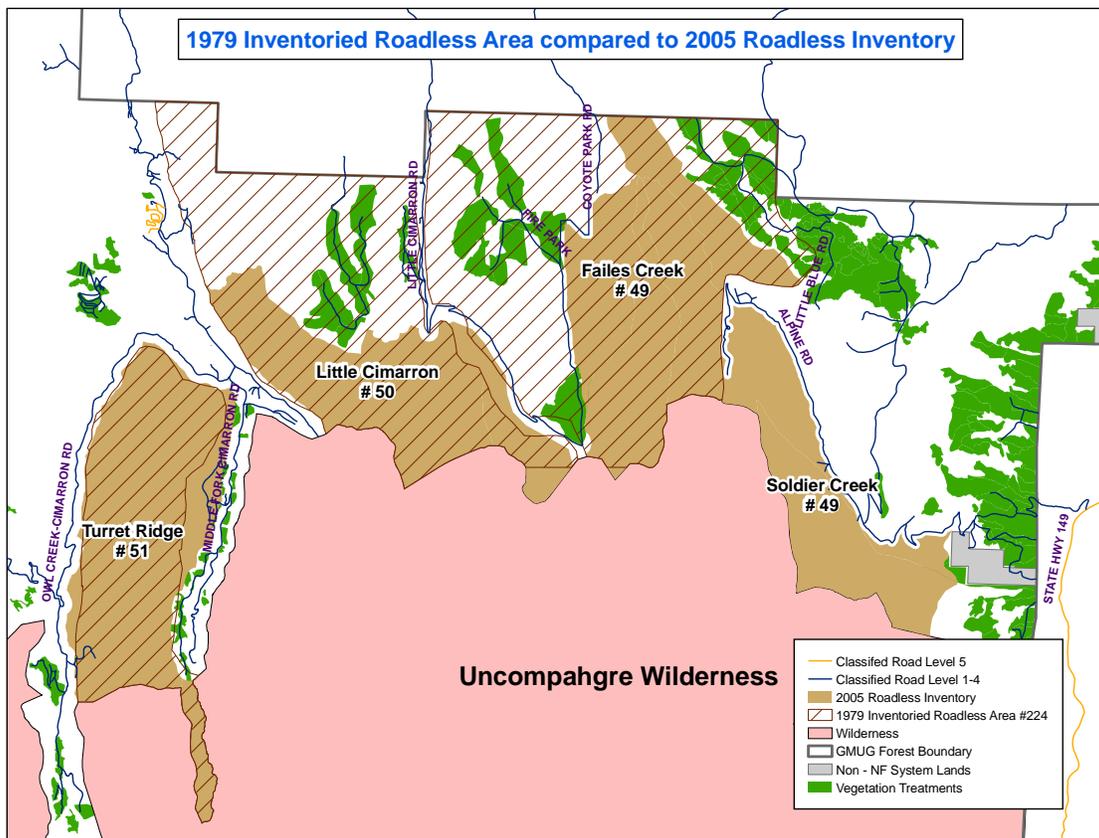


Rare II # 224 Uncompahgre

RARE II History – RARE Unit 224 identified 38,840 acres as roadless yet was not recommended for wilderness in the RARE II FEIS. A portion of the roadless area was designated as wilderness in the 1980 Colorado Wilderness Act (Public Law 96-560). Lands that have been altered by road construction and timber harvest have been removed from the inventory. The remaining acreage is carried forward in the **2005 inventory as #20449 Failes Creek/Soldier Creek, #20450 Little Cimarron, and #20451 Turret Ridge.**

Resource Activities which removed lands of RARE 224 from 2005 inventory:

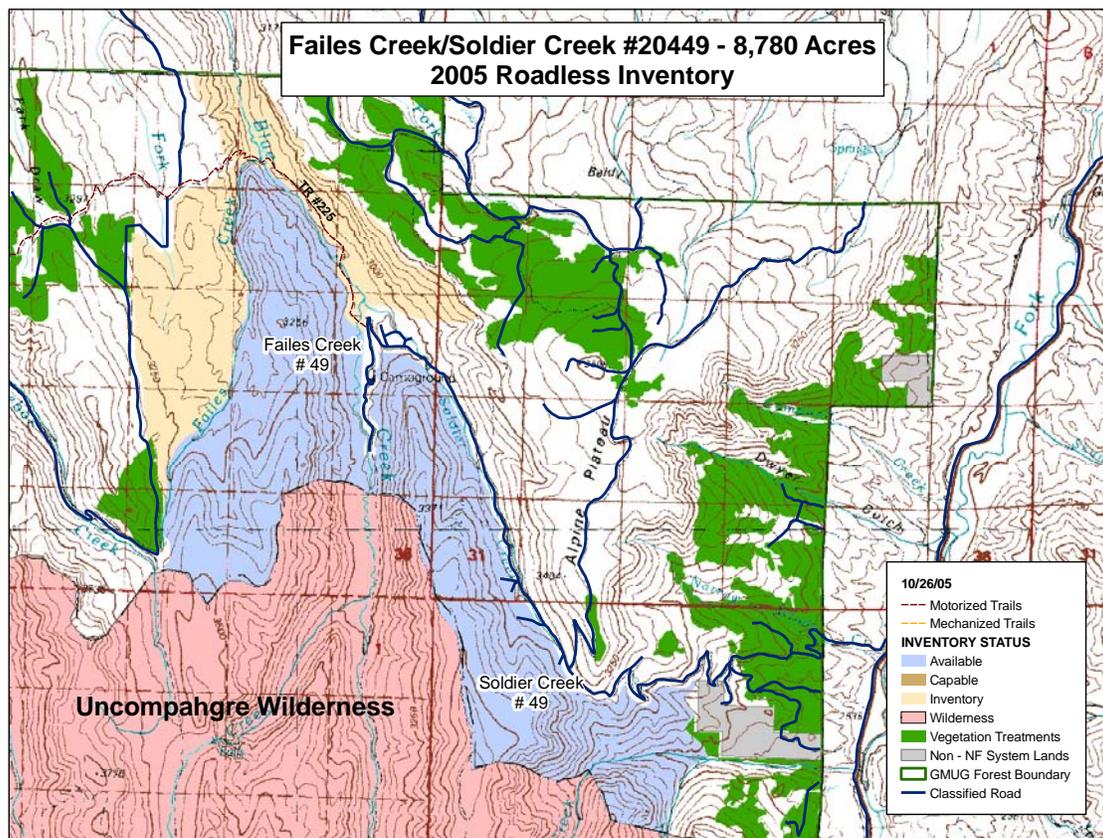
- There are 22 miles of road within IRA 224
- Vegetation harvest of 2,619 acres



2005 Inventory Descriptions:

Failes Creek / Soldier Creek #20449 – 8,780 Acres – Gunnison County

General Description: Unit 20449 is located within the San Juans Geographic Area approximately 20 miles northeast of the Town of Ouray. The Failes Creek/Soldier Creek roadless area is bordered to the north by the BLM and the south by the Uncompahgre Wilderness Area. The Little Cimarron Road #868.1A makes the west boundary and the Alpine Road #868 the east boundary. There are two distinct segments within this unit, separated almost in half by Big Blue Creek. The Failes Creek area is west of Big Blue Creek and the Soldiers Creek segment is to the east.



Elevation Range – 8,800' – 11,900'

Ecoregion – M331G – South – Central Highlands

Vegetation – The Potential Natural Vegetation is predominately 65% spruce-fir, 13% spruce-fir aspen, 6% aspen, 6% grass/forbs, 2% riparian, and 6% bare ground.

Land Type –

75% 60VX - Montane and Subalpine climate zone; mixed igneous extrusive geology.

20% 70BS – Subalpine climate zone; basalt igneous extrusive geology.

Resource Activities:Current & Ongoing:

- The Big Park and Alpine Plateau cattle allotments are within this unit.
- Motorized trail #225, Alpine Trail, runs through the northern portion of this unit and is linked to a larger trail system.
- The Alpine Road, which borders the Soldier Creek segment, provides access to the Big Blue Creek wilderness trail head.
- Two non-motorized trails are within the unit, #230 Failes Creek Trail and #234 Big Park Trail.
- Parks and meadows within this unit are popular winter snowmobiling areas.

Wilderness Potential:Capability:

Environment –

- Naturalness – The area is predominately a spruce-fir forest that has not been altered.
- Solitude – The unit is surrounded by roads and one motorized trail. The Little Cimarron Road segment that borders the unit is closed to public access; therefore, distractions from the road are minimal. The Alpine Trail receives generally low levels of use with the exception of annual motorcycle events where the volume of users is significant during event days. The Alpine road along the Soldiers Creek segment receives steady use during the summer and fall. Generally, the Failes Creek segment offers opportunity for solitude and sense of remoteness.

Challenge – The area offers the same sense of adventure and challenge as the adjacent Uncompahgre Wilderness

Manageability/Boundaries –

- Size – The area would create a narrow extension to the Uncompahgre Wilderness.
- Boundaries – The northern boundary may be difficult to describe. Adjusting the boundary to follow Failes Creek and Big Blue Creek would make a more manageable boundary. Pulling the western boundary back from the road to Failes Creek will provide a more identifiable and defensible boundary.

Special Features/Activities –None identified.

Evaluation: The majority of the area is **capable**. Adjustments to the boundary north and west of Failes Creek were made. That area is considered **not capable** due to boundary management concerns.

Availability (of Capable Lands):

Recreation – The Alpine Trail is a popular motorcycle trail that links to a larger recreation trail system runs through the unit. Winter snowmobiling is a popular activity within the area.

Water – There are no water developments in this unit.

Timber – There are approximately 1,500 acres within the capable portion of this unit that are tentatively suitable for wood fiber production. An additional 200 acres of tentatively suitable timber land are within the inventory portion of the unit.

Minerals – No known potential for oil and gas.

Management Considerations – The Soldier Creek area is adjacent to private in-holdings. There is a potential for fuels treatment needs within this interface.

Evaluation – The capable lands within this unit **are available** for wilderness consideration.

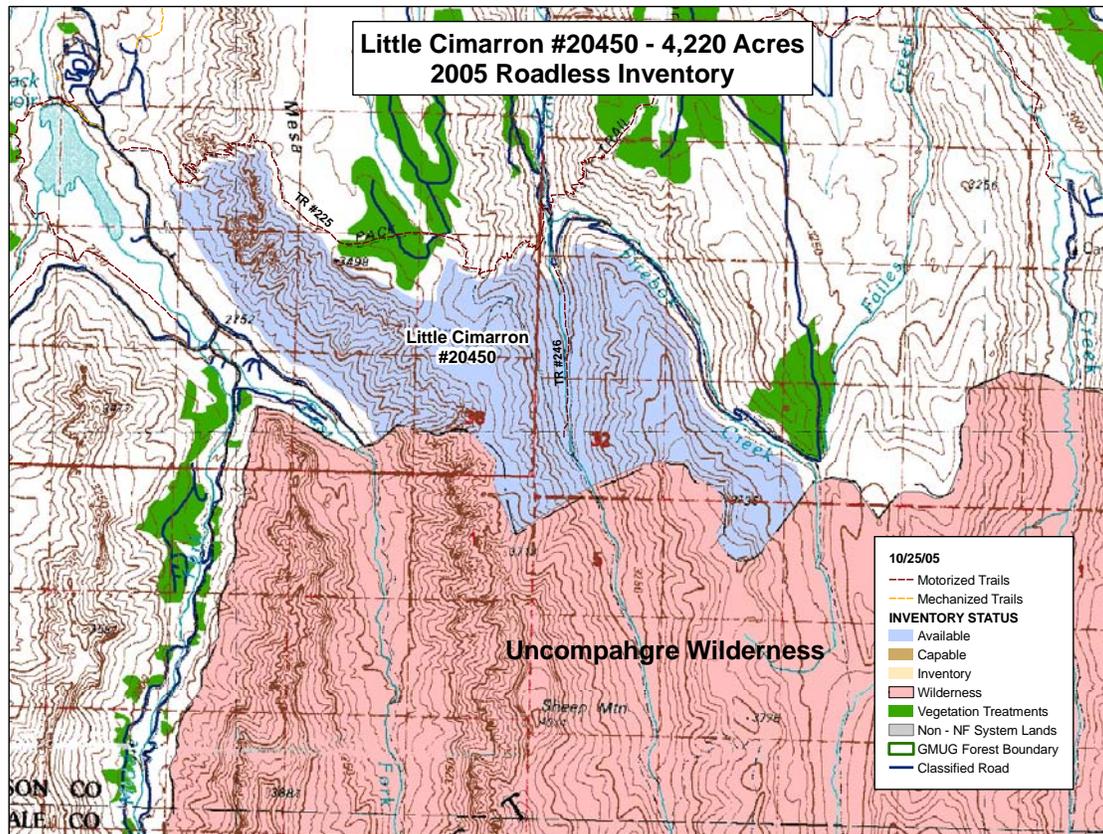
Need: Individual unit assessments of available lands begin on page 262.

Nearby Wilderness – approximate distance away:

- Uncompahgre Wilderness – <1 mile
- Powderhorn Wilderness – 5 miles
- LaGarita Wilderness – 15 miles
- Mt Sneffels Wilderness – 25 miles
- Gunnison Gorge Wilderness – 25 miles
- Weminuche Wilderness – 30 miles

Little Cimarron #20450 – 4,220 Acres – Gunnison County

General Description: Located within the San Juans Geographic Area and approximately 16 miles northeast of the Town of Ouray. This area is bordered by the Uncompahgre Wilderness to the south and the Alpine Trail #225 to the north. The unit sits above the escarpments that parallel the Owl Creek-Cimarron Road and East Fork Road. The Little Cimarron Road #864 borders this area on the east along Fire Box Creek.



Elevation Range – 9,200' – 12,400'

Ecoregion – M331G – South – Central Highlands

Vegetation – The Potential Natural Vegetation is predominately 65% spruce-fir, 13% spruce-fir aspen, 6% aspen, 6% grass/forbs, 2% riparian, and 6% bare ground.

Land Type –

45% 60VX - Montane and Subalpine climate zone; mixed igneous extrusive geology.

55% 70VX – Subalpine climate zone; mixed igneous extrusive geology.

Resource Activities:Current & Ongoing:

- The Big Blue and Fall Creek cattle allotments are within this unit.
- The Alpine Trail #225, a single track motorcycle trail, is the northern border of the unit.
- Snowmobiling is popular in the meadows directly north of this area.

Wilderness Potential:Capability:

Environment –

- Naturalness – The area has maintained natural processes.
- Solitude – The perimeter of the area overlooks both the Big Cimarron and Little Cimarron drainages, both popular recreation destinations. Generally the core of this area offers opportunities for solitude and a sense of remoteness.

Challenge – The area provides a moderate degree of challenge. The ruggedness of the land and dense vegetation offers opportunities for adventure and challenge.

Manageability/Boundaries –

- Size – The area would be a narrow extension to the Uncompahgre Wilderness.
- Boundaries – The existing wilderness boundaries along topographic features are very effective. Adding this unit to the wilderness will create boundaries that generally follow roads and trails. The west boundary, however, follows the topography of the mesa. Managing the north and east boundaries during the winter may prove difficult.

Special Features/Activities – None identified.

Evaluation: The area meets criteria to make it **capable** of becoming wilderness.

Availability:

Recreation – Winter motorized use occurs in the meadows north of this unit. The Alpine Trail, a motorized route, lies at the northern edge of the boundary.

Water – There are no water developments or diversions in this unit.

Timber – There are approximately 1,000 acres of land that are tentatively suitable for producing timber for wood fiber production within this unit.

Minerals – No known potential for oil and gas.

Management Considerations – Winter motorized trespass.

Evaluation – This area is **available** for wilderness consideration.

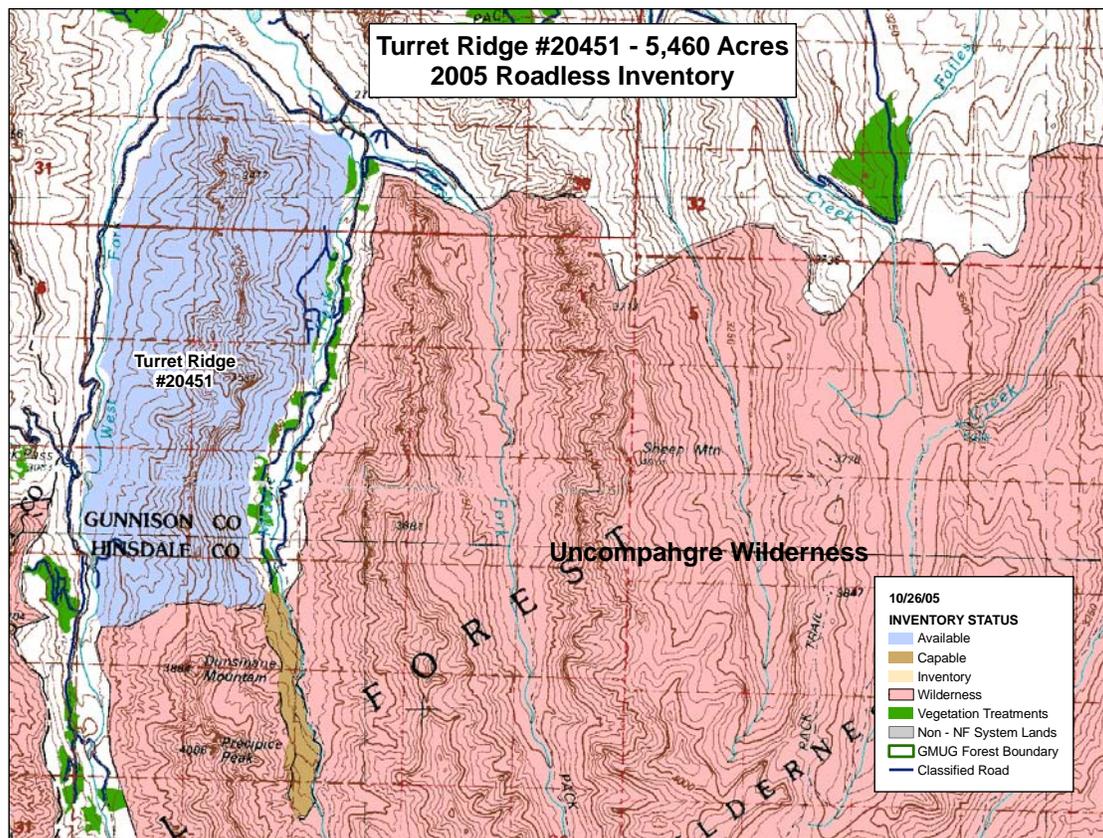
Need: Individual unit assessments of available lands begin on page 262.

Nearby Wilderness – approximate distance away:

- Uncompahgre Wilderness – <1 mile
- Powderhorn Wilderness – 10 miles
- LaGarita Wilderness – 20 miles
- Mt Sneffels Wilderness – 25 miles
- Gunnison Gorge Wilderness – 25 miles
- Weminuche Wilderness – 30 miles

Turret Ridge #20451 – 5,460 Acres – Gunnison & Hinsdale Counties

General Description: Unit 20451 is located within the San Juans Geographic Area approximately 11 miles northeast of the Town of Ouray. Turret Ridge roadless area is approximately five miles long by two miles wide bordered on the north and west by the Owl Creek-Cimarron Road #858, bordered on the east by the Middle Fork Road #861, and adjoining the Uncompahgre Wilderness to the south.



Elevation Range – 9,100' – 10,400'

Ecoregion – M331G – South – Central Highlands

Vegetation – The Potential Natural Vegetation is predominately 65% spruce-fir, 13% spruce-fir aspen, 6% aspen, 6% shrub, 2% riparian, and 6% bare ground.

Land Type –

33% 60VX – Montane and Subalpine climate zone; mixed igneous extrusive geology

66% 70VX – Subalpine climate zone; mixed igneous extrusive geology

Resource Activities:Current & Ongoing:

- The Big Cimarron and Green Mountain cattle allotments are within this unit.
- There are no developed trails within this unit.
- The area was harvested along the perimeter of the unit during the late 1960s.
- There is an outstanding Plan of Operation for hard rock mineral activities within the southern leg of this unit.

Wilderness Potential:Capability:

Environment –

- Naturalness – There is evidence of past spruce clear-cuts along the Middle Fork and West Fork roads, however, these areas are recovering. The remainder of the area retains a high level of naturalness.
- Solitude – Once a way from the roads, opportunity to find remoteness and solitude is high.

Challenge – The area provides a high degree of challenge. The rugged terrain and dense vegetation along with proximity to trails provides opportunity for adventure and self reliance.

Manageability/Boundaries –

- Size – The area is narrow, approximately two miles across, and is an extension of the Uncompahgre Wilderness.
- Boundaries – The roads that bound the area are easily identifiable

Special Features/Activities – The area possess unique scenic and geological pinnacle tufts.

Evaluation: The area meets criteria for **capable** wilderness.

Availability:

Recreation – Two classified roads are along the boundary of the unit.

Water – There are no water developments within the unit.

Timber – There are no lands suitable for wood fiber production within this unit.

Minerals – No known potential for oil and gas. The area is highly mineralized and there is one outstanding Plan of Operation within the unit.

Management Considerations – Hard rock mineral operation.

Evaluation – The major segment of the unit is **available** for wilderness consideration; however, the pig-tail extending south is **not available** due to existing mineral rights and subsequent outstanding plan of operation.

Need: Individual unit assessments of available lands begin on page 262.

Nearby Wilderness – approximate distance away:

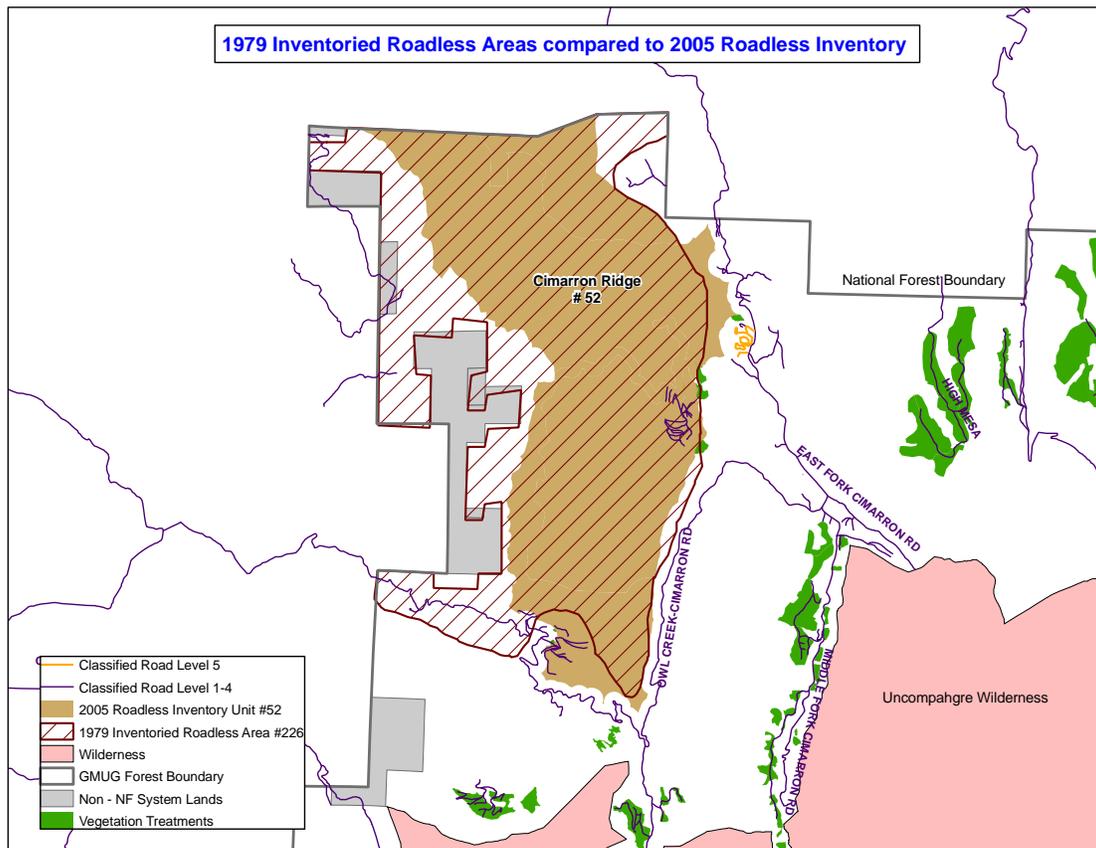
- Uncompahgre Wilderness – <1 mile
- Powderhorn Wilderness – 15 miles
- Mt Sneffels Wilderness – 20 miles
- Weminuche Wilderness – 20 miles
- LaGarita Wilderness – 22 miles
- Gunnison Gorge Wilderness – 25 miles

Rare II # 226 Cimarron

RARE II History – RARE Unit 226 identified 15,000 acres as roadless yet the area was not recommended for wilderness in the RARE II FEIS. Lands altered by road construction and timber harvest along with non-National Forest System lands were removed from the inventory. The remaining acreage is carried forward in the **2005 inventory as #20452 Cimarron Ridge**.

Resource Activities which removed lands of RARE 224 from 2005 inventory:

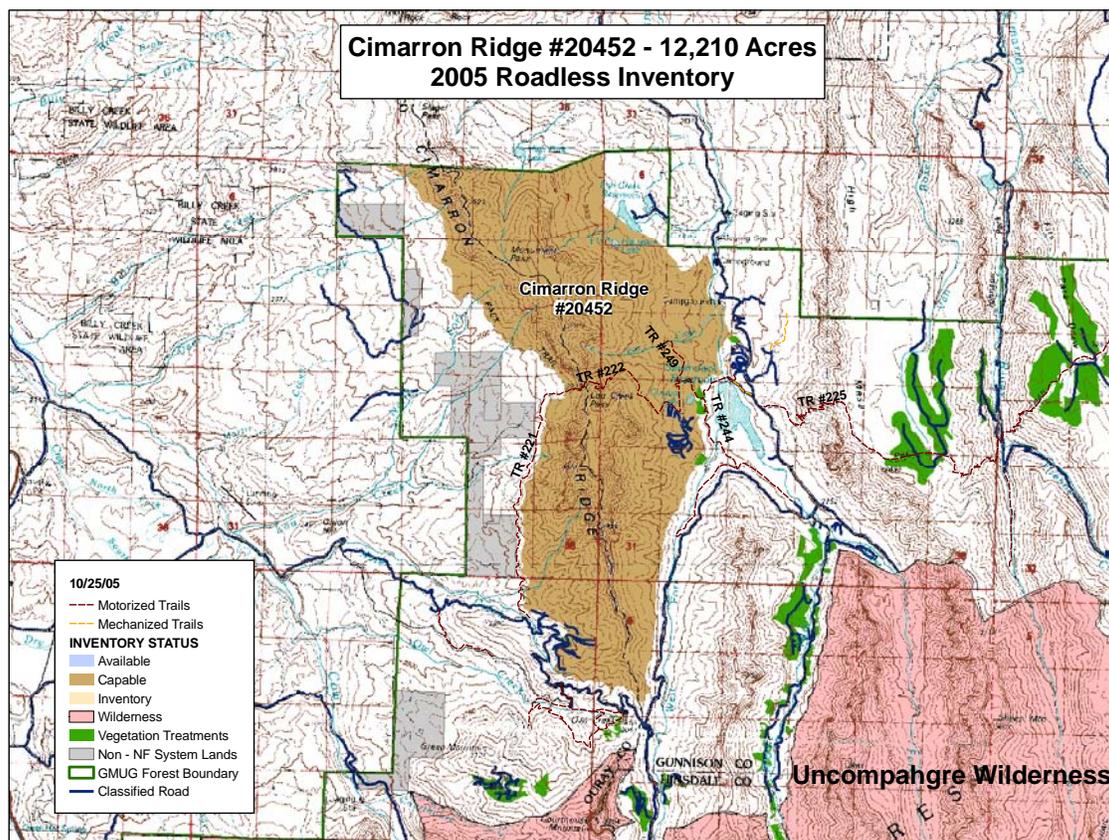
- There are 10 miles of road within IRA 226
- Vegetation harvest of 194 acres occurred in IRA 226



2005 Inventory Descriptions:

Cimarron Ridge #20452 – 12,210 Acres – Gunnison & Ouray Counties

General Description: Unit 20452 is located within the San Juans Geographic Area approximately 10 miles northeast of the Town of Ridgway. The Cimarron Ridge roadless area is bordered on the south and east boundary by the Owl Creek-Cimarron Road #858. It borders private land to the west and Big Cimarron River to the east. The area runs north to the National Forest boundary which abuts a small section of BLM lands surrounded by private land. There is no public access into the area from the north. This area is also approximately two miles northwest of the Uncompahgre Wilderness, separated by Turret Ridge unit #20451 and the Owl Creek-Cimarron Road.



Elevation Range – 8,700' – 11,500'

Ecoregion – M331G – South – Central Highlands

Vegetation – The Potential Natural Vegetation is predominately 40% spruce-fir, 34% spruce-fir aspen, 14% aspen, 5% shrub, and 6% bare ground.

Land Type –

75% 60VX - Montane and Subalpine climate zone; mixed igneous extrusive geology.

20% 70VX – Subalpine climate zone; mixed igneous extrusive geology.

Resource Activities:Current & Ongoing:

- The Big Cimarron and Lou Creek cattle allotments are within this unit.
- One connected motorized single-track trail comprised of #225 Nate Creek Trail and #222 Lou Creek Trail bisect the unit in half north to south.
- The Fox Creek Trail, #249, a double track ATV route, spurs off of the Lou Creek trail and travels north along the Big Cimarron River.
- The Cowboy Lake Trail, #244, parallels the unit boundary separating the unit from the Silver Jack reservoir.

Wilderness Potential:Capability:

Environment –

- Naturalness – The area shows evidence of aspen clearcuts along the eastern perimeter of the unit that occurred during 1950s and 1960s. The Silver Jack Reservoir and campground are along the east side of the Big Cimarron River. Cimarron Ridge divides the area into two segments west and east. The west side of the ridge retains a higher degree of naturalness than does the east side which is influenced by past timber harvests, evidence of roads, and the influence of the reservoirs and dams. The west side away from the private lands appears natural and undisturbed.
- Solitude – The Nate Creek-Lou Creek trail is a motorized trail system. The Nate Creek portion, on the west side of Cimarron Ridge, has a limited use season. Generally, motorized activity on the trail is intermittent and light; however, during special recreation events, the trail receives high volumes of traffic. The Fox Creek Trail is a double track ATV trail with no seasonal restrictions. Generally, motorized activity on this trail is intermittent and light. Use increases during fall big game hunting.

Challenge – The area west of Cimarron Ridge offers a higher degree of challenge than does the east side of Cimarron Ridge. The terrain is steep, however, the east side is within the sights and sounds of trails and other developments such as the Silver Jack Reservoir.

Manageability/Boundaries –

- Size – The area is of sufficient size to manage for roadless and wilderness character; however, the ridge effectively splits the unit into two narrow segments.
- Boundaries – The adjacency to private lands could prove difficult to manage boundaries along the west.

Special Features/Activities – None identified.

Evaluation: The area meets has attributes that make it **capable** of wilderness consideration.

Availability:

Recreation – The Nate Creek -Lou Creek Trail, is a motorized trail system that runs east-west through the unit bisecting the unit north and south. The Fox Creek Trail, an ATV route, spurs off the Lou Creek trail and heads north to the National Forest boundary.

Water –Water developments skirt the eastern boundaries. The Montrose Reservoirs are located along the northeast boundary and the Silver Jack Reservoir is east of the Big Cimarron River.

Timber – There are approximately 10,000 acres tentatively suitable timber for wood fiber production within this unit.

Minerals – Low potential for oil and gas.

Management Considerations –Private lands along the eastern boundary are currently being developed as ranchettes. The private land-forest interface will continue to develop and management within the interface is a concern.

Evaluation – This area is **not available** for wilderness due to the high recreation values that it offers. The Nate Creek-Lou Creek trails system provides linkages to a larger motorized trail system. There are no feasible alternatives to re-route these trails to provide the same recreation experiences. The Nate Creek trail draws users for a recreation event from across the nation.

Need:

Nearby Wilderness – approximate distance away:

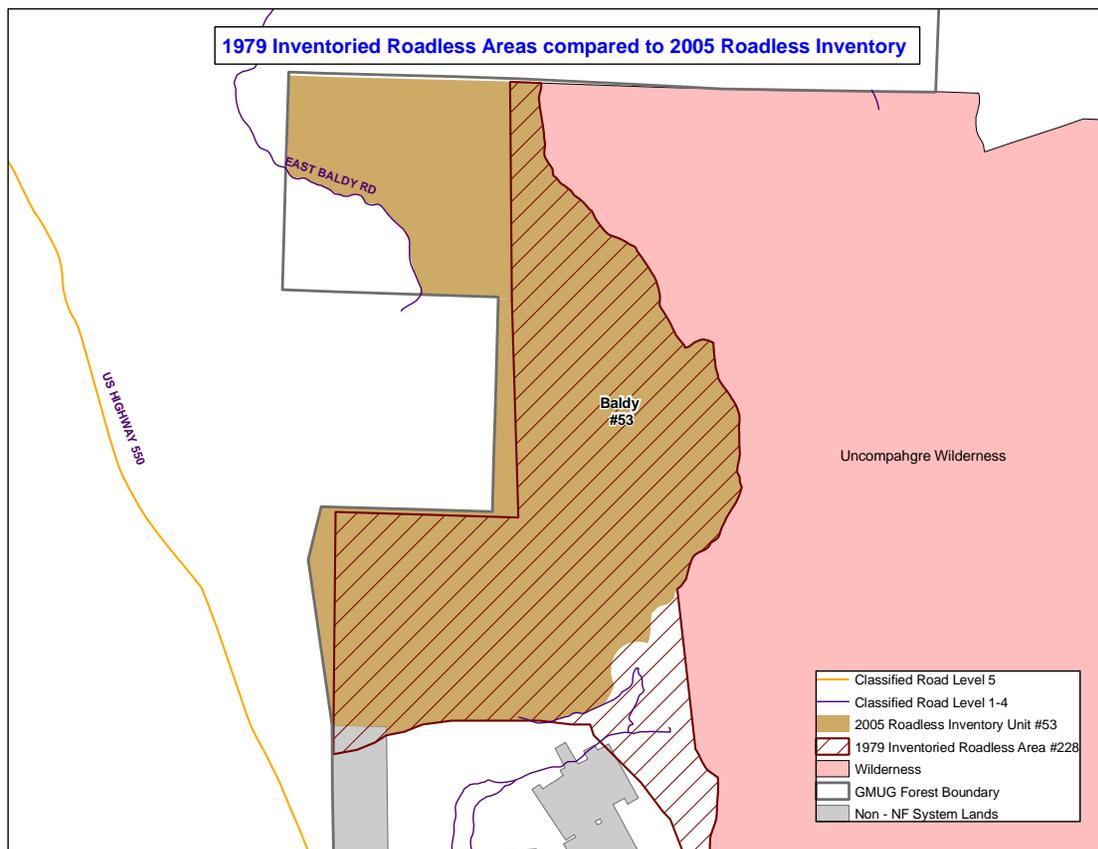
- Uncompahgre Wilderness – 2 miles
- Powderhorn Wilderness – 20 miles
- Mt Sneffels Wilderness – 20 miles
- Gunnison Gorge Wilderness – 20 miles
- LaGarita Wilderness – 25 miles
- Weminuche Wilderness – 30 miles

Rare II # 228 Baldy Peak

RARE II History – RARE Unit 228 identified 10,080 acres as roadless and was recommended for wilderness in the RARE II FEIS. Most of the area was designated as part of the Big Blue Wilderness (now Uncompahgre Wilderness) in the 1980 Colorado Wilderness Act (Public Law 96-560). Of the remaining RARE II acres, roaded lands and non-National Forest System lands were removed from the inventory; the remaining acreage is described in the **2005 Inventory as #20453 Baldy**.

Resource Activities which removed lands of RARE 228 from 2005 inventory:

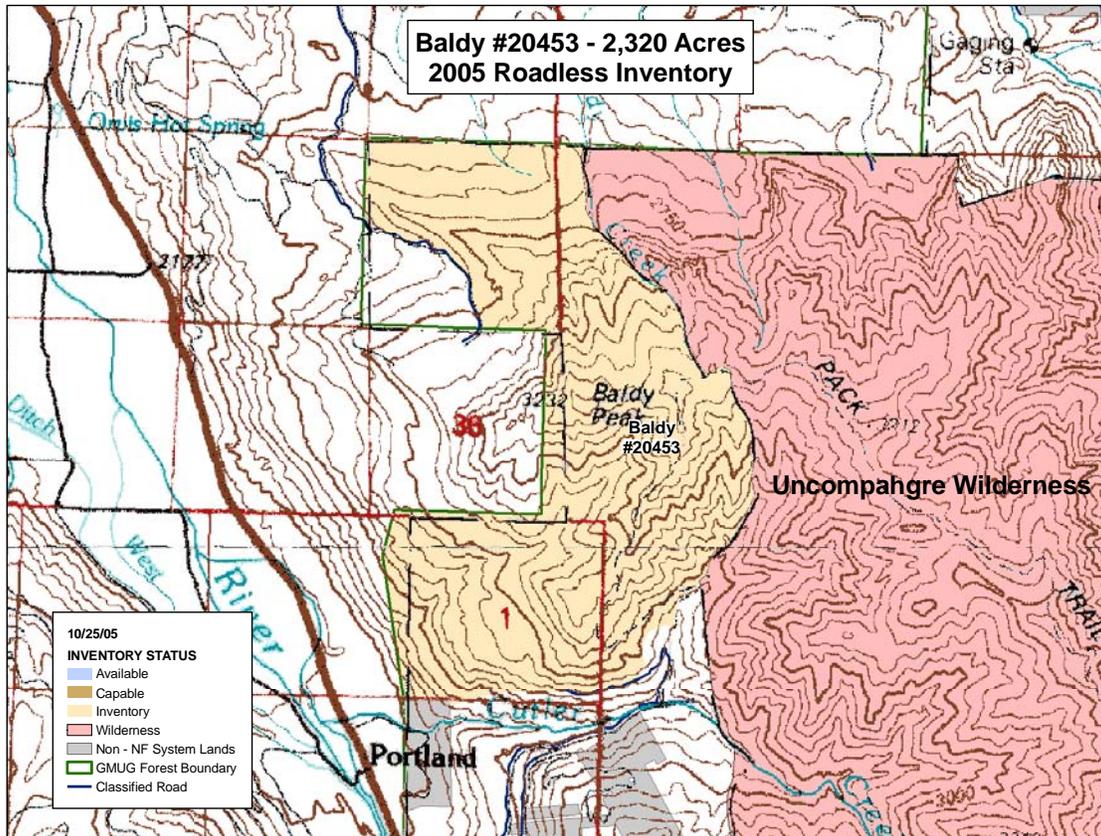
- Roaded lands
- Non-National Forest System lands



2005 Inventory Descriptions:

Baldy #20453 – 2,320 Acres –Ouray County

General Description: Unit 20453 is located within the San Juans Geographic Area approximately four miles southeast of the Town of Ridgway. The Baldy roadless area is bordered by private land along the National Forest boundary along the north and west boundaries, the Uncompahgre Wilderness to the east, and the Cutler/Dexter Road #872 to the south.



Elevation Range –7,400' – 10,600'

Ecoregion – M331G – South – Central Highlands

Vegetation – The Potential Natural Vegetation is predominately 41% oak-serviceberry, 27% spruce-fir aspen, 10% pinyon-juniper, 13% aspen, and 6% grass.

Land Type –

50% 50VX - Montane climate zone; mixed igneous extrusive geology.

20% 30IX – Semi-arid climate zone; mixed igneous intrusive geology.

Resource Activities:Current & Ongoing:

- The Baldy and Section 25 cattle allotments are within this unit.
- The area is being actively managed for Bighorn sheep habitat. Projects such as prescribed fire and roller chopping have occurred and are planned in the future.
- Two non-motorized trails are within the area, #216 Baldy Trail and #216.1A Baldy Peak Trail.
- Extensive habitat improvements for Bighorn sheep take place within the area, predominately prescribed fire.

Wilderness Potential:Capability:

Environment –

- Naturalness – The area shows evidence of habitat improvement projects, such as roller chopping and prescribed fire.
- Solitude – The area is adjacent to private land developments on three sides; opportunities for solitude and sense of remoteness are very limited.

Challenge – The area offers a low degree of challenge. Over half the area is brush and grass land. The proximity to the urban developments and the open vegetation limits opportunities for challenge.

Manageability/Boundaries –

- Size – The area is adjacent to the Uncompahgre Wilderness.
- Boundaries – The existing Wilderness boundaries would not be improved by using this area as an addition to the wilderness. Managing boundaries along private lands could prove difficult.

Special Features/Activities – Bighorn sheep habitat.

Evaluation: The area is considered to be **not capable** of wilderness because it does not meet the criteria for remoteness, challenge, and boundary management.

Availability (there are no capable lands):

Recreation – Non-motorized trails are within the unit.

Water – There are no water developments or diversions in this area.

Timber – There are no lands suitable for wood fiber production within this unit.

Minerals – Low potential for oil and gas.

Management Considerations –Critical Bighorn sheep habitat.

Wildlife – Management for Bighorn sheep habitat could be hindered if the area was to become wilderness.

Evaluation – This area does not meet criteria for capability and thus an availability assessment is not necessary; however, the area would not meet availability criteria since the landscape is critical Bighorn sheep habitat and requires active vegetation management.

Need:

Nearby Wilderness – approximate distance away:

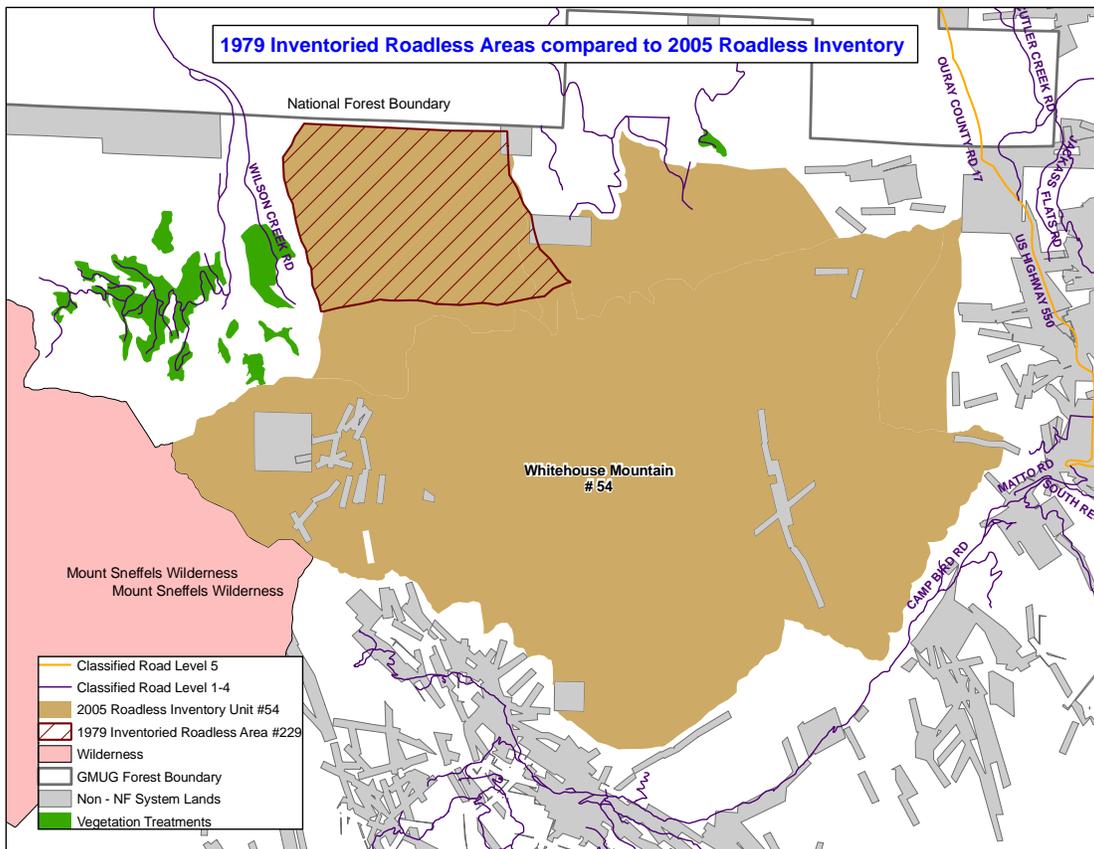
- Uncompahgre Wilderness – <1 mile
- Mt Sneffels Wilderness – 10 miles
- Weminuche Wilderness – 25 miles
- Powderhorn Wilderness – 25 miles
- Lizard Head Wilderness – 25 miles
- Gunnison Gorge Wilderness – 30 miles
- LaGarita Wilderness – 30 miles

Rare II # 229 Beaver Creek

RARE II History – RARE Unit 229 identified 1,480 acres as roadless yet did not recommend the area for wilderness in the RARE II FEIS. The area is currently described as part of **2005 inventory unit #20454 Whitehouse Mountain**.

Resource Activities which removed lands of RARE 229 from 2005 inventory:

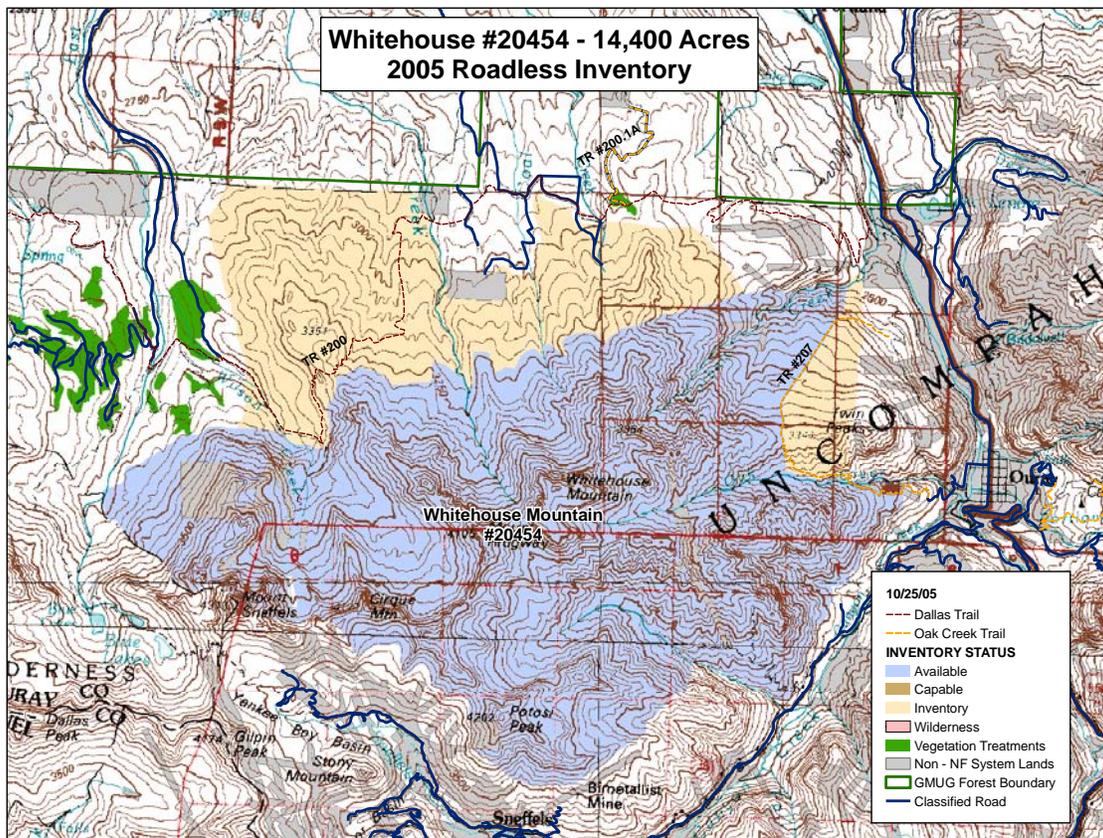
- Non-National Forest System lands



2005 Inventory Descriptions:

Whitehouse Mountain #20454 – 14,400 Acres – Ouray County

General Description: Unit 20454 is located within the San Juans Geographic Area approximately 2 miles northeast of the Town of Ouray. The Whitehouse Mountain roadless area adjoins the Mt. Sneffels Wilderness at the summit of the peak. The unit roughly parallels the Camp Bird Road #853 and the Yankee Boy Road #853.1B to the south and west. The eastern boundary is in the vicinity of the Oak Creek Trail #602 just outside of the Town of Ouray.



Elevation Range – 8,000' – 14,100'

Ecoregion – M331G – South – Central Highlands

Vegetation – The Potential Natural Vegetation is predominately 43% bare ground, 40% spruce-fir, 13% spruce-fir aspen, and 4% alpine.

Land Type –

50% 80VX - Alpine climate zone; mixed igneous extrusive geology.

25% 70VX – Subalpine climate zone; mixed igneous extrusive geology.

15% 60IH – Montane and Subalpine climate zone; igneous intrusive geology.

10% 80VX – Alpine climate zone; mixed igneous extrusive geology.

Resource Activities:Current & Ongoing:

- Portions the Coal Creek and Cocan Flats cattle allotments fall within the area; however, the majority of this unit does not have any livestock allotments within it.
- Winter motorized recreation occurs in the Miller Mesa area, which is adjacent to the northeast section of the unit.
- A winter ski hut resides within the inventoried area along trail #200.
- Trail #200, Dallas Trail, allows mountain bike use.
- There are five non-motorized trails within the unit:
 - #200 Dallas Trail – allows mountain bike use
 - #206 Weehawken Trail
 - #207 Oak Creek Trail
 - #203 Blain Basin Trail
 - #202.1A Wilson Ck Trail

Wilderness Potential:Capability:

Environment –

- Naturalness – There are isolated patent mining claims within the area and remnants of historic mining operations. There is evidence in the Wilson Creek drainage of past timber harvest. A cross-country ski hut is located within the unit. The core of the area is comprised of Whitehouse Mountain, Cirque Mountain, Mt. Sneffels, and their flanks. The lands within the core have retained a high degree of naturalness.
- Solitude – The Camp Bird Road has a high volume of vehicular traffic, the Oak Creek trail, being close to town also has a high use pattern. Within the core of the area a sense of remoteness and solitude can be obtained.

Challenge – The core of the area offers a high degree of challenge. The remainder of the area is influenced by sights and sounds from trails and developments on private lands.

Manageability/Boundaries –

- Size – There is sufficient size to manage for roadless and wilderness opportunities.
- Boundaries – Boundaries along the east would be more identifiable and manageable if they followed the Oak Creek Trail. Trespass into the area from private in-holdings and winter use in the Miller Mesa area are of a concern.

Special Features/Activities –None identified.

Evaluation: Areas of low naturalness and unmanageable boundaries do not meet the capability criteria; however, approximately **10,300 acres** of the remaining acres are considered **capable** for wilderness consideration.

Availability (of Capable Lands):

Recreation – The mechanized use along trail #200, Dallas Trail, and a cross-country ski hut are located outside of the capable lands.

Water – There are no water developments or diversions.

Timber – There are no suitable timber lands within the capable portion; however, 3,000 acres of tentatively suitable timber land are within the inventory portion.

Minerals – Low potential for oil and gas.

Management Considerations – Private lands within the unit.

Evaluation – The capable lands are **available** for wilderness.

Need: Individual unit assessments of available lands begin on page 262.

Nearby Wilderness – Approximate distance away:

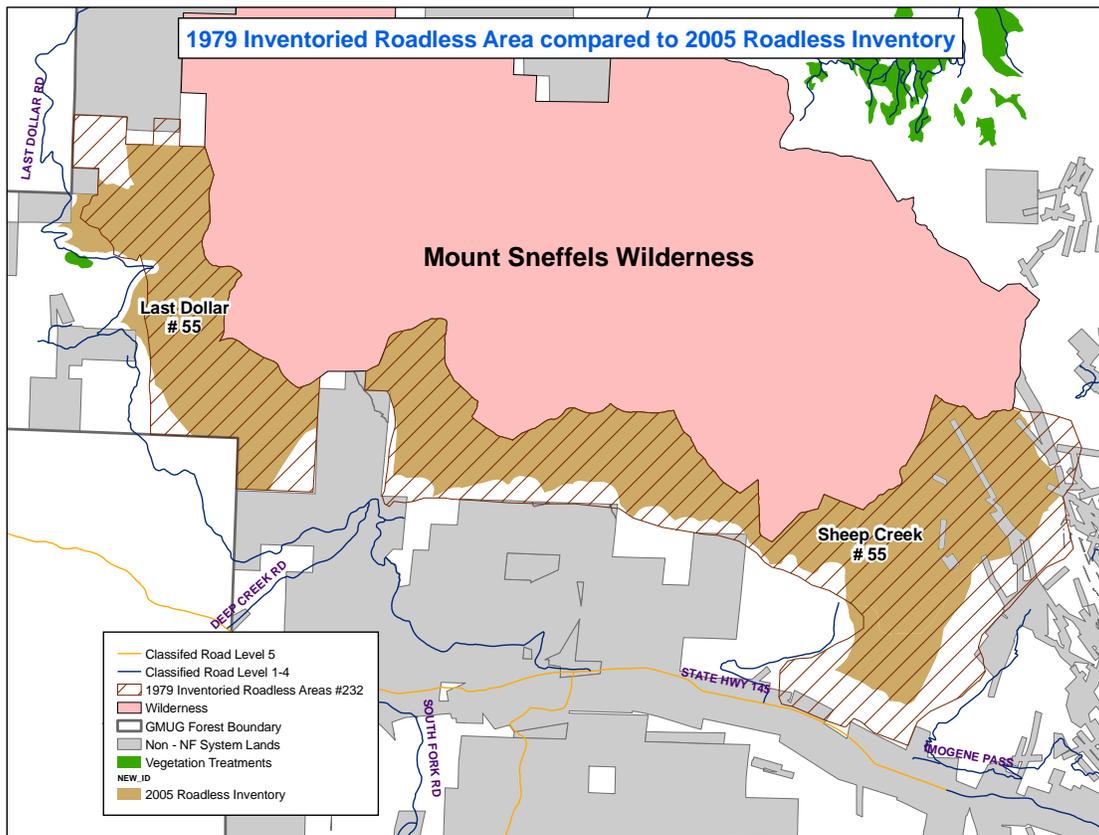
- Mt. Sneffels Wilderness – 2 miles
- Uncompahgre Wilderness – 5 miles
- Lizard Head Wilderness – 15 miles
- Weminuche Wilderness – 20 miles
- Weminuche Wilderness – 20 miles
- Powderhorn Wilderness – 25 miles
- Roubideau Special Area – 30 miles
- LaGarita Wilderness – 30 miles
- Tabeguache Special Area – 40 miles
- Gunnison Gorge Wilderness – 40 miles
- West Elk Wilderness – 40 miles
- South San Juan Wilderness – 65 miles
- Raggeds Wilderness – 65 miles

Rare II # 232 Iron Mountain

RARE II History – RARE Unit 232 identified 7,400 acres as roadless yet did not recommend the area for wilderness in the RARE II FEIS. A portion of these lands were designated as the Mount Sneffels Wilderness in the 1980 Colorado Wilderness Act (Public Law 96-560). The remaining acreage is carried forward in the **2005 Inventory as #20455 Last Dollar/Sheep Creek**.

Resource Activities which removed lands of RARE 232 from 2005 inventory:

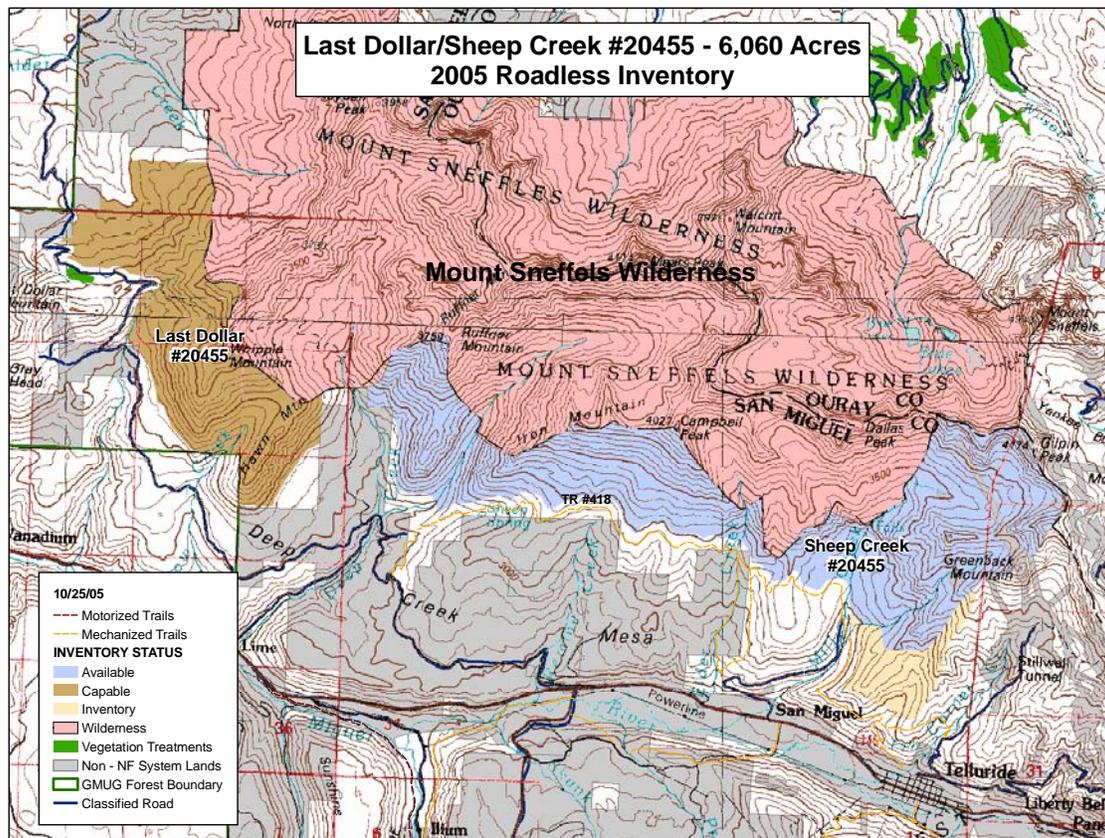
- Non-National Forest System lands
- Roaded lands



2005 Inventory Descriptions:

Last Dollar/Sheep Creek #20455 – 6,060 Acres – San Miguel County

General Description: Unit 20466 is located within the San Juans Geographic Area, approximately two miles northwest of the Town of Telluride. The Last Dollar/Sheep Creek roadless area is bordered to the north by the Mount Sneffels Wilderness. The Deep Creek mountain bike trail #418 forms the south boundary and the Last Dollar Road is the western boundary of this area. The area is surrounded by private lands on three sides.



Elevation Range – 9,900' – 13,700'

Ecoregion – M331G – South – Central Highlands

Vegetation – The Potential Natural Vegetation is predominately 8% spruce-fir, 41% spruce-fir aspen, 13% aspen, 7% spruce-fir fir, 8% alpine, and 18% bare ground.

Land Type –

90% 60IH – Montane and Subalpine climate zone; interbedded sandstone and shale geology.

8% 60IX - Montane and Subalpine climate zone; mixed igneous intrusive geology.

Resource Activities:Current & Ongoing:

- The San Miguel and Alder cattle allotments and Ruffner sheep allotments are within this unit.
- An irrigation ditch network that is maintained with motorized equipment follows a portion of the Deep Creek Trail near Sheep Creek.
- One classified road, #638 Last Dollar Road, is along the west boundary of this area.
- A cross-country ski hut is located within the unit.
- The Deep Creek mountain bike trail #418 forms the southern boundary.
- Several non-motorized trails are within the unit each of which connects to trails within the Mt Sneffels Wilderness:
 - #419 Whipple Mountain Trail
 - #434 Sneffels Highline Trail
 - #510 Alder Creek Trail

Wilderness Potential:Capability:

Environment –

- Naturalness – The area is adjacent to several private land parcels, many of which were associated with historic mining. Today those lands are being developed as homesites. The Aldasoro, Greyhead, and Sunnyside subdivisions are large developments adjacent to the area.
- Solitude – The area is within range of the sights and sounds of the Town of Telluride. The proximity to town facilitates the high recreation use along the trail systems. The opportunities for solitude and sense of remoteness are lessened as a result.

Challenge – The area has rugged topography offers opportunities challenge.

Manageability/Boundaries –

- Size – The area is adjacent to the Mt Sneffels Wilderness.
- Boundaries – Boundary management of the existing wilderness boundary could be improved with this addition.

Special Features/Activities – The area has a ski hut within its boundaries.

Evaluation: Most of the area meets criteria for capability and is considered to be **capable** of wilderness. However, a portion of the unit along the southeast boundary is unmanageable and is considered not capable **not capable**.

Availability (of Capable Lands):

Recreation – There is a ski hut located within the boundaries of this area.

Water – An irrigation ditch network follows a portion of the Deep Creek Trail near Sheep Creek. Motorized access is needed for maintenance.

Timber – There are approximately 1,000 acres within the capable portion of the unit that are tentatively suitable for wood fiber production; however, there is no suitable timber land within the inventory portion.

Minerals – The area has low potential for oil and gas.

Management Considerations –Private lands are located along three quarters of the unit. Trespass from private lands particularly during winter could be a concern.

Evaluation –This western portion of this unit along the Last Dollar road is **not available** due to recreation values associated with the ski hut. The remainder of the unit is **available** for wilderness consideration.

Need: Individual unit assessments of available lands begin on page 262.

Nearby Wilderness – Approximate distance away:

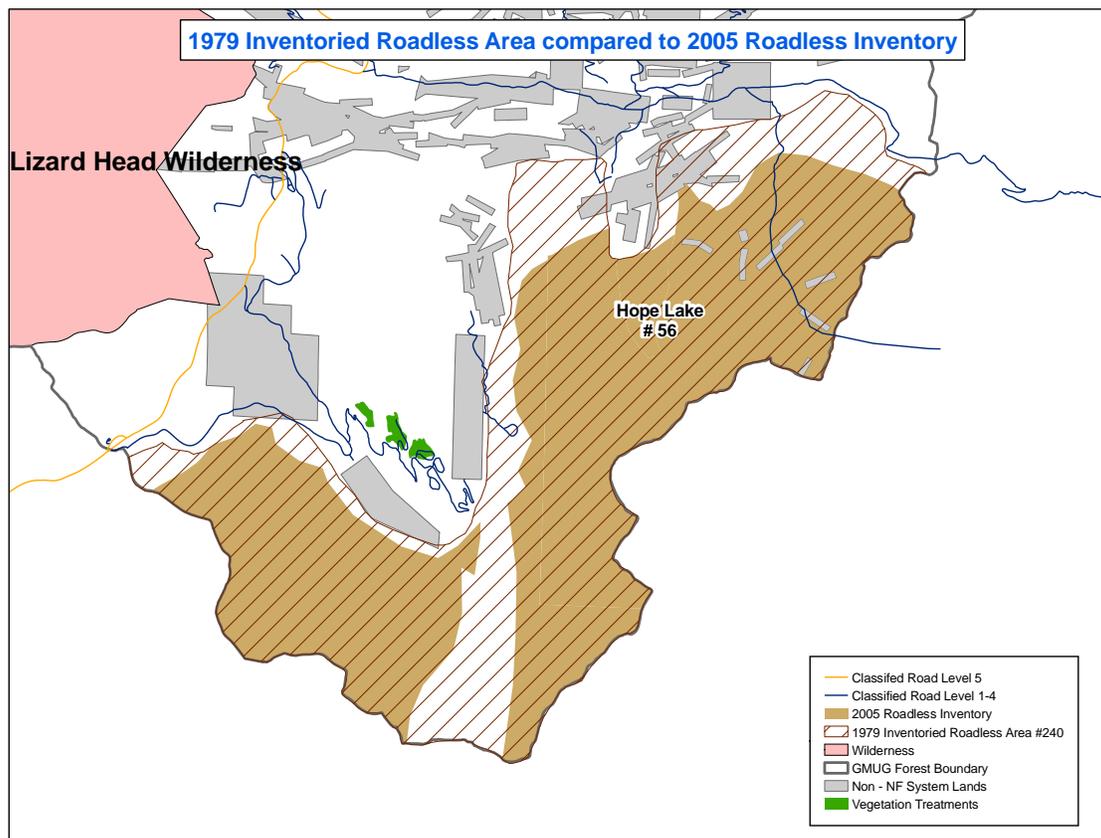
- Lizard Head Wilderness – 10 miles
- Uncompahgre Wilderness – 10 miles
- Mt. Sneffels Wilderness – 11 miles
- Weminuche Wilderness – 20 miles
- Roubideau Special Area – 30 miles
- LaGarita Wilderness – 35 miles
- Powderhorn Wilderness – 35 miles
- Tabeguache Special Area – 35 miles
- Gunnison Gorge Wilderness – 45 miles
- West Elk Wilderness – 50 miles

Rare II # 240 San Miguel

RARE II History – RARE Unit 240 identified 9,630 acres on the GMUG National Forest as roadless yet did not recommend the area for wilderness in the RARE II FEIS. The RARE II unit extended onto the San Juan National Forest. Lands altered by road construction and non-national forest system lands were removed from the inventory. The remaining acreage is carried forward in the **2005 Inventory as #20456 Hope Lake**.

Resource Activities which removed lands of RARE 240 from 2005 inventory:

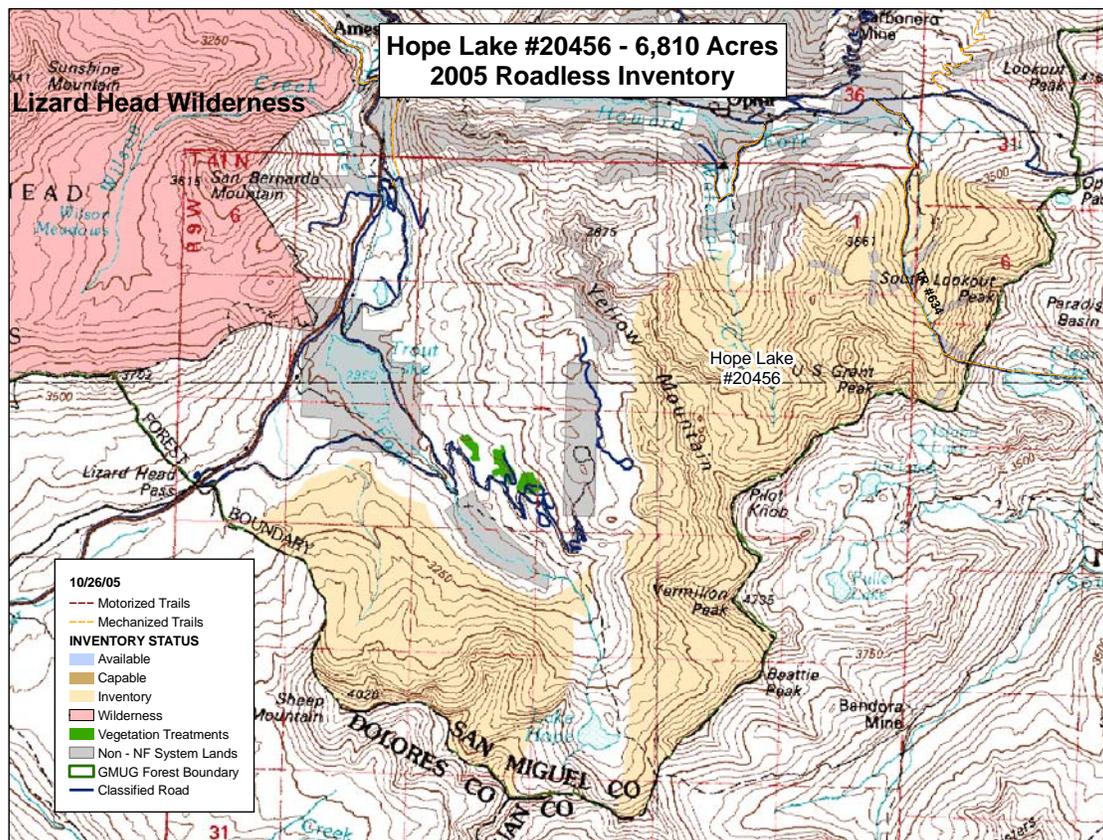
- There are three miles of road within IRA 240
- Water developments
- Non-National Forest System lands were removed from the inventory



2005 Inventory Descriptions:

Hope Lake #20456 – 6,810 Acres – San Miguel County

General Description: This unit is located within the San Juan Geographic Area approximately 6 miles south of the Town of Telluride. The Hope Lake roadless unit lies east of Highway 145 in the vicinity of Lizard Head Pass and is bordered to the south by the San Juan National Forest



Elevation Range – 9,900' – 13,900'

Ecoregion – M331G – South – Central Highlands

Vegetation – The Potential Natural Vegetation is predominately 29% spruce-fir, 2% spruce-fir aspen, 8% riparian, and 59% bare ground.

Land Type –

12% 70VX – Subalpine climate zone; mixed igneous extrusive geology.

14% 70IH – Subalpine climate zone; interbedded sandstone and shale geology.

49% 80VX – Alpine climate zone; mixed igneous extrusive geology.

Resource Activities:Current & Ongoing:

- The Prospect and Basin Lake sheep allotments are within this area.
- One mechanized trail, #634 Swamp Canyon Trail, bisects the east portion of this area. This trail is currently being proposed to change use to non-motorized foot and horse travel only.
- Excel Energy operates the Ames Hydro-Electric Project which includes the Hope Lake dam and water storage in the lake.
- The area has a permitted winter heli-ski operation.

Wilderness Potential:Capability:

Environment –

- Naturalness –The majority of the area is natural in character except for evidence of historic mining activities. The presence of the Hope Lake dam (part of the Ames Hydro-Electric Development Project) is an exception to this. Water draw downs of the lake each fall cause “unnatural” lake levels that likely impact native flora and fauna associated with the lake.
- Solitude – The steep, rugged terrain in this area limits the sights and sounds of traffic on Hwy 145 and associated with the scattered home sites on adjacent private lands.

Challenge – The area offers a high degree of challenge. There are many opportunities for unconfined recreation such as rock climbing, peak climbing, and back country skiing.

Manageability/Boundaries –

- Size –The area is dissected into two segments by Hope Lake, the dam, and access. Alone, neither segment is greater than the minimum acreage for wilderness (5,000). Management of the adjacent lands on the adjacent San Juan National Forest lands must be considered.
- Boundaries – The northern boundaries are buffered along private lands and may be difficult to identify and manage. The southern boundary is the GMUG National Forest boundary, bordered with the San Juan National Forest.

Special Features/Activities –A commercial heli-ski operation is authorized to conduct tours in this area and other non-roadless areas within the Ouray-Telluride vicinity. There are no other heli-ski operations within the State of Colorado.

Evaluation: The units are too small to consider as independent units; therefore, evaluation of capability will be reserved until the adjacent San Juan National Forest lands have been reviewed during their current forest plan revision process.

Availability:

Recreation – One mechanized trail bisects the east portion of the unit. The area is open to heli-ski activities.

Water –The Ames Hydro-Electric Project includes the Hope Lake dam and water storage in the lake. This area has been buffered out of the unit.

Timber – There are approximately 100 acres within the capable portion of this unit that are tentatively suitable for wood fiber production. Another 400 acres of tentatively suitable timber land are within the inventory portion of the unit.

Minerals – No known potential for oil and gas.

Management Considerations –The Swamp Canyon Trail, currently opened to mountain bike use, is being proposed as a foot and horse use only trail .

Evaluation –These lands will be evaluated for capability and availability along with the adjacent San Juan National Forest lands.

Need:

Nearby Wilderness – Approximate distance away:

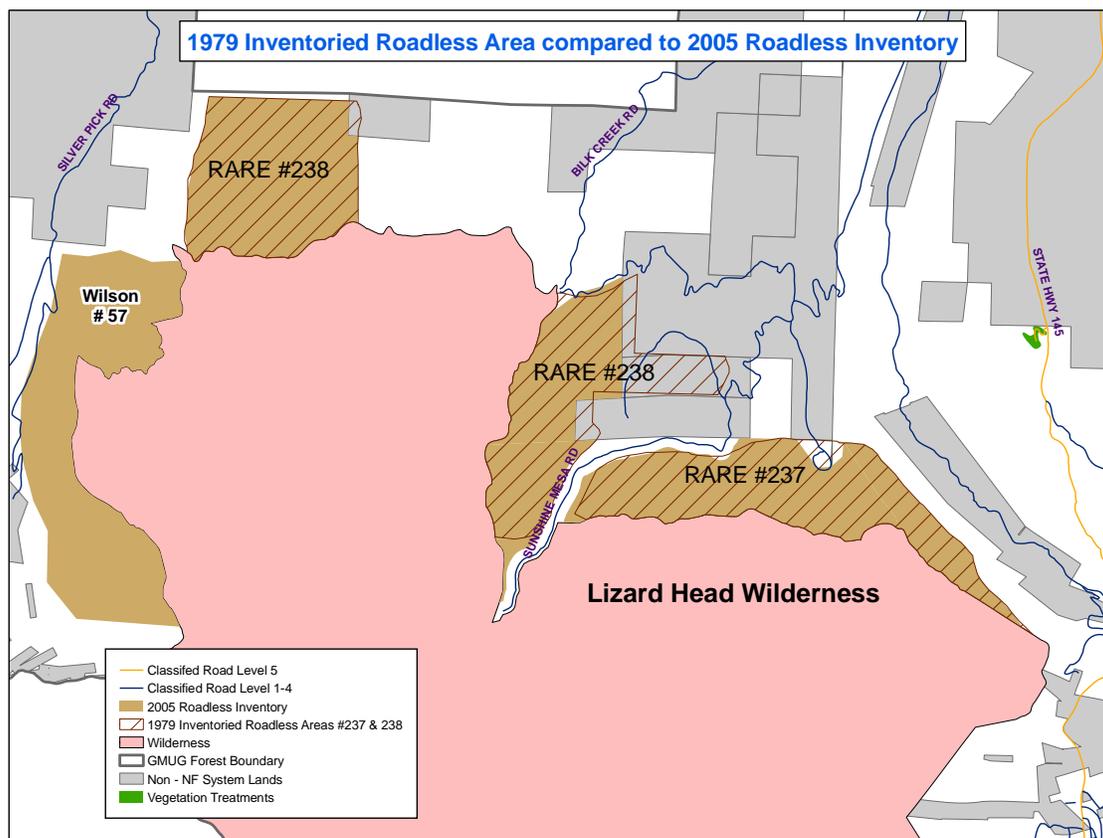
- Lizard Head Wilderness – 2 miles
- Weminuche Wilderness – 8 miles
- Mt. Sneffels Wilderness – 11 miles
- Uncompahgre Wilderness – 20 miles
- LaGarita Wilderness – 40 miles
- Powderhorn Wilderness – 40 miles
- Roubideau Special Area – 45 miles
- Tabeguache Special Area – 50 miles
- Gunnison Gorge Wilderness – 55 miles
- South San Juan Wilderness – 60 miles
- West Elk Wilderness – 60 miles

Rare II #237 & #238 – Sunshine Mesa & Wilson Mesa

RARE II History – RARE Units 237 and 238 identified 1,120 and 1,960 acres, respectively, on the GMUG National Forest as roadless. Both units were adjacent to the Wilson Mountain Primitive Area which became the Lizard Head Wilderness in 1980 through Public Law 96-560. A section of RARE Unit 237 was also designated as part of the Lizard Head Wilderness in 1980. The remaining acreage of these units is described in the **2005 Inventory as #20457 Wilson**.

Resource Activities which removed lands of RARE 237-238 from 2005 inventory:

- Non-National Forest System lands

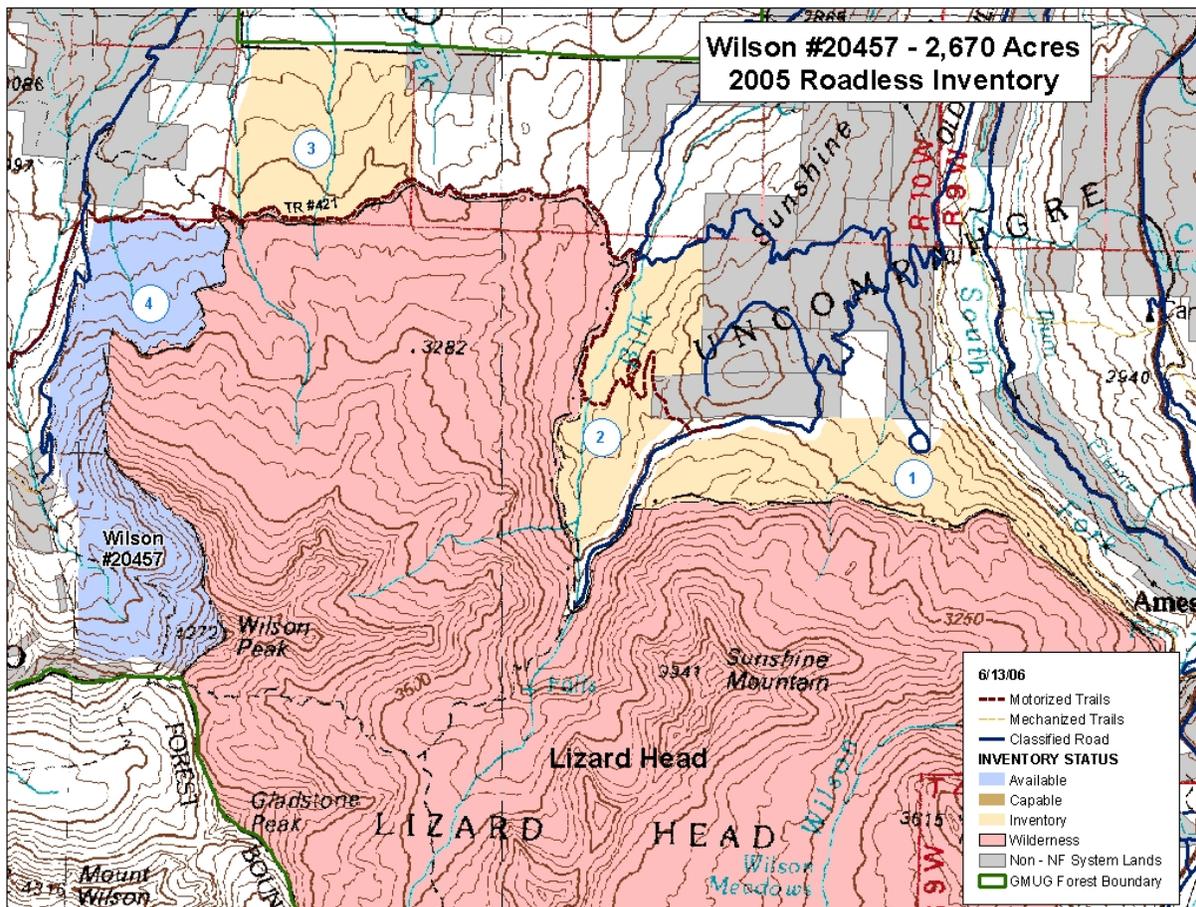


2005 Inventory Descriptions:

Wilson #20457 – 2,670 Acres – San Miguel County

General Description: Located within the San Juans Geographic Area, approximately eight miles southwest of the Town of Telluride, the unit is comprised of four individual segments, all of which adjoin the Lizard Head Wilderness.

- Segment 1 is the eastern most segment and borders the Galloping Goose Trail #499 which parallels State Hwy 145.
- Segment 2 is the middle segment and is adjacent to private lands and the Sunshine Mesa Road #623.
- Segment 3 is the northern most segment and is bordered by private land along the National Forest boundary.
- Segment 4 is the western most segment is bordered by the Silver Pick Road #622 along the west and private lands.



Elevation Range – 8,900' – 13,700'

Ecoregion – M331G – South – Central Highlands

Vegetation – The Potential Natural Vegetation is predominately 59% spruce-fir-aspen, 17% bare ground, 12% aspen, 6% spruce-fir, 3% Douglas fir, and 3% riparian.

Land Type –

90% 70IX - Subalpine climate zone; mixed igneous intrusive geology.

Resource Activities:

Current & Ongoing:

- The Pick and Bilk cattle allotments are within this area.
- The Wilson Mesa Trail #421, a single track motorized trail, separates the north and middle segment from the wilderness.
- The Galloping Goose Trail #499 is open to mountain bikes and is located along the eastern boundary of the unit.
- The Sunshine Mesa Road #623 is managed as a mountain bike trail at its western termini. This road/trail separates segment one from segment two.

Wilderness Potential:

Capability:

Environment –

- Naturalness – The naturalness of segments 1 and 2 is heavily influenced by private lands and evidence of past mining activities. Segment 2 in particular does not appear natural. Segment 3 is relatively flat terrain with open parks that is surrounded by Wilson Mesa Homeowners and several large parcels of private land that have recently been subdivided. Segment 4 has some evidence of historic mining yet the sites are located within areas difficult to access.
- Solitude – Much of the area is adjacent to home developments and is also influenced by State Hwy 145 and a motorized trail along segments 2 and 3. Opportunities for a sense of remoteness and solitude are limited.

Challenge – Segments 1 and 2 offers a moderate degree of challenge. Segment 3 with its gentle terrain and open park vegetation offers a low degree of challenge. The proximity to private land developments and trail systems adjacent to segments 1, 2, and 3, limits opportunities for challenge and self-reliance. Segment 4, however, having steep terrain and dense vegetation and not as influenced by private lands, offers a high degree of challenge.

Manageability/Boundaries –

- Size –The existing boundary of the Lizard Head Wilderness is very defensible. Boundary adjustments along segments 1, 2, and 3 would be difficult to manage. Segment 4 would provide a reasonable extension to the wilderness.

- Boundaries – Boundaries along private lands may be difficult to manage trespass uses. The Sunshine Mesa Road will create a cherry-stem boundary between segments 1 and 2.

Evaluation: Segments 1-3 are **not capable**; Segment 4 is **capable** and will be further evaluated for availability.

Availability (of Capable Lands):

Recreation – One motorized trail runs along the boundary of the wilderness near segments 2 and 3, which are considered not capable. This trail is part of a larger recreation system.

Water – There are no water developments or diversions.

Timber – There are approximately 1,200 acres within the capable portion of this unit that are tentatively suitable for wood fiber production. Another 300 acres of tentatively suitable timber land are within the inventory portion of this unit.

Minerals – No known potential for oil and gas.

Management Considerations – Boundary management.

Evaluation – The capable lands of this unit are **available** for wilderness consideration.

Need: Individual unit assessments of available lands begin on page 262.

Nearby Wilderness – Approximate distance away:

- Lizard Head Wilderness – <1 mile
- Weminuche Wilderness – 10 miles
- Mt. Sneffels Wilderness – 15 miles
- Uncompahgre Wilderness – 25 miles
- LaGarita Wilderness – 40 miles
- Powderhorn Wilderness – 40 miles
- Roubideau Special Area – 40 miles
- Tabeguache Special Area – 45 miles
- Gunnison Gorge Wilderness – 50 miles
- South San Juan Wilderness – 65 miles