

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
PALM SPRINGS-SOUTH COAST FIELD OFFICE**

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
EA Number CA-660-05-08**

DATE: October 20, 2004

TITLE / PROJECT TYPE: *Elite Land Tours / Special Recreation Permit, Commercial*

CASE FILE / PROJECT NO: CA-660-SRP-05-01

FUNDING CODE: CA660-1220

PROGRAM ELEMENT: EA

BLM OFFICE: Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office
690 W. Garnet Avenue, P.O. Box 581260
North Palm Springs, CA 92258-1260

APPLICANT / PROPONENT: Mark Farley, President
Elite Land Tours, Inc.

LOCATION OF PROPOSED ACTION: (a) Motorized-vehicle routes of travel in the Mecca Hills-Orocopia Mountains-Chuckwalla Mountains region, including Box Canyon Road, Meccacopia Trail, Red Canyon Jeep Trail, Red Cloud Road, Summit Road, Bradshaw Trail, and Corn Springs Road; (b) hiking trail to Sheep Hole Oasis in the Mecca Hills Wilderness

PROJECT SCOPE: Approximate mileage of vehicle routes/hiking trails utilized on public lands (see locations above):
(a) 47 miles
(b) 0.5 miles

USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS (1:24K): Corn Spring, Cottonwood Basin, Cottonwood Spring, East of Red Canyon, Hayfield, Hayfield Spring, Mortmar, Orocopia Canyon, Pilot Mountain, Red Canyon, Sidewinder Well

LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE and Other Regulatory Compliance

In accordance with Title 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) §1610.5-3, the proposed action and alternatives are in conformance with the following approved land use plan: California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan (1980), as amended. The proposed activity would occur on public lands designated as Multiple Use Class “C” (Controlled Use), “L” (Limited Use), and “M” (Moderate Use). Motorized-vehicle use is allowed on routes designated “open” unless the authorized officer determines the need for immediate closure pursuant to 43 CFR §8341.2.

Class “C” lands are those which have been formally designated as wilderness by Congress, which, relative to the proposed action, comprise the Mecca Hills Wilderness, Orocopia Mountains Wilderness, and Chuckwalla Mountains Wilderness. These lands are administered in accordance with provisions of the California Desert Protection Act of 1994 which, in turn, requires that such lands be administered in accordance with provisions of the Wilderness Act of 1964. The Wilderness Act requires the administering agency to preserve the wilderness character of such areas, and to devote these areas to the public purposes of recreational, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historical use. Class “C” lands are suitable for non-mechanical types of recreation that generally involve low to very low user densities. Only the Mecca Hills Wilderness would be utilized by the applicant, though motorized-vehicle activities would occur on routes immediately adjacent to each of the three cited wilderness areas. Bureau of Land Management policy for actions in wilderness within the California Desert District requires a Notice of Proposed Action (NOPA) be distributed to interested parties. The NOPA for this proposal was mailed on November 16, 2004, for a 30-day comment period (see Appendix C). No comments were received.

Class “L” lands are managed to provide for generally lower-intensity, carefully controlled multiple use of resources, while ensuring that sensitive values are not significantly diminished. These lands are suitable for recreation that generally involves low to moderate user densities. Class “M” is based upon a controlled balance between higher intensity use and protection of public lands. Lands in this category are suitable for a wide range of recreation activities that may involve moderate to high user densities.

The proposed activity in the Mecca Hills-Orocopia Mountains-Chuckwalla Mountains region, in part, would traverse the Chuckwalla Desert Wildlife Management Area (DWMA), established in 2002 through the Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert Coordinated Management Plan (NECO Plan), an amendment to the CDCA Plan. The DWMA was designated to protect desert tortoise and significant natural resources, including special status plant and animal species and natural communities. No management prescriptions restricting non-motorized commercial recreation activities on public lands (e.g., hiking) were adopted through the NECO Plan. Any motorized-vehicle use associated with the proposed activity would be restricted to routes designated “open” or “limited.”

Threatened and Endangered Species Consultation

In the Mecca Hills-Orocopia Mountains-Chuckwalla Mountains region, the proposed activity would, in part, occur within designated critical habitat for the desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*). The desert tortoise was listed as a threatened species in 1990 under the federal Endangered Species Act. In 1994, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) designated desert tortoise critical habitat. The proposed activity is subject to the terms and conditions of *Biological Opinion for Small Projects Affecting Desert Tortoise Habitat in Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties, California* (1-8-97-F-17) issued by USFWS to the Bureau of Land Management in 1997 (see Appendix B).

Cultural Resources and Native American Consultation

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) charges the BLM with the responsibility to manage public lands in a manner that will “protect the quality of scientific, scenic,

historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archaeological values.” Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as implemented at 36 CFR Part 800, requires Federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties.

Native American consultation for commercial recreation permitting in the project area was previously conducted (*Big Wheel Bike Tours*, October 2004) with the Torres Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Cabazon Band of Mission Indians, Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians, and Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. No concerns were expressed by any of these Tribes.

NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION

In accordance with 43 CFR §2932.11, Special Recreation Permits are required for commercial use of public lands. Mr. Mark Farley, president of *Elite Land Tours, Inc.*, hereinafter *Elite Land Tours*, has submitted an application to the Bureau of Land Management for a Special Recreation Permit to conduct commercial driving tours on existing routes in the Mecca Hills-Orocopia Mountains-Chuckwalla Mountains region, including a short hike in the Mecca Hills Wilderness, and at Big Morongo Canyon Preserve. Since commercial activities at Big Morongo Canyon Preserve would be limited to County of San Bernardino lands, proposed stipulations affecting such use would be advisory only.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION and ALTERNATIVES

1. Proposed Action

Elite Land Tours proposes to conduct commercial driving tours on public lands for the period of January 1, 2005 through December 31, 2009. These tours would occur as described below. The general locations of these tours are depicted on SRP-05-01 Map 1. Stipulations identified in Appendix A are incorporated as part of the proposed action. In accordance with 43 CFR §2932.41, BLM may impose stipulations and conditions to meet management goals and objectives, and to protect lands and resources and the public interest. The permittee would be required to follow all stipulations of the approved Special Recreation Permit.

(a) Mecca Hills-Orocopia Mountains

Two different tours would be offered in the Mecca Hills-Orocopia Mountains region. These tours are described below.

- **Meccacopia Trail Tour** (see SRP-05-01 Map 2)

Customers would be transported in Hummer H2 vehicles from the Coachella Valley via Interstate Highway 10 to the northern terminus of Box Canyon Road, about 25 miles east of the City of Indio. Tours may first proceed on Interstate 10 to Chiriaco Summit, about five miles beyond the Box Canyon Road exit, then return. The tour would proceed generally southwest on paved Box Canyon Road to the Sheep Hole Oasis Trailhead where customers would disembark for a ½-mile hike on Sheep Hole Oasis Trail to a vantage point overlooking the Salton Sea. Upon returning to the trailhead, the driving part of the tour would resume by retracing its path on Box Canyon Road, either to its intersection with the Meccacopia Trail or to its intersection with a wash route that leads to the Meccacopia Trail. Both routes are of natural surface, i.e., not paved. Following either of these two routes, the tour would then proceed south through a corridor that separates the Mecca Hills and Orocopia Mountains Wildernesses, departing

this mountainous region through the community of North Shore via “Drop 31” of the Coachella Canal. Tours on the segment of the Meccacopia Trail that forms a corridor between the two wilderness areas would not occur from June 1 through September 30. This restriction is consistent with the route designation of “limited” in accordance with the NECO Plan.

Hummer H2 vehicles would accommodate up to five passengers and one driver per vehicle. No more than five vehicles would be utilized at any one time for the Meccacopia Trail Tour; the maximum tour size would be 30 individuals (25 customers and five drivers). No more than one Meccacopia Trail Tour per day would occur. Customers would be allowed to periodically step out of the vehicles, though pedestrian access into designated wilderness would occur via the Sheep Hole Oasis Trail only. Water and food would be provided by *Elite Land Tours* for its customers. No sanitary facilities would be provided on public lands. Permission has been secured to use sanitary facilities at the George S. Patton Memorial Museum at Chiriaco Summit on Interstate 10.

- **Red Canyon Trail Tour** (see SRP-05-01 Map 2)

Customers would be transported in Hummer H2 vehicles from the Coachella Valley via Interstate Highway 10 to Chiriaco Summit, about 30 miles east of the City of Indio. The tour would then proceed west on the Interstate 10 frontage road before turning south onto the Red Canyon Jeep Trail, a dirt road. The tour would proceed generally southeast through a corridor that separates the main body of the Orocopia Mountains Wilderness from a much smaller disjunct portion to the northeast. At the southern terminus of the Red Canyon Jeep Trail, the tour would proceed either northeast to Interstate 10 via Summit and Red Cloud Roads, or southwest to the community of North Shore via the Bradshaw Trail.

Hummer H2 vehicles would accommodate up to five passengers and one driver per vehicle. No more than five vehicles would be utilized at any one time for the Red Canyon Trail Tour; the maximum tour size would be 30 individuals (25 customers and five drivers). No more than one Red Canyon Trail Tour per day would occur. Customers would be allowed to periodically step out of the vehicles, though pedestrian access into the Orocopia Mountains Wilderness would not occur. Water and food would be provided by *Elite Land Tours* for its customers. No sanitary facilities would be provided on public lands. Permission has been secured to use sanitary facilities at the George S. Patton Memorial Museum at Chiriaco Summit on Interstate 10.

(b) Chuckwalla Mountains

- **Corn Springs Tour** (see SRP-05-01 Map 3)

Customers would be transported in Hummer H2 vehicles from the Coachella Valley via Interstate Highway 10 to Corn Springs Road, about 60 miles east of the City of Indio. From the Interstate 10 frontage road, the tour would proceed southeast on Corn Springs Road, a graded dirt road, to Corn Springs Campground. Approximately six miles of Corn Springs Road is bounded on both sides by the Chuckwalla Mountains Wilderness. Since motorized-vehicle access and egress to the heart of the Chuckwalla Mountains can occur only via the Corn Springs Road “cherrystem,” tours would return to Interstate 10 from Corn Springs Campground by the same route.

Hummer H2 vehicles would accommodate up to five passengers and one driver per vehicle. No more than five vehicles would be utilized at any one time for the Corn Springs Tour; the maximum tour size would be 30 individuals (25 customers and five drivers). No more than one Corn Springs Tour per day would occur. Customers would be allowed to periodically step out of the vehicles, though pedestrian access into the Chuckwalla Mountains Wilderness would not occur. Water and food would be provided by *Elite Land*

Tours for its customers. Sanitary facilities at Corn Springs Campground would be available for use; no other sanitary facilities on public lands would be provided. Permission has been secured to also use sanitary facilities at the George S. Patton Memorial Museum at Chiriaco Summit on Interstate 10.

(c) Big Morongo Canyon Preserve

- **Big Morongo Canyon Preserve Tour** (see SRP-05-01 Map 4)

Customers would be transported in Hummer H2 vehicles from the Coachella Valley via California Highway 62 to Big Morongo Canyon Preserve. Activities would be limited to trails on lands under jurisdiction of the County of San Bernardino. Proposed stipulations relating to commercial activities on County lands at Big Morongo Canyon Preserve with Preserve personnel are advisory only.

2. No Action Alternative

The Proposed Action would not be undertaken. Existing management and use of the motorized-vehicle routes and Sheep Hole Oasis Trail would continue subject to applicable statutes, regulations, policies, and land use plans.

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Mecca Hills-Orocopia Mountains-Chuckwalla Mountains

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)

The project area partially lies within the Chuckwalla Desert Wildlife Management Area (DWMA), an ACEC established in 2002 through the Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert Coordinated Management Plan which amended the California Desert Conservation Area Plan. The northern segments of Box Canyon Road, Meccacopia Trail, and Red Canyon Jeep Trail, as well as Corn Springs Road in its entirety occur within the DWMA. The DWMA was designated to protect desert tortoise and significant natural resources, including special status plant and animal species and natural communities, and largely coincides with designated critical habitat for the tortoise.

Cultural Resources

Native American tribal groups were the first inhabitants of the California Desert region and continue to hold lands in the desert today. Archaeological sites, plant collection areas, ritual and ceremonial areas, and sacred areas are significantly connected to specific desert resources and regions. Potential threats and impacts to these resources are of concern to these tribes. These resources are often difficult to identify as they may not have associated physical or archaeological components, and locations may be held as closely guarded secrets by various tribes.

The Mecca Hills are in the traditional use areas of the Cabazon Band of Mission Indians and the Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians. Primary uses of the Mecca Hills included quarrying of clay for pottery, hunting bighorn sheep and other game, and gathering plant foods. The historic period village site of *Maswut Helaanut* is reported to have been located at the mouth of Painted Canyon. This village was one of several under the leadership of Chief Cabezon. The village is believed to have been destroyed during a flood in the early 1900's.

Between 900 A.D. and 1600 A.D., Ancient Lake Cahuilla intermittently filled the Salton Basin. Several prehistoric camps and occupation sites are associated with the freshwater shoreline of Lake Cahuilla. There is the potential for these types of sites to occur at the base the Mecca Hills. Prehistoric cultural resources located in the Mecca Hills include rock rings, trail segments, lithic scatters, and pottery scatters. George Wharton James commented on a faint “Indian” trail into Sheep Hole Oasis in his 1907 book, *“Wonders of the Colorado Desert.”* The current hiking trail apparently follows that old path. The BLM Archaeologist, Wanda Raschkow, performed a cultural resources reconnaissance survey of the trail in 2002. No cultural artifacts or features were noted; the trail is well-worn and obviously heavily used.

A single historic site has been recorded along Box Canyon Road. Shaver’s Well was named after John Shaver, Riverside County Supervisor between 1895 and 1935. The well was apparently excavated sometime between 1898 and 1900. Little remains of the historic site at this time. The northern end of Box Canyon Road passes through an area that saw use in the 1940s as part of Patton’s Desert Training Center (DTC). Division Headquarters, Camp Young, lies north of Interstate 10. Sites associated with DTC activities are known to occur near Box Canyon Road. These include rifle ranges and other practice areas which have not been formally recorded.

The **Meccacopia Trail Tour** passes through an area which may have been the location of a branch between two important Indian trails. In the 1950’s Francis and Patricia Johnston recorded segments of an east-west trail which parallels today’s Interstate 10 (north of the Orocopia Mountains). This trail has been referred to as the Cocomaricopa Trail. This name has also been applied to a trail which ran east to west but was located south of the Orocopia Mountains. An alternate name for this southern trail is the Maricopa-Cahuilla Trail. The route of the Meccacopia Trail Tour follows a natural corridor which would have provided a link between these two trails. North-south trail segments have been identified in the foothills of the Mecca Hills. Other archaeological resources in the area include lithic scatters and DTC maneuver areas.

Red Canyon Jeep Trail also passes through an area which may contain DTC related sites. Very little cultural resources inventory has been done within the Orocopia Mountains. Sites recorded as a result of sample inventories performed in support of the 1980 California Desert Conservation Plan include lithic reduction and quarry locations. Other sites in the area include rock art sties and temporary camps with lithics, pottery, and plant processing artifacts and features. Prehistoric trails have been identified, but not formally recorded.

The primary historic sites in the project area include the Bradshaw Trail and stage stops associated with it. William Bradshaw developed the route in 1862, reportedly with the help of Indians from Chief Cabezon’s village. He also followed portions of a route surveyed earlier by Isaac Smith, H.M. Frink, and Hank Brown. Bradshaw’s route served the mines at La Paz (Arizona) and remained the primary route of east-west travel until the Southern Pacific Railroad was constructed in 1875 and 1876.

Summit Road and the Bradshaw Trail parallel another historic site. Construction of the Eagle Mountain Railroad was initiated in 1946 and completed in 1948. The railroad transported ore from the Eagle Mountain mine to Ferrum on the eastern shore of the Salton Sea. The Eagle Mountain Mine was the region’s largest iron mine. The railroad is being reviewed for eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places for its association with the development of mining within the region.

The Orocopia Mountains also include several historic mining sites. Gold, fluorite, and manganese were among the minerals sought in these mountains. Mining in the Orocopias began in the 1880’s.

The **Corn Springs Tour** also leads into an area associated with historic mining. The area was a popular campsite for prospectors and was also one of the few reliable water sources. Miners working in Red Cloud Canyon several miles west of Corn Springs would frequently make a 2-3 day wagon trip through the canyons to secure water for their camps and mining operations. In the early 1900's the owners of the Red Cloud Mine planned to run a pipeline from Corn Springs to their mine and mill site. Gus Lederer, the last resident prospector and "mayor" of Corn Springs, passed away in 1932.

The presence of water at Corn Springs attracted earlier inhabitants as well. Several trails lead into Corn Springs Wash and an extensive rock art site occurs on the canyon walls. The Corn Springs site also features bedrock mortars, milling slicks, lithic scatters, and stone circles- all evidence of prehistoric occupation. The petroglyphs at Corn Springs may represent over 2000 years of human occupation and art. The Corn Springs rock art site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Prior to European settlement, **Big Morongo Canyon** served as a connection between Serrano and Cahuilla territories. The Serrano inhabited the San Bernardino Mountains and areas to the north. The term "Serrano" derives from the Spanish for "mountaineers." Specifically the Maringa or Marina clan may have inhabited both the Big and Little Morongo Canyons (Bean and Smith 1978; Daly, Davis, and Lerch 1981; Kroeber 1925). During the historic period, Cahuilla and Serrano groups were allied by trade and intermarriage and many Serrano currently reside on the Morongo Reservation with the Cahuilla.

At one time, the area now known as Covington Park was the location of a Serrano village. Later, after the Serrano had been moved to the missions and reservations, this site and Morongo Canyon were used for cattle ranching. General Land Office maps from the late 1800s refer to a road running from Mission Creek through Dry Morongo and into the Morongo Valley as the "Warren's Ranch" road.

Plants and Wildlife

Plants:

The project area is comprised of two dominant plant communities: Sonoran Creosote Scrub and Desert Dry Wash Woodland. Sonoran Desert Scrub, or Creosote Bush, is characterized by widely spaced shrubs, 0.5 to 3 yards tall, on well-drained secondary soils of slopes, fans, and valleys. The growing season is from winter to early spring, with a flowering period for ephemerals in late February to March, depending on rainfall. It is the dominant plant community below 3,000-foot elevation throughout the Colorado Desert, occurring from the Little San Bernardino Mountains south and east into Baja California.

Sonoran Desert Mixed Scrub, another type of Sonoran Desert Scrub, includes members of the cactus and agave families, and is generally found above 1,000-foot elevation on rocky, well-drained slopes and baguets. Succulent scrub areas typically have higher floristic and structural diversity than surrounding areas, which attract more wildlife.

Desert Dry Wash Woodland, also called microphyll woodland, consists of drought-deciduous, small-leaved (microphyllous), mostly leguminous trees of riparian or wash areas. The trees can reach 30 feet or more in height, but typically do not exceed 15 feet. Some assemblages are very dense woodlands, while others are more open and dispersed. This community is typically found in sandy or gravelly washes or adjacent baguets under 2,500-foot elevation throughout the Mojave and Colorado Deserts. This plant community is considered sensitive by the California Resource Agency. Wildlife

species richness is much higher in this than other community types in the desert, and this community is slow to recover from disturbance.

Several special status plants may occur in the project area. Special status species are those having federal or state designations as endangered, threatened, candidate, or sensitive. These species include: Los Animas colubrina or snakebush (*Colubrina californica*), California ditaxis (*Ditaxis serrata* var. *californica*), spearleaf (*Matelea parvifolia*), giant Spanish-needle (*Palafoxia arida* var. *gigantea*), Orocopia sage (*Salvia greatae*), and Mecca aster (*Xylorhiza cognata*). Of these species, none are federally or state listed as endangered or threatened.

Common plants include creosote (*Larrea tridentata*), ocotillo (*Foqueria splendens*), brittlebush (*Ambrosia dumosa*), cheesebush (*Hymenoclea salsola*), palo verde, honey mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*), ironwood (*Olneya testota*), and smoke tree.

Wildlife:

Special status animal species—those federally or state designated as endangered, threatened, candidate, or sensitive—that may occur in the project area include: desert bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*), desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus*), western mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis*), California leaf-nosed bat (*Macrotus californicus*), Townsend's big-eared bat (*Plecotus townsendii*), prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), LeConte's thrasher (*Toxostoma lecontei*), crissal thrasher (*Toxostoma crissale*), Colorado Valley woodrat (*Neotoma albigula venestra*), and mountain lion (*Felis concolor*)—sometimes referred to as Yuma puma (*Felis concolor browni*). Of these species, only the desert tortoise is federally and state listed as threatened.

Common wildlife include: badgers (*Taxus taxidea*), coyotes (*Canis latrans*), bobcats (*Felis rufus*), kit foxes (*Vulpes fulva*), antelope ground squirrels, whiptail lizards, sidewinders, side-blotched lizards (*Uta stansburiana*), tarantulas, and a wide variety of beetles and other insects. Crows, ravens, red-tailed hawks, rock wrens, and black-tailed gnatcatchers all occur in the area. Wildlife is particularly abundant in heavily-vegetated washes and is much less common on the barren hilltops.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) was listed as a threatened species in 1990 under the federal Endangered Species Act. In 1994, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service designated desert tortoise critical habitat and completed the *Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Recovery Plan*, which contains recommendations for protective action. This *Recovery Plan* identifies two major populations or "recovery units." These are the Northern Colorado Desert and Eastern Colorado Desert Recovery Units. The highest densities of tortoises are in the Chemehuevi and Ward Valleys, on Chuckwalla Bench, and in Joshua Tree National Park. Populations have declined precipitously in some parts of the range, such as Chuckwalla Bench. Causes for declines include habitat loss, diseases, excessive predation on young tortoises by ravens, collecting, shooting, highway and vehicle kills, and other factors. Portions of the tours proposed for the Mecca Hills-Orocopia Mountains-Chuckwalla Mountains region occur west and east of the former Chuckwalla Bench Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). This ACEC was encompassed by, and enlarged to become, the Chuckwalla DWMA.

Recreation

The Mecca Hills, by virtue of its unique landscape, is a popular area for both motorized and non-motorized recreation activities. In the Box Canyon area, the labyrinth of winding, eroded badlands

and canyons create a wonderfully intricate maze that attracts many hikers into designated wilderness where vehicles and mechanized equipment (such as bicycles) are prohibited.

Numerous opportunities for motorized backcountry touring exist on routes along the outskirts of the Mecca Hills, Orocopia Mountains, and Chuckwalla Mountains Wildernesses (casual motorized-vehicle use is prohibited in designated wilderness). Immediately to the south of these wilderness areas is the Bradshaw Trail National Back Country Byway. This historic route, the first through Riverside County, was established for stagecoach passage in the early 1860s to hasten the transport of equipment and supplies, as well as gold, to and from the mines at La Paz (now Ehrenberg), Arizona. The route can be followed today from Dos Palmas near the Salton Sea to Highway 78 south of Blythe, California.

The Meccacopia Trail is a popular OHV route that separates the Mecca Hills and Orocopia Mountains Wildernesses. It provides the only opportunity to travel from the “Drop 31” area to access routes north of the Mecca Hills and Orocopia Mountains without utilizing the paved Box Canyon Road or first driving for some distance in easterly or westerly directions to avoid the two wilderness areas. The Drop 31 area (indicating the 31st inverted siphon along the Coachella Canal to accommodate the flow of water, and vehicles, from one side to the other) is extremely popular for family camping and ATV/motorcycle activities, especially during holiday weekends. The central portion of the Meccacopia Trail—the segment separating the Mecca Hills and Orocopia Mountains Wildernesses was designated “limited” in 2002; motorized-vehicle use of this segment of the route is prohibited from June 1 through September 30, and is allowed the remainder of the year. The northern and southern segments of the route are open year-round.

On the eastern edge of the Orocopia Mountains Wilderness is the Red Canyon Jeep Trail, a four-wheel-drive route that provides visitors with a challenging drive through scenic canyon country. A segment of the route separates the main body of the Orocopia Mountains Wilderness from a much smaller disjunct portion to the northeast.

Corn Springs Road is a graded dirt route that leads to Corn Springs Campground in the heart of the Chuckwalla Mountains. This small campground provides developed facilities for visitors including picnic tables, shade armadas, cooking grills, and vault toilets. A self-guiding nature trail beginning at the campground reveals the natural history of the area.

Recognizing that significant public recreation issues and management concerns occur in the Mecca Hills-Orocopia Mountains region, the BLM established the 125,441-acre Meccacopia Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA) in 2002, of which 90,304 acres are public lands. It is anticipated that a Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) to address these issues and concerns will be initiated in 2005. Part of the overall Meccacopia SRMA management strategy to be addressed through the RAMP includes the following: (1) Protect wilderness values to include minimizing motorized vehicle and mechanized equipment intrusions into the Mecca Hills and Orocopia Mountains Wildernesses; (2) enhance the quality of motorized recreation on public lands surrounding the two wilderness areas and wildlife watering zones by providing adequate facilities and management to direct use and protect environmental values; (3) enhance the quality of non-motorized recreation on public lands by minimizing the potential for conflicts with motorized vehicles, and providing adequate facilities and management to direct use and protect environmental values; and (4) construct and maintain additional water sources with limited vehicle access to discourage bighorn sheep from using the Coachella Canal and to minimize conflicts with off-highway vehicle users.

Currently, three commercial recreation operators conduct tours in the Mecca Hills-Orocopia

Mountains region, principally in the Painted Canyon area which is not proposed for use by *Elite Land Tours*. One operator served 15,177 customers from January 1995 through April 2004, averaging 1,518 customers per year with most use occurring from November through April. Data from Environmental Assessment CA-660-01-15 (2001) show that the average number of customers per day when calculated only for the days of actual operation from January 1995 through December 2000 was about 13 (12,769 total customers served during 996 days of operation; no tours were conducted on 824 days during this time period). Eighty (80) percent of the days of operation saw groups of 20 or fewer customers; 64% of the days saw groups of one to ten customers. More recent data for 2003 show that 485 customers were served (utilizing 99 tour guides and 99 vehicles for transport) during 63 days of operation, or about 8 customers per day; no tours were conducted on 302 days in 2003. When calculated for the heaviest use period of 2003—February through April—322 customers were served (utilizing 64 tour guides and 99 vehicles for transport) during 36 days of operation, or about 9 customers per day; no tours were conducted on 53 days during this three-month period. The second operator conducted far fewer tours during a similar period, having served only 47 customers from January 1995 through December 2001. The third operator was issued a Special Recreation Permit at the beginning of 2005; use data are not yet available. No commercial recreation operators have been issued a permit to conduct tours in the Corn Springs area.

Data regarding levels of casual use (i.e., activities for which no permit or other specific authorization is required) in the Mecca Hills-Orocopia Mountains-Chuckwalla Mountains region are limited, focusing on the Painted Canyon and “Drop 31” areas. An infrared traffic counter installed by the BLM on Painted Canyon Road recorded the passage of vehicles during 146 days from October 4, 1999, to March 28, 2000. The total number of vehicles counted during this time was 11,985, *including* commercial recreation vehicles; the average daily vehicle count was 80, *excluding* commercial recreation vehicles. At Drop 31, visitor use during the Thanksgiving holiday weekend, traditionally the heaviest use period of the year, was estimated as approximately 1,200 individuals in both 2003 and 2004.

Wilderness

The Mecca Hills Wilderness encompasses 30,363 acres of arid badlands. Of the ten desert wilderness areas administered by the Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office, this wilderness by far receives the most visitation by the public. It is relatively close to populated areas of the Coachella Valley and is very easy to access, especially with two-wheel-drive vehicles via Highway 195 (Box Canyon Road) and Painted Canyon Road. The wilderness is deeply incised with numerous slot canyons whose colorful rock formations and unusual geologic forms make this an ideal spot for hikers. Despite high use, the Mecca Hills Wilderness is relative pristine with outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Non-conforming uses and activities do occur in the area, but do not detract from the overall wilderness setting.

The Orocopia Mountains Wilderness encompasses 54,683 acres of folded, faulted, and eroded valleys, canyons, and washes. The northern portion is dominated by open valley and dissected ridges, whereas the southern portion boasts colorful eroded canyons. The Red Canyon Jeep Trail, a four-wheel-drive route that connects the Interstate 10 frontage road near Chiriaco Summit with the Bradshaw Trail National Back Country Byway, passes through a corridor that separates the main body of the wilderness from a much smaller portion to the northeast.

The Chuckwalla Mountains Wilderness encompasses 88,183 acres of a characteristic Sonoran desert landscape. These mountains rise like an island from a vast sea of sand and rock. Included within the walls of this rock fortress are a seemingly endless variety of landforms, textures, and colors. Steep-

walled canyons, inland valleys, large and small washes, isolated rock outcrops, and vast desert expanses interact to form a constantly changing panorama. Corn Springs Road and Corn Springs Campground occur within a “cherrystem” of the Chuckwalla Mountains Wilderness, i.e., both are excluded from wilderness.

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ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

1. Critical Elements

The following table summarizes potential impacts to various elements of the human environment, including the "critical elements" listed in BLM Manual H-1790-1, Appendix 5, as amended. Elements for which there are no impacts will not be discussed further in this document.

Environmental Element	Proposed Action	No Action Alternative
Air Quality	Temporary increases in emissions and dust, predominantly from vehicle travel	No impacts
ACECs	May affect the Chuckwalla DWMA (an ACEC) relative to biological values	No impacts
Cultural Resources	No effect	No effect
Native American Concerns	N/A	N/A
Farmlands	N/A	N/A
Floodplains	N/A	N/A
Energy (E.O. 13212)	N/A	N/A
Minerals	N/A	N/A
T&E Animal Species	May affect desert tortoise	No impacts
T&E Plant Species	N/A	N/A
Invasive, Nonnative Species	No impacts	No impacts
Wastes (hazardous/solid)	Potential infrequent occurrences of human waste deposition	No impacts
Water Quality (surface and ground)	No impacts	No impacts
Wetlands/Riparian Zones	No impacts	No impacts
Wild and Scenic Rivers	N/A	N/A
Wilderness	May result in minor impacts to solitude from use of the Sheep Hole Oasis Trail	No impacts
Environmental Justice	N/A	N/A
Health and Safety Risks to Children	N/A	N/A
Visual Resource Mgmt.	N/A	N/A

2. Discussion of Impacts

Air Quality

Vehicle travel by *Elite Land Tours* would result in localized increases of hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide, as well as particulate matter (dust) created by the passage of vehicles on dirt roads. The overall increases, however, would be temporary and insubstantial given the limited amount of use.

Areas of Critical Environment Concern (ACECs)

The proposed action would affect the Chuckwalla Desert Wildlife Management Area/ACEC commensurate with its effect on the resource values which the ACEC was principally established to protect. These effects are herein described under the applicable critical element.

Cultural Resources

The majority of the proposed project areas have not been inventoried for cultural resources and unrecorded cultural resources may be present. Because all vehicle traffic will occur on previously-established routes, no new surface disturbance would result, and the potential for impacts to cultural resources is minimal.

The visitors themselves are the most likely source for impacts to cultural resources. Impacts could include artifact collection, excavation attempts, trampling or scattering of artifacts, and touching or alteration of rock art. However, the focus of the proposed tours is travel by vehicle, not on foot; hence, “opportunities” for visitors to impact cultural resources would be minimal, occurring only when clients are allowed to “stretch their legs” when tour vehicles are stopped.

Cultural resources are protected by *Standard Conditions and Stipulations* 15 and 16 and by *Special Stipulation B.16* (Appendix A). These stipulations instruct the operator to ensure its clients do not disturb or damage cultural resources. In addition, the commercial operator, *Elite Land Tours*, will be encouraged to educate customers about cultural resource values and deliver a stewardship and conservation message.

The petroglyph site at Corn Springs is monitored by site stewards trained by the BLM under the California Archaeological Site Stewardship Program. Site stewards regularly inspect the site and report any change to the BLM.

Damaging, altering, or defacing archaeological resources is prohibited under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) as well as other federal laws and regulations. Violations of ARPA may result in civil or criminal penalties.

With the above protections in place, the proposed project will have no effect to cultural resources listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places.

Native American Concerns

Federal agencies have a unique and formal legal relationship with Native American tribes. The National Historic Preservation Act, as implemented at 36 CFR 800, and related federal regulations and guidelines direct federal agencies to consult with Indian tribes. The goal of consultation is to identify the potential for effects to properties of religious or cultural significance.

No concerns were expressed during consultation conducted in reference to the *Big Wheel Bike Tours* Special Recreation Permit. The current permit request is similar in nature to that of *Big Wheel Bike Tours*.

Threatened and Endangered Animal Species

Mecca Hills-Orocopia Mountains-Chuckwalla Mountains

Desert Tortoise (and General Wildlife)

Since motorized vehicles would be used on existing routes only, few direct impacts to plant and wildlife habitat would occur. However, wildlife may be disturbed by motorized vehicles and might temporarily leave habitats adjacent to these routes. In addition, a small amount of wildlife mortality, including desert tortoises, might occur from vehicles running over animals. Juvenile tortoises, lizards, snakes, and beetles are particularly vulnerable to such mortality. Due to the potential for these impacts, the proposed activity “may affect” desert tortoises in accordance with the regulations at 50 CFR Part 402. Although the proposed activity “may affect” desert tortoises, incorporation of pertinent terms and conditions from *Biological Opinion for Small Projects Affecting Desert Tortoise Habitat in Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties, California* (1-8-97-F-17, USFWS 1997)(see Appendix A, section G) results in a determination of “not likely to adversely affect” the population.

Prohibiting vehicle tours from June 1 through September 30 on the segment of the Meccacopia Trail that forms a corridor between the Mecca Hills Wilderness and Orocopia Mountains Wilderness would allow bighorn sheep to freely access critical water sources in the Mecca Hills during the summer months.

Vehicles could bring seeds from salt cedar into the area. This exotic plant could displace native plants within washes thereby degrading the natural habitat and lowering biodiversity.

Big Morongo Canyon Preserve

The passage of hikers could cause some temporary disturbance to wildlife, especially birds immediately adjacent to trails. Since the trails are already heavily used and have been for a long time, birds have probably habituated to the passage of people. Therefore, serious disruptions to feeding, territory defense, and breeding are unlikely. Because hikers would remain on trails, no additional direct impacts to vegetation (trampling of upland or riparian areas) are anticipated. No loss or degradation of vireo, flycatcher, toad, or tortoise habitat is anticipated because cross-country travel would not be allowed.

In a similar area—the Kern River Preserve in central California—southwestern willow flycatchers (*Empidonax traillii extimus*) successfully breed in spite of the presence of many hikers and bird watchers (Wright, pers. obs. 1997). In light of this observation, it is anticipated that flycatchers would also be able to successfully breed in Big Morongo Canyon Preserve, even in the presence of hikers. The same scenario is likely true for Least Bells’ vireo (*Vireo belii pusillus*).

Recreation

Mecca Hills-Orocopia Mountains-Chuckwalla Mountains

Visitor concentrations can have an adverse effect on the quality of recreational experiences in a given area, especially where there is a desire to experience solitude in such areas as wilderness. The degree to which impacts to recreational experiences occur as a result of commercial recreation activities being permitted depends on the number of customers served by the commercial operator at a particular site coincident with the level of use by casual recreationists in the same area. Since visitor use surveys are limited for the project area, the extent to which new commercial activities increase overall levels of use in a particular area is unknown. With regard to use of the Sheep Hole Oasis Trail, impacts to opportunities for solitude and primitive types of recreation are addressed below under “Wilderness.”

Meccacopia Trail, Red Canyon Jeep Trail, and Corn Springs Road

The focus of *Elite Land Tours* is vehicle touring on existing routes. *Elite Land Tours* would be utilizing some popular backcountry routes traveled by the public, these being Meccacopia Trail, Red Canyon Jeep Trail, and Corn Springs Road. Levels of use on these roads have not been determined. However, anecdotal information suggests that motorized-vehicle use of these routes is low, except during holiday periods (such as Thanksgiving weekend) when use is significantly greater. The addition of no more than five *Elite Land Tours* vehicles per day on any one route is not expected to substantially affect others’ use and enjoyment of these routes. Opportunities for casual use would generally be unimpeded by the permitted commercial activity.

Corn Springs Campground

Use of restroom and other facilities at Corn Springs Campground would not likely affect use of the site by other recreationists. *Elite Land Tours* would not be visiting the site from late afternoon to early morning, the period that encompasses established quiet hours when disturbances to campers would be most pronounced.

Big Morongo Canyon Preserve

Big Morongo Canyon Preserve is a wildlife sanctuary created to protect and preserve unique resources, valuable wildlife habitat, and sensitive species of birds and other wildlife. The Preserve’s primary purpose, therefore, differs from that of a park which provides visitors with outdoor recreation experiences. Use of Big Morongo Canyon is allowed to the extent that sensitive habitat for resident and breeding birds and wildlife is not significantly impacted by visitors. For this reason, visits by groups of people have been set at a limit which does not overcrowd the trail system, and does not result in excessive noise which can accompany larger groups. It is especially important to control visitor use numbers during the season when most birds and wildlife at the Preserve are breeding (February through June). This is also the season when the Preserve is the most popular with visitors, so it is critical that appropriate levels of visitor use by groups are not exceeded.

The Preserve policy currently limits group size to no more than 60 visitors at one time. If several groups schedule visits on the same day, Preserve staff will attempt to schedule the groups at different times of the day. This reduces noise, trail congestion, and possible trail widening, and allows Preserve staff to better monitor visitors on heavy use days.

Group sizes of up to 25 customers per visit as proposed by *Elite Land Tours* would be within the group limits established by Preserve policy. However, if a tour conducted by *Elite Land Tours* occurs

coincident with a visit by a large group of school children or other organized, scheduled party, visitors may perceive the Preserve as being overly crowded, thereby diminishing the serenity of the site and adversely affecting visitor experiences, as well as potentially causing negative impacts to wildlife. These impacts could be minimized by coordinating tours with Preserve staff to ensure that overlap with school groups or other organized, scheduled parties does not occur.

Commercial tours offered by *Elite Land Tours* would provide a service that benefits many who otherwise would not have the means or opportunity to experience the resource values that exist in the Mecca Hills-Orocopia Mountains-Chuckwalla Mountains region, and Big Morongo Canyon Preserve. These tours would also seek to impart an environmental ethic in participants about proper behaviors in a backcountry setting, including designated wilderness where utilized for a tour. If such an ethic is carried forward, resources of the public lands could ultimately be better protected.

Wilderness

Mecca Hills Wilderness

Elite Land Tours proposes to conduct commercial tours that include hikes on the Sheep Hole Oasis Trail in the Mecca Hills Wilderness. Currently, two commercial operators are permitted by BLM to conduct tours on this trail. One of these operators served only 47 customers over a seven-year period from 1995 through 2001 in the Mecca Hills, some of which ventured to Sheep Hole Oasis while the others visited the Painted Canyon area. The other operator was issued a Special Recreation Permit in early 2005 that included the Sheep Hole Oasis Trail in its menu of available commercial tours; data are not yet available regarding levels of use by this operator.

Commercial services provided by *Elite Land Tours* and others serve an important role in management of this area as wilderness by providing the opportunity to introduce these special areas to segments of the public that might not otherwise visit the wilderness. Such services can widen wilderness consciousness within the public mind and further the goals of wilderness management and protection. However, if such use occurs at levels that either adversely impacts the natural landscape or causes an undue deterioration in the solitude that wilderness protects, all possible benefits of such use are erased.

Wilderness may be harmed both ecologically and socially through overuse. Groups that are too large create added surface disturbance—such as creating undue soil erosion, inhibiting plant growth, and disturbing wildlife—that may interfere with natural processes. Socially, large groups create much more frequent contact between visitors. This increased contact greatly harms the qualities of solitude that are protected by law, and degrades not only the experience for the general public but also for the commercial operator’s customers. A wilderness area is not an amusement theme park, and those who might not otherwise know differently may come away with the impression that conditions in a wilderness are not particularly special if they even learn what a wilderness is at all.

In Section 1(c)(2) of the Wilderness Act, a wilderness area is defined as having “outstanding opportunities for solitude ...” Solitude is defined in Webster’s Dictionary as “a solitary or lonely place.” It is the goal of wilderness management to ensure that a visitor, any visitor, may find this characteristic in any portion of a wilderness area to the greatest extent possible. This opportunity for solitude not only applies to members of the general public using wilderness, but also for individuals accessing the wilderness through a commercial service. There is potential, however, for commercial

tours to utilize the same trail or area at the same time other individuals are seeking to enjoy a wilderness experience. The potential for this occurring is greater on the Sheep Hole Oasis Trail, given that it is locally known, than at other lesser known areas where no defined trails have been established. While the Wilderness Act provides equal protection for all users to experience the area as defined in the Act, access for commercial operators should never be a detriment to access by the general public.

Section 4(c) of the Wilderness Act states “... there shall be no commercial enterprise ... except as necessary to meet minimum requirements for the administration of the area for the purposes of this Act ...” A commercial enterprise such as a guide service may be considered to meet the “minimum requirements” if the activity is seen to actively promote the “primitive and unconfined” types of recreation that the Wilderness Act allows while, at the same time, protecting the primeval character of the land and condition of solitude for all users.

Wilderness Management Plans

Wilderness management plans have not been prepared for the Mecca Hills or Orocopia Mountains Wildernesses. Currently, they are being managed consistent with existing laws and regulations, and the California Desert Conservation Area Plan (1980), as amended. The CDCA Plan Amendment for the Coachella Valley (2002) established the Meccacopia Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA), which encompasses the Mecca Hills and Orocopia Mountains Wildernesses. Detailed planning for the SRMA requires the preparation of a Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP). The Plan Amendment identifies the protection of wilderness values as part of the overall SRMA management strategy to be addressed through the RAMP. Such values would include the opportunities for solitude and primitive types of recreation.

Conclusion:

It is anticipated that tours conducted by *Elite Land Tours* on the Sheep Hole Oasis Trail would not substantially preclude or adversely affect opportunities for solitude and/or primitive types of recreation in the Mecca Hills Wilderness for either the general public or customers of the operator. This conclusion is based on there not having been expressed a concern by the public that wilderness experiences have, in fact, been precluded or adversely affected by commercial tours in this region despite BLM’s permitting of them. It is recognized, however, that too many people simultaneously using the same trail or area will diminish the quality of a wilderness experience, though the point at which this occurs—when a threshold is reached that tips the scale of quality from positive to negative—differs from one individual to another. There have been no surveys conducted in the project area to determine the degree to which wilderness experiences have been or are being adversely affected. [Note: The BLM, in cooperation with the UDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Research Station, conducted a Visitor Research Case Study in the Mecca Hills in 1991-1992. This study pre-dated designation of the Mecca Hills and Orocopia Mountains Wildernesses, which occurred in 1994. Hence, the study did not address satisfaction with opportunities for solitude and/or primitive types of recreation.] At the same time, *Elite Land Tours* would expose certain members of the general public to a new landscape experience while fostering an appreciation for wilderness that can be carried forward in their lives.

It is expected that BLM will address the effects of commercial use in the Mecca Hills Wilderness upon preparation of the Meccacopia Recreation Area Management Plan. Through this Plan, maximum levels of commercial use on a site-specific basis may be established if warranted. If it is demonstrated that levels of commercial use permitted by BLM in this area is detrimental to wilderness experiences and should be further limited, BLM has the authority to modify current permits accordingly.

Big Morongo Canyon Preserve

Big Morongo Canyon Preserve does not encompass any designated wilderness, hence there would be no impacts to wilderness resulting from the proposed action.

Wastes (hazardous/solid)

Mecca Hills-Orocopia Mountains-Chuckwalla Mountains

As no sanitary facilities have been developed along the Meccacopia Trail, Red Canyon Jeep Trail, or Corn Springs Road, it is anticipated that some human waste would occasionally be deposited on site. As these areas are regularly frequented by casual users of public lands, an accumulation of additional wastes consequent to *Elite Land Tours*' activities in these locations may degrade the visual appeal of the spectacular scenery, especially if toilet paper becomes scattered due to the actions of wind and/or animals. If *Elite Land Tours*' customers are advised about the lack of sanitary facilities in these backcountry areas and informed about the availability of such facilities at Chiriaco Summit and Corn Springs Campground, it is anticipated that deposition of fecal matter would be infrequent. Threats to human health, therefore, are not expected.

Big Morongo Canyon Preserve

Sanitary facilities are readily available at Big Morongo Canyon Preserve; hence, threats to human health from human waste are not anticipated.

3. Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures to protect desert tortoise and cultural resources, and to maintain opportunities for solitude in wilderness have been included in the proposed stipulations, which are incorporated as part of the proposed action by reference (see Appendix A). Terms and conditions of *Biological Opinion for Small Projects Affecting Desert Tortoise Habitat in Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties, California* (1-8-97-F-17), issued by USFWS to the Bureau of Land Management in 1997 (see Appendix B), have been incorporated into the proposed stipulations.

4. Residual Impacts

After mitigation, the probability of tortoise mortality would be reduced. Disturbance to wildlife and the possibility of exotic plant invasion would remain. Positive impacts to wilderness would be realized through enhanced opportunity for the public to experience wilderness, increasing awareness of the wilderness resource. Additionally, the increased presence afforded by individuals experiencing wilderness in a legal manner would likely deter unauthorized entry or other illegal activities through peer presence.

5. Cumulative Impacts

The Sheep Hole Oasis Trail in the Mecca Hills Wilderness is currently used for similar commercial purposes by *Big Wheel Bike Tours* and *Trail Discovery Hiking Guide Service*, both of which hold Special Recreation Permits from BLM for activities on public lands. *Big Wheel Bike Tours* is also authorized to conduct commercial bicycling tours on the Red Canyon Jeep Trail through the Orocopia Mountains.

Other tour operators may apply for permits in the future as tourism grows in the Coachella Valley; disturbances to wildlife and other recreationists could increase upon permit approval. Disturbance to wildlife also occurs from noncommercial recreational hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, camping, off-highway vehicle activities, shooting, hunting, and commercial filming. All of these human impacts have likely resulted in some loss of vegetative cover and increased soil compaction. Generally, the level of human impacts would be expected to increase in the region as the growing human population seeks places to recreate in and near the Coachella Valley.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT CONSIDERATIONS:

Public comments submitted for this environmental assessment, including names and street addresses of respondents, will be available for public review at the Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office during regular business hours (7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.), Monday through Friday, except holidays. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

PERSONS / AGENCIES CONSULTED:

Pete Sorensen, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Carlsbad, California

PREPARED BY:

Jim Foote, BLM Outdoor Recreation Planner (Project Lead)
Wanda Raschkow, BLM Cultural Resources Specialist

REVIEWED BY:

Environmental Coordinator

Date

APPENDICES

- A Proposed Permit Stipulations for *Elite Land Tours*
- B Biological Opinion for Small Projects Affecting Desert Tortoise Habitat in Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties, California (1-8-97-F-17)(U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1997)
- C Notice of Proposed Action (NOPA CA-660-05-03), *Elite Land Tours* (BLM November 15, 2004), mailed on November 16, 2004
- D Electronic Mail Notification of Proposed Action sent to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (BLM December 27, 2004)

E Desert Tortoise Education Program