The public lands in Imperial County are managed according to the California Desert Protection Act (Public Law 99-628) of 1986 and in accordance with Title 36, Chapter 25, Subchapter 2, of the United States Code. In 2001, one of the amendments mandated legal rules for travel in restricted areas of the wilderness. The following OHV areas and routes of travel are authorized by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) for travel in the western portion of the area. A primary emphasis is the WECO plan to designate wilderness areas and sensitivity areas (WSA) that are currently in the process of being resourced as well. Please note that vehicle travel on the desert basins is limited to only streets legal vehicles with three exceptions: route 78, 238 and 238A are all in vehicle travel routes within the Pomarja Area. Since it is limited to certain times of year: routes are closed to vehicle travel from January 1 through June 30 due to the loading season for Pomarja Sheep herders. Additionally, vehicle travel is prohibited in military training areas.

There are numerous opportunities for OHV recreation in the lands managed by BLM California Desert Field Offices. Miles of trails are open for various types of OHV recreation. Please keep in mind you are responsible for being courteous, understanding, and complying with all OHV regulations. Please follow any signs regarding the management of public lands and make sure you have an OHV registration card with you. It is strongly recommended to travel on trails that are “closed to OHV”. The state of California does not permit all-terrain vehicle (ATV) travel on federal lands. In the state of California, all OHV recreation is permitted on land operated by the BLM. If you are in need of assistance, please contact the BLM and the California Department of Fish and Game for current information.

If you are planning to use OHVs on public lands, or you have any questions about laws, regulations, or safety issues, you should contact the BLM office having jurisdiction over your selected location for current information.

Archeological sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and are protected by law. Archeological sites are important parts of America’s cultural heritage. More than 4000 cultural sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and approximately 250 sites are located within the area. These sites can include rock art, rock shelters, caves, and other similar places that are significant to the history of the area.

Coyote Mountains Wilderness

The Coyote Mountains is a southward-sloping range, roughly four miles wide and 11 miles long. Coyote Mountains Wilderness is located on the eastern border of Imperial County, California, adjacent to Mexico. It is a contiguous strip of land that follows the border between the United States and Mexico. The area is also designated as a National Park by the U.S. government.

Fish Creek Mountains Wilderness

The Fish Creek Mountains range is a plateau near the town of El Centro. From a distance, the Fish Creek Mountains are visible. However, from a closer vantage point, a large body of water is visible near the town of El Centro.

The Fish Creek Mountains offer a variety of natural environments, including desert and sagebrush habitats, as well as riparian zones and wetlands. The area is also home to a variety of wildlife, including mule deer, coyotes, and bobcats. The area is managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) for public recreation.

The Fish Creek Mountains are a popular destination for hiking, mountain biking, and birdwatching. The area is also home to a variety of wildlife, including mule deer, coyotes, and bobcats. The area is managed by the BLM and the CDFG for public recreation.
The Colorado Desert contains thousands of historic and prehistoric archaeological sites as well as other cultural resources that demonstrate the rich and important legacy of more than 10,000 years of human history in North America. Unfortunately, many of these sites have been damaged by unauthorized artifact collection, vandalism, and off-road travel. Removing or damaging artifacts and other antiquities found on public lands is illegal and subject to severe civil and criminal penalties. Please remember that cultural resources are fragile and nonrenewable—enjoy them by viewing, sketching, or photographing them. Take care to identify archaeological sites by leaving artifacts and other objects in place and untouched. Please help protect our archaeological legacy so that future generations may also visit, enjoy, and learn about our heritage.

**Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail and Overlook**

In early December 1775, nearly a month and a half after starting his overland expedition to colonize Alta California, Lieutenant Colonel Juan Bautista de Anza entered the Yuha Desert. The winter journey to escape the scorching summer desert heat had been marked by hunger, thirst, and long, sudden sandstorms that threatened the success of the expedition. More than 240 people traveled with Anza, including army regulars, soldier recruits with their families, and livestock herders. Gathering what little food they could find, the colonists struggled to keep warm and to prevent their small packs from freezing throughout the night. The women and children were especially hard hit.

Nearly a week after leaving the Colorado River, the group was desperate to find water. A year earlier, Native Americans showed Anza where to find water by digging near large rock formations. Anza ordered the men to use pickaxes to open a passage through the rocks, hoping to reach springs underneath. When the rocks were broken, the men were alarmed to see the distant mountains covered in snow, indicating the water was probably frozen. Despite the storm, nearly 40 stock animals died from cold and thirst.

As the expedition continued north, the group took refuge on San Gualberto Marsh, where, with minimal water supply and forage for their animals, the colonists held a grand festa, or festivity. After breaking open the rock, hoping to reach springs underneath, the colonists changed their pace to mark their passage across the desert. They had survived the most difficult segment of the entire journey. Ahead, a new life awaited them on the edge of the Spanish frontier.

The Juan Bautista de Anza Overlook provides a panoramic view of the Yuha Desert. To access the overlook, take route 274 north from State Highway 86 and turn east on route 308.

**Yuha Well**

More than 200 years ago Lieutenant Colonel Juan Bautista de Anza’s party, guided by Native Americans, replenished their water supplies here before pushing on. The Yuha Well became an important site for later travelers and settlers who followed Anza’s trail through the desert. The well is located off of route 346, east of route 302.

**Yuha Desert**

The Yuha Desert, a component of the much larger Colorado Desert, is rich in both human and natural history. It is hard to imagine that the landscape, which is millions of years old, once was a ocean floor.

The Yuha Desert is a BLM area of critical environmental concern (ACEC). It is home to sensitive plants and animals as well as historic and prehistoric cultural sites. It is a limited use area, meaning that travel is limited to designated routes of travel to protect these resources, so please observe all posted signs. An audio tour describing several points of interest in the area is available from BLM’s El Centro Field Office. The Yuha Desert can be accessed from State Highway 86 and from the Dunaway Road exit off of Interstate 8.

**Yuha Geoglyph**

Geoglyphs, or pictographs, are ground figures constructed by Native Americans in the Colorado River area. These ground figures were made by removing rocks or soil from the ground surface to expose the lighter colored rock or soil below, then smoothing or incising the surface. The Yuha Geoglyph, located off of route 308, was damaged extensively by vandals in 1994 and is protected by a fenced enclosure. In 1981, the Imperial Valley College’s Barker Museum and the BLM restored the Yuha Geoglyph in its present condition. Geoglyphs can be extremely fragile, so please do not disturb them or travel on them.

**Fossil Shell Beds**

These remarkably well-preserved fossil shells are remnants of Miocene epochs of the Imperial Formation, which covered most of Imperial and central Riverside Counties about 10 million years ago. Shells for the collection of fossil shells can be obtained from BLM’s El Centro Field Office. The fossil shells are located off of route 346, west of route 234, a four-wheel drive vehicle is strongly recommended.

**Crucifixion Thorn**

This unique plant species is rare in California but is fairly common in Arizona and Sonora, Mexico. These plants resemble the plant said to have been placed on the head of Christ at the time of crucifixion. The plants can also be seen off of State Highway 86, along route 282.