

# Shoshone

Field Office / Shoshone, Idaho



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## Shoshone Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs)

In 1976 Congress instructed the BLM, in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, to inventory areas on public lands that meet the minimum criteria for wilderness designation under the Wilderness Act of 1972. These areas are called Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs). Congress also asked BLM to provide recommendations about which areas would be most suitable for designation as wilderness.

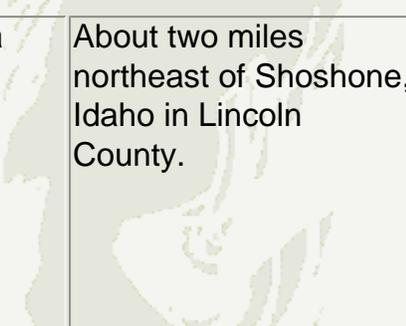
The BLM completed the Idaho Wilderness Study Report in 1991. The Report identified 67 WSAs totaling 1,797,456 acres on Idaho's public lands. It also recommended 27 WSAs containing 972,239 acres as suitable for wilderness designation by Congress. The following table summarizes the 15 WSAs identified by BLM in the Shoshone Field Office. It also identifies the WSAs that BLM has recommended as suitable for wilderness designation.

Only Congress can designate wilderness areas. Until Congress makes its decision, the BLM is required to manage all WSAs to prevent impairment of the area's suitability for wilderness designation. Certain historic uses, such as livestock grazing and existing mining claims, can generally continue in WSAs. But most uses that can impact the wilderness qualities of WSAs are restricted. In particular, cross-country travel by Off-Highway Vehicles is not allowed in WSAs. WSAs are available for a variety of recreation activities, such as hiking and hunting (in accordance with Idaho State hunting regulations). Due to the remote character of these lands, it's a good idea to contact the local BLM field office for the access, resource and management information that will enable a safe and rewarding visit.

## WSAs of the Shoshone Field Office Summary Table

	General Location	Natural Features	Total Acres	Acres Supported by BLM for Wilderness Designation	Rationale for BLM's Recommendation
Bennett Mountain Complex					
1) <b>Black Canyon WSA</b>	About 10 miles northwest of Gooding, Idaho in Gooding County. One of six WSAs located within the Bennett Mountain landform, a rolling belt of foothills located between the Sawtooth Mountains to the north and the Snake River Plain to the south.	Scenic rock formations composed of welded volcanic tuffs are found along the west-central boundary of the WSA.	10,371	0	Nearby WSAs having greater wilderness qualities are recommended for designation. Few threats exist to the naturalness of the area.
2) <b>Deer Creek WSA</b>	About 20 miles northwest of Gooding, Idaho in Gooding County. One of six WSAs located within the Bennett Mountain landform.	Scenic rock formations and steep hills dissected by Cottonwood Creek, Deer Creek and other unnamed drainages.	7,487	0	Nearby WSAs having greater wilderness qualities are recommended for wilderness designation. Few threats exist to the naturalness of the area.
3) <b>Gooding City of Rocks East WSA</b>	About 14 miles northwest of Gooding, Idaho. One of six WSAs located within the Bennett Mountain landform.	Highly scenic rock formations of welded volcanic tuff that has weathered to form arches, mushroom caps and pillars called 'hoodoos'. Dry Creek dissects the WSA and contains high riparian values.	14,743	13,063	Exceptional ecologic, geologic and wilderness values would add landforms not currently represented in the National Wilderness Preservation System.

4) <b>Gooding City of Rocks West WSAs</b>	About 14 miles northwest of Gooding, Idaho in Gooding County. One of six WSAs located within the Bennett Mountain landform.	Same exceptional geologic features as the adjacent Gooding City of Rocks East WSA.	6,287	6,287	Exceptional ecologic, geologic and wilderness values would add landforms not currently represented in the National Wilderness Preservation System.
5) <b>King Hill Creek WSA</b>	About 40 miles east of Boise, Idaho in Elmore County. One of six WSAs located within the Bennett Mountain landform.	The eastern quarter of this WSA is located within the Shoshone Field Office. The majority of the WSA is located within BLM's Four Rivers Field Office. Scenic, convoluted geography with a maze of drainages, ridges hills and peaks.	29,309	0	Nearby WSAs having greater wilderness qualities are recommended for wilderness designation. Few threats exist to the naturalness of the area.
6) <b>Little City of Rocks WSA</b>	About 7 miles north of Gooding, Idaho in Gooding County, Idaho.	One of six WSAs located within the Bennett Mountain landform. Scenic 'hoodoo' rock formations cover about 2,400 acres.	5,875	0	Nearby WSAs having similar but higher quality geologic values are recommended for wilderness designation. Few threats exist to the naturalness of the area.
<b>Lava Complex</b>					
7) <b>Black Butte WSA</b>	About 17 miles north of Shoshone, Idaho in Lincoln and Blaine Counties.	The WSA is dominated by Black Butte, an inactive volcano of recent origin (4,000 to 6,000 years ago) that rises about 200 feet above the surrounding lava plateau.	4,068	0	The naturalness of the WSA has been impacted by mining activity for lava rock. Larger areas with higher quality lava features are found nearby.
8) <b>Bear Den Butte WSA</b>	About 23 miles southeast of Cary in Minidoka and Blaine Counties.	The central portion of the WSA contains younger, rugged "aa" lava flows.	9,700	0	Other WSAs in the area possess higher-quality natural and geologic values and are recommended for wilderness designation.

 <p>9) <b>Lava WSA</b></p>	<p>About two miles northeast of Shoshone, Idaho in Lincoln County.</p>	<p>The WSA consists of a relatively flat, older lava flow containing examples of pressure ridges and pahoehoe lava.</p>	<p>23,680</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>Several portions of the WSA have been impacted by human uses. Relatively low wilderness quality compared to other lava flows in the Great Rift area.</p>
<p>10) <b>Little Deer WSA</b></p>	<p>About nine miles east of Carey in Blaine, Lincoln and Minidoka Counties.</p>	<p>The northern third of the area contains older lava flows with wind-blown soil deposits. The remainder of the area contain younger and more rugged “aa” lava flows.</p>	<p>33,531</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>Other WSAs in the area possess higher-quality natural and geologic values and are recommended for wilderness designation.</p>
<p>11) <b>Raven’s Eye WSA</b></p>	<p>About two miles east of Carey in Blaine and Lincoln Counties.</p>	<p>It lies adjacent to the Sand Butte WSA. The southern portion of the WSA contains three prominent volcanic cones and older lava flows covered by wind-blown soils. The northern portion is covered by the younger Craters of the Moon lava flow.</p>	<p>67,110</p>	<p>67,110</p>	<p>The WSA has outstanding wilderness values and a wide variety of volcanic features of special interest.</p>
 <p>12) <b>Sand Butte WSA</b></p>	<p>About 35 miles northeast of Shoshone, Idaho in Lincoln County.</p>	<p>It lies adjacent to the Raven’s Eye WSA. Sand Butte, the most prominent feature, is an excellent example of a maar crater, which is formed by the explosive generation of steam caused by magma contacting ground water. The remainder of the area is a relatively flat, older lava flow covered by wind-blown soil deposits.</p>	<p>20,792</p>	<p>20,792</p>	<p>The WSA has outstanding geologic and wilderness values. Sand Butte is a unique formation among the many other volcanic cones on the Snake River Plain. The area would add landform diversity to the National Wilderness Preservation System in Idaho.</p>

13) <b>Shale Butte WSA</b>	About 26 miles east of Shoshone, Idaho in Lincoln County.	The area is an older lava flow that rises up to 300 feet above the surrounding plain. The lava has been largely covered by wind-blown soil deposits but exposed lava outcrops are common.	15,968	0	The natural values of the WSA are marginal. The No Wilderness recommendation would allow greater flexibility in restoring wildlife habitat and controlling wildfire.
14) <b>Shoshone WSA</b>	About one mile northwest of Shoshone, Idaho in Lincoln County.	The WSA consists of a recent lava flow characterized by pressure ridges, subsidence craters and other volcanic features.	6,914	0	The area has been impacted by the unauthorized removal of lava rock and other human imprints. It does not contain natural values that would add quality and diversity to the National Wilderness Preservation System.
<b>Other WSAs</b>					
15) <b>Friedman Creek WSA</b>	About 15 miles east of Ketchum, Idaho in Blaine County.	Mountainous terrain dissected by numerous drainages. Douglas-fir and quacking aspen at higher elevations.	9,773	0	High mineral potential and nine private inholdings that would require access is minerals were developed; non-wilderness recommendation for much larger, adjacent U.S. Forest Service roadless area.
Totals			265,608	107,252	