

# Red Desert

## Findings

INVENTORY UNIT ACRES		
Federal	State	Total
<b>With Wilderness Characteristics</b>		
31,800	3,300	35,100 (82%)
<b>Without Wilderness Characteristics</b>		
7,400	400	7,800 (18%)
<b>Inventory Unit Total</b>		
39,200	3,700	42,900
<b>Contiguous Area-Wilderness Characteristics</b>		
None		

The Red Desert inventory unit has 35,100 acres that retain wilderness characteristics. Unit 1 is mostly natural in appearance, with its red Entrada Sandstone cliffs, colorfully striped bentonite hills, and rocky canyons providing outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. Unit 1 features striking views of the Henry Mountains, Caineville Reef, and Factory Butte. Most intrusions in Unit 1 are minor and substantially unnoticeable, although a small portion is disturbed by roads and a water project and thus does not have wilderness characteristics. Units 2 and 3 are not of sufficient size to qualify as wilderness and therefore were not inventoried for other wilderness values. All three units are contiguous to a portion of Capitol Reef National Park that has not been administratively endorsed by the National Park Service (NPS) for wilderness. If the NPS does further planning on their lands, a reevaluation of Units 2 and 3 may be appropriate. The portion of the inventory area lacking wilderness characteristics, including part of Unit 1 and all of Units 2 and 3, totals 7,800 acres.

## Unit Description

The Red Desert inventory unit is in Wayne County, one mile northwest of Caineville. Capitol Reef National Park is to the west and State Highway 24 to the south. The terrain consists of a domed anticline and small rocky canyons. Entrada Sandstone cliffs tower over the Red Desert floor, which is surrounded by rolling bentonite hills striped in blues, greys, and reds. The badlands contain little vegetation. However, tamarisk is found along wash bottoms and scattered grasses and fishhook cactus are found throughout the unit. Scattered juniper is found in the wetter areas of the low-lying hills.

Recreational use consists of sightseeing, photography, hiking, backpacking, and camping, although visitor use is low. Hartnet Draw Road, which accesses the northern portion of Capitol Reef National Park's popular Cathedral Valley, splits the unit. Outdoor leadership schools use the area for hiking and camping. Livestock grazing also occurs throughout the inventory area.

## Wilderness Characteristics

### Naturalness

Unit 1 has largely retained its natural character because of its remote location and diverse terrain. However, a small portion lacks natural character because of four water wells and several branching access roads that are substantially noticeable. Roads have been cherry-stemmed from the unit. Grazing activities and facilities such as fences, water developments, and vehicle ways have not significantly

affected the area's natural character. The same can be said for disturbances associated with recreational and mining activities. Most of these substantially unnoticeable intrusions are near the boundary or are adjacent to maintained roads.

## Outstanding Opportunities

### Solitude

Unit 1 has rolling hills, rocky canyons, and isolated basins. Travelers would find it difficult to cross this rugged terrain. The surrounding red cliffs isolate portions of the unit from its surroundings. Visitors could experience a profound feeling of solitude in this area.

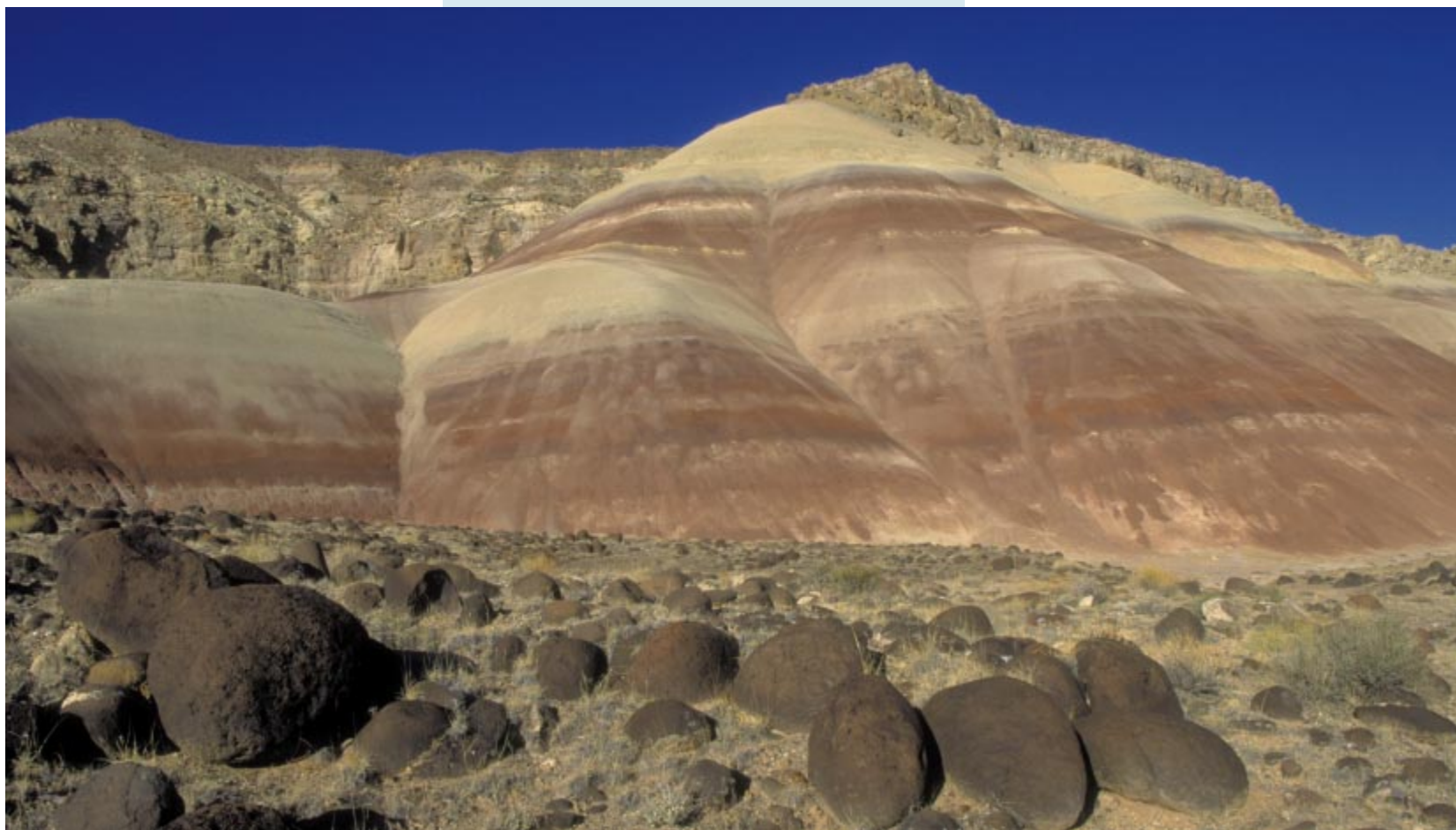
### Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

Unit 1 provides outstanding opportunities for hiking, backpacking, photography, and rockhounding. The Red Desert's encircling cliffs of Entrada Sandstone form spires and scenes reminiscent of Cathedral Valley in Capitol Reef National Park. Outdoor leadership schools use this remote, isolated area because of the challenge and inspiration provided to their students. The banded bentonite hills, with their unique colors and formations, have long appealed to photographers. Caineville Wash offers remote backpacking and exploring opportunities.

## Supplemental Values

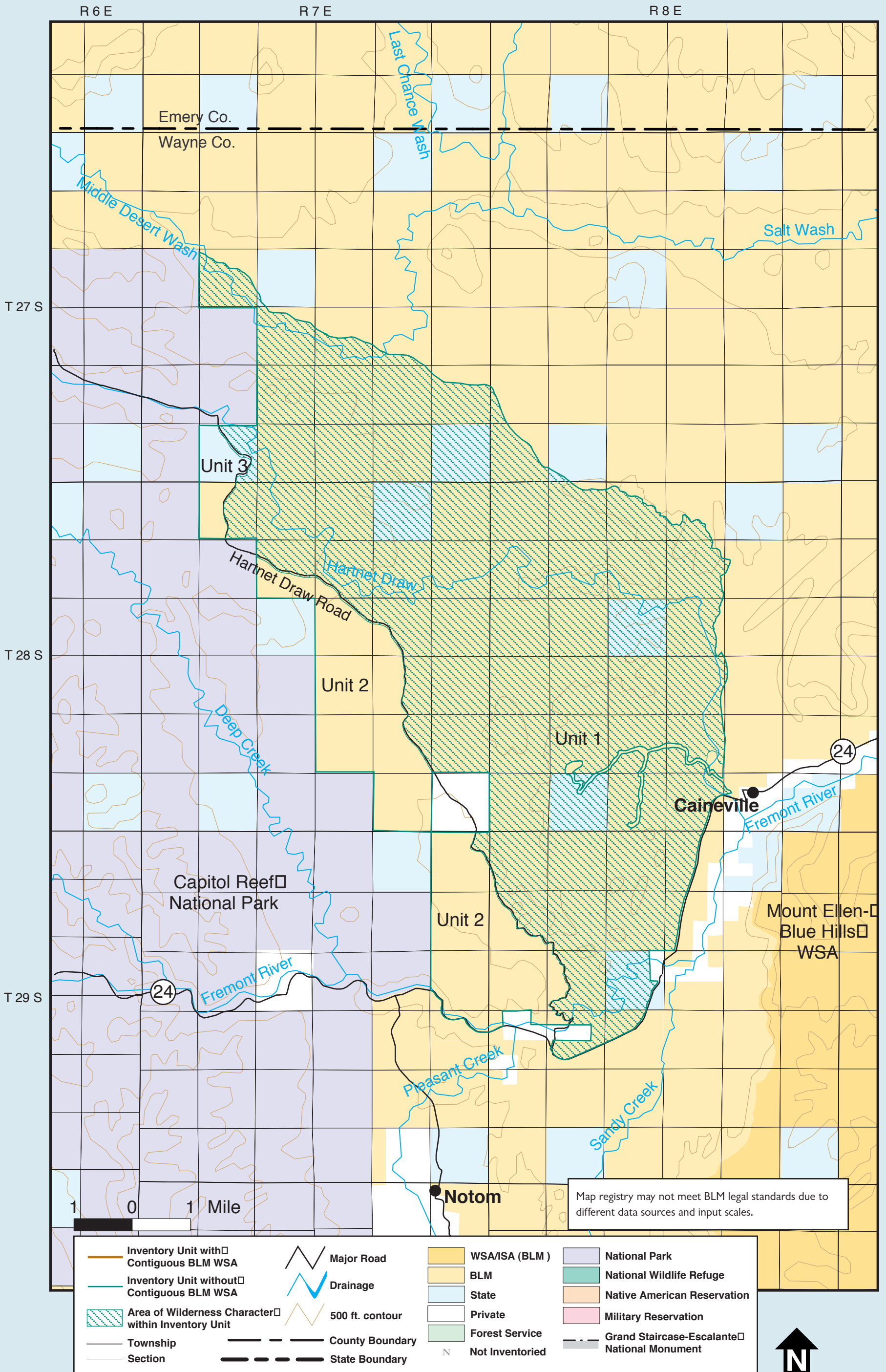
The endangered Wright's fishhook cactus (*Sclerocactus wrightiae*) is found in this unit. The endangered peregrine falcon has also been known to use an area on the western edge of the unit.

RED DESERT—Red Entrada Sandstone cliffs, colorfully striped bentonite hills, and rocky canyons offer numerous opportunities for the sightseer, hiker, or photographer.



Jerry Sintz

# Red Desert



Map registry may not meet BLM legal standards due to different data sources and input scales.

Inventory Unit with Contiguous BLM WSA	Major Road	WSA/ISA (BLM)	National Park
Inventory Unit without Contiguous BLM WSA	Drainage	BLM	National Wildlife Refuge
Area of Wilderness Character within Inventory Unit	500 ft. contour	State	Native American Reservation
Township	County Boundary	Private	Military Reservation
Section	State Boundary	Forest Service	Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
		Not Inventoried	

EAST CENTRAL REGION—Red Desert