

# Harmony Flat

## Findings

| INVENTORY UNIT ACRES                              |       |              |
|---|-------|--------------|
| Federal   | State | Total        |
| <b>With Wilderness Characteristics</b>            |       |              |
| 10,100  | 500   | 10,600 (98%) |
| <b>Without Wilderness Characteristics</b>         |       |              |
| 100   | 100   | 200 (2%)     |
| <b>Inventory Unit Total</b>                       |       |              |
| 10,200  | 600   | 10,800       |
| <b>Contiguous Area-Wilderness Characteristics</b> |       |              |
| Natural Bridges National Monument                 |       | 5,340        |

Most of the Harmony Flat inventory unit (10,600 acres) has wilderness characteristics. The unit contains outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation among the upper reaches of Armstrong and Tuwa Canyons. However, several small portions of the unit (200 acres) lack wilderness characteristics because of old highway rights-of-way and chainings.

## Unit Description

The Harmony Flat inventory unit is located in central San Juan County, 25 miles west of Blanding. It is contiguous to a portion of Natural Bridges National Monument (NBNM) that has already been administratively endorsed by the National Park Service for wilderness designation. The terrain consists primarily of a plateau varying in elevation from 6,000 to 6,700 feet that is deeply incised by Armstrong and Tuwa Canyons. These canyons are two of the major tributaries of White Canyon, joining in NBNM near Owachomo Bridge. Piñon pine, along with some juniper and buffaloberry, is the dominant vegetation, while pockets of sagebrush dominate a few flats.

## Wilderness Characteristics

### Naturalness

Most of the unit appears natural, with human imprints being substantially unnoticeable. However, several small areas that total 200 acres are not natural. These include one short road (perhaps 200 yards long) leading to a reclaimed landfill, a small area west of the access road to the NBNM water well, abandoned rights-of-

way from old route locations along the edge of the unit, and a portion of an old chaining.

## Outstanding Opportunities

### Solitude

The unit provides outstanding opportunities for solitude. The unit's remoteness, the rolling piñon woodland, and Armstrong and Tuwa Canyons all contribute to a sense of isolation.

### Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

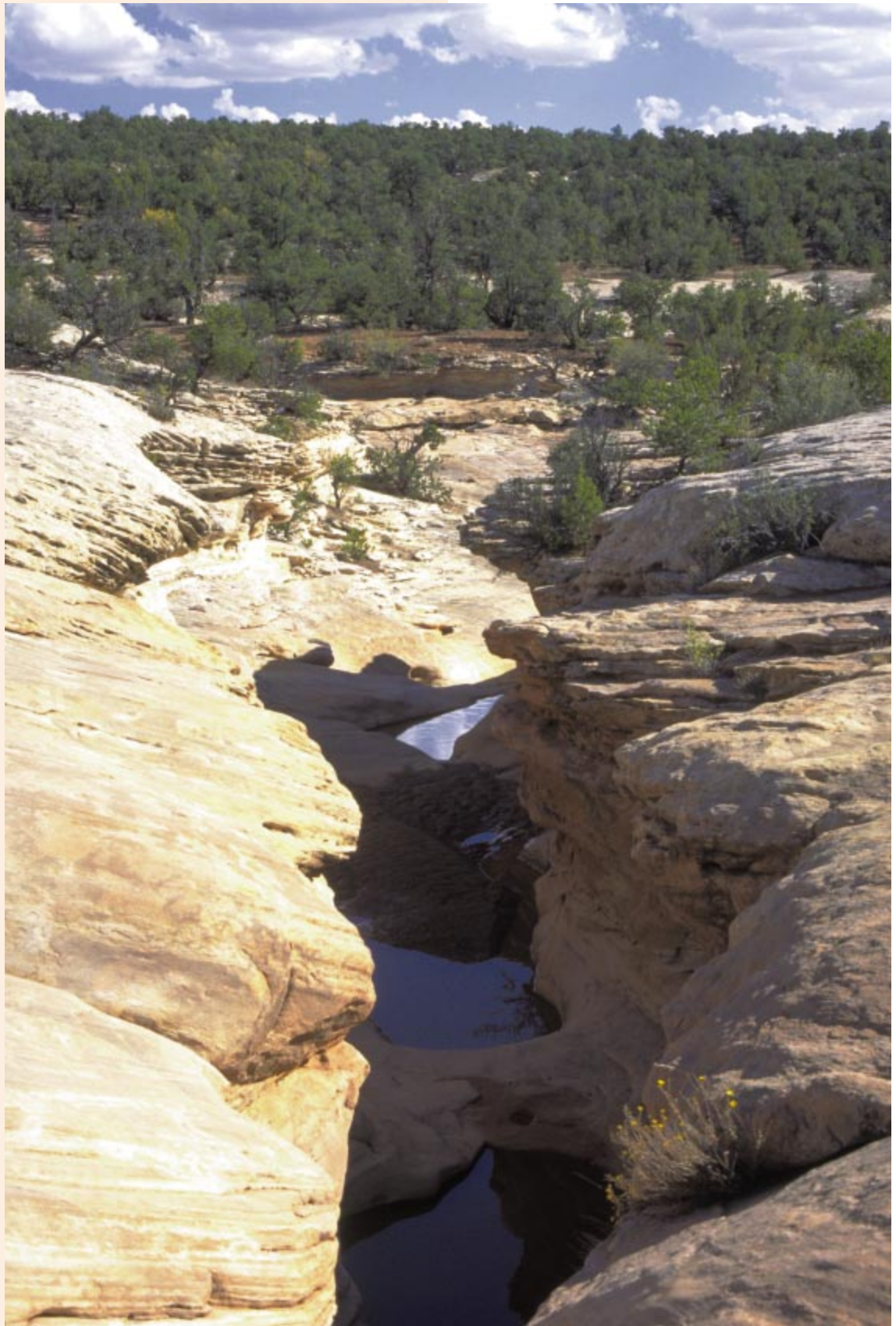
The remote location and the impressive surroundings provide outstanding opportunities for dispersed, undeveloped

recreation, including hiking, backpacking, and hunting. Considerable challenges are offered to the recreationist who enters White Canyon by way of the Armstrong or Tuwa drainages. Archaeological features also contribute to the unit's lure.

## Supplemental Values

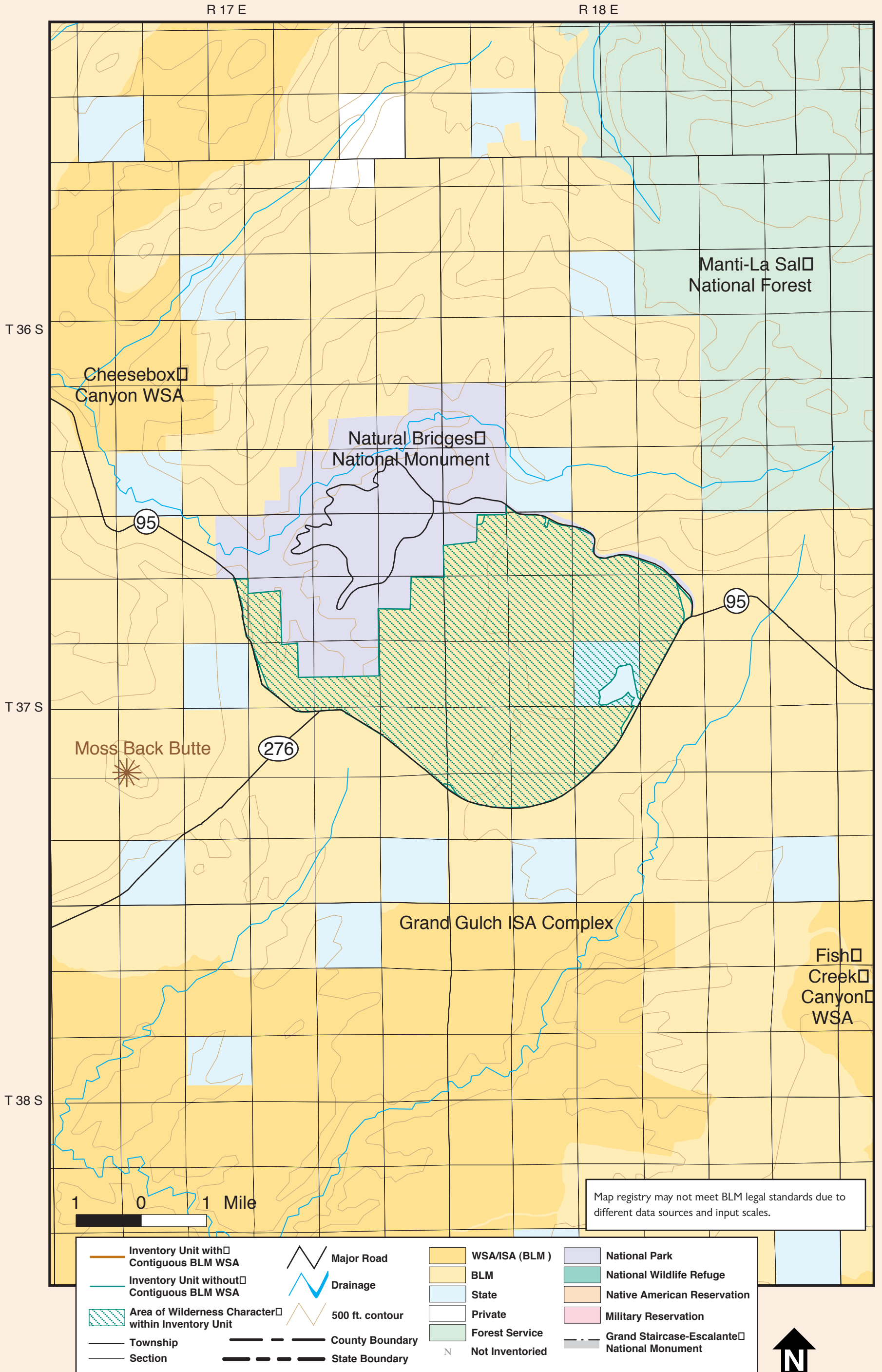
The National Park Service estimates that hundreds of archaeological sites lie within the unit. Although no comprehensive archaeological survey has been completed, a casual hike revealed scores of stone flakes and potsherds, as well as one habitation site. Scenic quality is high, especially in the Armstrong and Tuwa drainages.

HARMONY FLAT—A view of the upper drainage of scenic Armstrong Canyon.



Chris Barns

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SOUTHEAST REGION—Harmony Flat