

Big Hollow

Findings

INVENTORY UNIT ACRES		
Federal	State	Total
With Wilderness Characteristics		
0	0	0 (0%)
Without Wilderness Characteristics		
4,300	0	4,300 (100%)
Inventory Unit Total		
4,300	0	4,300
Contiguous Area-Wilderness Characteristics		
None		

The Big Hollow inventory unit meets all the basic criteria required to have wilderness characteristics, except for size. While most of the acreage in the inventory unit is natural and provides outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, the unit is only 4,300 acres in size and is no longer contiguous to other lands being considered for wilderness designation. Because the unit is less than 5,000 acres in size, it fails to meet the requirements for further consideration as wilderness.

Supplemental values exist, but they are not abundant. A cave in the unit might be of cultural value. Scenic vistas from the unit's upper boundary are pleasing; some might consider them spectacular. Naturalness is the unit's strongest value; it serves as a transition to the contiguous U.S. Forest Service (USFS) lands and to the nearby, but non-contiguous, USFS wilderness. There are outstanding qualities, but they are confined to the higher, well-screened canyons near the northern border of the unit and the national forest boundary.

Unit Description

The Big Hollow inventory unit is in east-central Tooele County about 57 miles southwest of Salt Lake City. There is a 40-acre parcel of private lands within the boundary of the unit that is accessed by a cherry-stemmed road. The terrain consists of a single ridge line (the south end of the Stansbury Mountains) descending from USFS land at 9,200 feet in elevation to the Johnson Pass Road 3,200 feet below. The backbone of the inventory unit trends north and south, with two twisting canyons and associated slopes dropping to the west, south, and east. Vegetation consists of a juniper woodland covering the lower one-third of the inventory unit that varies in density from a mottled or patchy appearance to a dense and continuous canopy. Above the juniper forest, a

transition zone of open slopes, mountain brush, and mixed grasses gives way to developing canyons where pockets of Douglas fir crowd the north and northwest aspects.

The primary uses are deer hunting and day hiking. Because there are so many other routes or trailheads into the Stansbury Mountains, use has been seasonal, light, and dispersed in the unit.

Wilderness Characteristics

Naturalness

The Big Hollow inventory unit is basically an undeveloped natural area. While the unit is small (four miles by two miles), it is diverse and displays two life zones within 3,200 feet of elevation. There are no developed trails or trail systems, although there are a few fire rings on the boundary. Vickory and Rock Spring Canyons drop rapidly through Douglas fir, open or brushy slopes, and juniper forest. Walls of limestone are exposed in the canyons before becoming foothills along the Johnson Pass Road.

Most of the existing intrusions are found along the southern boundary and consist of vehicle ways, abandoned mining prospects, a cedar post cutting area, scattered trash, and fences along private land. Many of these developments are substantially unnoticeable and do not impact the unit's natural character. Two areas in the south and southeast, however, are unnatural because of an abundance of vehicle ways, cedar post cutting in Clover Cove, and paralleling cherry-stemmed and boundary roads in the Vickory Canyon and Big Hollow Canyon area.

Outstanding Opportunities

Solitude

At many locations along the boundary, a visitor can walk 100 yards off the highway and feel isolation. Vegetative cover is plentiful, and when combined with rolling hills, winding canyons, rocky outcrops and extremes of relief, it results in solitude in varying degrees. Perhaps the lower foothills and the vehicle-way-impacted Clover Cove might be considered common and the solitude short of outstanding, but deep in Vickory Canyon and Rock Spring Canyon, outstanding opportunities are possible.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The unit could provide a natural trailhead to the national forest and the Desert Peak Wilderness. Within a few hundred yards of its boundary, the unit's terrain lends itself to outstanding opportunities for primitive types of recreation, including hunting, hiking, backpacking, and horse-back riding. Rock Spring Canyon and Vickory Canyon provide immediate access to the Wasatch National Forest boundary, Vickory Peak, and the 11,000-foot peaks further north. Also available are trail-free juniper woodlands, open slopes, and sylvan alpine settings, all offering potential for primitive and unconfined recreational experiences.

Supplemental Values

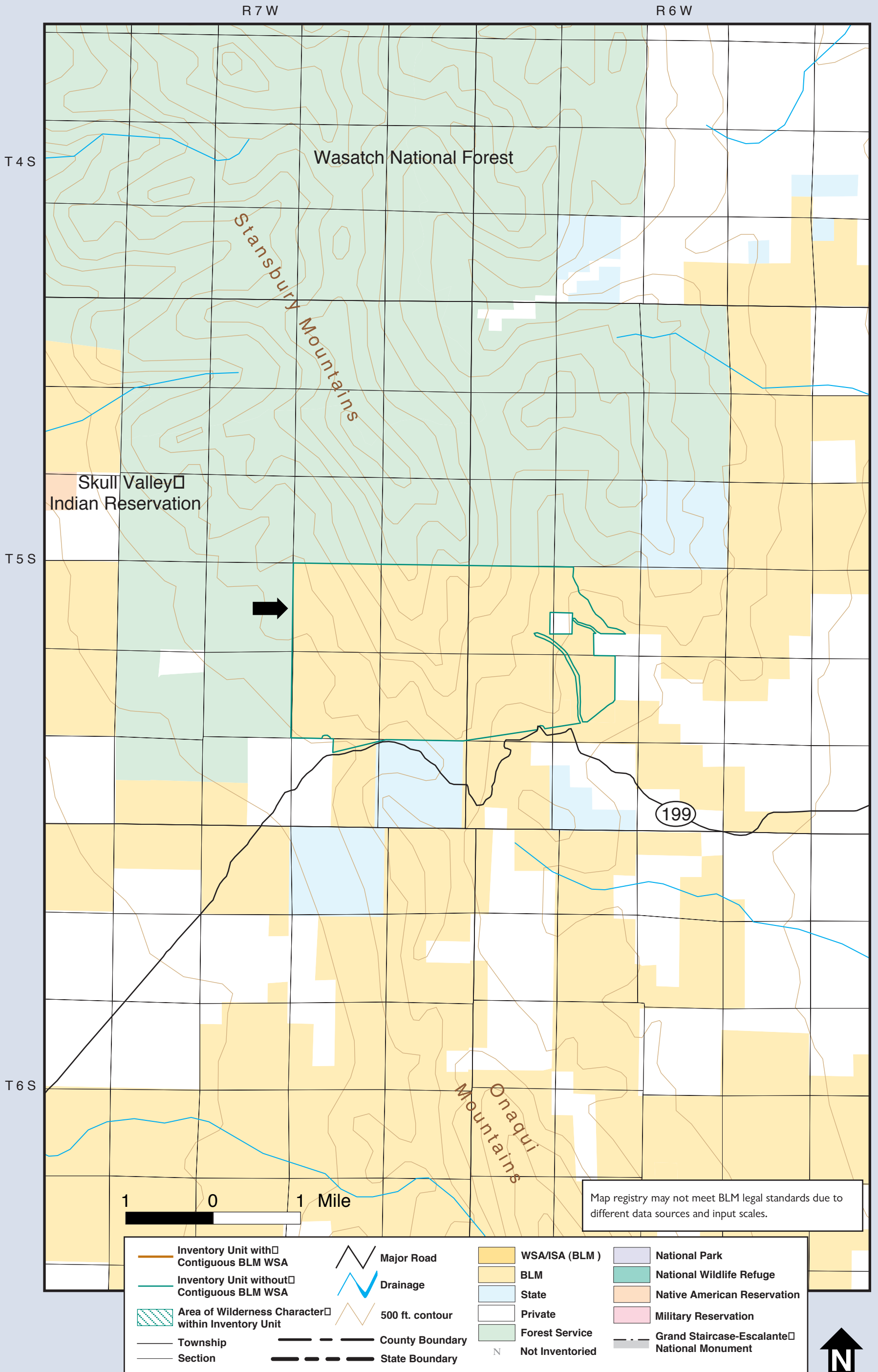
Geological, educational, and historical values may lie in a well-screened cave in the unit. Productive wildlife habitat exists for populations of mule deer, cougar, coyote, cottontail, birds of prey, and upland game birds.

BIG HOLLOW—Deep in Vickory Canyon (background), outstanding opportunities await those seeking solitude.



Maggie Kelsey

Big Hollow



NORTHWEST REGION—BIG HOLLOW