

Negro Bill Canyon

Findings

INVENTORY UNIT ACRES		
Federal	State	Total
With Wilderness Characteristics		
2,500	900	3,400 (21%)
Without Wilderness Characteristics		
11,400	1,140	12,540 (79%)
Inventory Unit Total		
13,900	2,040	15,940
Contiguous Area-Wilderness Characteristics		
Negro Bill Canyon WSA (UT-060-138)		7,260

The four Negro Bill Canyon inventory units are contiguous to the Negro Bill Canyon Wilderness Study Area (WSA). Portions of two of the units (12,540 acres) show numerous imprints of human activity and therefore do not have wilderness characteristics. Although such areas as Mat Martin Point and Porcupine Rim remain undeniably beautiful, many vehicle ways and seismic exploration lines have eliminated their naturalness.

Other units and portions of units (3,400 acres) are still predominantly natural and enhance the adjacent WSA's outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive forms of recreation. These parcels are logical extensions of the WSA.

Unit Description

The Negro Bill Canyon inventory units are located in south-central Grand County, five miles northeast of Moab. All four units are contiguous to Negro Bill Canyon WSA. Unit boundaries follow legal boundary lines or substantially noticeable human impacts. Unit 1 is a region of sandstone fins north of the Sand Flats Road. Unit 2 straddles Negro Bill Canyon north of the rough dirt road that nearly bisects this state section. Unit 3 is bounded on the south and east by the Porcupine Rim Road and encompasses the upper reaches of Negro Bill Canyon. Unit 4 is the largest unit, consisting of Porcupine Rim and much of its steep northeast-facing slope, as well as the Coffee Pot Rock area, Drinks Canyon, Hal Canyon, and Mat Martin Point.

NEGRO BILL CANYON—A view from within one of the inventory units at the upper end of Negro Bill Canyon offers a spectacular panorama of the distant La Sal Mountains.

At an elevation of almost 7,000 feet in Unit 3, the terrain is predominantly covered with a piñon woodland. At lower elevations, juniper and blackbrush become more prevalent in the pockets of soil between outcrops of sandstone. Cottonwoods are common along waterways within the canyon. The units have been heavily used by both mountain bike riders and four-wheeling enthusiasts.

Wilderness Characteristics

Naturalness

Close to the Sand Flats Road in Unit 1 are numerous vehicle ways and campsites. For most of this unit, the boundary delineating wilderness characteristics follows the northern-most connecting routes, commonly known as the Fins 'n' Things route. Units 2 and 3 retain their wilderness characteristics throughout. They are within the rugged middle and upper portions of Negro Bill Canyon.

Unit 4 includes scenic Porcupine Rim and breathtaking scenic vistas from Mat Martin Point. Mat Martin Point contains a substantial network of vehicle ways. Although these are rarely driven, they are numerous enough to be substantially noticeable. A communication facility on Porcupine Rim contributes to the overall lack of naturalness. In addition, there are numerous seismic exploration lines south of Coffee Pot Rock. The remainder of Porcupine Rim is not contiguous with the portion of the unit possessing wilderness characteristics and is too small to stand on its own. The portions of Unit 4 that do have wilderness characteristics are contiguous to the WSA.

Outstanding Opportunities

Solitude

The units are contiguous to the Negro Bill Canyon WSA, which has outstanding opportunities for solitude. Most of Unit 1 is adjacent to highly popular mountain bike and four-wheel-drive routes and offers opportunities for solitude only in combination with the contiguous WSA. Units 2 and 3 are small but so rugged as to guarantee outstanding opportunities for solitude. Unit 4, dominated by the remote area of Mat Martin Point and the rugged Porcupine Rim, also possesses outstanding opportunities for solitude.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The units are contiguous to the Negro Bill Canyon WSA, which has outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Unit 1 contains the Morning Glory Arch; the hike to this span is exceptional. Units 2 and 3, though small, offer outstanding opportunities for primitive climbing, backpacking, hiking, and photography in Negro Bill Canyon. The rugged and remote nature of much of Unit 4 creates outstanding opportunities for hiking, photography, backpacking, and horseback riding.

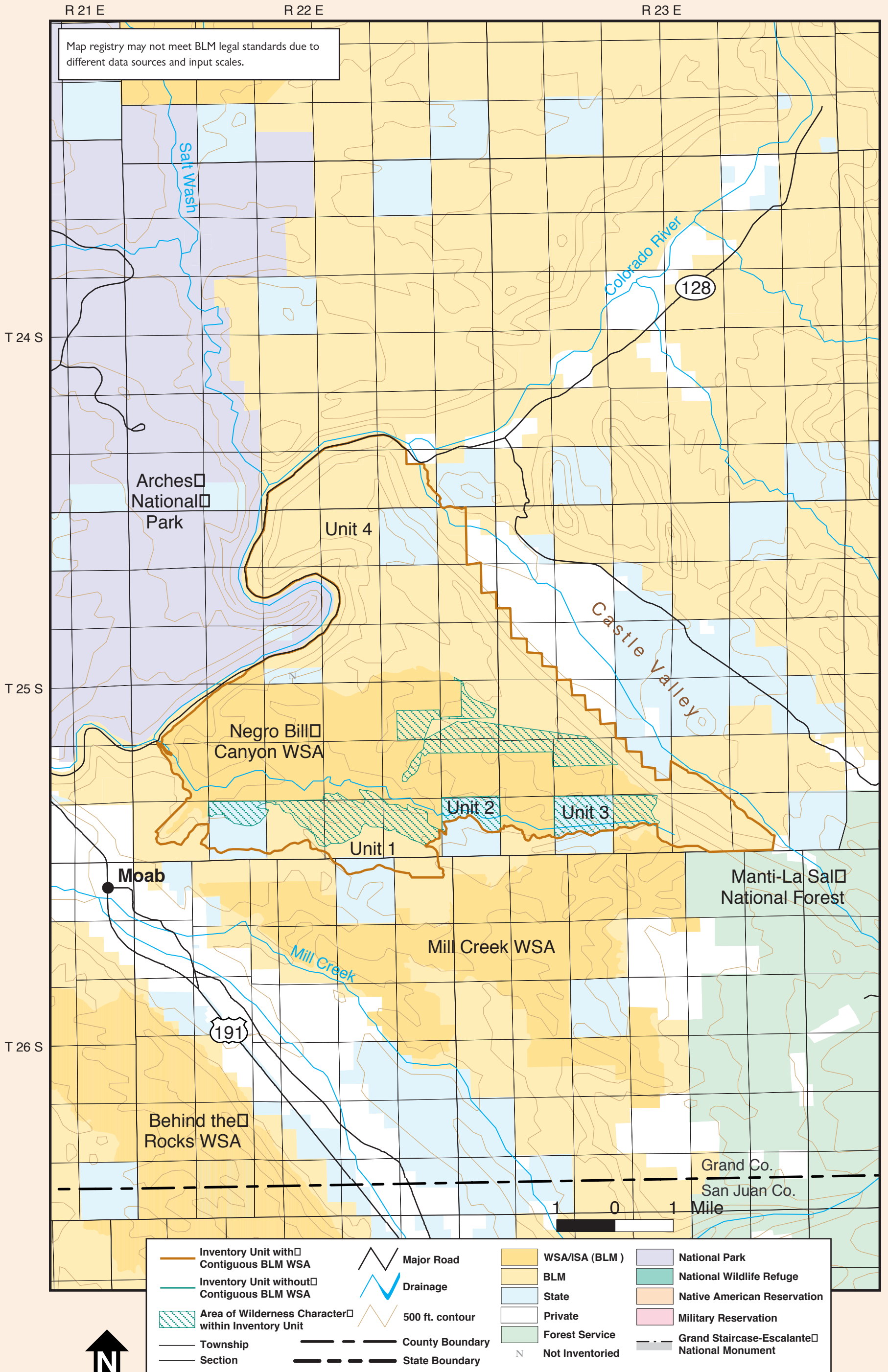
Supplemental Values

Portions of these units are within Negro Bill Canyon itself, which features a perennial stream and superlative scenery. Morning Glory Arch in Unit 1 is one of the largest natural bridges in the world—a truly awe-inspiring sight. Several points in Unit 4 offer compelling 360-degree scenic vistas.



Eric Finstick

Negro Bill Canyon



SOUTHEAST REGION—Negro Bill Canyon