



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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In Reply Refer to:
(6300, 6510)
NV020.00

SEP 29 2015

NOTICE OF PROPOSED ACTION **LANDS IN WILDERNESS**

STATE: Nevada

COUNTY: Humboldt

OFFICE: Black Rock Field Office
Winnemucca District
5100 East Winnemucca Blvd.
Winnemucca, Nevada 89445

WILDERNESS AREAS: North Jackson Wilderness (N74470)
South Jackson Wilderness (N774469)
Black Rock Desert Wilderness (N74461)

PROPOSED ACTION: **Range Improvement Maintenance and Access to Private Inholdings**

Background

The North Jackson Wilderness (NJW), South Jackson Wilderness (SJW), and Black Rock Desert Wilderness (BRDW) were designated by the passage of the Black Rock Desert-High Rock Canyon-Emigrant Trails National Conservation Area Act (NCA Act) (2000) (Amended 2001). With the passage of the NCA Act and the Wilderness Act of 1964, Wilderness Areas are to be managed to preserve and protect their wilderness character and to provide for their use and enjoyment by the American people, in such a manner that will leave it unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness, and will allow for recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation and historical use.

The Wilderness Act allows grazing operations to continue where they occurred prior to designation of the area as wilderness. To clarify Congressional intent concerning grazing in wilderness areas, Congress has issued guidelines for management of grazing in wilderness areas. These grazing guidelines allow for occasional motorized use to maintain existing range developments. The guidelines also allow for the construction of new developments if they benefit the wilderness resource.

The Wilderness Act (Sec. 5. (a)) addresses access and states where privately owned land is completely surrounded by designated wilderness, the private land owner shall be given such rights as may be necessary to assure adequate access to the privately owned land.

Livestock grazing has occurred in the NJW, SJW and BRDW since the late 1800s. Portions of the Jackson Mountain Allotment overlap the NJW, SJW, and BRDW. Over time, and prior to wilderness designation, several range developments were installed to assist in livestock grazing management. DeLong Ranches, Inc.

currently holds the grazing preference and permit for the Jackson Mountain Allotment. DeLong Ranches, Inc. also owns one inholding in the NJW and one inholding in the BRDW.

Description of the Proposed Action

The over-all proposed action is to maintain or reconstruct and provide continued access for 15 existing range improvements and two ditches in the vicinity of three wilderness areas. Of the 15 existing range improvements, eight of these are located in the North Jackson Wilderness, South Jackson Wilderness and Black Rock Desert Wilderness. The two ditches are not located within designated wilderness areas, but they convey water for irrigation and stock water within and adjacent to the designated wilderness areas. The two ditch segments (located outside of designated wilderness areas) would be analyzed and evaluated for authorization in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) for rights-of-way.

The proposed improvements vary in type and may require major or minor maintenance to maintain or restore functionality. Actions would include cleaning of reservoirs or catchments; cleaning, maintaining or replacing troughs; maintaining or replacing pipelines and headboxes; re-drilling wells; and replacing infrastructure. Maintenance requests range from minor actions that require use of hand tools, to moderate maintenance level activities that may employ the use of power tools, air tools, trucks and trailers, compressors, welders, chainsaws, and similar tools. Potential reconstruction of the developments may employ the additional use of backhoes, front-end loaders, and similar heavy equipment.

The occasional use of power tools and motorized/mechanized equipment needed for the maintenance actions and access to the range improvements and private inholdings will be analyzed and evaluated in an Environmental Analysis (EA). The BLM is currently in the process of developing the EA and a Minimum Requirements Decision Guide.

Please send your comments on the proposed activity to Mark E. Hall, PhD., Black Rock Field Office Manager at the address above within 30 days from the date of this letter.

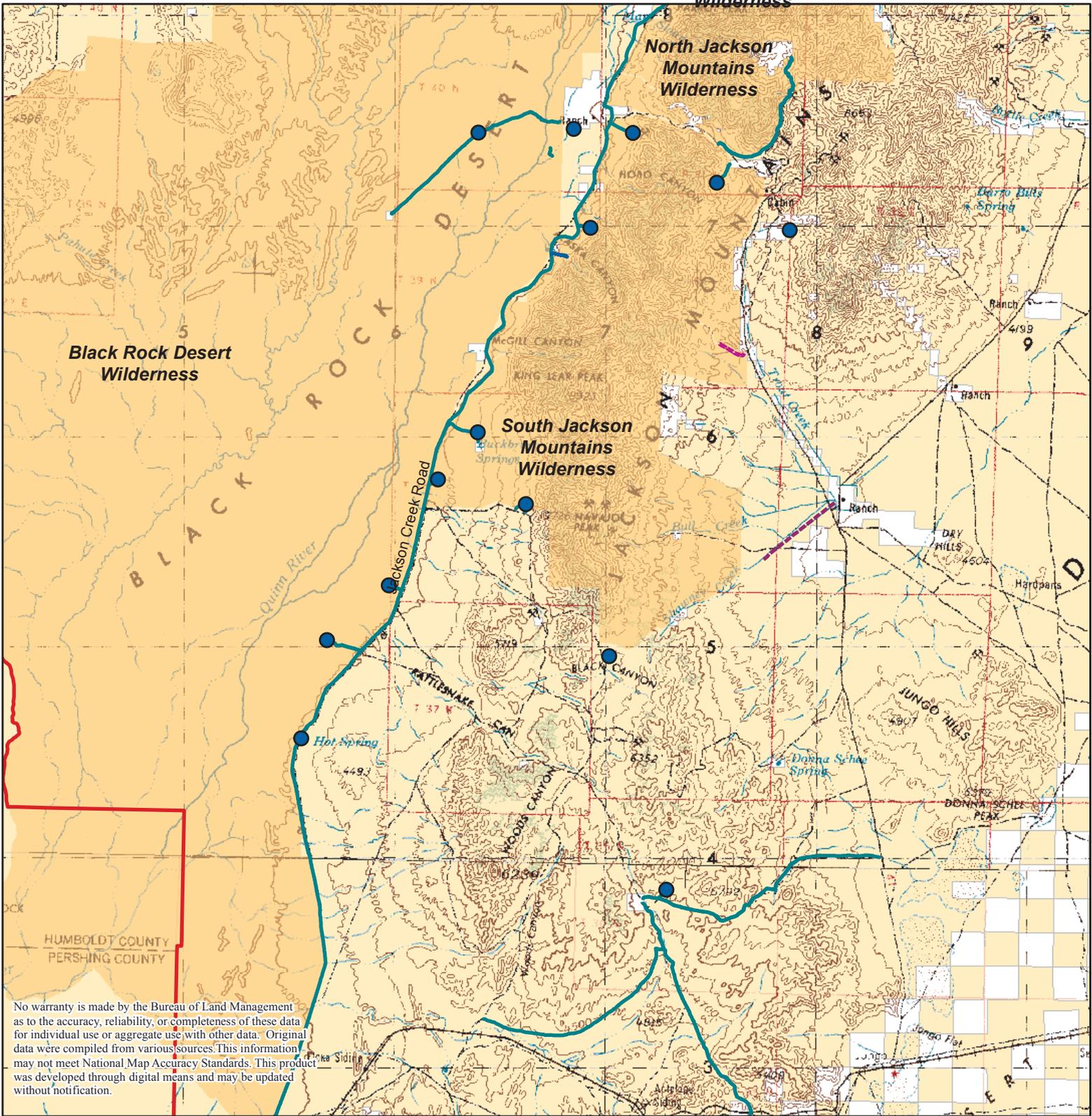
Public comments submitted for this project, including names and addresses of commenters will be available for public review during regular business hours 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Please note that your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information that you provide may be made publicly available at any time. While individuals may request that the BLM withhold personal identifying information from public review, BLM cannot guarantee it will be able to do so. If you wish us to withhold your personal information, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comment. We will make all submissions from organizations or businesses available for public disclosure in their entirety.



Robert B. Towne
District Manager
Winnemucca District

9/29/15
Date

Proposed Range Improvement Maintenance and Access



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Winnemucca District
 Bureau of Land Management
 5100 E. Winnemucca Blvd
 Winnemucca, NV. 89445

0 5 Miles

1:250,000

- Range Improvements
- Alaska Creek Range Improvement
- Access Route/Roads
- Clover Creek Ditch
- Shawnee Creek Ditch

- National Conservation Area
- Designated Wilderness Area
- Land Status**
- BLM
- Private



Date: 9/28/2015