major geographical additions within the proposed addition areas.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 7420 feet to 9060 feet. All of the additions fall within these elevations. The area includes some drainages of the North Platte River, which runs through a canyon and along some of the lower elevations in the area. There are some high points such as the Platte Ridge, Prospect Mountain, Deerhorn Point, and Elkhorn Point, on the western border of the roadless area.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 3% Aspen, 2% Douglas fir, 8% grasslands, 67% Lodgepole pine, 1% Ponderosa pine, 19% shrubs and 1% spruce-fir. There is one species of sensitive plants in the area.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally gravelly sandy loams. The soils in the area are moderately deep and well-drained, with moderate to high possibility of erosion. In the eastern and southern portions of the area, the soil becomes less erosive and contains more clay.

**Current Uses of the Area:** Hiking, hunting, skiing, horseback riding, camping, and water sports are common recreational activities in the areas.

Table C-121. Management area acres for Alternative A, Platte River Addition Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	232
5.13 Forest Products	3,222
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	3,110
5.41 Deer and Elk Winter Range	1,347
8.21 Developed Recreation	36

**Appearance:** Most of the additional areas are small in size, ranging in size from 8 to 1,986 acres. The additional areas are similar in appearance to the existing Platte River Wilderness area.

**Surroundings:** All of the proposed addition areas lie near the four wheel drive roads that lead into the original Platte River Wilderness.

**Key attractions:** None of the additional areas contain any new key attractions. The proposed additions would not add significantly to the attractiveness of the area.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** The addition of these areas to the Platte River wilderness would add an insignificant increase to the opportunity for solitude.

**Naturalness:** The additional areas are natural in appearance and similar to the naturalness of the existing Platte River wilderness. Insignificant changes to the naturalness of the Platte River Wilderness would occur because of these additional areas.

**Challenge-** There would be an insignificant change in the degree of challenge offered in the Platte River Wilderness by the addition of these areas. There currently exists many opportunities for challenging experiences in the Platte River Wilderness—most notable is the challenge offered technical rock-climbers on the rock faces.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** There would be an insignificant change in the primitive recreation opportunity because of the addition of these areas. There already exists many recreational opportunities in the Platte River Wilderness area. The North Platte River is an excellent rafting river, which hosts many whitewater rafting activities. Many outfitters run rafting trips on the North Platte through the canyons northward. There are over 28 miles of trails in this area, accessible by any of the four trailheads on all sides of the area.

### Special Features-

**Education:** There would be no new educational opportunities afforded by the addition of these areas. There currently exists some special educational opportunities in the Platte River wilderness area, including learning about riparian areas along the North Platte River, as well as the opportunity to learn about older aged undisturbed tree stands.

**Scenic Features:** There are no special scenic features in the area other than the opportunities for wildflower sightings, the beautiful views of the surrounding mountains, and wildlife viewing.

### Manageability-

- ◆ **Size:** The additional areas vary in size from 8 to 1,986 acres, totaling 7,947 acres. The two largest acre additions near the north boundary of the area would have the most opportunity for adding to the overall manageability of the area however, they currently have many user-created roads criss-crossing them and are heavily used by ATV's. Mining, grazing and dispersed camping also occur in these areas and would detract from their ability to add to the manageability of the area.
- ◆ **Boundaries:** The addition of these areas would cause boundary management to be more difficult. The current boundaries are easily located on the ground and this could change with the addition of these new areas.

**Conclusion:** This area lies on the low end of the range of capability. It has some issues that tend to make it less capable than other areas on the forest, however, it will still be considered capable for wilderness and will be further evaluated for availability and need

## Availability:

**Recreation:** The addition areas offer many of the same recreation opportunities that are available in the adjacent wilderness. No new recreation opportunities will be added if the addition areas are included in wilderness system. The small size of many of the addition areas strongly limits the ability of the areas to add significantly to the quality of the recreation experiences currently available. Short segments of two trails exist in two of the addition areas. Hunting, hiking, horseback riding, and limited dispersed area camping are the major activities that occur in the addition areas.

**Wildlife species:** A significant portion of the addition areas serve as spring-summer-fall range for deer, big horn sheep, moose and elk. Most west and south facing slopes also serve as winter yearlong range for big game species. A resident population of about 200 Bighorn sheep frequently utilizes the area near Sheep Mountain, south of Boat Creek. Brook and rainbow trout are the principle fish species most likely to be found in perennial water within the addition area. Several Forest Service sensitive wildlife species including the western boreal toad, boreal owl, wood frog, pine martin and dwarf shrew are highly likely to utilize the area. Except for bald eagles, no Threatened or Endangered species are known to utilize the area. The area is not within a Canada lynx analysis unit or linkage area.

**Water availability and use:** No lakes or reservoirs are within the addition areas. Several small perennial tributaries of Douglas Creek and the North Platte River drainages occur. On site water is primarily used for recreation, wildlife and fisheries habitat and for livestock watering.

**Livestock operations:** The addition areas occur within two cattle livestock grazing allotments, Platte River and West Beaver. A small portion of one addition area is within the Platte Ridge wildlife area which currently has no permitted livestock use. Cattle grazing occurs during the summer and early fall months. Much of the addition area has heavy tree cover or steep slopes that limit use by livestock. Lower Boat Creek, the area north of Elkhorn Creek and the area adjacent to the Platte River are three areas that receive the most livestock use.

**Timber:** Suitable lodgepole pine timber exists in many of the addition segments. It is estimate that approximately 75-80% of the area with timber stands is suitable for timber management. Timber harvesting has occurred adjacent to several of the boundaries of a few addition sites. Several outyear timber sale proposals also exist within less than ¼ mile of boundaries of several addition areas.

**Minerals:** Prospecting for hard rock minerals has occurred historically throughout the area but only one patented claim site is adjacent to the addition area. A few unpatented mining claims are know to exist in the area. None of the area has been withdrawn from mineral entry. No oil and gas leases exist nor has any recent exploration been done adjacent to the area.

**Cultural resources:** There is potential for prehistoric sites in the lower elevation areas. Remnants of old trails, cabin sites, and mining activities can occasionally be discovered in the area.

**Authorized and potential land uses:** No special uses exist in the area nor have any been recently proposed. Outfitter guiding associated with horseback, camping and hiking activities is limited and transient.



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Management considerations:** Addition of the unroaded areas will create a highly irregular boundary that will be difficult to manage and hard for the public to identify on the ground. Prescribed fire has occurred in about 1500 acres in the addition area. Some timber harvest units adjoin the boundary of a few addition areas.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
Unlikely.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
Timber suitable for harvesting and management occurs in some parts of the area.  
Demand for mineral development is small as some prospecting still occurs.  
No developed recreation sites are currently planned.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies adjacent to the Platte River Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-122. Percent covertype in Platte River Addition Roadless Area

Covertype	Acres	Percent
Aspen	234	3
Douglas fir	163	2
Grassland	606	8
Lodgepole pine	5,288	67
Ponderosa pine	59	1
Shrubs	1,546	19
Spruce fir	48	1

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-123. Limited representation coverts in Platte River Addition Roadless Area.

Coverttype	Acres in Platte River Addition Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Ponderosa pine	59	<1
Douglas fir	163	6
Lodgepole pine	5,288	4
Gambel oak	*1,546	5
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	234	1
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	606	3

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs met in this area.

#### Augmenting the size of existing Wilderness:

The four Wildernesses on the Medicine Bow are quite small compared to those found in other mountainous areas of the west (Platte River, 22,749 GIS acres; the Encampment River 10,400 GIS acres; Huston Park, 30,726 GIS acres; and Savage Run, 14,940 acres). The natural fragmentation of the terrain here and associated federal ownership pattern combined with extensive resource extraction before the establishment of Wildernesses limited the size of areas that met Wilderness criteria.

The small size of the existing areas constrains the Forest's ability to allow natural processes like fire to follow a natural course. In addition, the current size may be too small to support populations of wide-ranging species within the boundaries.

The benefits of recommending roadless areas that are adjacent to existing Wilderness as Proposed Wilderness are as follows: The Platte River Additions would add 7,977 acres to the existing 22,749 acre Wilderness (a 35% increase). Like the Savage Run Additions, the areas would pick up the headwaters of several creeks. Currently, activities in the headwaters could compromise the water quality of downstream stretches. Inclusion of these headwaters would create a more logical ecological unit for both aquatic and terrestrial species.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Platte River Addition roadless area.

Table C-124. Management prescriptions by alternative for the Platte River Addition Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							7,821
1.33			5,936	2,224			
3.4		127	127	127	127	127	127
3.5						4,670	

# ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
3.56	232						
3.58				1,609	1,534	1,431	
5.13	3,222	4,744					
5.15				2,439	4,583		
5.4	3,110						
5.41	1,347	3,077	1,884	1,549	1,704	1,720	
8.21	36						

The following table summarizes the Platte River Addition roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-125. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Platte River Addition roadless area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	6,339	4,743		2,439	4,583		
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	29		5,936	2,224			7,821
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	1,579	3,205	2,011	3,285	3,365	7,948	127

## R20625 Illinois Creek 6,707 Acres

### Overview

**Location and vicinity:** The Illinois Creek area is located in the Lower Douglas Creek Geographic Area on the Laramie Ranger District in Albany County. It is approximately 16 miles to the southwest of Centennial,

approximately 3.5 miles north of the Wyoming-Colorado Border. (T.12 and 13N, R. 78, 79, and 80W). Primary access to the area is provided by Primary Forest Road 898 from the South and Primary Forest Road 512 from the West. Unimproved Roads 512F and 512S lead directly into the area.

**Geography:** The western portion of the area borders the Platte River Wilderness Area. The principal feature of the area is the Illinois Creek, which runs along the length of the area. Castle Rock is an 8600-foot peak in the northwestern portion of the area.

**Topography:** Elevations range from 8,340 feet to 9,160 feet. The Illinois Creek area has very steep canyons that drain into Illinois Creek and Pelton Creek.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 83% Lodgepole pine, 16% shrubs and 1% spruce-fir. There is one species of sensitive plants in the area.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally moderately deep, well drained sandy loams. The soils in the area contain a lot of gravel and stone, and they are moderately high in clay content.

**Current Uses of the Area:** There are opportunities for hunting, hiking, camping, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, recreational mining, and mountain biking. There are many ATV and non-system, user-created roads in the area.

Table C-126. Management area acres for Alternative A, Illinois Creek Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	28
5.13 Forest Products	6,661
8.21 Developed Recreation	17

**Appearance:** The area has many user created roads that bisect it.

**Surroundings:** To the west side of the roadless area lies the Platte River Wilderness area. There is a tract of private land to the north east of the roadless area where many private cabins exist. The Pelton Creek campground lies just outside the roadless area on the southwest.

**Key attractions:** Illinois Creek is the main attraction in the area.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** The relatively small size of the area, little topographic screening, moderate vegetative screening and distance from perimeter to core combine to give the area a moderate rating for opportunities for solitude. The opportunity for solitude is greater in the eastern portion of the area due to its size and distance from established 4-wheel drive roads.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Naturalness:** There is a moderate level of naturalness in this area. The user created ATV trails that crisscross the area are the main features that detract from the naturalness of the area. The small size of the area allows noise to intrude into the area.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains (for example, those provided by limited access and harsh weather conditions) are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-** There is moderate opportunity for outdoor recreation experiences. This rating reflects the factors listed in Opportunities for Solitude, and the moderate diversity of opportunity.

### Special Features-

**Education:** There are no specific areas where educational opportunities are present in this area.

**Scenic Features:** There are few known scenic features of particular interest in the area. The Pelton Creek area is fairly scenic, but not one of the more scenic areas in the forest.

### Manageability-

- ♦ **Size:** The small size of the area makes the area manageable, but
- ♦ **Boundaries:** The boundaries of the area are acceptable and can be fairly easily managed due to easy road access.

**Conclusion:** The Illinois Creek area is suitable for further consideration. It meets the criteria for Wilderness and will be further evaluated for availability and need.

## Availability

**Recreation:** The Illinois Creek area is very close to the Pelton Creek Campground. There are opportunities for hunting, hiking, camping, horseback riding, wildlife viewing, and mountain biking.

**Wildlife Species:** This area is habitat for many of the more common types of wildlife on the forest, including deer, elk, and mountain lions. This area is also a habitat for various FS Sensitive Species, including the boreal owl, wood frog, goshawk, bald eagle, boreal toad, and marten.

**Water Availability and Use:** The Illinois Creek is the main waterway in this area. All of the other streams and drainages in the area flow into Illinois Creek, which ties into Pelton Creek at the edge of the roadless area. There is very little recreational use of the waterways in the area.

**Livestock Operations:** There are no cattle allotments in the area. There is some current livestock activity in the area in small areas that overlap and fall within the Roadless area boundaries.

**Timber:** There are two proposed timber sales which overlap into the area (Spruce Gulch and Somber Hill Timber sales).

**Minerals:** There is potential for recreational mining in this area, especially along Illinois Creek itself.

**Cultural Resources:** There are no known cultural resources in the area, and there is minor possibility of resources being found in the area..

**Authorized and Potential Land Uses:** There are none.

**Management Considerations:** The northeastern corner of the area borders an area of private land. There are many ATV and non-system visitor-created roads in the area. There is also an established campground very close to the area.

#### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
No. There is some potential for recreational mining.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
There are two proposed timber sales in the area.  
Minerals activity is primarily recreational.  
Summer motorized recreation opportunities.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies adjacent to the Platte River Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-127. Percent covertime in Illinois Creek Roadless Area.

Covertime	Acres	Percent
Aspen	28	-
Grassland	7	-
Lodgepole pine	5,570	83
Shrubs	1,058	16
Spruce fir	43	1

#### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-128. Limited representation covertypes in Illinois Creek Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres in Illinois Creek Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Lodgepole pine	5,570	5
Gambel oak	*1,058	3
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	28	<1
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	7	<1

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs met in this area.

### Augmenting the size of existing Wilderness:

The four Wildernesses on the Medicine Bow are quite small compared to those found in other mountainous areas of the west (Platte River, 22,749 GIS acres; the Encampment River 10,400 GIS acres; Huston Park, 30,726 GIS acres; and Savage Run, 14,940 acres). The natural fragmentation of the terrain here and associated federal ownership pattern combined with extensive resource extraction before the establishment of Wildernesses limited the size of areas that met Wilderness criteria.

The small size of the existing areas constrains the Forest's ability to allow natural processes like fire to follow a natural course. In addition, the current size may be too small to support populations of wide-ranging species within the boundaries.

The benefits of recommending roadless areas that are adjacent to existing Wilderness as Proposed Wilderness are as follows: Illinois Creek would add 6,706 acres of headwater drainage to the wilderness (a 29.4% increase). This area includes beaver dams and riparian willow habitat.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Illinois Creek roadless area.

Table C-129. Management prescriptions by alternative for the Illinois Creek Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							6,690
1.31					4,749		
1.33			6,690				
3.31				1,652			
3.5						6,690	
3.56	28						
5.13	6,662	6,690					
5.15				5,039	1,954		
8.21	17	17	17	17	5	17	17

# ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

The following table summarizes the Illinois Creek roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-130. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Illinois Creek roadless area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	6,678	6,707	17	5,056	1,959	17	17
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.			6,690	1,652	4,749		6,690
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	28					6,690	



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**R20626 Soldier Creek**  
**5,989 Acres**

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**Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** The Soldier Creek area is located in the Box Elder Geographic Area on the Douglas Ranger District in Converse County. This roadless area contains the western part of the RARE II

Deer Creek Roadless Area (02067). It is approximately 30 miles southwest of Glenrock (T.30N, R.77 and 78W). Access from Glenrock is provided by Converse County Roads 18 and 17 south to FDR 629, south on 629 (no legal public access) to FDR 660, west on 660 to FDR 605 and north on 605. Improved roads end at the start of FDR 629. FDR 605 comprises the eastern side of this roadless area, and parallels Deer Creek. FDR 600, which is also an unimproved road, accesses the western part of the area, but legal public access does not exist on this road.

**Geography:** This roadless area lies within the western part of the Laramie Mountain Range, with the Laramie Plains to the south and the North Platte River Drainage to the north. Most moisture occurs in April through June. Summers are generally dry with occasional thunderstorms. The area is generally not accessible by wheeled vehicles from late November until mid-June due to snowpack.

**Topography:** Elevations in the area range from about 7,800 feet to 8,762 feet at the top of Reno Hill. The peaks are typical of the Laramie Range Mountains with rocky outcrops. The principal peak in the area is Reno Hill, which is the highest point on a general south to north ridge through the middle of this area. The area contains the upper drainages of Soldier Creek, which drains the west side of the area into Deer Creek. Several unnamed streams drain the east side of the main ridge through the area and empty into Deer Creek, which passes through the southern part of this area and then along the eastern edge of the area. Deer Creek then heads north into the North Platte River in Glenrock, Wyoming.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised 18% Limber Pine, 8% Aspen, 2% grasslands, 43% Lodgepole pine, 8% non-forested, 2% Ponderosa pine, 18% shrubs and 1% spruce-fir.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally granitic, originating from decomposition of the adjacent peak and rocky ridges. Erosion hazard in the area is high.

**Current Uses of the Area:** The current uses of the area include hiking, horseback riding, ATV use, hunting and dispersed camping. Most of the dispersed camping occurs along FDR 605 and Deer Creek where about a dozen well established dispersed campsites exist. Legal public right-of-way was acquired on this road in 1998 and public use since then has gradually increased along this road to a moderate level. Low levels of use occur on Reno Hill and the ridge to the south due to the very rugged and rocky topography. Some use is occurring in the western side of the area accessed by FDR 600, but this is still generally a low to moderate level of use due to lack of legal access and its remote distance from communities. No Forest Service system trails exist in the area. However, use in the area increases considerably during the fall hunting season due to good game populations and road access around the area.

Table C-131. Management area acres for Alternative A, Soldier Creek Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	452
4.31 Dispersed Recreation, Low Use	2,585
5.12 General Forest and Rangelands, Rangeland Vegetation Emphasis	2,952

**Appearance:** The area is characterized by the main south to north ridge, which is very rocky, with Deer Creek to the east and Soldier Creek to the west. Most of the slopes are sparsely forested with limber pine and lodgepole pine due to the rocky soils, with spruce and fir occurring along the perennial streams.

**Surroundings:** The area is surrounded by the Laramie Plains to the south, rolling hills and meadows to the north and west, and the Gunnysack Roadless Area to the east. A section of State land exists to the southwest of Reno Hill within the Forest Proclamation Boundary. A few summer homes exist on private lands along Deer Creek, but most of the rest of the surrounding private lands still exist as large ranching operations.

**Key attractions:** The key attraction in the area is Deer Creek along the eastern edge of this roadless area. No outstanding key attractions exist within the roadless area itself.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** The small size of the area, limited vegetative screening, and moderate to high levels of use during the hunting season, combine to give the area a moderate rating for opportunities for solitude.

**Naturalness:** The main south to north ridge through the area has a moderate level of naturalness. The areas along Soldier Creek, and its forks, has a lesser level of naturalness due to range improvements. Canada thistle is a non-indigenous plant that grows in the area. Low levels of water contamination occur in areas with concentrated stock use. Rainbow and brook trout have been introduced to provide improved fishing opportunities along Deer Creek. Evidence of human presence or activity includes the following: abandoned historic cabins, fences, stock watering tanks, and signs of dispersed camping.

**Challenge-** Opportunities for challenging experiences in the area are rare. Off-trail hiking along the rocky ridge through the area would be the primary challenging experience. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains such as limited access and harsh weather conditions are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-**The factors listed in Opportunity for solitude and little diversity combine to give the area a low rating for opportunities for primitive recreation.

### Special Features-

**Education:** Environmental educational opportunities are few and would consist of low impact camping information along Deer Creek.

**Scenic Features:** There are no outstanding or unique scenic features in the area.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

### Manageability-

- ♦ **Size:** The area is small in size but it borders the Gunnysack Roadless area to the south and north, with about a 1.5 mile stretch of private land along Deer Creek at the eastern side. The greatest impairment to manageability is the fact that it is a 2.5 hour drive from the Douglas District Office and very little Forest Service employee presence would be possible for patrol and enforcement.
- ♦ **Boundaries:** The boundary of the area largely follows the Forest boundary on the north and south, FDR 600 on the west, and FDR 605 to the east.

**Conclusion:** This area lies on the low end of the range of capability. It has some issues that tend to make it less capable than other areas on the forest, however, it will still be considered capable for wilderness and will be further evaluated for availability and need.

### Availability:

**Recreation:** Primitive and Semi-Primitive recreation availability is currently limited due to the small size of the area, limited vegetative screening, and existence of range developments in the few areas that have aesthetic draw.

**Wildlife Species:** Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer, black bear, and mountain lions are the primary big game species in the area.

**Water Availability and Use:** The West and East Forks of Soldier Creek are the main perennial streams in the area. A few beaver ponds exist along these streams. No other water impoundments or natural lakes exist in the area.

**Livestock Operations:** Livestock grazing occurs in the area from summer through fall, especially in the western part of the area around Soldier Creek, and the eastern part of the area along Deer Creek.

**Timber:** No suitable timber exists within the area.

**Minerals:** The area has a low potential for mineral exploration and development.

**Cultural Resources:** Native Americans utilized this area for summer and fall sustenance, primarily hunting.

**Authorized and Potential Land Uses:** Livestock grazing and incidental amounts of outfitter and guide operations during hunting seasons are the only permitted land uses in the area. There is a moderate potential for additional permitted outfitter and guide operations.

**Management Considerations:** Legal public access should be acquired along FDR 600. Closing and reclaiming FDR 605 in the south part of the area would provide a land link between this roadless area and the Gunnysack Roadless Area, however, the landowners of the private inholdings along FDR 605 have a legal right to access their lands and summer cabins.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures?

Primary wildlife management seems to be big game hunting which presumably can be done w/o motorized vehicles.

3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
No.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with wilderness designation?  
No unique or outstanding features.
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
No suitable timber, low mineral potential, limited primitive/semi-primitive recreation opportunities.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 91 miles from the Savage Run Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

. Percent covertype in Soldier Creek Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres	Percent
Aspen	504	8
Grassland	115	2
Limber pine	1,062	18
Lodgepole pine	2,601	43
Non Forested	467	8
Ponderosa pine	120	2
Shrubs	1,083	18
Spruce fir	36	1

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-132. Limited Representation Covertypes in Soldier Creek Roadless Area

Covertypes	Acres in Soldier Creek Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Ponderosa pine	120	<1
Lodgepole pine	2,601	2
Gambel oak	*1,083	3
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	504	2
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	115	1
Limber pine	1,062	26

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** Includes limber pine which is in very limited representation in the region.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Soldier Creek roadless area.

Table C-133. Management prescription by alternative in the Soldier Creek Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							5,989
3.31		9	5,989	5,989	5,989	5,989	
3.56	452						
4.31	2,585						
5.12	2,952	5,980					

The following table summarizes the Soldier Creek roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-134. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Soldier Creek roadless area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.							
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.		9	5,989	5,989	5,989	5,989	5,989

**ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Alt A</b>	<b>Alt B</b>	<b>Alt C</b>	<b>Alt D DEIS</b>	<b>Alt D FEIS</b>	<b>Alt E</b>	<b>Alt F</b>
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	5,989	5,980					

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**R20627 Gunnysack  
12,881 Acres**

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**Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** The Gunnysack area is located in the Box Elder Geographic Area on the Douglas Ranger District in Converse county. This roadless area is part of the RARE II Deer Creek Roadless Area (02067). It is

approximately 25 miles south of Glenrock (T.30N., R.76 and 77W). The primary access to this area Converse County roads 18 and 17 south to the Box Elder Road, FDR 629, then FDR 629 south to the Basin Road, FDR 660, then west on FDR 660 to the Upper Deer Creek Road, FDR 659. A developed trailhead exists at the end of FDR 659, just within the forest boundary, where the Deer Creek Trail, FDT 659 travels north into the southern part of this roadless area. Access to the western side of the roadless area can be attained by continuing west on FDR 660 to the Lower Deer Creek Road, FDR 605. The improved roads end at the north end of FDR 629, at the end of County Road 17. No legal public access exists off of FDR 629, which travels just outside of the eastern side of the roadless area. Several four-wheel drive roads approach the area from the north, east, and south through private lands. A non-system ATV route is known to exist along Horse Creek, from private land to FDR 605.

**Geography:** This roadless area lies within the western part of the Laramie Mountain Range, with the Laramie Plains to the south and the North Platte River drainage to the north. Most moisture occurs in April through June. Summers are generally dry with occasional thunderstorms. The area is generally not accessible by wheeled vehicles from late November until mid-June due to snowpack.

**Topography:** Elevations in the area range from about 7,800 feet to 9,061 feet at the top of Gunnysack Peak. The peaks are typical of the Laramie Range Mountains with rocky outcrops. The principal peaks in the area include: Gunnysack Peak in the east central part of the area and Davis Peak, just outside of the roadless area at the north end of the area. The area contains some of the upper drainages of Deer Creek and Davis Creek, which drain into the main fork of Deer Creek and north into the North Platte River. Gunnysack Creek drains the east side of the area into Box Elder Creek, which also heads north to the North Platte River.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 1% aspen, 1% grasslands, 9% limber pine, 66% lodgepole pine, 1% non-forested, 7% ponderosa pine, 11% shrubs, and 2% spruce-fir.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally granitic, originating from decomposition of the adjacent peaks and rocky ridges. Erosion hazard in the area is high.

**Current Uses of the Area:** The current uses of the area include hiking, horseback riding, some ATV use, hunting, and dispersed camping. Most of the use occurs along and from the Deer Creek Trail, FDT 695, which provides nonmotorized access into the central part of the area. Lesser amounts of use occurs along the non-system Horse Creek trail where private lands control access from either end of this route. Minor amounts of off-trail hiking use occurs throughout the area.

Table C-135. Management area acres for Alternative A, Gunnysack Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	79
4.31 Dispersed Recreation, Low Use	9,741
5.12 General Forest and Rangelands, Rangeland Vegetation Emphasis	3,060

**Appearance:** The area is characterized by rocky ridges and rock outcrops along the stream courses. Deer Creek ascends to the base of Gunnysack Creek where open meadows and broad, wet marshes and seeps exist. Horse Creek divides the area near the north and consists of a deep canyon. The northern part of the area consists primarily of an upland, rocky ridge with no developed access. The area is mostly timbered with lodgepole pine and limber pine along the slopes and ridge tops, and spruce and fir along the stream courses.

**Surroundings:** The area is surrounded by the Laramie Plains to the south, rolling hills and meadows to the north, the Deer Creek canyon to the west and Box Elder canyon to the east. Much of the private lands to the east, along the Box Elder Road, FDR 629, have been subdivided and have summer homes. The private lands to the north and south remain as large ranching operations. Two forest inholdings to the west also contain a few summer homes.

**Key attractions:** The key attractions in the area are the upper meadows and marshes of Deer Creek. This area is habitat for many elk in the early summer.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** Use in the area is relatively low due to the rugged topography and limited public access. Use along Deer Creek Trail has increase in the past few years, when legal public access was acquired on FDR 659, but the increase has been slow due the long distance to the trail from communities and the distance of low standard roads that must be driven to reach the trailhead. Opportunities for solitude are high along the trail and very high off of the trail.

**Naturalness:** Most of the area within the roadless boundary has a high level of naturalness. The greatest sign of human presence exists along Deer Creek Trail where unknown individuals “blazed” many of the trees along the trail with chainsaw cut marks. Canada thistle is a non-indigenous plant that grows in the area. Low levels of water contamination occurs in areas with concentrated stock use. Some rainbow and brook trout fishing opportunities exist along Horse Creek. Evidence of human presence or activity includes the following: one system trail and one non-system trail on which ATV use is occurring, the potential for abandoned historic cabins, and signs of dispersed camping.

**Challenge-** Opportunities for challenging experiences in the area exist in the form of off-trail hiking and orienteering in rough, rocky topography. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains such as limited access and harsh weather conditions are present in the area.



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-**The factors listed in Opportunity for solitude, moderate size, and low levels of use on and off trails combine to give the area a high rating for opportunities for primitive recreation.

### **Special Features-**

**Education:** Deer Creek Trailhead offers the only developed site for displaying educational information. Such information could include early Native American use of the area, especially from the Laramie Plains area, homesteading, and forest ecology.

**Scenic Features:** There are no outstanding scenic features in the area. The scenery of the area is typical of the Laramie Mountain Range. The meadows and marshes of upper Deer Creek offer a unique setting for the Laramie Mountains.

### **Manageability-**

- ♦ **Size:** The area is moderate in size, but the scarcity of four-wheel drive roads intruding into the area from adjacent private lands would allow for good manageability.
- ♦ **Boundaries:** The boundary of the area largely follows the Forest boundary. A “tail” of National Forest lands to the south would present management difficulty due to the potential for trespass off of public lands onto private lands and visa versa. The area of National Forest lands in the north presents a similar situation, but these lands are broader, and exist along an easily identified ridge. A system trail along this ridge would improve manageability. Two State inholdings exist in the area, one of 40 acres and the other of 80 acres.

**Conclusion:** The high opportunities for solitude and naturalness and the areas moderate size makes the area capable for wilderness and it will be further evaluated for availability and need.

## **Availability:**

**Recreation:** Primitive and Semi-Primitive recreation currently exists in the area. Motorized trail use along the non-system Horse Creek Trail should be prohibited regardless of wilderness recommendation, as the maintenance of this trail is not authorized.

**Wildlife Species:** Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer, black bear, and mountain lions are the primary big game species in the area.

**Water Availability and Use:** Several perennial streams originate or pass through the area. Some beaver ponds exist along these streams. No other water impoundments or natural lakes exist in the area.

**Livestock Operations:** Moderate to low levels of livestock graze throughout the area from mid-summer to fall from the adjacent private ranches.

**Timber:** Very little suitable timber exists within the area. Some firewood cutting occurs at the Deer Creek Trailhead. Substantial timber logging has been occurring in recent years on private lands to the south of the roadless area.

**Minerals:** The potential for mineral exploration and development is low.

**Cultural Resources:** Native Americans utilized this area for summer and fall sustenance, primarily hunting. Some prospector and homestead cabins may have been built within the area in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

**Authorized and Potential Land Uses:** Livestock grazing is the primary permitted use in the area. Incidental levels of permitted outfitter and guide hunting occurs in the area. The potential for increased permitted outfitter and guide use is moderate.

**Management Considerations:** A recent NEPA analysis has identified the need to acquire legal public right-of-way along two low standard roads through private land to improve public access to this area. These are both off of the Box Elder Road, FDR 629, one into the east end of Horse Creek and the other up Gunnysack Creek. The two state in-holdings should be acquired through a land exchange. Other land exchange acquisitions of state and private land along the boundary of this roadless area could enlarge and enhance the recreation and roadless opportunities of this area.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
Low potential for mineral exploration/development.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
Very little suitable timber in the area.  
Low mineral potential.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 89 miles from the Savage Run Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-136. Percent covertype in Gunnysack Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres	Percent
Aspen	187	1
Cottonwood	15	-
Douglas fir	38	-
Grassland	125	1
Limber pine	1,222	9
Lodgepole pine	8,564	66
Non Forested	130	1
Ponderosa pine	946	7
Shrubs	1,448	11
Spruce fir	210	2

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-137. Limited representation covertypes in Gunnysack Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres in Gunnysack Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Ponderosa pine	946	2
Douglas fir	38	1
Lodgepole pine	8,564	7
Gambel oak	*1,448	4
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	187	1
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	125	1
Limber pine	1,222	30
Cottonwood/willow	15	7

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs met in this area.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Gunnysack roadless area.

Table C-138. Management prescriptions by alternative for the Gunnysack Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							12,881
1.33				12,881	12,881	12,881	
3.31		6,646	12,881				

**ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION**

<b>Mgmt Rx</b>	<b>Alt A</b>	<b>Alt B</b>	<b>Alt C</b>	<b>Alt D DEIS</b>	<b>Alt D FEIS</b>	<b>Alt E</b>	<b>Alt F</b>
3.56	79						
4.31	9,741						
5.12	3,060	6,235					

The following table summarizes the Gunnysack roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-139. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Gunnysack Roadless Area.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Alt A</b>	<b>Alt B</b>	<b>Alt C</b>	<b>Alt D DEIS</b>	<b>Alt D FEIS</b>	<b>Alt E</b>	<b>Alt F</b>
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.							
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.		6,646	12,881	12,881	12,881	12,881	12,881
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	12,881	6,235					

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**R20628 Buffalo Peak**  
**17,543 Acres**

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**Overview**

**Location and vicinity:** The Buffalo Peak area is located in the Boxelder Geographic Area on the Douglas Ranger District in Converse county. This roadless area is part of

the RARE II Buffalo Peak Roadless Area (02068). It is approximately 30 miles south of Glenrock (T29N., R75 and 76 W; T30N., R76 W.). Access is provided by the Cold Springs Road, Converse Count Road 24, along the east side of the area, and the Basin Road, FDR 660, along the south side of the area. The Twin Peaks Trail, FDT 618, provides the only legal public access on a transportation facility into the area from the east. This trail was improved in 1995 to provide ATV access to Twin Peaks. A number of unimproved four-wheel-drive roads approach the area from the south and north through private lands.

**Geography:** The area lies within the western part of the Laramie Mountain Range, with the Laramie Plains to the south and the North Platte River drainage to the north. Most moisture occurs in April through June. Summers are generally dry with occasional thunderstorms. The area is generally not accessible by wheeled vehicles from late November through early June due to snowpack.

**Topography:** Elevations in the area range from about 7,200 feet to 9,400 feet. The peaks are typical of the Laramie Range mountains with numerous rock outcrops. The peaks in the area are Buffalo Peak, Squaw Mountain, and Twin Peaks. The area includes the upper drainages of East Box Elder Creek, Meadow Creek, Roaring Fork Creek, and Rock Creek. Most of the area drains north into Box Elder Creek and LaPrele Creek, with the remainder draining south into Little Medicine Bow River.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 1% Aspen, 1% Douglas fir, 6% grasslands, 5% Limber pine, 68% Lodgepole pine, 4% non-forested, 8% Ponderosa pine, 2% shrubs and 6% spruce-fir.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally granitic, originating from decomposition of the adjacent peaks. Erosion hazard in the area is high.

**Current Uses of the Area:** Most of the current uses of the area are hiking, ATV riding, dispersed camping, and hunting, with some low levels of horse back riding, snowmobiling and cross country skiing. The Twin Peaks Trail, FDT 618 and Buffalo Peak Trail, FDT 619 are the only Forest Service system trails in the area. Legal public access does not currently exist on the Buffalo Peak Trail, but access has been identified as being needed in a separate NEPA analysis. Both of these trails receive a moderate amount of ATV use. The Buffalo Peak Trail was originally an old jeep trail to a prospecting site, and most ATV use on this trail originates from private lands to the west. The Old Twin Peaks Trail, FDT 618A, has been identified in a separate NEPA analysis for possible inclusion into the Forest Development Trail system and reconstruction for hiking and horse use. This old trail exists in part between Russell's Camp at the west side of the area and the Twin Peaks Trail in the eastern part of the area. Some minor amounts of dispersed camping occurs within the area, mostly during the big game hunting seasons in the fall. Off trail ATV use in the area increases during this time of the year. Other than during the hunting seasons, most of the use in the area is in the form of day incursions rather than overnight camping.

Table C-140. Management area acres for Alternative A, Buffalo Peak Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	119
4.31 Dispersed Recreation	15,802
5.12 General Forest and Rangelands, Rangeland Vegetation Emphasis	624
5.41 Deer and Elk Winter Range	997

**Appearance:** The area is characterized by heavily forested slopes along the perennial streams at the lower elevations. These streams have numerous beaver ponds and thick understory vegetation. The drainages open into small grassy parks and long meadows at higher elevations where the rocky outcroppings and nearby peaks can be seen. Some of the rock formations are quite scenic.

**Surroundings:** The surrounding area consists of more open meadows, interspersed with forested stands and rocky outcropping, that gives way to open plains as the elevation decreases. Some of the private lands to the west and south have been subdivided, but few summer cabins have been built yet. Most of the private lands to the east and north remain in large ranching operations. Fairly extensive logging has occurred on many of the private lands in the Russell's Camp area and areas to the south and southeast during the past 10 years.

**Key attractions:** Deer, bear, mountain lion and elk inhabit the area. Other than the rock formations and peaks, there are no special scenic landmarks or other special attractions in the area.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** The moderately large size of the area, moderate topographic screening, moderate vegetative screening, moderate distance from perimeter to core and no off-site intrusions combine to give the area a moderate rating for opportunities for solitude.

**Naturalness:** Most of the area within the roadless boundary has a moderate level of naturalness. The width of, and ATV use on, the existing system trails detracts from the naturalness. Canada thistle and other weeds are non-indigenous plants that grow in the area. Low levels of water contamination occurs in areas with concentrated stock use. Evidence of human presence or activity includes the following: abandoned cabins, wire fence, old prospecting pits, livestock grazing, and signs of dispersed recreation use.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains such as limited access and harsh weather conditions are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-**The factors listed in Opportunity for solitude, moderate diversity and absence of facilities combine to give the area a moderate rating for opportunities for primitive recreation.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

### Special Features-

**Education:** The educational opportunities that exist in the area are Native American history and use of the area and early prospecting and homesteading.

**Scenic Features:** There are no known special scenic features in the area

### Manageability-

- ♦ **Size:** The area comprises a moderate sized but contiguous block of National Forest land on the Douglas District, which could be managed towards the semi-primitive end of the recreation spectrum.
- ♦ **Boundaries:** The boundary of the area largely follows the Forest Boundary. No known two-track roads from private lands enter the roadless area, but several non-system trails are known to exist from adjacent private lands that are used by ATV's.

**Conclusion:** The moderately large size of the area, moderate opportunity for solitude and naturalness and moderate opportunity for primitive recreation experiences combine to make the area capable for wilderness and it will be further evaluated for availability and need.

## Availability

**Recreation:** Primitive and Semi-Primitive recreation opportunities are currently moderate. Closure of the system trails to motorized trail vehicle use would increase the availability of these uses. Motorized trail vehicle use on system and non-system trails that originate from adjacent private lands into the area would degrade primitive recreation experiences. These incursions would be very difficult to enforce. Legal motorized vehicle use on the Twin Peaks trail and on FDR 607 would introduce motorized vehicle noise into the area which would also impact primitive recreation experiences.

**Wildlife Species:** Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer, black bear, and mountain lions are the primary big game species in the area.

**Water Availability and Use:** Several perennial streams exist in the area, and a few beaver ponds exist along these streams. The lower reach of Meadow Creek is eroding due to FDT 619 that exists along this stream channel. Stream restoration work is needed to reduce the erosion and downstream sedimentation in beaver ponds that is occurring. No other water impoundments or natural lakes exist in the area.

**Livestock Operations:** Low levels of livestock grazing occurs in the area during the summer and fall months.

**Timber:** Very little suitable timber exists in the area. A small timber sale, consisting mostly of products other than logs, recently occurred in the Russell's Camp area within the roadless area.

**Minerals:** Some prospecting for gold and silver occurred in the area in the past. The potential for mineral exploration and development is low.

**Cultural Resources:** Native Americans utilized this area for summer and fall sustenance, primarily hunting. Recent archeological surveys have revealed these people may have used the southern part of the area, adjacent to the Laramie Plains for extended periods of time. Some prospecting and homestead cabins were built in the area in the late 1800s and early 1900s.

**Authorized and Potential Land Uses:** Livestock grazing is the primary permitted land use in the area. Some incidental outfitting and guiding, mostly day use guided hunting, is permitted in the area. The potential for increased outfitting and guiding in the area is moderate.

**Management Considerations:** Legal public right-of-way has been identified as being needed in a separate NEPA analysis for the road access to the forest boundary for FDT 619, and for access into Russell's Camp along FDR 607. Increased Forest Service enforcement patrols would be necessary to stop ATV use on the existing Forest Development Trails should the area be designated for non-motorized recreation use.

The Douglas Ranger District has identified the eastern part of this area, between the forest boundary and Cold Springs Road, for land acquisition through land exchange. Much of this area has recently been roaded and logged. Analysis for acquisition of this land will need to assess mitigation of these roaded and logged lands to meet the land management prescription standards and guidelines of the adjacent National Forest lands within the roadless area.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
No. The potential for mineral exploration/development is low.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
Very little suitable timber.  
Low mineral potential.  
Summer motoriaed recreation opportunities.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 86 miles from the Savage Run Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

Table C-141. Percent covertype in Buffalo Peak Roadless Area.

Covertype	Acres	Percent
Aspen	132	1
Cottonwood	40	-
Douglas fir	172	1
Grassland	976	6
Limber pine	898	5
Lodgepole pine	11,886	68
Non Forested	617	4
Ponderosa pine	1,485	8
Shrubs	268	2
Spruce fir	1,069	6

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-142. Limited representation covertypes in Buffalo Peak Roadless Area.

Covertype	Acres in Buffalo Peak Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Ponderosa pine	1,485	4
Douglas fir	172	6
Lodgepole pine	11,885	10
Gambel oak	*268	1
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	132	<1
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	976	5
Limber pine	898	22
Cottonwood/willow	40	19

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs met in this area.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Buffalo Peak roadless area.

Table C-143. Management prescriptions by alternative for the Buffalo Peak Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							17,541
3.5				17,402	17,541	17,387	
3.51						153	

**ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION**

<b>Mgmt Rx</b>	<b>Alt A</b>	<b>Alt B</b>	<b>Alt C</b>	<b>Alt D DEIS</b>	<b>Alt D FEIS</b>	<b>Alt E</b>	<b>Alt F</b>
3.56	119						
4.31	15,801						
5.12	624	17,377	17,402				
5.41	996						
5.42		164	138	138			

The following table summarizes the Buffalo Peak roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-144. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Buffalo Peak Roadless Area.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Alt A</b>	<b>Alt B</b>	<b>Alt C</b>	<b>Alt D DEIS</b>	<b>Alt D FEIS</b>	<b>Alt E</b>	<b>Alt F</b>
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.							
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.							17,541
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	17,541	17,541	17,541	17,541	17,541	17,541	

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## R20629 LaBonte Canyon

### 16,257 Acres

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## Overview

**Location and vicinity:** The LaBonte Canyon Roadless Area is located in the LaBonte Creek Geographic Area on the Douglas Ranger District in

Albany and Converse counties. This Roadless Area is part of the RARE II LaBonte Canyon Roadless Area (02069). It is approximately 30 miles southwest of Douglas (T.27, 28 and 29 N., R. 73 and 74W.). The primary access to the area is provided by Fort Fetterman Road (Albany County Road 61). From the Ft. Fetterman Road, the LaBonte Canyon road (FDR 658) provides legal public access into the National Forest lands. This road is a double lane, gravel surfaced road for about 4.5 miles, which ends at the Curtis Gulch Campground. Four-wheel-drive non-system roads (originating on private Land) approach the roadless area from all sides. We do not have legal public right-of-way on most of these roads and we have no control over the access and/or traffic (outside of placing gates at the intersections w/FS lands) into NFS lands. It is unlikely we will get support from the adjacent non-federal landowners for such a gating. Law Enforcement will also be a major concern.

**Geography:** This roadless area lies within the western part of the Laramie Mountain Range, with the Laramie Plains to the south and the North Platte River drainage to the north. Most moisture occurs in April through June. Summers are generally dry with occasional thunderstorms. The area is generally not accessible by wheeled vehicles from late November until early June due to snow pack.

**Topography:** Elevations in the area range from about 6,200 feet to 8,700 feet. Peaks and mountains in the area are typical of the Laramie Range Mountains, being upthrust granitic mountains. The prominent peaks and mountains include Sawtooth Ridge, North and South Sawtooth mountains, Blacktail Peak, The Needles, Trethway Mountain and Burnt Mountain. The area also includes part of the rocky, precipitous LaBonte Canyon.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of: 2% Aspen, 3% Douglas fir, 1% grasslands, 33% Lodgepole pine, 3% non-forested, 56% Ponderosa Pine, and 1% spruce-fir.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally granitic, originating from decomposition of the adjacent canyon walls and mountains. Erosion hazard in the area is high.

**Current Uses of the Area:** The area along LaBonte Canyon road (FDR 658) experiences the greatest amount of dispersed camping on the Douglas Ranger District. Most of these campsites are located between the road and LaBonte Creek. The Curtis Gulch Campground is located about 4 miles down the LaBonte Road from the Forest boundary, where this gravel road ends and becomes a two track Forest Development Road (FDR 624) for another 2.8 miles along LaBonte Creek. Off road ATV use has been observed in the area along FDR 624 into the roadless area. This road then ends at a small trailhead for Forest Development Trail 624, which continues down the creek for another 2 miles to the forest boundary.

The LaBonte Creek area, adjacent to FDR 658, experiences fairly heavy recreation use throughout the summer and fall in the forms of: dispersed camping, fishing, viewing scenery and wildlife, four wheel driving, ATV driving, big game hunting in the fall, hiking, horseback riding, and some rock climbing. These users often hike into the roadless area that is adjacent to FDR.

The Curtis Gulch Trail, FDT 639, provides access north into the roadless area from near Curtis Gulch Campground. This trail travels along Curtis Gulch Creek for about three miles until it enters a private inholding. Forest Service trail maintenance of this trail has consisted mostly of logging out downed trees across the trail. The trail is open to motorized trail vehicles.

Low level of hiking and horseback riding mostly occurs along the exiting roads and trails in the area due to the very rocky, steep, and rugged topography that exists off of the roads and trails within the roadless area. Occasional hiking use and illegal off road ATV use occurs within the roadless area that is accessed by these roads.

Table C-145. Management area acres for Alternative A, LaBonte Canyon Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	231
4.31 Dispersed Recreation, Low Use	13,704
5.12 General Forest and Rangelands, Rangeland Vegetation Emphasis	146
5.41 Deer and Elk Winter Range	2,143
8.21 Developed Recreation	32

**Appearance:** The area is characterized by rugged hills, numerous cliff faces, and ridges and peaks with deep divides. LaBonte creek bisects the area from west to east, and several other perennial streams enter LaBonte Creek from the north and south. The streams are mostly in a forested setting, with some areas of the streams being along small meadows and sage covered hills. The main road runs along LaBonte Creek.

**Surroundings:** The area is surrounded by rugged drainages, and some plains are visible in the far distance. Laramie Peak can be seen to the southeast and the Laramie Plains can be viewed to the south. The area to the northwest of the roadless area, east of the Ft. Fetterman Road, has seen a number of summer homes constructed on private lands in the past decade. Hiking use into the roadless area from these homes has increased during this time. The area surrounding the roadless area is rich with evidence and existence of developed uses.

**Key attractions:** The primary scenic landmark in the area is LaBonte Canyon. The Sawtooth Mountains along the southeast part of the area provide attractive and scenic vertical relief in the area. The dominant visuals are of the cliff faces, from the canyon bottom, or of the landscape from the cliff edges. Most of these views are outside of the inventoried roadless area.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** The moderate size of the area, high topographic screening, and moderate distance from perimeter to core combine to give the area a moderate rating for opportunities for solitude. The portion of this area south of LaBonte Creek probably has slightly higher opportunities for solitude due to the more rugged topography along the Sawtooth Mountains and greater distance from summer homes on private lands and the

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

heavy recreation use along LaBonte Canyon. Human pressure within the roadless boundary is increasing due to the already heavy recreation use along LaBonte Canyon, the increasing number of summer homes on adjacent private lands, and the increasing use of ATV's along the two track roads adjacent to the area.

**Naturalness:** Most of the area within the roadless boundary has a moderate level of naturalness. Some evidence of human presence or activity includes the following: abandoned historic cabins, wire fences, old prospecting pits, livestock grazing, and signs of low levels of dispersed recreation use, such as rock fire pits at dispersed campsites. Canada thistle is a non-indigenous plant that grows in the area. Low levels of water contamination occurs within LaBonte Creek due to the concentrated dispersed camping use adjacent to the creek. Rainbow and brook trout have been introduced to provide improved fishing opportunities.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few opportunities for unusual challenging experiences in the area. Some opportunities for rock climbing exist. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains such as limited access, rugged topography, and harsh weather conditions are present in the area.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-**The factors listed in Opportunity for solitude, moderate size, and the increasing numbers of recreationists venturing into the area, combine to give the area a low rating for opportunities for primitive recreation. Because of the situation (the existence of a road thru the middle of the area) hiking opportunities are limited to short hikes.

### **Special Features-**

**Education:** The potential for outdoor educational opportunities exist due to the fairly heavy recreation use along LaBonte Creek.

**Scenic Features:** LaBonte Canyon and the adjacent peaks provide some of the more scenic areas in this part of the Laramie Mountain Range. However, this setting is not highly unique or extraordinary.

### **Manageability-**

- ◆ **Size:** The area is of moderate size but is bisected by FDR 624 along LaBonte Creek. Historic and increasing on and off road ATV use from FDR 624 will create management difficulties. Even if FDR 624 is closed to motorized vehicular use, some ATV use will continue into the northern parts of the roadless area on historic routes from the private lands to the north.
- ◆ **Boundaries:** The boundary of the area largely follows the Forest Boundary. However, this boundary is irregular due to the fragmented land ownership pattern on the Douglas District. There is a 160-acre block of private land in the center of the area. Boundary management would be difficult due to the numerous two track roads that enter the area from adjacent private land on which there are no public or administrative rights-of-way. Some of these routes and travelways that originate on non-federal lands, dead end within the forest so effective closure of these routes to motorized vehicle use would be difficult.

**Conclusion:** This area lies on the low end of the range of capability. It has some issues that tend to make it less capable than other areas on the forest, however, it will still be considered capable for wilderness and will be further evaluated for availability and need.

## Availability:

**Recreation:** Primitive recreation availability is currently limited due to the mostly motorized based recreation use, although much of this use is within a semi-primitive setting away from the main access roads. The fact that the LaBonte Canyon road bisects the area would continue to reduce the available primitive opportunities.

**Wildlife Species:** Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer, black bear, and mountain lions are the primary big game species in the area. Some Bighorn Sheep also inhabit portions of LaBonte Canyon.

**Water Availability and Use:** LaBonte Creek and several other perennial streams exist in the area. A few beaver dams exist along these streams. Trout fishing occurs in these streams and beaver ponds. No other water impoundments or natural lakes exist in the area.

**Livestock Operations:** Livestock are grazed in the area throughout the summer and early fall.

**Timber:** Very little suitable timber exists in the area. Some firewood cutting occurs along LaBonte Road by non-commercial permit holders and dispersed campers.

**Minerals:** Some gold and silver prospecting and mining occurred along upper LaBonte Creek in the mid-1900s. No active mining is currently occurring.

**Cultural Resources:** Native Americans utilized this area for summer and fall sustenance, primarily hunting. The Spaniards may have entered the LaBonte Canyon area in the 1500's. Some prospector and homestead cabins were built within the area in the late 1800's or early 1900's.

**Authorized and Potential Land Uses:** Livestock grazing is the only current permitted land use in the area. Road access through isolated and fragmented National Forest lands have been authorized in the recent past and may be requested in the future for timber harvest on private lands or to access private lands for summer cabin construction.

**Management Considerations:** The primary management considerations for the area have been to determine what amount of low standard road and motorized and non-motorized trail systems would be appropriate for the area, and to limit motorized use to designated roads and trails. Legal public road access from the east would be desirable, at least to the Forest boundary. Reciprocal rights-of-way could be acquired as opportunities arise, but these opportunities are few.

The Douglas District Land Adjustment Plan has identified this area for acquisition of private inholdings through exchange, and further consolidation and expansion of the area through exchange.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
No mining currently.
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
Little suitable timber, no current mining. Recreation is primarily motorized and LaBonte Canyon Road bisects the area.
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 87 miles from the Savage Run Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-146. Percent covertype in LaBonte Canyon Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres	Percent
Aspen	375	2
Cottonwood	11	-
Douglas fir	538	3
Grassland	88	1
Limber pine	24	-
Lodgepole pine	5,408	33
Non Forested	466	3
Ponderosa pine	9,100	56
Rocky Mountain juniper	70	-
Shrubs	30	-
Spruce fir	143	1

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-147. Limited representation covertypes in LaBonte Canyon Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres in LaBonte Canyon Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Ponderosa pine	9,100	23
Douglas fir	538	19
Lodgepole pine	5,408	4
Gambel oak	*30	<1
Big sagebrush		
Pinyon-juniper	70	100
Aspen	375	1
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	88	<1
Limber pine	24	1
Cottonwood/willow	11	5

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs met in this area.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the LaBonte Canyon roadless area.

Table C-148. Management prescriptions by alternative for the LaBonte Canyon Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2							16,257
1.33				9,217	7,936		
2.2					2,970		
3.31			8,560	1,284			
3.5						14,702	
3.51						1,255	
3.56	231						
4.3			6,442		9		
4.31	13,704						
5.12	146	15,047					
5.41	2,143			4,501	5,341	300	
5.42		1,209	1,255	1,255			
8.21	32						



## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

The following table summarizes the LaBonte Canyon roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-149. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in LaBonte Canyon Roadless Area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	32						
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.			8,560	10,501	10,906		16,257
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	16,224	16,257	7,697	5,755	5,350	16,257	

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## R20630 Laramie Peak

### 28,577 Acres

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### Overview

**Location and vicinity:** The Laramie Peak Roadless Area is located in the Bear Creek, Horseshoe Creek and Cottonwood Creek

Geographic Areas on the Douglas Ranger District in Albany and Converse counties. This area is part of the RARE II Laramie Peak Roadless Area (02070). It is approximately 40 miles south of Douglas (T.26N., R.71 and 72W.; T.27N., R.71 and 72 W., T. 28N., R71W.). Access is provided by Esterbrook Road (Converse County Road 5), Cottonwood Park Road (Albany County road 71), Bear Creek Road (FDR 671), Friend Park Road (FDR 661), and Harris Park Road (FDR 633). These are gravel surfaced roads. The Black Mtn. Road (FDR 667) is a low standard, four-wheel-drive road that provides access to the Black Mtn. Fire Lookout adjacent to the roadless area. There are also numerous four-wheel-drive roads that approach the area on most sides from private lands.

**Geography:** This roadless area lies within the western part of the Laramie Mountain Range, with the Laramie Plains to the south and the North Platte River drainage to the north. Most moisture occurs in April through June. Summers are generally dry with occasional thunderstorms. The area is generally not accessible by wheeled vehicles from late November through early June due to snowpack.

**Topography:** Elevations in the area range from about 6,500 feet to 10,272 feet on Laramie Peak. In addition to Laramie Peak, the highest mountain in the Laramie Range, peaks include Squaw Peak, Haystack Peaks, and South Mountain. There is also a relatively large forested drainage basin on the north side of Laramie Peak known as Ashenfelder Basin. This drainage basin contains several perennial streams that combine into Roaring Fork Creek at the north end of the roadless area. The area also contains some of the upper drainages of Horseshoe Creek and Bear Creek. Horseshoe Creek and Roaring Fork drain north, and Bear Creek drains south into the North Laramie River.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised of 1% Douglas fir, 1% grasslands, 18% Lodgepole pine, 1% non-forested, 76% Ponderosa pine, 1% shrubs, and 2% spruce-fir.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally granitic, originating from decomposition of the adjacent peaks and mountains. Erosion hazard in the area is high.

**Current Uses of the Area:** Current uses of this roadless area include hiking, hunting, backpacking, dispersed camping, some horseback riding, and viewing scenery and wildlife. While the levels of these uses are currently low, they have increased substantially in the past few years due to recent access and facility improvements made by the Forest Service. Between the late 1980's and mid-1990s, much of this area became inaccessible to most people due to a bark beetle epidemic that killed many of the larger ponderosa pine. Many of these trees then fell over, blocking the many hiking trails from use, and making cross-county hiking very difficult. In 1997, the Douglas District began a trail re-opening program in this area that included trail signing and trailhead development. These old trails were re-located and logged open, and some new trail alignments were constructed entirely on National Forest lands where the old trails crossed private lands.

A hiking trail system of Forest Development Trails now exists between Harris Park and Friend Park, several miles up Ashenfelder Creek, up Saltlick Creek to the top of Black Mountain, and up Lost Creek. A small, developed trailhead now exists on the Black Mtn. Road and a larger trailhead exists at Friend Park. These trails and trailheads serve the part of

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

the roadless area generally west and north of Laramie Peak, known as the Ashenfelder Basin. In the area south of Laramie Peak, the Friend Park Trail, FDT 609, was also reopened, with signs installed at either end to direct users to this trail. The trails are also signed at their intersections with other trails in the area to better orient users of these trails.

The Laramie Peak Trail, FDT 602, is the most popular and heavily used trail on the Douglas District. It is about 5 miles long, was built between 1968 and 1972 to provide motorized trail vehicle access to the permitted and Forest Service electronic sites at the top of the peak, and is open to ATV use. In 1998, the Douglas District widened this trail in places to improve the safety of ATV users, and constructed a new trailhead parking facility for this trail. Also in 1998, the Friend Park Campground, which is located ¼ mile south of the Laramie Peak Trailhead, was expanded from 6 campsites to 11 campsites, and accessibility improvements were made for the disabled. Ashenfelder Basin Special Interest Area is located within this IRA.

Table C-150. Management area acres for Alternative A, Laramie Peak Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
2.1 Special Interest Areas	2,098
3.32 Backcountry Recreation, Summer Nonmotorized with Winter Snowmobiling	23,773
3.56 Aspen Maintenance and Enhancement	45
5.12 General Forest and Rangelands, Rangeland Vegetation Emphasis	1,064
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	1,283
5.41 Deer and Elk Winter Range	313

**Appearance:** From background viewpoints, Laramie Peak dominates the general area of this roadless area, with the lesser peaks and rocky ridges and outcropping signifying the ruggedness of this area. Laramie Peak itself is the highest peak in the Laramie Range. Within the area itself, one becomes more aware of the ruggedness of the area, which is magnified by the many large, dead and downed pine trees. A few open grassy parks are interspersed within the hills, peaks, and numerous riparian areas along the streams. The streams themselves are often cut through the bedrock formations and often contain large boulders and cascading waterfalls and pools. The views from the top of the peak are wide and panoramic.

**Surroundings:** The Laramie Peak Area is surrounded by drainages that gradually give way to plains. While the roadless area contains the most rugged and forested country of the area, most of the adjacent private lands consist of more rolling hills that are a mix of open parks and stands of timber. The majority of the surrounding private lands consist of large summer ranching operations. However, subdivision of some of the private lands and summer and year-round home developments have been occurring for many years in the Harris Park, Esterbrook, and Friend Park areas. This trend has been increasing the past 10 years.

**Key attractions:** The two special attractions in the area are Laramie Peak itself, which provides panoramic views of surrounding areas, and Ashenfelder Basin. In addition, there are relatively large stands of mature ponderosa pine and extensive stands of down and

standing ponderosa pine. Deer, elk, a few bighorn sheep and wild turkey are among the wildlife species that inhabit the area.

## Capability

### Environment-

**Opportunity for solitude:** The moderate size of the area, high topographic screening, high live and downed dead vegetative screening, moderate distance from perimeter to core, and some permanent off-site intrusions combine to give the area a high rating for opportunities for solitude. Those who travel off of the developed trail system can anticipate a very high level of solitude.

**Naturalness:** Almost all of the area within the roadless boundary has a high level of naturalness. Canada thistle is a non-indigenous plant that grows in the area. Rainbow and brook trout have been introduced to provide improved fishing opportunities and turkey have been introduced to expand their range. Evidence of human presence or activity includes the following: an occasional four-wheel-drive road along the perimeter of the area, a 2.4kv powerline that travels up the southeast side of Laramie Peak, an electronic site with several buildings and antenna at the top of the peak, old cabins and sawmill sites at the north end of the area, one trail bridge, fences, constructed trails, signs of dispersed recreation use and a few grazing livestock.

**Challenge-** This area offers fairly high and unique opportunities for challenge. The trails that exist and are maintained in the area are basically primitive and have frequent steep ascents and descents. Those who venture off the trail system will encounter very difficult hiking and orienteering opportunities compared to many other areas of the Rocky Mountains.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-**The factors listed in Opportunity for solitude, moderate diversity and limited development combine to give the area a high rating for opportunities for primitive recreation.

### Special Features-

**Education:** The Laramie Peak Trailhead would offer an excellent site for educational information dissemination. Yearly educational presentations to local school children are given at the Friend Park Campground by Douglas District personnel. The Roaring Fork Trailhead can also provide an educational site. Topics that are of interest would be fire ecology, ponderosa pine forest ecology, and roadless area preservation.

**Scenic Features:** The wild turkey and bighorn sheep are important species in the area. Laramie Peak itself is a special feature—the highest peak in the Laramie Range that had emotional value to the early settlers. There is also evidence in the area of early logging, sawmills, and homesteading.

### Manageability-

- ◆ **Size:** Relative to other Medicine Bow roadless areas, the Laramie Peak area is quite large (28,577 acres). It is also the largest block of contiguous National Forest land in a mountainous and forested setting on the Douglas Ranger District. There is a small tract of private land in the southern portion of the area that constitutes a forest inholding but is not an inholding within the roadless area.
- ◆ **Boundaries:** The boundary of the area largely follows the Forest boundary. The heavy downed and dead timber in the area has effectively closed off most of the two-track roads that entered the area from private lands. While the rugged terrain enhances the wilderness quality of the area, traffic and other evidences of off-site human activity are visible from the Peak and other higher elevations.

**Conclusion:** The high opportunities for solitude and naturalness, as well as the large size of the area combine to make the area capable for wilderness. It will be further evaluated for availability and need.

## Availability

**Recreation:** Primitive recreation opportunities are currently available throughout most of the roadless area. Based on trailhead registration numbers, about 15% of the users of Laramie Peak trail are ATV users. This motorized trail is needed for access to the electronic sites at the top of the peak and is isolated and screened from the rest of the roadless area.

**Wildlife Species:** Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer, black bear, Rocky Mountain sheep, and mountain lions are the primary big game species in the area. Sightings of bear, lions, and sheep are relatively frequent. Wild Turkeys inhabit the lower elevations.

**Water Availability and Use:** Numerous perennial streams exist throughout the area, with small waterfalls and pools being common in many of these streams. A few beaver ponds also exist along some of the streams. Some trout fishing occurs in the streams, pools, and beaver ponds. No other water impoundments or natural lakes exist in the area.

**Livestock Operations:** Very little livestock grazing occurs in the area, due in large part to the heavy dead-fallen timber throughout the area. The heaviest grazing occurs along the western edge of the area, along the upper South Fork of Roaring Fork Creek. Some minor amounts of grazing also occur north of the Haystack Peaks and at the lower end of Roaring Fork Creek.

**Timber:** Very little suitable timber exists in the area. Most of the merchantable timber in the area was killed by the bark beetle epidemic. Road access costs would be very high due to the rough and rocky topography.

**Minerals:** The area has a low potential for mineral exploration and development.

**Cultural Resources:** Native Americans utilized this area for summer and fall sustenance, primarily hunting. Laramie Peak most likely held spiritual significance for these early Americans. The early settlers who passed through the area on the Oregon and Mormon trails viewed Laramie Peak as a key point in their journey as it represented their entry into the Rocky Mountains. Soldiers from Ft. Laramie used the area for firewood collecting. A few homestead cabins and old, abandoned sawmills exist along the lower elevations of the area.

**Authorized and Potential Land Uses:** Low levels of permitted livestock grazing exist in the area. The permitted and Forest Service electronic site facilities at the top of the peak provide important communication services in this part of the State. The potential for permitting outfitter and guide operations in the area is high.

**Management Considerations:** As this area is the largest contiguous block of National Forest lands in a mountainous setting on the Douglas District, it has a high potential to provide recreation opportunities. Since it is mostly undeveloped, primitive and semi-primitive uses predominate and should be considered for the future.

#### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential? No
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports? No
6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 80 miles from the Savage Run Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-151. Percent covertime in Laramie Peak Roadless Area.

Covertime	Acres	Percent
Aspen	66	-
Douglas fir	187	1
Grassland	208	1
Limber pine	59	-
Lodgepole pine	5,200	18
Non Forested	130	1
Ponderosa pine	21,726	76
Shrubs	349	1
Spruce fir	653	2

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3

Table C-152. Limited representation covertypes in Laramie Peak Roadless Area.

Covertypes	Acres in Laramie Peak Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Ponderosa pine	21,726	54
Douglas fir	187	7
Lodgepole pine	5,200	4
Gambel oak	*349	1
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	66	<1
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	208	1
Limber pine	59	1

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** Overlaps all of the WYNDD map of Ashenfelder Basin (B2, 7,340 acres), noted for Laramie columbines and other sensitive plants too many to list, and for four rare low-elevation ponderosa pine community types.

### Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Laramie Peak roadless area.

Table C-153. Management prescription by alternative for the Laramie Peak Roadless Area.

Mgmt Rx	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
1.2				28,577			16,571
1.31					26,515		
1.33			28,577			26,515	
2.1	2,098	2,099			2,062		
2.2						2,062	7,144
3.31		26,216					
3.32	23,773						
3.56	45						
5.11		227					
5.12	1,064	13					
5.4	1,283						4,862
5.41	313						
5.42		22					

# ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

The following table summarizes the Laramie Peak roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-154. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Laramie Peak roadless area.

Category	Alt A	Alt B	Alt C	Alt D DEIS	Alt D FEIS	Alt E	Alt F
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	1,283	227					4,862
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	2,098	28,314	28,577	28,577	28,577	28,577	23,714
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	25,196	35					



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## R20631 Cow Creek Mountain

### 8,269 Acres

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#### Overview

**Location and vicinity:** The Cow Creek Mountain Roadless Area is located in the Bear Creek Geographic Area on the Douglas

Ranger District in Albany County. This roadless area is part of the RARE II Eagle Peak Roadless Area (02071). It is approximately 45 miles south of Douglas (T.26N., R.72 and 73W., T.27N., R.72W.). The primary access to the area is provided by Esterbrook Road (Albany county Road 710) and Bear Creek Road (FDR 671). However, other than two areas of State land that provide a link between the above roads and National Forest Lands, there is no cross-county legal public access into the area off of the main roads. Cow Creek Mtn. Road (FDR 637) is the only road providing legal public access to the roadless area. This is a single-lane gravel surfaced road about 1.5 miles in length, and ends at the Cow Creek Mountain Trailhead. Legal public access was acquired on this road in 1995. The Cow Creek Mountain Trail (FDT 637) is the only system trail that provides access into the roadless area. It is about 3.5 miles in length. It exits the Cow Creek Mtn. Trailhead, travels east for about 1 mile and through a private inholding, then heads south along Cow Creek to the Forest Boundary. This trail is open to motorized trail vehicles, but is not to a wide enough standard to effectively handle ATV's. One other user-created two-track road exits the Cow Creek Mtn. road within the State land and travels south to the Forest. There are also a few unimproved four-wheel-drive roads that approach the area off of the above main roads, which pass through private land on which there is no public right-of-way.

**Geography:** The area lies within the western part of the Laramie Mountain Range, with the Laramie Range to the south. The streams in the area all drain to the south towards the North Fork of the Laramie River. Most moisture occurs in April through June. Summers are generally dry with occasional thunderstorms. The area is generally not accessible by wheeled vehicles from the end of November until late May due to snow pack.

**Topography:** Elevations in the roadless area range from about 7,200 feet to 8,765 feet on Cow Creek Mountain. Other peaks and mountains in the area include Sugarloaf Mountain, Poor Man's Peak, and Indian Peak. Eagle Peak and Blue Jay Mountain are very rugged with numerous rocky outcrops. Cow Creek bisects the area, roughly from north to south, with Sugarloaf Mountain on the west side of the creek and Cow Creek Mountain on the east side of the creek.

**Vegetation:** Vegetation in the area is comprised 1% Aspen, 3% grasslands, 29% Lodgepole pine, 1% non-forested, 65% Ponderosa pine, and 2% shrubs.

**Soils:** Soils in the area are generally granitic, originating from decomposition of the adjacent mountains. Erosion hazard in the area is high.

**Current Uses of the Area:** The heaviest use of the area occurs during the big game hunting seasons in the late summer and fall. This use includes hunting and related dispersed camping, with many of these users using ATV's on system roads and trails and on non-system, user created routes. Cow Creek Trail is becoming impacted from ATV use due to its single lane width. The adjacent Cow Creek is also becoming impacted from this ATV use as it is adjacent to the Cow Creek Trail and ATV users must sometimes leave the trail and cross the creek to avoid steep sideslopes. Summer use is increasing in the area in the forms of

ATV riding, dispersed camping, hiking, horseback riding, and viewing wildlife, flowers and scenery. Winter use is low and consists primarily of snowmobile riding through the area. There is an irrigation ditch that comes off of non-federal lands and crosses Forest Service along Cow Creek in Sec. 33, T26N; R73W. There are currently numerous range and wildlife structure and non-structure improvements across the area. There is a salt station in section 22; T26N; R73W. Livestock grazing is evident in the lower end of Cow Creek. Traditional use has been motorized winter and summer ATV and snowmobile use. There are several abandoned hunter blinds (more than 4) along Cow Creek. There are fences and an old cabin in section 28; T26N; R73W. There is a thru-traffic road from Indian Head Rock to a barn in section 20; T26N; R73W. Existing range improvements include prescribed burning, sagebrush control and fencing on Deer Creek.

Table C-155. Management area acres for Alternative A, Cow Creek Mountain Roadless Area.

Alternative A Management Area	Acres
4.31 Dispersed Recreation, Low Use	642
5.12 General Forest and Rangelands, Rangeland Vegetation Emphasis	3,652
5.4 Forested Flora and Fauna Habitats	415
5.41 Deer and Elk Winter Range	3,552
8.21 Developed Recreation	8

**Appearance:** Rugged, rocky mountainous areas are interspersed with grassy parks that occur mostly in riparian areas. Aspen also occur in riparian areas and adjacent uplands. The Sugarloaf Mountain side of the area is composed of scattered stands of ponderosa pine and limber pine, while the Cow Creek Mountain side of the area is more densely forested with a mix of lodgepole pine and spruce and fir.

**Surroundings:** The area is surrounded on three sides by topography similar to the area itself: rough and rocky with deep drainages. Laramie Peak is visible to the northeast. The southwest gives way to larger open areas and eventually the Laramie Plains. The private lands surrounding the area are still basically ranching operations where cattle are grazed in the summer. Subdivision of the private lands and summer home construction has not significantly occurred yet; However, several large cabins have been built along the south border in the past few years,

**Key attractions:** Deer, elk and a few bighorn sheep are among the wildlife species in the area. Nearby Blue Jay Peak, Eagle Peak and Jack Squirrel Peak all provide, with their rugged rocky features, special scenic attractions.

## Capability

### Environment-

Opportunity for solitude: The limited size of the area offers low potential for solitude, and there is little topographic screening and only moderate vegetative screening. There are some permanent off-site intrusions, such as ranching operation buildings and barns, and there is moderate distance (less than 2 miles) from the perimeter of the area to the core. Livestock

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

fencing and a road are adjacent to Deer Creek. Almost all of the area is within 2 miles of a major county road and associated sight and noise intrusions.

**Naturalness:** Most of the area on the Cow Creek Mountain side has a moderate level of naturalness. Cow Creek and the Sugarloaf Mountain side of the area are showing signs of increasing human use by the proliferation of user created ATV routes off of system trails and roads. The private inholding contains a cattle-salting area and the ground and vegetation show the impact of this use. An old historic cabin exists on one of the tributaries off Cow Creek. Canada thistle is a non-indigenous plant that grows in the area. Low levels of water contamination occurs in areas with concentrated stock use. Other evidence of human presence or activity includes the following: fences, signs of dispersed camping use, and grazing livestock. The area does not present unique ecosystems or a good example of an unmodified ecotype.

**Challenge-** There are relatively few unusual opportunities for challenging experiences in the area. Challenges that are typical of the Rocky Mountains such as limited access and harsh weather conditions are present in the area. The area is dominated by day use opportunities that pose few physical challenges.

**Outdoor recreation opportunities-**Overall, the potential for primitive recreation opportunities is low. There are limited opportunities for camping/hiking trails. Opportunities exist for day hiking and horseback riding. Overnight stays and visuals are limited. Hunting opportunities would be very limiting for large groups and fair for small groups. This rating results from the factors mentioned under Opportunities for Solitude, as well as from little diversity of opportunity.

### **Special Features-**

**Education:** The Cow Creek Mountain Trailhead provides the potential for developing an environmental education site using bulletin boards.

**Scenic Features:** The main scenic feature of the area are views of the more prominent peaks outside of the roadless area. Traveling down Cow Creek itself provides the main scenic attraction within the area, and while this experience provides a fair level of scenic beauty, it is not at a spectacular level.

### **Manageability-**

- ♦ **Size:** While the area is relatively small in size, much of the boundary of National Forest land is irregular and adjacent to private and state lands. This situation, combined with limited administrative access, would make the boundary management and private access control difficult.
- ♦ **Boundaries:** The boundary of the area largely follows the Forest boundary. A private inholding of about 160 acres exists within the north central part of the roadless area. The motorized Cow Creek Mountain Trail currently provides ATV access to this inholding.

**Conclusion:** This area lies on the low end of the range of capability. It has some issues that tend to make it less capable than other areas on the forest, however, it will still be considered capable for wilderness and will be further evaluated for availability and need.

## Availability:

**Recreation:** Primitive recreation availability is currently limited due to the mostly motorized based recreation use, although much of this use is within a semi-primitive setting.

**Wildlife Species:** Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer, black bear, and mountain lions are the primary big game species in the area.

**Water Availability and Use:** Cow Creek is the main perennial stream that exists in the area. A permitted diversion ditch exists at the lower end of this stream. A few beaver dams also exist along this stream. Some brook trout fishing may occur along this stream and at the beaver ponds.

**Livestock Operations:** Private landowners adjacent to the area all have active grazing permits within the roadless area. Livestock are grazed in the area throughout the summer and early fall.

**Timber:** No suitable timber exists within the area. Some firewood cutting occurs at the Cow Creek Mountain Trailhead.

**Minerals:** No active mining is currently occurring.

**Cultural Resources:** Native Americans utilized this area for summer and fall sustenance, primarily hunting. One homestead cabin is known to exist just off of Cow Creek.

**Authorized and Potential Land Uses:** Livestock grazing is the primary permitted land use in the area. The diversion ditch at the lower end of Cow Creek is the only other authorized land use in the area. The potential for permitted outfitter and guide operations, both for hunting and other recreation uses, does exist.

**Management Considerations:** The increasing summer and fall recreation use in the area, especially ATV use, is a concern. This unregulated and designated ATV use is beginning to impact resources and cause recreation conflicts. Adjacent landowners have expressed concerns about these impacts and conflicts. What types of trails are needed, where they are needed, and appropriate trail use in the area is a consideration. The Douglas District Land Adjustment Plan has identified this area for acquisition of private inholdings through exchange, and further expansion of the area through exchange.

### Availability Questions

1. Is the area vitally needed for increased water protection and storage? No
2. Would wilderness designation seriously restrict important wildlife management measures? No
3. Does the area have high strategic or economic mineral development potential?  
No mining currently
4. Are there unique or outstanding natural phenomena that require public access and development that would be inconsistent with Wilderness designation? No
5. Is the land needed to meet clearly documented resource demands such as for timber, minerals, or developed recreation sites including winter sports?  
No suitable timber, no mining. Recreation is primarily motorized.

## ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION

6. Are there existing contractual or other significant obligations on the area not in concert with Wilderness designation? No

**Conclusion:** Based on the resource potentials and management considerations described above, this area has been determined to be available for Wilderness.

## Need

**Nearby Wilderness:** The roadless area lies approximately 75 miles from the Savage Run Wilderness Area.

**Cover Type:** The following table displays percentage of the covertypes represented in this roadless area.

Table C-156. Percent covertype in Cow Creek Mountain Roadless Area.

Covertype	Acres	Percent
Aspen	73	1
Grassland	251	3
Lodgepole pine	2,393	29
Non Forested	38	1
Ponderosa pine	5,369	65
Shrubs	143	2

### Limited Representation Covertypes:

Certain covertypes identified in Table C-3 have limited representation in the Rocky Mountain Region wilderness system. The following table shows how this roadless area contributes to the acreages in Table C-3.

Table C-157. Limited representation covertypes in Cow Creek Mountain Roadless Area.

Covertype	Acres in Cow Creek Mountain Roadless Area	Percent of Total Medicine Bow Capable/Available Roadless Area
Ponderosa pine	5,369	13
Lodgepole pine	2,393	2
Gambel oak	*143	<1
Big sagebrush		
Aspen	73	<1
Grass types (e.g., fescue)	251	1

\*Gambel oak and big sagebrush acres are combined

**Wildlife Needs:** No known special wildlife needs met in this area.

## Environmental Consequences:

The following table shows the management prescription allocations by alternative for the Cow Creek Mountain roadless area.

**ROADLESS AREA DIRECTION**

Table C-158. Management prescription by alternative for the Cow Creek Mountain Roadless Area.

<b>Mgmt Rx</b>	<b>Alt A</b>	<b>Alt B</b>	<b>Alt C</b>	<b>Alt D DEIS</b>	<b>Alt D FEIS</b>	<b>Alt E</b>	<b>Alt F</b>
1.2							8,269
1.33				8,269	4,865		
3.31			8,269			8,269	
4.31	642						
5.12	3,652	8,269					
5.4	415						
5.41	3,552				3,404		
8.21	8						

The following table summarizes the Cow Creek Mountain roadless area acreage by alternative for the groups shown in Table C-5.

Table C-159. Acres allocated Categories 1, 2, and 3 in Cow Creek Mountain Roadless Area.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Alt A</b>	<b>Alt B</b>	<b>Alt C</b>	<b>Alt D DEIS</b>	<b>Alt D FEIS</b>	<b>Alt E</b>	<b>Alt F</b>
Category 1 - Permit actions that will not retain roadless characteristics.	423						
Category 2 - Permit actions that will retain roadless characteristics and are consistent with the prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.			8,269	8,269	4,865	8,269	8,269
Category 3 -Permit actions that retain roadless characteristics but are inconsistent with prohibitions of the RACR that has been set aside by the Court.	7,846	8,269			3,404		

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## Public Proposed Wilderness Areas Battle Mountain and Vedauwoo

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There are public proposed recommended wilderness areas in Alternative F. They include areas from 30 of the Forest Service IRA's, acres added to some of the 30 FS IRAs

and two newly created areas; Battle Mountain and Vedauwoo. Sheep Mountain is the only Forest Service IRA that is not recommended for Wilderness in Alternative F. With minimal analysis, we concluded that Battle Mountain and Vedauwoo along with additional acres added to several other Forest Service Inventoried Roadless Areas would be considered capable and available. We did not conduct a needs analysis for any of the areas not analyzed in the previous 31 areas. They were allocated to Management Area 1.2, Recommended Wilderness and effects disclosed in Chapter 3 of the EIS.

**Battle Mountain** lies within the South Savery Geographic Area. This proposed wilderness area does not meet the size criteria under the Wilderness act, but it is manageable as a unit. It is entirely surrounded by private lands.

**Vedauwoo Area** encompasses the maze of granite formations at the southern tail of the Sherman Mountains within the Pole Mountain Geographic area. It is bounded on the south by FR 700 and on the north by FR 707A. The Vedauwoo area is a heavily used recreation area providing outstanding rock climbing opportunities as well as opportunities for hiking, scrambling, and wildlife viewing.