

Santa Rosa Mountains

CDCA 341

SANTA ROSA MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS STUDY AREA (WSA)

(CDCA-341)

1. **THE STUDY AREA** ————— 69,642 acres

The Santa Rosa Mountains WSA is located in south central Riverside County in the central portion of the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA). Palm Desert, located seven miles north, is the closest community. The WSA includes 47,417 of public land under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), 1,495 acres of State land, and 20,730 acres of private inholdings (see Map 1 and Table 1).

Because of the checkerboard land ownership pattern, the WSA boundary is extremely ragged and the study area's shape irregular. Its western boundary joins the Santa Rosa Wilderness Area, a U.S. Forest Service wilderness area located within the San Bernardino National Forest. The southern boundary, formed by the Riverside/Imperial county line, coincides with a State designated wilderness area in Anza Borrego State Park. The remaining boundaries to the east and north follow section lines and were established to avoid agriculture, private land and disturbed public lands. Section 10, Township 8S, Range 5E is within the WSA boundaries. It was patented to the State of California in 1983 for State Parks Wilderness under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act.

The terrain is rugged with the elevations rising dramatically from just above sea level to around 7000 feet in a relatively short distance. The WSA is laced with deep washes and shallow drainages and supports numerous riparian springs and streams which flow year round. Here, desert and mountain environments blend together to form a complex overlapping of vegetative patterns. Numerous life zones are represented as the elevation changes and each reflects a unique plant environment. Abundant water sources found throughout the area create riparian oases where plants and animals are found in great abundance and diversity.

The WSA was studied under Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). Four alternatives were analyzed in the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the CDCA Plan: protection, use, balanced, and no action; a summary of the area's wilderness values was included in Appendix III of the Final EIS.

2. **RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE** —————

69,316	acres recommended for wilderness
276	BLM acres recommended for nonwilderness

Partial wilderness (99% suitable) is the recommendation for this WSA. The 276 acres in this WSA recommended nonsuitable are released for uses other than wilderness. In addition to the Federal acreage recommended for wilderness, BLM recommends that 11,153 acres of private land be acquired through exchange or purchase and designated as wilderness. Additional State lands totalling approximately 11,023 acres, managed by the State for wildlife preservation, will be recommended for wilderness but are not recommended for acquisition. With acquisition of these inholdings, a total of 69,316 acres are recommended for wilderness. Appendix 1 lists all inholdings and provides additional information on their acquisition. This recommendation will be implemented in a manner which will use all practical means to avoid or minimize environmental impacts.

The Balanced Alternative is the environmentally preferable alternative as outlined in the CDCA Plan and further explained in the California Wilderness Study Overview.

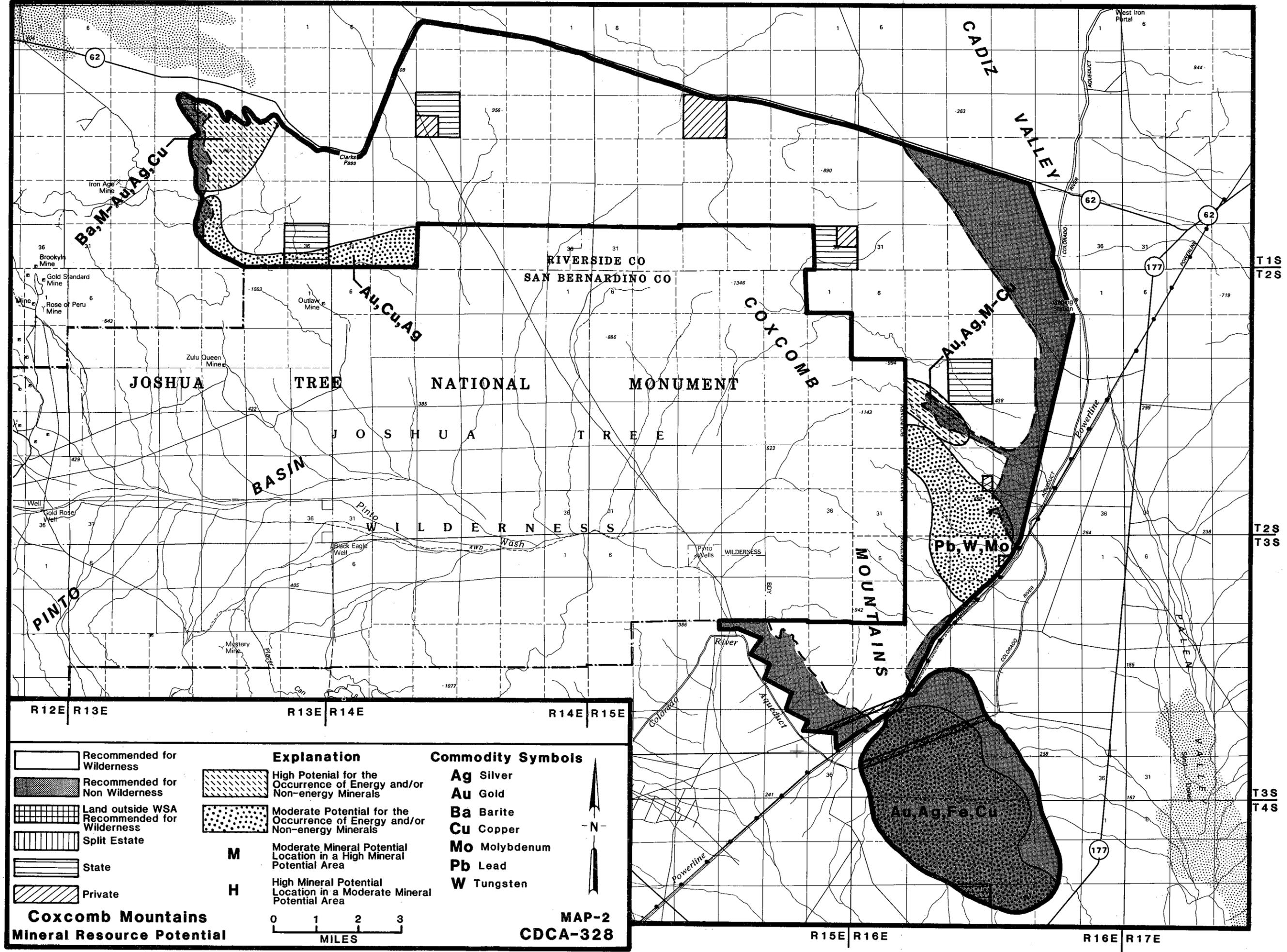
The suitable portion of the Santa Rosa Mountains WSA is recommended for wilderness designation because: (1) in all measured values, it exceeds the criteria specified in Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964; (2) the area is replete with special features; and (3) few conflicts exist with other resources. These boulder strewn mountains, where steep walled canyons are eroded by perpetual springs and streams that feed hidden palm oases, are the essence of a wilderness experience. The remoteness and primeval character of this desert-mountain area enhances the area's wilderness values. As the southern backdrop of the rapidly growing Coachella Valley, this rugged range provides an important seasonal recreational outlet to both residents and visitors to the area. Because wilderness values are so significant, the suitability recommendation will preclude any further vehicular use of approximately nine miles of primitive routes of travel.

The WSA boundaries encompass a truly unique environment that includes unequalled natural beauty, diverse populations of wildlife and vegetation, and a variety of habitats that range from Creosote Bush scrub to palm oasis woodland and finally to mixed conifer forest. A multitude of wildlife and vegetation, traces of ancient Native American cultures and unlimited panoramic ridge top vistas are found in abundance. The area is enhanced by the fact that it joins designated wilderness in the San Bernardino National Forest along its western border and designated California State Wilderness in Anza Borrego Desert State Park to the south.

Within the California Desert Conservation Area, the Santa Rosa Mountains WSA was determined to have some of the best wilderness values of all study areas. This high rating is reflected in other recognitions that the area has received. The Santa Rosa Mountains have been recommended for inclusion into the Man in the Biosphere Reserve. This area is also an integral part of the Santa Rosa Mountains Wildlife Habitat Management Area, a Sikes Act project. This area is managed to support the largest population of Peninsular bighorn sheep (Ovis canadensis cremnobates) remaining in the United States.

Within this WSA, wilderness values are in conflict with mineral resource values. However, no development of these mineral resources has yet occurred and there are no mining claims on record with BLM. In the southern portion of the WSA, areas having high potential for the occurrence of tungsten and limestone and moderate potential for the occurrence of gold are located. Also, within the WSA boundaries are two areas having moderate potential for the occurrence of geothermal resources.

Only 276 acres of public land within the study area boundary are not recommended for wilderness designation. Located in the extreme northwest corner of the WSA, this small parcel abuts Highway 74, known as Palms to Pines Highway. As the only through route across the Santa Rosa Mountains, this highway receives considerable traffic. The sights and sounds of the passing vehicles greatly diminishes the feeling of solitude, detracting from the wilderness experience to be had at this parcel. Manageability of this portion of the WSA is also a factor in the nonsuitable determination. At this corner, the WSA boundary follows section lines, private land boundaries and the highway. Manageability is constrained by this confusing boundary. The area will serve as an effective buffer for the designated wilderness by reducing the existing noise and visual impacts of the highway.



R12E R13E R13E R14E R14E R15E

- Recommended for Wilderness
- Recommended for Non Wilderness
- Land outside WSA Recommended for Wilderness
- Split Estate
- State
- Private

- Explanation**
- High Potential for the Occurrence of Energy and/or Non-energy Minerals
 - Moderate Potential for the Occurrence of Energy and/or Non-energy Minerals
 - M** Moderate Mineral Potential Location in a High Mineral Potential Area
 - H** High Mineral Potential Location in a Moderate Mineral Potential Area

- Commodity Symbols**
- Ag** Silver
 - Au** Gold
 - Ba** Barite
 - Cu** Copper
 - Mo** Molybdenum
 - Pb** Lead
 - W** Tungsten

Coxcomb Mountains Mineral Resource Potential



MAP-2
CDCA-328

R15E R16E R16E R17E

T1S
T2S

T2S
T3S

T3S
T4S

TABLE 1 - Land Status and Acreage Summary of the Study Area

<u>Within Wilderness Study Area</u>		<u>Acres</u>
BLM	(surface and subsurface)	47,417
Split Estate	(BLM surface only)	0
Inholdings		
State		1,495
Private		20,730
Total		<u>69,642</u>
<u>Within the Recommended Wilderness Boundary</u>		<u>Acres</u>
BLM	(within WSA)	47,140
BLM	(outside WSA)	0
Split Estate	(within WSA) ¹	0
Split Estate	(outside WSA) ¹	0
Total BLM Land Recommended for Wilderness		<u>47,140</u>
Inholdings ¹		
State		
Private		11,153
<u>Within the Area Not Recommended for Wilderness</u>		<u>Acres</u>
BLM	(surface and subsurface)	276
Split Estate	(BLM surface only)	0
Total BLM Lands Not Recommended for Wilderness		<u>276</u>

¹ Appendix 1 is a detailed description of inholdings and split estate tracts included within the study. For purposes of this report, split estate lands are defined only as those lands with Federal surface and non Federal subsurface (minerals). Lands that have Federal minerals but non Federal surface should be classified in this report by the owner of the surface estate.

3. CRITERIA CONSIDERED IN DEVELOPING THE WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Wilderness Characteristics

1. Naturalness: The Santa Rosa Mountains WSA has generally retained its primeval character and influence and man's imprint is substantially unnoticeable. The rugged terrain has historically limited access into the area. Except on foot or horseback, deep penetration of the area is virtually impossible. With the exception of Indian village ruins, Indian artifacts, one abandoned stone cabin and a few scattered wildlife drinkers, the area is truly pristine. Even ways, so numerous in most of the desert study areas are scarce. Vegetation has remained untouched and the abundance of wildlife attest to the fact that humans have been, and are still, only brief visitors to the area.
2. Solitude: The screening effect of the natural barriers combine to provide truly outstanding opportunities for solitude. In spite of the WSA's relative closeness to the Coachella Valley, it is buffered from its activity by miles of open space. Designated wilderness protects the western and southern borders from intrusion. The eastern boundary is isolated by rugged foothills and agriculture. The only immediate threat to solitude is from Highway 74 in the north which passes close to the boundary. However, this threat is mitigated by the small area recommended as nonsuitable, and more importantly, the extreme ruggedness of the terrain which tends to discourage all but the most determined hikers.

Internally, the sense of loneliness and isolation is reinforced by rugged, varied terrain and areas of dense vegetation which form barriers that separate users and divide the study area into relatively remote parcels. The views of the surrounding mountains and valleys provide a sense of spaciousness while the canyons ensure opportunities for intimacy and a sense of isolation. The diversity of both the topography and vegetation ensure opportunities for a variety of adventures and exciting wilderness experiences for all users.

This WSA is periodically overflowed by military aircraft as part of the national defense mission taking place in approved military operating areas and flight corridors. The visual intrusions and associated noise create periodic temporary effects on solitude which are deemed necessary and acceptable as a part of the defense preparedness of the nation.

3. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The Santa Rosa Mountains and foothills support steep walled canyons, isolated valleys, hidden palm oases, aboriginal trails and numerous panoramic ridge top vistas. They provide an outstanding backdrop for recreationists seeking primitive and unconfined types of recreation. There are few man made features within the study area and these have no impact on primitive recreation. The sense of complete freedom and lack of

confinement is enhanced by the designated wilderness and natural areas in the adjoining Anza Borrego Desert State Park and San Bernardino National Forest.

Current primitive recreational activities in the Santa Rosa Mountains WSA includes backpacking, and horseback riding, day hiking, nature study and hunting. The Boo Hoff equestrian trail loops through a corner of the WSA. This is one of the few trails in the WSA, constructed and maintained by a local equestrian club. The Cactus Spring Trail which is an ancient aboriginal pathway, links the Santa Rosa plateau with the desert floor in the Coachella Valley. To the west, this trail connects the WSA with designated wilderness areas in the San Bernardino National Forest.

Other popular destinations for hikers are Bear Creek Oasis, Lost Canyon Oasis, Guadalupe Canyon and Devil Canyon. These areas, located in the northeast, are favored by day hikers and horseback riders. Rockhouse Canyon and valley, in the extreme south, offer glimpses into the area's past. Remnants of early Native American and European settlers can still be found. Access by foot or on horseback is relatively easy from Anza Borrego State Park. Rabbit Peak, located near the southeastern boundary of the WSA is a notable desert peak. The ascent to the 6623 feet summit is recognized as one of the most challenging and rewarding climbs of any of the desert mountain peaks located in Southern California. Local Sierra Club chapters lead organized day and overnight trips to the summit of this mountain.

Opportunities for nature study and photography are rated high in the WSA. The area displays a diverse mixture of topography and vegetation which ranges from the desert floor to mountain peaks. Numerous life zones are represented and each reflects the unique plant life identified with the zone. Universities and local colleges utilize the Santa Rosa Mountains frequently as a living laboratory for scientific and informal studies and outings.

Hunting is restricted to the southern half of the WSA since the northern portion is located within a State Wildlife Refuge. Deer, quail and dove are hunted in season.

4. Special Features: The Santa Rosa Mountains abound with areas of known cultural resources and/or sensitivity. Many locations containing sherd scatters, primitive trails, rock cairns, roasting pits, milling stations, rock alignments, rock shelters and outstanding examples of rock art have been documented. Remnants of entire villages and temporary camps still remain. Native Americans have identified areas that are currently used for temporary habitation, resource collection and ritual hunting.

The mountains are well known for their Peninsular bighorn sheep. This subspecies (Ovis canadensis cremnobates) is listed by the State of California as threatened. It is limited to the Peninsular Ranges of Southern California and Northern Baja California, Mexico. With an estimated number of 350 animals, the Santa Rosa Mountains support the largest herd in the United States. The herd utilizes the entire range between the 1000 feet and 4000 feet levels. Bear Creek, Deep Canyon and Martinez Canyon are extremely important as summer concentration areas and along with one existing guzzler, provide the water and rugged escape terrain necessary for lambing. Mule deer (Odocoileus hemionus) are abundant throughout the coniferous forests at the higher elevations and can be found throughout the area above the 3500 feet level. Mountain lion (Felis concolor), bobcat (Lynx rufus), grey fox (Urocyon cinereoargenteus), coyote (Canis latrans) and ringtail (Bassariscus astutus) round out the diverse animal population in the WSA.

Avian predators include the great horned owl, prairie falcon, and golden eagle, all of which nest and forage throughout the area.

The reptilian fauna found in the WSA is as varied. The elevation span and undisturbed nature of the area provides broad representation of the species characteristic of the lower Sonoran life zones. Frogs, toads and a relic salamander, the desert slender salamander, which will undoubtedly be added to the Federal and State species list, complete the cast.

Scenic quality throughout the area is high overall and during the scenic quality evaluation was rated extremely high in the categories of landform, color and vegetation.

B. Diversity in the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS)

1. Assessing the diversity of natural systems and features as represented by ecosystems: The WSA contains 23,221 acres of the California Chaparral/Juniper-pinyon woodland (Juniperus-Pinus) and 24,196 acres of the American Desert/Creosote Bush-Bur Sage (Larrea-Franseria) ecosystem. Adjacent to two designated wilderness areas, the Santa Rosas provide the missing piece which links the two distant environments together. It ties the heavily vegetated mountains of the San Bernardino National Forest to the dry, barren sands of Anza Borrego State Park. Its transition from desert to mountain completes an environmental sequence that includes landform, wildlife and vegetation. Few, if any, such unique environments can be found within the NWPS.

Table 2 - Ecosystem Representation

Bailey-Kuchler Classification Domain/Province/PNV	<u>NWPS Areas</u>		<u>Other BLM Studies</u>	
	<u>areas</u>	<u>acres</u>	<u>areas</u>	<u>acres</u>
<u>NATIONWIDE</u>				
American Desert/Creosote Bush- Bur Sage	3	126,033	48	1,547,244
California Chapparal/Juniper- Pinyon Woodland	1	42,971	1	13,736
<u>CALIFORNIA</u>				
American Desert/Creosote Bush- Bur Sage	2	26,427	20	952,783
California Chapparal/Juniper- Pinyon Woodland	1	42,971	1	13,736

2. Expanding the opportunities for solitude or primitive recreation within a day's driving time (five hours) of major population centers: The WSA is within a five-hour drive of nine major population centers. Table 3 summarizes the number and acreage of designated areas and other BLM study areas within a five-hour drive of the population centers.

Table 3
Wilderness Opportunities for Residents
of Major Population Centers

<u>Population Centers</u>	<u>NWPS areas</u>		<u>Other BLM Studies</u>	
	<u>areas</u>	<u>acres</u>	<u>areas</u>	<u>acres</u>
<u>California</u>				
Anaheim-Santa Ana	25	2,823,534	153	5,703,616
Bakersfield	32	4,071,358	128	3,998,548
Los Angeles-Long Beach	27	2,876,234	135	4,958,751
Oxnard-Ventura	23	2,195,198	85	2,703,260
Riverside-San Bernardino	22	2,031,054	205	7,658,649
Santa Barbara-Santa Maria-Lompoc	20	1,166,142	35	528,590
San Diego	15	1,043,680	100	3,378,814
<u>Arizona</u>				
Phoenix	40	1,758,456	118	4,449,908
<u>Nevada</u>				
Las Vegas	46	3,507,293	311	11,186,463

3. Balancing the geographic distribution of wilderness areas: The WSA is within 50 air miles of eleven BLM WSAs recommended for wilderness designation. The WSA is adjacent to the Santa Rosa Wilderness Area, administered by San Bernardino National Forest and Anza Borrego Desert State Wilderness. Also within a 50 mile radius are the following designated wilderness areas: San Jacinto and San Geronio Wilderness Areas, administered by San Bernardino National Forest; Pine Creek and Agua Tibia Wilderness Areas, administered by Cleveland National Forest; Joshua Tree Wilderness Areas, administered by Joshua Tree National Monument; and Cuyamaca Mountains and Mount San Jacinto State Wilderness Areas.

C. Manageability

The Santa Rosa Mountains WSA is manageable as wilderness. Although much of the area reflects a checkerboard land ownership pattern, projected private land uses are compatible with wilderness management. The majority of private land in the WSA is owned by the State of California and managed by the California Department of Fish and Game as a wildlife refuge. Since their goal is to maintain the habitat in as pristine a condition as possible, there should be no conflict with wilderness values. On the remaining private lands within the WSA's borders, little development could take place, and, what could, by the nature of the rugged terrain, would be isolated. BLM has determined that the land ownership pattern, which under most circumstances would preclude wilderness designation, in this case, has virtually no impact on the manageability of the area.

Once designated wilderness, an administrative determination will be made to provide for maintenance of the bighorn guzzler.

Adjoining designated wilderness on the west and south enhances the manageability not only of the Santa Rosa Mountains WSA but also of the two existing wilderness areas. Signing will be required along these borders, however, since each administering agency has their own set of rules and regulations concerning wilderness use. The extremely rugged terrain along the eastern and northern boundaries virtually preclude penetration except in a few isolated canyons.

The single location where manageability is constrained is the parcel in the extreme northwest corner recommended nonsuitable. The manageability concerns involve an irregular boundary following section lines, private land boundaries and Highway 74. Because positive on the ground identification of this boundary is difficult as is delineation by signing, inadvertent encroachments may occur, degrading the parcels naturalness and invading solitude.

Military overflights in this WSA must be considered to maintain the integrity of the existing and future national defense mission as well as the wilderness resource.

D. Energy and Mineral Resource Values

1. Summary of Information Known at the Time of the Preliminary Suitability Recommendation: The Santa Rosa WSA (CDCA 341) is located in the BLM Santa Rosa Mountains Geology-Energy-Mineral (G-E-M) Resource Area (GRA). The G-E-M section of the wilderness portion of the CDCA Plan EIS (Volume B, Appendix III) stated that mineral resource data had not been fully analyzed, integrated, or interpreted during the 1980 recommendation process. However, the 1980 EIS did state that the WSA had possible potential for metallic resources based on geochemical data, but the data were insufficient to evaluate the potential for other mineral resources. The G-E-M data in the EIS did not indicate the number of mining claims within the WSA as of December 12, 1979.

In 1980 when the suitability recommendation was made, little data was available in the GRA file concerning this WSA. The 1980 GRA did contain some evidence that indicated there was potential for metallic minerals, limestone, and geothermal resources; however the exact extent of this mineralization was not known nor classified.

2. Summary of Significant New Mineral Resource Data Collected Since the Preliminary Suitability Recommendation Which Should Be Considered in the Final Recommendation: The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and U.S. Bureau of Mines (BOM) conducted a mineral survey for the suitable portion of the WSA. In July 1987 a draft of the USGS Report for the WSA was obtained by BLM. This report identifies several areas in the WSA with moderate or high potential for gold, tungsten, and limestone.

The USGS/BOM report identified several areas in the recommended suitable southern portion of the WSA possessing high and/or moderate potential for mineral occurrence. In one area, replacement deposits, found along contacts between granitic intrusive rocks and Paleozoic carbonate rocks, have a high potential for the occurrence of tungsten and construction quality limestone. These deposits were also found to contain anomalous concentrations of beryllium, bismuth, copper, molybdenum, tin, and zinc. At a second site, quartz veins, cutting through quartz monzonite, gneiss, schist, and mylonite rocks, were classified as having a moderate potential for the occurrence of gold (see Map 2).

The California Division of Mines and Geology (CDMG) mapped a large shear zone (Rogers, T., 1965, Geologic map of California: Santa Ana sheet, Olaf P. Jenkins, edition) as trending northwesterly and ending at the point that reaches the western boundary of the WSA. All of the mineralized areas lie in the southern portion of the WSA and are largely associated with this shear zone and its associated faults.

The USGS/BOM report extends the faults of this shear zone into and across the WSA to an area with known hot springs at the east boundary of the WSA. Generally, the east boundary of the WSA is also the west boundary of the Coachella Valley area classified by BLM (1982) as prospectively valuable for geothermal resources. The USGS report stated that no evidence of hot springs or other geothermal indicators were noted in the WSA. However, the recommended suitable south portion of the WSA is classified under the BLM classification system as having a moderate potential for the occurrence of geothermal resources (see Map 2). This classification is based on the connection between the shear zone, an area with known hot springs, and the portion of the WSA mapped by CDMG as having favorable geologic conditions for geothermal resources (Majmundar, H., 1983, Technical Map of Geothermal Resources of California, Technical Map No. 5).

Alder Canyon, in the recommended suitable west portion of the WSA, has been assigned a moderate potential for geothermal resources by the BLM. This canyon contains the Buck Ridge Fault which is a branch fault of the San Jacinto fault zone, an area classified by CDMG as favorable for the occurrence of geothermal resources.

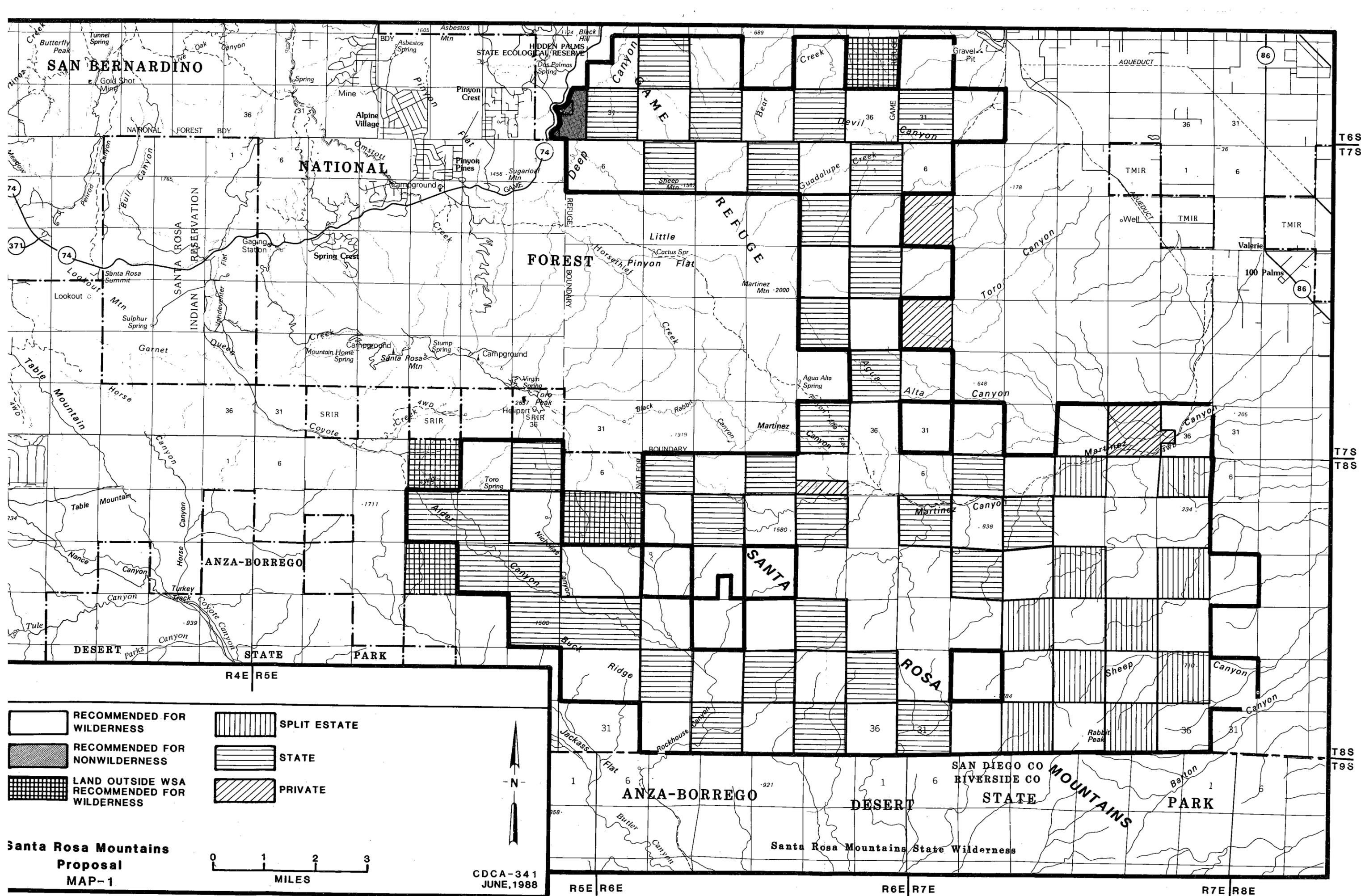
Sand and gravel resources occur in Alder Canyon. To date no production or interest has been expressed in developing these resources. As of December, 1987, no unpatented mining claims were recorded with BLM in this WSA.

E. Summary of Environmental Consequences of the Proposed Action

1. Impact on Wilderness Values: Throughout the suitable area, wilderness values will be maintained. Minor beneficial impacts to naturalness will occur because of the restrictions placed on fire suppression activities. In the small nonsuitable area, rugged terrain precluding entry will protect existing wilderness values. Should any development of private inholdings occur before Federal acquisition, wilderness values will be adversely impacted.

Based on the current lack of interest in mineral development, impact on wilderness values from any development on areas of mineral potential are considered very low.

2. Impact on Bighorn Sheep/Habitat: Habitat throughout the area will remain in its present condition. Placement and maintenance of improvements such as water guzzlers, and herd management will be constrained by wilderness designation because of the restrictions placed on motorized vehicles, specifically helicopters, and mechanized equipment. Guzzler maintenance will be provided for through administrative designation.



SAN BERNARDINO

NATIONAL FOREST

ANZA-BORREGO

SANTA ROSA

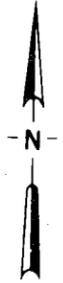
ANZA-BORREGO

DESERT STATE

SAN DIEGO CO RIVERSIDE CO STATE MOUNTAINS PARK

Santa Rosa Mountains State Wilderness

- RECOMMENDED FOR WILDERNESS
- RECOMMENDED FOR NONWILDERNESS
- LAND OUTSIDE WSA RECOMMENDED FOR WILDERNESS
- SPLIT ESTATE
- STATE
- PRIVATE



CDCA-341 JUNE, 1988

R5E R6E

R6E R7E

R7E R8E

T6S T7S

T7S T8S

T8S T9S

3. Impact on Desert Slender Salamander/Habitat: Habitat within the WSA will remain in its present condition. Study and inventory of this elusive species may be constrained by wilderness designation because of restrictions placed on the use of mechanized equipment.
4. Impact on Cultural Resources: Designation will have little impact on the preservation of cultural resources in the WSA. Existing Federal laws and BLM management guidelines, as well as rugged, inaccessible terrain, already provide adequate protection for these special values.
5. Impact on Native American Values: The proposed action will result in slight beneficial impacts by preserving the traditional collection areas and ritual sites in their present state for generations to come.
6. Impact on Mineral Exploration and Development: Unless claims are filed before designation, opportunities for mineral development on 99% of the WSA will be eliminated by wilderness designation.

F. Local Social and Economic Considerations

No local social or economic considerations were identified in the CDCA Plan and EIS. Therefore, no further discussion of this topic will occur in this document.

G. Summary of WSA - Specific Public Comments

Public comments were solicited throughout all phases in the development of the CDCA Plan, finalized in 1980. Issues raised by the public during the Inventory and Study Phase were taken into account during development of the Draft Plan Alternatives and Proposed Plan. The following is a summary of all comments received. Inaccuracies that are known to exist are noted in parentheses.

1. Inventory Phase: Public comments stated overwhelmingly that this area is one of the most pristine and potentially spectacular wilderness areas in the desert. These comments will be evaluated in the study phase to determine if an enlarged area should be considered.
2. Study Phase: Of the 71 comments received on this WSA, all but 11 supported wilderness designation. Many respondents stated that this is one of the most outstanding wilderness candidates in the California Desert. The two reasons given most frequently for supporting wilderness were the contiguity of WSA 341 with USFS RARE II lands (Cactus Springs) and the presence of the rare Peninsular bighorn sheep.

Other features mentioned by wilderness proponents as needing the protection of wilderness status were: the desert slender salamander; at least three rare plants - Santa Rosa sage, redshank

chamise, and agave; fossil mammals; and archaeological values. The area provides an example of a mountain-to-desert transition area and excellent opportunities for education and research. Proximity to urban areas was considered to be a positive feature, since it provides unusual "escape terrain." Specific areas within the WSA which were noted were Cactus Springs trail, Toro Peak, Martinez Peak, Coyote Canyon, Mexican Hat, and Horsethief Creek. A few letters mentioned the lack of vehicle access and the damage which vehicles could have in this special area. The contiguity of the WSA with Fish and Game wildlife lands and with Anza Borrego Desert State Park were additional reasons for designating this area as wilderness.

Extensive non-public land ownership within the WSA was addressed both by proponents and opponents of wilderness status. Proponents noted the willingness of the Nature Conservancy and the California Department of Fish and Game to submit their holdings for wilderness designation. They also suggested that school districts would benefit from a trade of their lands here for high revenue producing lands elsewhere. Opponents of wilderness said this checkerboard area did not contain 5,000 acres of contiguous land and, therefore, did not meet the wilderness requirements. The cost of acquiring private lands would be prohibitive to overburdened taxpayers.

Those who objected to wilderness designation gave the following reasons. The area's plant life is typical, not unique. The western and southern portions of the WSA should be eliminated from further study since the communications facilities on Toro Peak (outside the WSA) degrade scenic quality. Opportunities for vehicle access are few and must be continued so that people can enjoy the wilderness. Environmental impacts of such access would be minimal and would be obliterated by weather. Mineral resource development is a primary concern, and provisions should be made to allow meaningful development on private lands withdrawn from multiple use. Geothermal potential exists within the area. The Army Corps of Engineers noted that WSA 341 may affect dam and debris basin sites under consideration in the Indian Wells-Dead Indian Creek-Deep Canyon areas.

Thirty-nine comments were received in response to the Public Input Workbook (3/15/79). The vast majority encouraged wilderness classification to protect the fragile ecosystem and requested expansion of the boundaries and acquisition of private lands. A few of those who commented were opposed to wilderness because of the great amount of private land in the WSA and the lack of access for motorized vehicles. The University of California wanted to acquire land in the northern portion of the WSA to add to its Deep Canyon Desert Research Center.

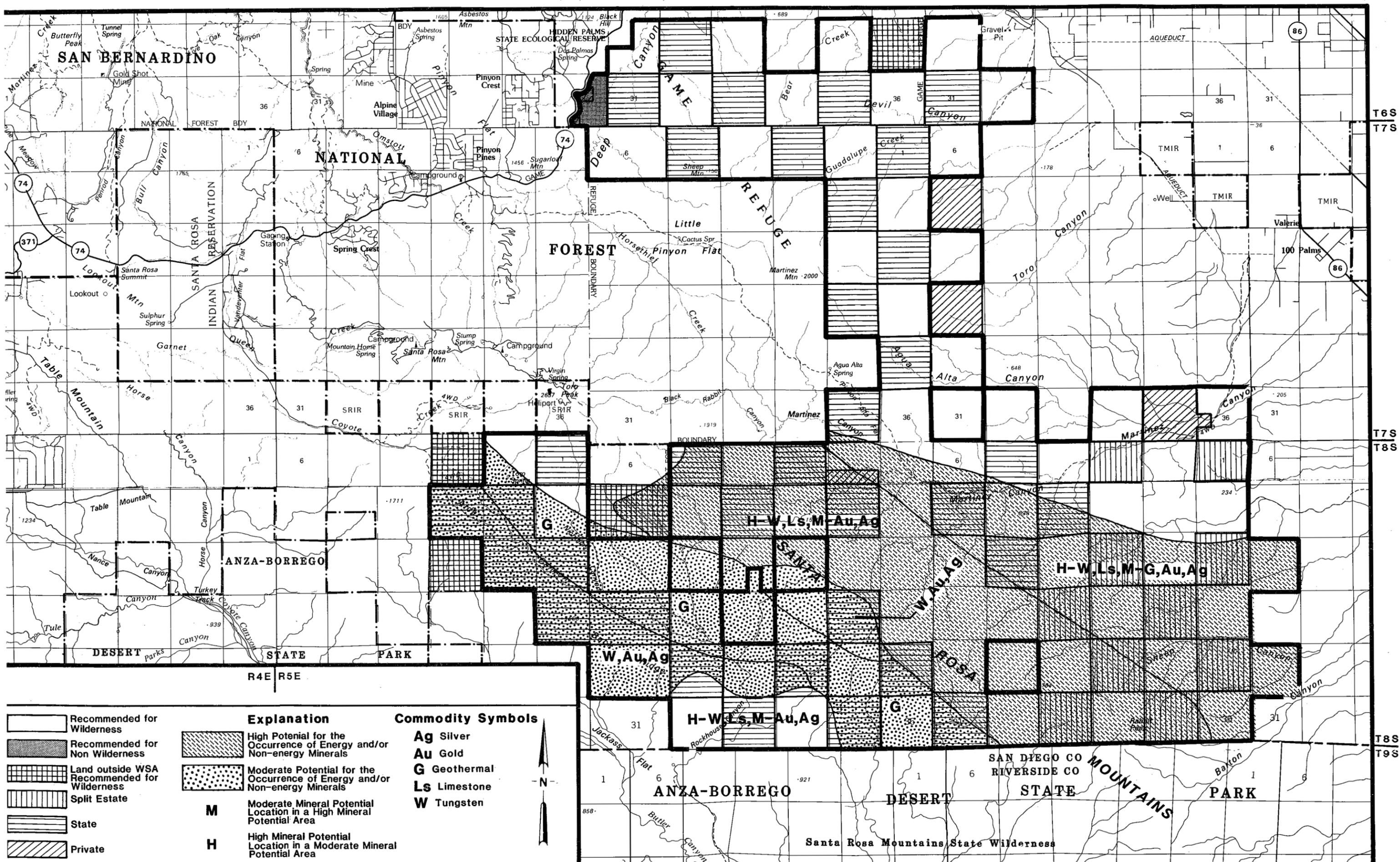
3. Draft Plan Alternatives: Both the conservation oriented public, as represented by the Sierra Club and the Audubon Society, and the multiple use proponents, as represented by the National Outdoor Coalition (NOC), supported a wilderness recommendation for this WSA. No new arguments were presented. The Coachella Valley Water District opposed any actions which would hinder construction of projects which would protect the valley from periodic floods from mountain canyons.
4. Proposed Plan: General input was similar to that for the Draft Plan. The Coachella Valley Association of Governments favored wilderness for this area. Several of those who commented, including the California Department of Fish and Game, recommended acquisition of the checkerboard private lands as early as possible for protection of the Bighorn Sheep.

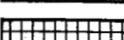
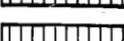
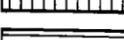
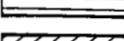
APPENDIX 1
 ESTIMATED COSTS OF ACQUISITION OF NON-FEDERAL HOLDINGS WITHIN
 AREAS RECOMMENDED FOR DESIGNATION
 SANTA ROSA MOUNTAINS WSA (CDCA-341)

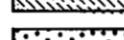
PARCEL No.	LEGAL DESCRIPTION			TOTAL ACREAGE	NUMBER OF OWNERS	TYPE OF OWNERSHIP BY ESTATE		PRESENTLY PROPOSED FOR ACQUISITION	PREFERRED METHOD OF ACQUISITION	ESTIMATED COST OF ACQUISITION		
	TWNSHP	RNG	SEC			MERIDIAN	SURFACE ESTATE			SUBSURFACE ESTATE	LAND COSTS (\$1000)	PROCESSING COSTS (\$1000)
1	6S.	6E.	25	SBM	160	1	PRIVATE	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	16.0	2.5
2	6S.	6E.	25	SBM	160	1	PRIVATE	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	16.0	2.5
3	6S.	6E.	25	SBM	160	1	PRIVATE	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	16.0	2.5
4	6S.	6E.	25	SBM	176	1	PRIVATE	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	17.6	2.5
5	7S.	7E.	7	SBM	*(648)	16	PRIVATE	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	648.0	40.0
6	7S.	7E.	19	SBM	*(650)	20	PRIVATE	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	650.0	50.0
7	7S.	7E.	35	SBM	640	1	PRIVATE	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	640.0	2.5
8	8S.	5E.	3	SBM	320	1	PRIVATE	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	320.0	2.5
9	8S.	5E.	3	SBM	320	1	PRIVATE	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	320.0	2.5
10	8S.	5E.	15	SBM	160	1	PRIVATE	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	160.0	2.5
11	8S.	5E.	15	SBM	160	1	PRIVATE	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	160.0	2.5
12	8S.	5E.	15	SBM	160	1	PRIVATE	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	160.0	2.5
13	8S.	5E.	15	SBM	160	1	PRIVATE	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	160.0	2.5
14	8S.	6E.	2	SBM	160	1	PRIVATE	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	160.0	2.5
15	8S.	6E.	7	SBM	987	1	PRIVATE	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	987.0	2.5
16	8S.	7E.	1	SBM	492	1	FEDERAL	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	12.3	0.85
17	8S.	7E.	3	SBM	492	1	FEDERAL	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	12.3	0.85
18	8S.	7E.	13	SBM	640	1	FEDERAL	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	16.0	0.85
19	8S.	7E.	15	SBM	640	1	FEDERAL	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	16.0	0.85
20	8S.	7E.	21	SBM	640	1	FEDERAL	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	16.0	0.85
21	8S.	7E.	23	SBM	640	1	FEDERAL	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	16.0	0.85
22	8S.	7E.	25	SBM	640	1	FEDERAL	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	16.0	0.85
23	8S.	7E.	27	SBM	640	1	FEDERAL	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	16.0	0.85
24	8S.	7E.	33	SBM	660	1	FEDERAL	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	16.5	0.85
25	8S.	7E.	35	SBM	648	1	FEDERAL	PRIVATE	YES	PURCHASE	16.2	0.85

* Indicates that exact parcel acreage is unknown. Total acreage for all parcels in a particular section are shown in ().

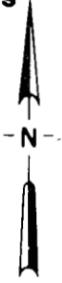
These figures were derived from Bureau Land Records and provide for more detail than GIS estimates and therefore may differ from acreage summaries in Table 1.



-  Recommended for Wilderness
-  Recommended for Non Wilderness
-  Land outside WSA Recommended for Wilderness
-  Split Estate
-  State
-  Private

- Explanation**
-  High Potential for the Occurrence of Energy and/or Non-energy Minerals
 -  Moderate Potential for the Occurrence of Energy and/or Non-energy Minerals
 - M** Moderate Mineral Potential Location in a High Mineral Potential Area
 - H** High Mineral Potential Location in a Moderate Mineral Potential Area

- Commodity Symbols**
- Ag** Silver
 - Au** Gold
 - G** Geothermal
 - Ls** Limestone
 - W** Tungsten



Santa Rosa Mountains Mineral Resource Potential



MAP-2 CDCA-341

R5E R6E R6E R7E R7E R8E R7E R8E

T6S T7S

T7S T8S

T8S T9S