

Beaver Dam Wash

Findings

INVENTORY UNIT ACRES		
Federal	State	Total
With Wilderness Characteristics		
23,000	2,200	25,200 (98%)
Without Wilderness Characteristics		
200	300	500 (2%)
Inventory Unit Total		
23,200	2,500	25,700
Contiguous Area-Wilderness Characteristics		
None		

Almost all of the Beaver Dam Wash inventory unit (25,200 acres) has wilderness characteristics. The core area is roadless and natural, providing visitors with outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Stark and desolate, the unit is part of the Mojave Desert ecosystem, which is characterized by some of Utah's hottest temperatures and lowest elevations. The Joshua tree forest and creosote-covered plains add to its primitive character, enhancing the impression of an inhospitable landscape with little human activity and no permanent structures for miles. The Beaver Dam Wash, which bisects the unit from north to south, is noted for its varied bird populations and the periodic presence of rare surface water. The endangered desert tortoise is found here. About 500 acres in two areas lack wilderness characteristics because of range developments and their access routes.

Unit Description

The Beaver Dam Wash inventory unit is located in the extreme southwestern corner of Washington County about 40 miles southwest of St. George. The landscape consists of a Joshua tree forest on open rolling hills, a number of washes, and a large mesa on the western boundary. The Beaver Dam Wash bisects the unit from north to south and is the primary geologic feature. Wide panoramic views can be seen from most hilltops. Vegetation transitions from Great Basin and Colorado Plateau plant species to Mojave Desert species, including blackbrush, creosote, apricot mallow, beavertail cactus, and several species of cholla, yucca, and barrel cactus.

The eastern boundary follows the Welcome Spring pipeline road near Castle Cliff Wash to a junction with the Lytle Ranch gravel road, which forms the northern boundary. The Beaver Dam Well road has been cherry-stemmed out of the unit from the Lytle Ranch road to the

Beaver Dam Wash. A single-spur vehicle way from the Beaver Dam Well road to a head box, trough, pipeline, and fence enclosure has also been cherry-stemmed out of the unit. The northern boundary continues west until it meets a large utility power line just east of the Beaver Dam Wash. The boundary then follows the power line and service road across the wash to the Nevada state line, the western boundary. The southern boundary is delineated by the Arizona state line.

Wilderness Characteristics

Naturalness

Most of the unit appears natural. It contains four fence lines totaling 8.5 miles, four water pipeline systems totaling 10.5 miles, six vehicle ways totaling 12.6 miles, and some range fence enclosures. Most of these facilities are relatively unnoticeable because they are screened by vegetation and rolling terrain. A visitor is unaware of these facilities until directly upon them. While occasional vehicle travel is possible along the bottom of Beaver Dam Wash, flash floods quickly erase evidence of vehicle passage. However, natural conditions in two parts of the unit are compromised by the presence of substantially noticeable grazing facilities and associated access.

Outstanding Opportunities

Solitude

The unit provides outstanding opportunities for solitude, with the best opportunities found in the central and western portions of the unit. The unit, averaging 7 miles

wide and 8 miles long, provides about 39 square miles of natural land. Users have ample spots to avoid the sights and sounds of others. Hikers are screened from one another by Joshua trees, rolling terrain, mesas, and washes. Except for Beaver Dam Wash, there are no evident destination points or linear corridors, so visitors are likely to disperse throughout the area.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The unit provides outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, especially during the cool weather of late fall, winter, and early spring. Outstanding opportunities exist primarily within the Beaver Dam Wash. Small rills empty into Beaver Dam Wash, providing short meanders to the bench lands and the Joshua tree forests above the drainage itself. Day hiking, photography, seasonal wild flower viewing, bird watching, and nature study are among the excellent opportunities for unconfined recreation. Visitors who seek a solitary walk or horseback trip through a lonely and uninhabited area will like this place.

Supplemental Values

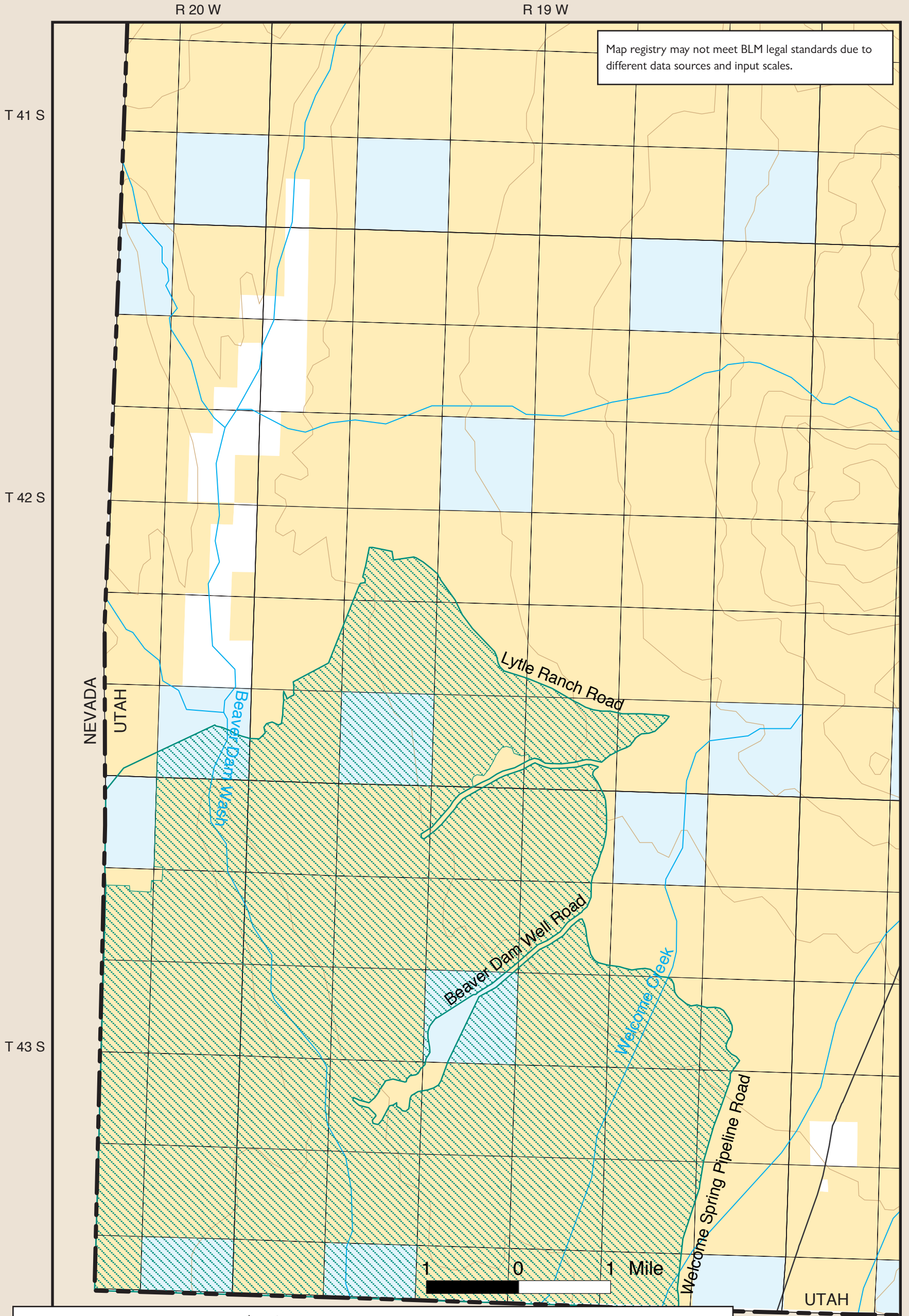
The panoramic views, Joshua trees, endangered desert tortoise, and diverse wildlife are considered the foremost supplemental values. The area provides habitat for a variety of Mojave ecosystem reptiles, including the sidewinder rattlesnake, speckled rattlesnake, Mojave rattlesnake, desert iguana, and Gila monster. Beaver Dam Wash is noted for its concentration of various bird species because of the proximity of both upland and riparian habitats. The area may also be part of an avian migration route.

BEAVER DAM WASH—Joshua trees provide screening from others in this area, which is noted for some of Utah's hottest temperatures and lowest elevations.



BLM photo

Beaver Dam Wash



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	

