

# Horse Mountain

## Findings

INVENTORY UNIT ACRES		
Federal	State	Total
<b>With Wilderness Characteristics</b>		
11,100	1,300	12,400 (44%)
<b>Without Wilderness Characteristics</b>		
14,740	900	15,640 (56%)
<b>Inventory Unit Total</b>		
25,840	2,200	28,040
<b>Contiguous Area-Wilderness Characteristics</b>		
None		

About 12,400 acres of the four Horse Mountain inventory units have wilderness characteristics, while 15,640 acres lack wilderness characteristics because of chainings, seedings, and other disturbances. Roads up the Willis Creek, Howard Creek, and Sheep Creek drainages divide the inventory area into four units. Horse Mountain and the roadless lands south of Willis Creek (Unit 1) have wilderness characteristics. These lands are nearly pristine and offer outstanding opportunities for solitude, although three tracts within Unit 1 are unnatural because of chainings and woodcutting.

All of Unit 2 north of Willis Creek is unnatural because of a proliferation of range developments, vegetation manipulations, and woodcutting. There are approximately 13.7 miles of roads and vehicle ways, one corral, four ring or stock tanks, two pipelines, 15 fence lines, 13 chainings and seedings with varying degrees of slash debris, and several active woodcutting areas in this unit. Units 3 and 4 do not satisfy the size requirements as they are less than 5,000 acres. The adjoining U.S. Forest Service lands are not under any formal wilderness consideration or study process.

## Unit Description

The inventory units are located about 4 miles southwest of Cannonville and about 1 mile from the southeastern boundary of Bryce Canyon National Park. All of the public lands in the unit are within BLM's Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument. The land between the units and Bryce Canyon National Park is administered by the U.S. Forest Service as part of the Dixie National Forest. The topography of the units consists of several benchlands that extend from the southeastern boundary of Bryce Canyon National Park and the Dixie National

Forest. Vegetation consists of an uneven piñon and juniper woodland, patches of scrub oak, service berry, sagebrush, rabbit brush, and a variety of grasses.

## Wilderness Characteristics

### Naturalness

Most of the inventory area south of Willis Creek has natural character. Four portions of the inventory area are unnatural: all lands north of Willis Creek, a chained tract south of Willis Creek, a large woodcutting area in Bull Run Valley, and areas in the southwest corner. The tops of the benchlands in these areas have been subject to extensive chainings and seedings over the years. Many vehicle ways and roads have been developed through some of these chainings and seedings by local woodcutters and range managers.

## Outstanding Opportunities

### Solitude

The solitude opportunities in Unit 1 are outstanding because of its size, blocked configuration, and natural screening. These factors provide sufficient opportunities to avoid the sights, sounds, and evidence of others within the area. Visitors can hike or ride several miles into the unit from any direction and seek and find a secluded spot. With few destinations or attractions, visitors would likely be scattered throughout the area, further reducing chances for visitor-to-visitor encounters. The generally

sparse piñon and juniper cover amid the rolling terrain is sufficient in this 18-square-mile area to effectively screen or separate users from each other. Overall, the best opportunities for solitude are in an area primarily west of Horse Mountain; in the eastern region of the unit, the opportunity for solitude diminishes.

## Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The opportunities for primitive or unconfined recreation are not outstanding because of the lack of challenge and diversity, along with the poor quality of the potential hiking, backpacking, and sightseeing experiences. The landscape consists of a mostly sparse and nondescript piñon and juniper woodland that is separated by drainages. These intervening washes and valleys are shallow, sage-choked, and uninspiring scenically. The hills are equally commonplace, with exposed flanks and generally sparse plant cover. Scenic vistas toward Bryce Canyon and the Paria/Hackberry region are meager, consisting mainly of views of unremarkable timber-covered hills. The noted red-rock exposures of Bryce Canyon are not readily visible from this locale. Observers on top of Horse Mountain view substantial chainings and seedings to the north, east, and southwest, along with farms and agricultural land elsewhere. Such scenes further detract from the promise and sense of an outstanding wilderness opportunity.

## Supplemental Values

No supplemental features have been identified.

HORSE MOUNTAIN—A view of Horse Mountain over a piñon and juniper woodland; Bryce Canyon National Park is on the horizon.



BLM photo

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