

NATIONAL CONSERVATION LANDS

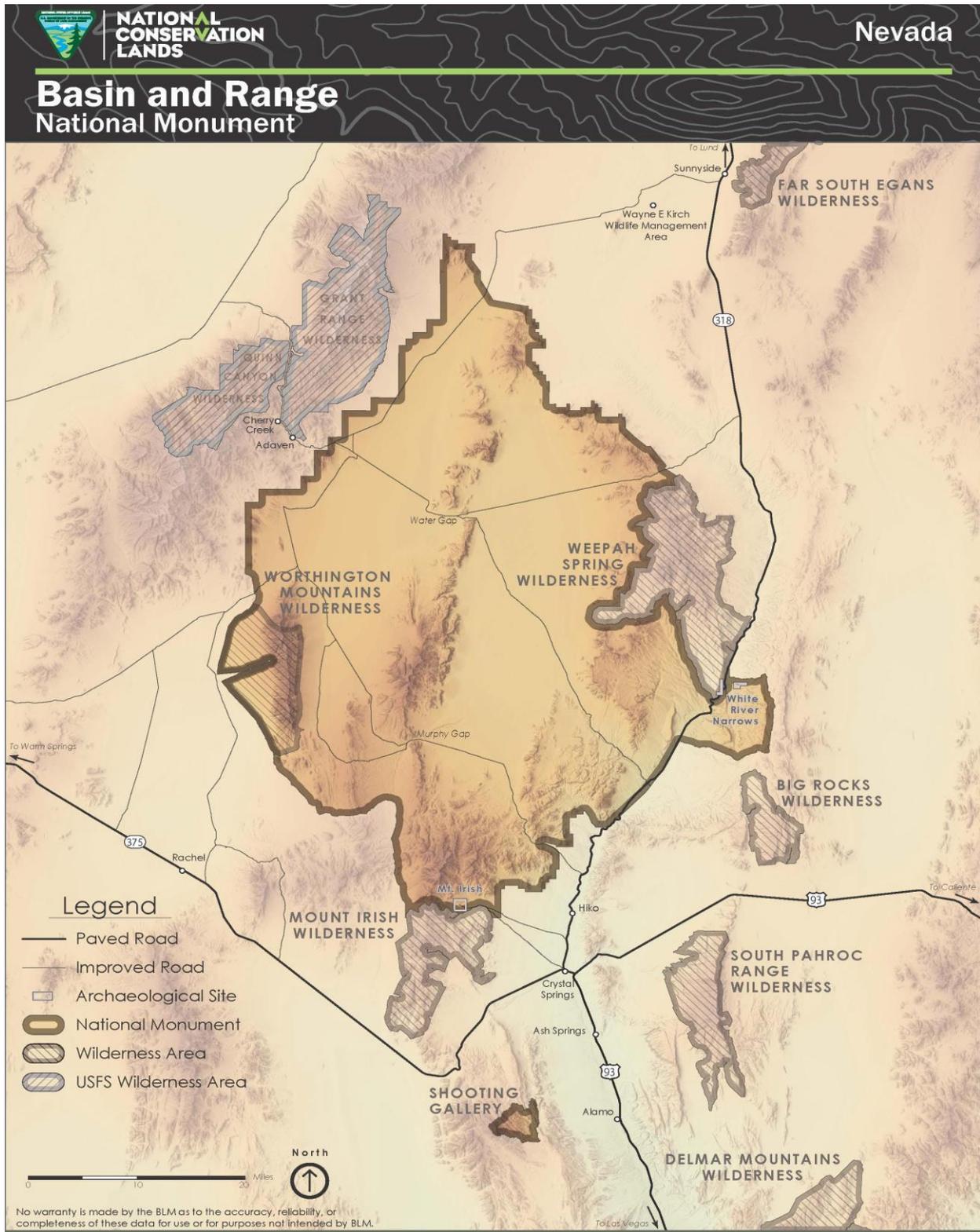
Nevada
2021: Annual Manager's Report

Basin and Range

National Monument



Map



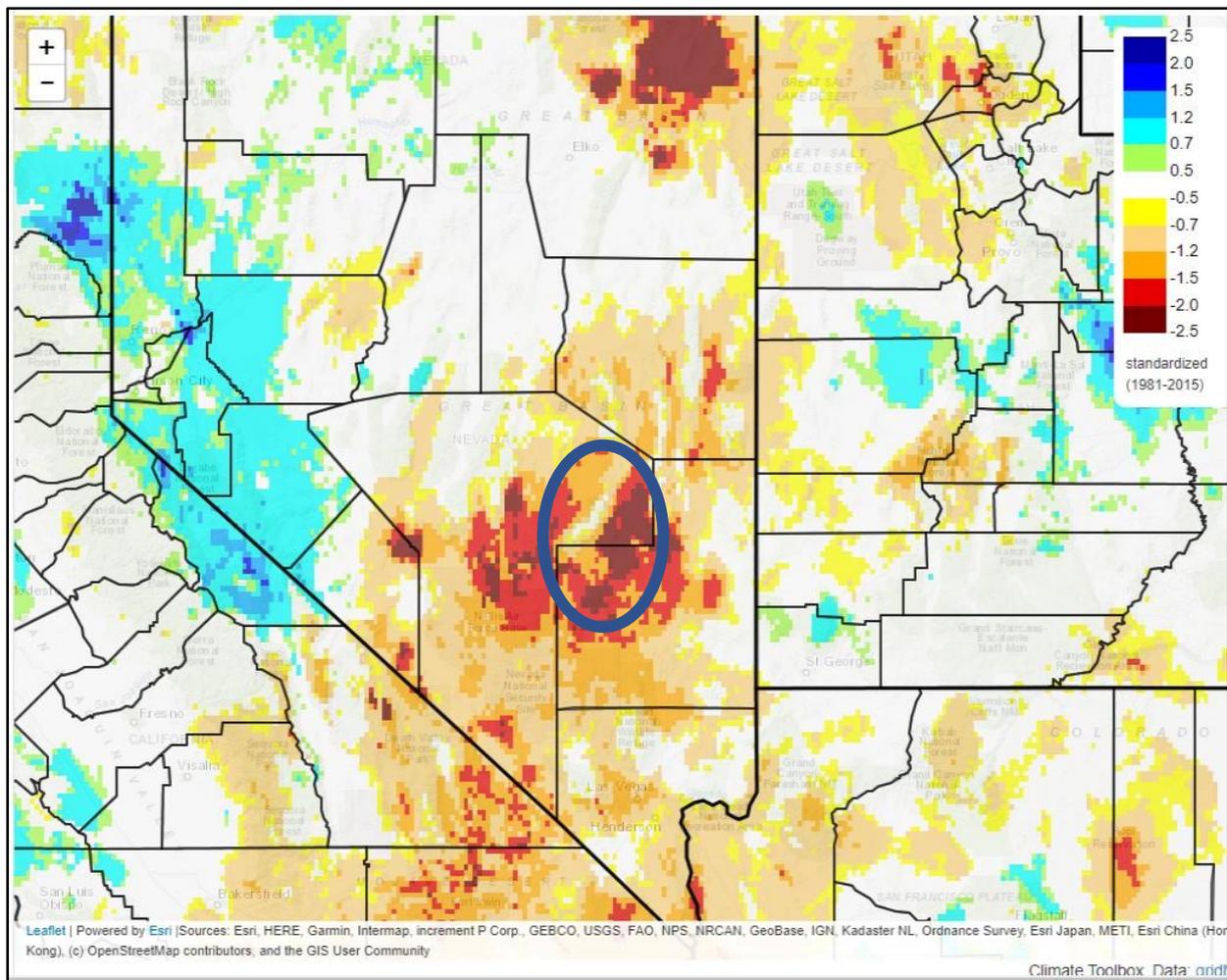
Accomplishments

The Basin and Range National Monument celebrated many successes in 2021. The BLM and a variety of partners held our first BioBlitz June 4 to 6, 2021. Approximately 100 volunteers and agency personnel recorded 1,728 observations of 406 species during the event using the iNaturalist application. Visitation in 2021 was similar to 2019 numbers. BLM issued Travel Nevada a statewide film permit in 2021, and Travel Nevada continued to encourage responsible recreation within the monument. Several Lincoln County Archaeological Initiative projects were ongoing in 2021. Outcome Based Grazing Land Health Assessments were another area of focus this year in Basin and Range National Monument.



Challenges

Drought conditions in Nevada were extreme in 2021. Many grazing permittees in the monument reduced their season of use and numbers of livestock and worked to increase livestock distribution across the allotments in response to the drought. Rangeland monitoring and inspections of wildlife guzzlers in coordination with Nevada Department of Wildlife were priorities in response to the drought. The Standardized Precipitation Index in the monument ranged from -2.5 to -1.4 last year. The approximate area of the monument is shown in the oval below. The numbers indicate lower probability of precipitation during a one-year time scale, with dark brown depicting the lowest probability.



Visitors

Visitation in Basin and Range National Monument in 2021 was similar to 2019 with an estimated 5,145 visits and 3,231 visitor days. These numbers were lower than in 2020, potentially due to a peak in visitation from the COVID-19 pandemic. More than half of all visitors in 2021 spent time at public cultural sites, such as White River Narrows and Mt. Irish, within the monument. Recreation (both motorized and non-motorized), sightseeing, hunting, trapping, rock climbing, caving, camping, photography, and hiking are popular activities in the monument. Additional interpretive signs and an entrance sign were installed in 2021. Monument staff collected traffic counter data to estimate visitation.



Staff unearthing and downloading traffic counter data.

Partnerships

BLM partnered for the BioBlitz held in 2021 with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), National Park Service, Nevada Department of Wildlife, Nevada Division of Natural Heritage, University of Nevada Reno, Desert Research Institute, Southern Nevada Water Authority, Great Basin Institute, Eastern Nevada Landscape Coalition, Conservation Lands Foundation, and Friends of Basin and Range. Volunteer hours totaled 2,171 hours for 2021. Volunteers participated in the BioBlitz, monitored cultural sites through the Nevada Site Steward Program, removed abandoned mining claim markers, conducted botanical inventories, and removed graffiti.



Volunteers collecting wildlife data for the 2021 BioBlitz.

Science

BLM provided additional funding to USGS through an Inter-Agency Agreement for a habitat model. The modeling effort uses an iterative approach of re-sampling and targeting certain areas for field work and citizen science efforts to refine the habitat models. The models identify habitat hot spots, based on occurrence data and environmental variables, for wildlife species listed in the monument proclamation.

Through the Management Studies Support Program, BLM entered into an Assistance Agreement with Desert Research Institute in 2021. The project focuses on long-term ecological monitoring of blackbrush populations. Blackbrush is an extremely slow growing paleoendemic species that has been in decline due to its inability to re-establish following disturbances, such as wildland fire.



A blackbrush community near Mail Summit.

Climate Impacts

A team of soils scientists and ecologists from the University of Nevada, Reno and the BLM worked on state and transition models for Major Land Resource Area 29 in the monument in 2021. The models will assist with evaluating land health for ecological sites across the landscape. Many of the Ecological Site Descriptions in this area are outdated and do not consider different paths of departure from reference states. Several ecological sites were observed to be in a stable but altered shrub state, which could lead to management implications into the future with changing climate patterns. Monument staff continued to monitor climate conditions using remote weather stations in 2021.



Staff monitoring ecological condition.

Climate Resiliency

A Lincoln County Archaeological Initiative project is investigating ancient Coal Valley and how this important area for cultural resources in the monument was once covered by a Pleistocene lake. In five short videos, the project partner Desert Research Institute, shows how various research methods are used to date lakebed materials in Coal Valley to better understand the changing climate in the area. To view the videos and learn about this fascinating study, go to the Archaeology in Action section at:

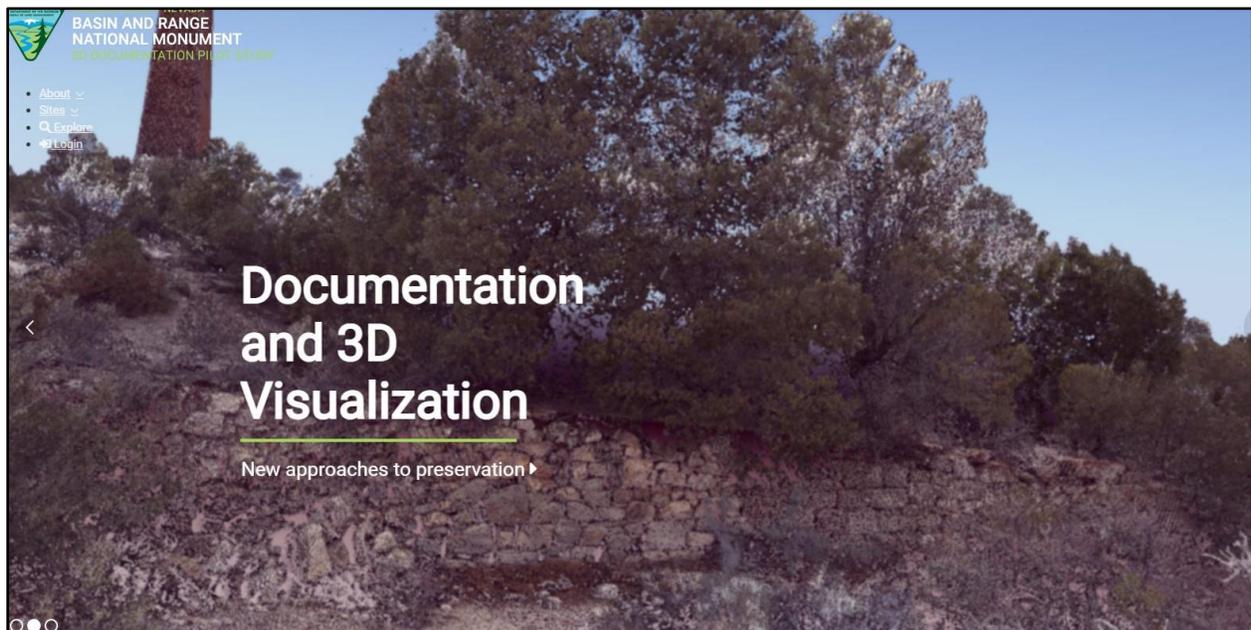
<https://www.dri.edu/crm/>.



Still image taken from educational videos produced by the Lincoln County Archaeological Initiative with funding from BLM and the Desert Research Institute.

Social and Environmental Justice

The Basin and Range National Monument 3D Documentation Pilot Study [website](#) allows visitors to virtually explore and experience prehistoric areas and a historic mining district. Points of interest featured include Paiute Rocks public rock art site, Crescent City mining area, and Red Pigment Canyon within Shooting Gallery Area of Critical Environmental Concern. The website provides virtual access to public cultural sites within the monument that might not otherwise be available to underserved communities, including minority, low-income, and tribal populations.



Screenshot taken from the Basin and Range National Monument 3D Documentation Pilot Study website.

Events

In addition to the BioBlitz event in June, staff from the Basin and Range National Monument conducted outreach and environmental education programs at Labor Day in Pioche, Nevada. The Legacy Racing Baja Nevada, a 550-mile truck and buggy race across Nevada, traversed a 37-mile stretch within the monument on existing county-maintained roads in 2021. The portion of the event within the monument was non-competitive with a 35-mph speed limit and special stipulations to protect the resources, objects, and values within the monument. Event promoters informed participants of the stipulations and speed limit upon entering the monument, and staff monitored the event held in May 2021.



Staff at a public event in Pioche, NV.

Words from the staff

Recreation, citizen science, research, rangeland management, and cultural resource protection were the primary areas of focus for our staff in 2021. Partnerships with federal, state, local, and non-profit organizations continue to support the monument and promote responsible recreation in this remote area of Nevada. We look forward to opening public visitation at Michael Heizer's private land artwork [the City](#) on a limited seasonal basis in 2022. Land Health Assessments for Outcome Based Grazing and a cultural resource protection project to enhance visitor amenities at Mt. Irish within Basin and Range National Monument will also be undertaken in the coming year.





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Flickr photo album link:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/mypubliclands/albums/72157655302466798/>

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