

## CHAPTER TWO

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## INTRODUCTION

This chapter details the proposed management actions for this BLM Bakersfield FO Draft RMP/Draft EIS. Twenty-three program areas and the management actions proposed for each program are described in this chapter. The land use management actions described in this chapter address identified issues, management concerns, and current and projected future uses of the lands administered by the Bakersfield FO.

The alternatives comprises two categories of land use planning decisions – (1) goals and objectives (desired outcomes) and (2) allowable uses and management actions (i.e., those described under the “Decisions” subheading within the descriptions of each alternative).

Goals and objectives direct BLM actions to most effectively meet legal mandates, regulations, and agency policy, as well as local and regional resource needs. Goals are broad statements of desired outcomes that are usually not quantifiable. Objectives identify more specific desired outcomes for resources and might include a measurable component. Objectives are generally expected to achieve the stated goals. The management goals and objectives for each resource are described in the detailed alternative descriptions section of this chapter.

Allowable uses identify uses that are allowed, restricted, or excluded on BLM-administered surface lands and federal mineral estate. Management actions are proactive measures or limitations intended to guide BLM activities in the Planning Area. In many cases the decision to restrict or prohibit an activity on public lands results in the need to create a supplementary rule in order to make that decision enforceable (e.g., the decision to prohibit shooting sports from an ACEC requires that a supplementary rule and associated penalties and punishments be created to allow for enforcement of the decision). To aid in reading the specific language of the proposed supplementary rules is not included in Chapter 2, as the decision indicates the intent and desired outcome of the rules and, therefore, analysis of the decision serves as the analysis of the proposed supplementary rule. Examples of specific supplementary rule language are provided for Alternative B in Appendix N.

In addition to land use planning level decisions, the RMP contains “Key Implementation” level decisions (presented under a subheading labeled as such) that would be implementable based on the level of analysis contained within this EIS. Principally, these decisions relate to the concurrent Travel Management Plan included as part of the RMP; however, other implementation level decisions are noted under the “Key Implementation Decisions” heading for Biological Resources and Livestock Grazing. It should be noted that only plan level decisions may be protested to the Director of the BLM, whereas implementation level decisions are subject to appeal to the Interior Board of Land Appeals after the Record of Decision has been approved.

Implementation level decisions considered during the development of the alternatives to achieve identified goals and objectives but that require more site-specific design and analysis are not analyzed in this EIS.

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES

The Draft RMP/Draft EIS presents a range of alternatives that reflect direction provided by numerous laws, mandates, policies, and plans. These include FLPMA, NEPA, and BLM planning regulations, criteria, and guidance. As a result, the alternatives analyzed in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS consist of different combinations of management actions and resource allocations or use. In addition to the alternatives discussed in detail, a number of alternatives were considered but not analyzed in detail as they are either impractical, do not adequately address the issues, or fail to meet the purpose and need. These alternatives are discussed in *Alternatives Considered but Not Analyzed in Detail* at the end of this chapter.

The five alternatives considered in detail in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS are as follows:

**Alternative A** continues current management practices as the No Action alternative required by NEPA. This alternative would continue current management under the existing 1997 Caliente RMP and 1984 Hollister RMP, as amended. Management of resources and sensitive habitats would remain at current levels but would not address emerging issues concerning public lands. This alternative also would not address the use of lands acquired after the signing of these RODs, including public lands at Atwell Island, Piedras Blancas Light Station, and portions of the San Joaquin River Gorge. When no specific management actions are described in the No Action alternative, management of lands and resources has been guided by BLM policy and interim management strategies.

**Alternative B (preferred alternative)** balances resource conservation and ecosystem health with the production of commodities and public use of the land. This alternative provides opportunities to produce commodities from natural resources and to use the land for public purposes on a sustainable basis while maintaining important ecological, cultural, and recreational values.

**Alternative C** emphasizes conserving cultural and natural resources, maintaining functioning natural systems, and restoring natural systems that are degraded. Management would focus on protecting sensitive resources through greater limitation of resource uses in sensitive areas.

**Alternative D** mimics<sup>2</sup> Alternative C in all aspects except livestock grazing. This alternative eliminates livestock grazing for the life of the plan from the public lands where Bakersfield RMP provides administrative direction for the livestock grazing program.

**Alternative E** emphasizes the production of natural resources commodities and public use opportunities. Resource uses such as recreation, livestock grazing, mining, and oil/gas leasing, consistent with BLM guidance and constraints, would be emphasized. Potential impacts on sensitive resources would be mitigated on a case-by-case basis.

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<sup>2</sup> i.e., repeats objectives and management actions made in Alternative C including specific acreage allocation and designations.

## 2.1 ALTERNATIVE A (NO ACTION)

The following section summarizes the No Action Alternative; this alternative brings forward the existing management as described in the Caliente and Hollister RMPs including applicable amendments, as they apply to the Bakersfield Decision Area. Only those Land Use Plan (LUP) level decisions described in these plans are presented and summarized. In the absence of specific resource decisions management has occurred based on federal law, regulation, and BLM policy and guidance; in these cases no decisions are described in this alternative.

Both the Caliente and Hollister RMPs divided their decision areas into Management Areas (MAs). The Caliente RMP divided the Planning Area into three MAs: Coast, Valley, and South Sierra. The Hollister RMP divided the Planning Area into 16 MAs, two of which are incorporated into this plan: Central San Joaquin and Squaw Leap (now known as San Joaquin River Gorge). Decisions made for specific MAs are only brought forward and applied to those areas; as such each decision source is identified and, if applicable, the area to which it applies.

In some places the original text of the LUP level decision from the Caliente and Hollister RMPs has been updated and/or paraphrased to reflect current terminology and aid in understanding of the decision.

Each of the prior RMPs handled explanation of the area-wide, management area, and resource-specific goals and objectives differently. The Hollister RMP identified resource-specific goals and objectives that are presented with each resource, where appropriate. The Caliente RMP did not establish resource specific goals. The Caliente RMP area-wide and MA goals and objectives are presented below:

Manage public lands to provide healthy, sustainable, biologically diverse ecosystems contributing goods, services and other social and cultural needs for local communities, the region and nation.

Manage public lands to meet the following minimum Standards of [Rangeland] Health (*Caliente RMP as amended*):

- Soils exhibit functional biological and physical characteristics that are appropriate to soil type, climate, and land form.
- Healthy, productive and diverse populations of native species, including special status species (Federal T&E, Federal proposed, BLM sensitive, or Calif. State T&E) are maintained or enhanced where appropriate.
- Riparian/wetland vegetation, structure and diversity and stream channels and floodplains are functioning properly and achieving advanced ecological status.
- Surface and groundwater quality complies with California or other appropriate water quality standards.

Coast MA: Increase management levels to enhance awareness of resource conditions and values in a landscape setting. Focus management on natural resource condition and health, particularly unique vegetative communities, riparian resources, landmark and coastal values.

Coast MA: Integrate management objectives with those of local county governments, coastal commission, state agencies and other federal agencies to contribute to regional conservation efforts.

Coast MA: Increase cooperation with management partners to integrate the isolated parcels with other natural resource and open space management programs.

Coast MA: Reposition properties that do not fit into an active Bureau or cooperator resource management program for lands in areas that do. Rely on county government land use controls to determine future use of those parcels transferred to private ownership.

Valley MA: Provide a leadership role in developing and implementing regional conservation strategies. Dedicate or reposition public lands to meet San Joaquin Valley conservation goals.

Valley MA: Integrate management objectives with and assist local county governments, private organizations, and state agencies in the development and implementation of local management plans (e.g. Habitat Conservation Plans, mitigation banks, county general plans, air and water quality plans).

Valley MA: Collaborate with the oil and gas and livestock industries in meeting mutually beneficial management objectives.

South Sierra MA: Assist in the maintenance of rural lifestyles and economies of local communities by providing for livestock grazing, community infrastructure needs and a range of dispersed recreational opportunities.

South Sierra MA: Maintain an increasingly active management presence to resolve private/public land use issues and respond to fire suppression needs that threaten private property.

South Sierra MA: Integrate management objectives with those of other Federal and State agencies and local and county governments.

South Sierra MA: Actively participate in regional conservation plans and proactively manage for the conservation of rare species and habitats, cultural resources, and Native American traditional values.

## RESOURCES

### 2.1.1 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

#### *Goals*

Protect and/or improve habitat necessary to recover populations of sensitive, rare, threatened or endangered species (*Hollister RMP*).

Provide sufficient habitat for wildlife species and give emphasis to maintaining or improving certain key habitats (*Hollister RMP*).

#### *Objectives*

San Joaquin River Gorge MA: Protect/maintain habitat condition in the area (*Hollister RMP*).

#### *Decisions*

Unless otherwise closed elsewhere in this plan, threatened and endangered species range would be open to leasing of oil, gas, and geothermal resources with the Controlled Surface Use - Protected Species stipulation (*Caliente RMP*).

Unless otherwise closed elsewhere in this plan, known locations of federal candidate species, State threatened and endangered species, and Bureau Sensitive species habitat would be open to leasing of oil, gas, and geothermal resources with the Controlled Surface Use - Sensitive Species stipulation (*Caliente RMP*).

Critical condor habitat and lands near Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge would be open to leasing of oil, gas, and geothermal resources with the Controlled Surface Use - Protected Species stipulation. Lands within the Blue Ridge Critical Condor Area would be closed to leasing of oil, gas, and geothermal resources (*Caliente RMP*).

Lands acquired through Compensation activities would be managed to benefit the species identified in the applicable U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WS) or California Department of Fish and Game (CDF&G) biological opinion, agreement, or other document. Acquisition of lands with compensation funds will target areas approved by the USF&WS and CDF&G. Management of these areas would be to promote recovery of the target species. Special management terms and condition for these areas include (*Caliente RMP*):

- These lands may only be repositioned or transferred to a party with concurrence from the USF&WS and CDF&G.
- ROW authorizations, land use permits, geophysical explorations, recreation permits and public uses and livestock grazing will be managed to be compatible with objectives for the area.
- These lands would be proposed for withdrawal from entry under the mining laws if surface lands are acquired over federal mineral estate.

- The area would be open to leasing of oil, gas, and geothermal resources with the Controlled Surface Use - Protected Species stipulation.

Essential and critical condor habitat would only be repositioned with concurrence from the USF&WS (*Caliente RMP*).

Woodcutting permits will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Commercial woodcutting may be considered to meet special management needs (*Hollister RMP*).

Coast MA: Approximately 3,979 acres federal surface and subsurface and 4,435 acres subsurface in five areas would be identified for Special Management Area designation. (*Caliente RMP*).

Frog Pond Mountain (53 acres surface and subsurface) would be managed for the protection of riparian resources and the California Bay Forest.

- Open for the leasing of oil, gas and geothermal resources subject to CSU-[Priority Species, Plant Community and Habitats] stipulation.
- Proposed for withdrawal from entry under the mining laws.
- Unavailable for livestock grazing.
- Travel in the riparian zone is limited to pedestrians.
- Terminate the Public Water Reserve and manage water resources for the benefit of the riparian system.
- Collection of vegetative materials within the SMA requires authorization.

Irish Hills (1,104 acres surface and subsurface and 560 acres subsurface only) would be managed to protect diverse and coastal plant communities.

- Open for the leasing of oil, gas and geothermal resources subject to CSU -[Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats] stipulation.
- Unavailable for livestock grazing.

Rusty Peak (797 acres surface and subsurface and 635 acres subsurface only) would be managed to protect serpentine chaparral, coastal live oak woodland, perennial grassland, and sensitive plant species.

- Open for the leasing of oil, gas and geothermal resources subject to CSU – [Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats] stipulation.
- Unavailable for livestock grazing.

Hopper Mountain (2,025 acres surface and subsurface and 3,240 acres subsurface only) would be managed to support the California Condor Recovery Program and to complement management of the adjacent Sespe Condor Sanctuary, Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge and Sespe-Piru Critical Condor Habitat Area.

- Open to the leasing of oil, gas and geothermal resources subject to the CSU - Protected Species stipulation.
- Proposed for withdrawal from entry under the mining laws.
- Portions of the SMA are available for livestock grazing if grazing operations complement management objectives, and portions are unavailable for livestock grazing.

Valley MA: Public lands identified by the USF&WS and CDF&G as important for the recovery of Federally listed species would be managed as conserved lands. These areas would be managed in a manner consistent with the direction established by the USF&WS and CDF&G through the Kern Valley Floor HCP and any pertinent recovery plans, and would complement local conservation plans (*Caliente RMP*).

Valley MA: Approximately 114,960 acres of federal surface and subsurface and 4,840 acres of subsurface would be identified as Special Management Areas (*Caliente RMP*).

The existing Temblor Mountain and Caliente National Cooperative Land and Wildlife Management Areas (NCLWMA) would be continued with the adoption of the following objectives. Public land within the existing Temblor NCLWMA would be managed for improved wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities as well as soil stabilization. Public land within the existing Caliente NCLWMA would be managed for improved vegetative communities and recreational opportunities.

- Open for the leasing of oil, gas and geothermal resources subject to CSU - Protected Species stipulation.
- These lands are withdrawn from application under the non-mineral public land laws and from disposition under the homestead, desert land entry and script selection laws.
- Available for livestock grazing.

Public land within the Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge, encompassing 960 acres of Federal surface and subsurface and 4,840 acres of subsurface only, would be managed to serve as conserved lands. Management as a Special Management Area would provide the special attention required for management of the Bureau administered surface and subsurface to be compatible with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's management of the surrounding Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge.

- Closed to the leasing of oil, gas and geothermal resources.
- Available for livestock grazing. Seasonal restrictions and limits on access may be required to prevent disturbance to condors.

South Sierra MA: Approximately 148,870 acres in eight areas would be identified for Special Management Area designation.

Erskine Creek (2,960 acres surface and subsurface and 480 acres subsurface only) would be managed to protect limestone caves, riparian areas, and sensitive vegetation.

- Closed to the leasing of oil, gas and geothermal resources. About half of the southwestern portion of the SMA is within the Piute Cypress Wilderness Study Area (WSA) where no new oil, gas, and geothermal leases may be issued.
- N1/2 Sec. 22 and SE1/4SW1/4 Sec. 15, T. 27 S., R. 33 E., MDB&M, shall be proposed for withdrawal from entry under the mining laws.
- A portion of the SMA is available for livestock grazing if riparian resource concerns can be met. A portion of the SMA is unavailable for livestock grazing.

The North Fork of the Kaweah (4,870 acres surface and subsurface) would be managed for riparian resources, cultural resources, and sensitive vegetation, while improving recreational opportunities.

- Available for livestock grazing.
- Portions of the area may be managed as day use. Maximum lengths for stays for visitors may be shortened to accommodate more visitors and reduce visitor conflicts.

The Monache-Walker Pass National Cooperative Land and Wildlife Management Area (140,000 acres) would be managed to improve and maintain a diverse assemblage of vegetative communities to benefit wildlife resources and recreational opportunities.

- These lands are withdrawn from application under the non-mineral public land laws and from disposition under the homestead, desert land entry and script selection laws.
- Available for livestock grazing.

Deer Spring (320 acres surface and subsurface) would be managed to protect riparian resources, cultural resources, and to improve wildlife habitat.

- Closed to the leasing of oil, gas and geothermal resources
- Available for livestock grazing. The spring enclosure is unavailable for livestock grazing.

San Joaquin River Gorge MA: Continue wildlife habitat management in accordance with the Squaw Leap Habitat Management Plan. Emphasis will be on project maintenance and evaluation (including mitigation projects associated with the Habitat Plan for the Kerckhoff 2 Project) (*Hollister RMP*).

## 2.1.2 CULTURAL RESOURCES

### *Objectives*

Ensure that cultural resources of high scientific, interpretive, or socio-cultural significance are not destroyed by other land uses (*Hollister RMP*).

Central San Joaquin MA: Protect significant cultural resources that exist in the area (*Hollister RMP*).

### *Decisions*

Coast MA: Approximately 1,005 acres federal surface and subsurface would be identified for Special Management Area designation. (*Caliente RMP*).

Huasna Peak (1,005 acres surface and subsurface) would be managed for the protection of Native American traditional [cultural practices].

- Open for the leasing of oil, gas and geothermal resources subject to NSO stipulation.
- Unavailable for livestock grazing.

South Sierra MA: Approximately 7,335 acres in three areas would be identified for Special Management Area designation.

Keyesville (7,133 acres surface and subsurface and 220 acres subsurface only) would be managed for the enhancement of compatible low impact recreational opportunities and natural resources.

- Disposals of mineral materials may be authorized outside of or away from riparian zones, sensitive plants, and cultural resources.
- Shooting of firearms, except for the legal taking of game, is prohibited.
- Open for the leasing of oil, gas and geothermal resources subject to CSU - Sensitive Species stipulation.
- Continued closure to the mining laws in the Keyesville area (Sec. 25 SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, and Sec. 36 N<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, SE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, T. 26 S., R. 32 E., MDB&M). Expand closure to include Sec. 25 S<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, Sec 35 NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, and Sec 36 S<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>, N<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>NW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>.
- Portions limited to day-use only.
- Routes of travel for OHVs and bicycles shall be designated in the Keyesville SMA.
- Available for livestock grazing.
- Recreational mining may be allowed within areas near Keyesville that are withdrawn from the general mining laws, subject to permit.

The [South Lake Cultural Area] (160 acres federal surface and subsurface) would be managed for the protection of its cultural resources values and characteristics which qualified the property for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

- Open for the leasing of oil, gas and geothermal resources subject to NSO stipulation.
- Unavailable for livestock grazing.

The Granite Cave cultural site (5 acres federal surface and subsurface) would be managed for the protection of its cultural resource and Native American traditional [cultural practices], and the cave's microclimate and natural environs.

- Open for the leasing of oil, gas and geothermal resources subject to NSO stipulation.

The Walker Pass National Historic Landmark (approximately 37 acres Federal surface and subsurface) would be managed for the protection of its historic property, natural landscape, and viewshed values.

- Open for the leasing of oil, gas and geothermal resources subject to NSO stipulation.
- Available for livestock grazing.

### 2.1.3 SOIL RESOURCES

#### *Objectives*

Manage public lands to meet the minimum Standards of Rangeland Health such that soils exhibit functional biological and physical characteristics that are appropriate to soil type, climate, and land form (*RMPs as amended by the Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines for California and Northwestern Nevada Final EIS*).

### 2.1.4 VISUAL RESOURCES

#### *Objectives*

Maintain and/or enhance the scenic quality of the public lands (*Hollister RMP*).

#### *Decisions*

Visual Resource Management (VRM) Class 4 standards will apply to all MAs unless otherwise stated (*Hollister RMP*).

San Joaquin River Gorge MA: All actions must conform to VRM Class 3 standards for the area (*Hollister RMP*).

### 2.1.5 WATER RESOURCES

#### *Objectives*

Manage public lands to meet the minimum Standards of Rangeland Health such that: (i) surface and ground water quality complies with objectives of the Clean Water Act and other applicable water quality requirements, including the California State standards and (ii) riparian/wetland vegetation structure and diversity, stream channels and floodplains are functioning properly and meeting regional and local management objectives (*RMPs as amended by the Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines for California and Northwestern Nevada Final EIS*).

### 2.1.6 WILDLAND FIRE ECOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT

#### *Goals*

Establish guidelines for fire management in order to meet resource objectives (*Hollister RMP*).

Establish a fire management program which is cost-efficient and commensurate with threats to life, property, public safety, and resources (*Hollister RMP*).

### *Decisions*

Prescribed burning may increase livestock forage (base AUMs) within one to three years depending on success of the burn. Livestock use will be dependent upon yearly monitoring and residual mulch requirements and upon available forage each year after burning. Increases in livestock use will not be granted in areas where burning for wildlife habitat improvement is the primary objective (*Hollister RMP*).

Prescribed burning during the spring (April through June) will be kept to a minimum (*Hollister RMP*).

Brush crushing "high-blading" and/or fire line construction (mechanical pre-burn site preparations) will be performed when soil and fuel moisture levels are low enough to prevent undue surface (soil) disturbance and to maximize pretreatment objectives (*Hollister RMP*).

San Joaquin River Gorge MA: Allow prescribed burning on a case-by-case basis for improvement of livestock forage and fuels reduction in accordance with the Fresno/Monterey County Burn Plan (*Hollister RMP*).

San Joaquin River Gorge MA: Develop a fire management Plan with emphasis on Fire prevention and action modification in cooperation with the State Department of Forestry (*Hollister RMP*).

## **RESOURCE USES**

### **2.1.7 COMPREHENSIVE TRAIL AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT**

#### *Decisions*

The areas which are closed to all vehicular travel include wilderness (even if an old pathway appears passable), Point Sal, Blue Ridge, and The Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCNST) (*Caliente RMP*).

Except for areas closed to all vehicles, the use of mountain bicycles is allowed on all roads and trails available to pedestrians. Bicycles are not allowed to travel off road (*Caliente RMP*).

Except as otherwise noted, travel is allowed on existing roads and trails which appear on BLM Surface Management maps, aerial photographs, and USGS topographical maps at the time this plan is approved. Routes are considered to be open unless indicated as closed on the ground by signs, barricades, or other physical considerations which appropriately direct the user. All authorized public land users that hold a special authorization (i.e. grazing permittees, rights-of-way holders, mining claimants, etc) may drive off road if their authorization allows. Emergency services and/or law enforcement activities are exceptions to these policies. Administrative access may be granted by the authorized officer to individuals requiring such access for official business (*Caliente RMP*).

Central San Joaquin MA: Vehicle Use is limited to designated routes (*Hollister RMP*).

San Joaquin River Gorge MA: Vehicle Use is limited to designated routes (vehicle use on Madera county side further restricted to administrative use and special project maintenance) (*Hollister RMP*).

## 2.1.8 LANDS AND REALTY

### Land Tenure

#### *Objectives*

Coast MA: Reposition properties that do not fit into an active Bureau or cooperator resource management program for lands in areas that do. Rely on county government land use controls to determine future use of those parcels transferred to private ownership (*Caliente RMP*).

Central San Joaquin MA: Provide for increased management efficiency through land tenure adjustments to meet various management needs in the area (*Hollister RMP*).

#### *Decisions*

All mineral estate lands (split estate lands) under BLM jurisdiction would be considered potentially suitable for disposal through exchange under Section 206 of FLPMA or sale under Section 209 of FLPMA. Any such disposal shall require a site-specific evaluation under the applicable regulations, prior to any final decision on such action (*Caliente RMP*).

Coast MA: All BLM lands would be identified as suitable for either new managers or repositioning [disposal] (*Caliente RMP*).

Valley MA: Approximately 80,000 acres (250 parcels) would be identified for local repositioning through land exchanges to consolidate natural resource values (*Caliente RMP*).

Valley MA: Approximately 7,000 acres would be identified as suitable for new managers where lands would be transferred to other [federal] parties (*Caliente RMP*).

South Sierra MA: Approximately 113,500 acres (160 parcels) would be identified for local repositioning through land exchanges to consolidate natural resource values (*Caliente RMP*).

Naval Petroleum Reserve 2: A limited number of parcels near the communities of Taft and Ford City will be considered for potential disposal. These parcels aggregate approximately 161 acres. Oil and gas rights will be retained on the above parcels, but without the right of surface entry (*NPR2 Amendment*).

Central San Joaquin MA: Dispose of lands identified for sale (1,917 acres) (*Hollister RMP*).

### Utility Corridors and Communication Sites

#### *Decisions*

All existing or occupied utility corridors delineated in the Western Regional Corridor Study of 1986 are designated as utility corridors. These right-of-way corridors are one mile wide and follow existing routes. Uses of these corridors include routes for: larger electric transmission facilities,

major pipelines, communication sites and associated pathways, and communication lines for interstate use (*Caliente RMP*).

## Withdrawals

### *Decisions*

Due to low productivity and/or conflicts with endangered species habitat, all BLM lands within the [Decision Area] are considered unsuitable for entry under the Desert Land Entry Act of March 3, 1877 (43 USC 321) and Indian Allotment Act of February 8, 1887 (25 USC 334) (*Caliente RMP*).

Coast MA: Approximately 5,800 acres in five areas are [recommended for proposal] for withdrawal from entry under the mining law. These areas would include the Pt. Sal, Tierra Redonda, and Salinas River (riparian portions) ACECs and the Frog Pond and Hopper Mountain SMAs (*Caliente RMP*).

Valley MA: Approximately 7,900 acres are [recommended for proposal] for withdrawal from entry under the mining law in four areas. These areas would include the Alkali Sink, Carrizo Plain Natural Area (Soda Lake only), Chico Martinez and Goose Lake ACECs (*Caliente RMP*).

South Sierra MA: Approximately 6,300 acres are [recommended for proposal] for withdrawal from entry under the mining law in four areas. These areas would include portions of the Blue Ridge and Case Mountain ACECs and Erskine Creek and Keyesville SMAs (*Caliente RMP*).

## 2.1.9 LIVESTOCK GRAZING

### *Objectives*

Manage public lands to meet the minimum Standards of Rangeland Health (RMPs as amended by the Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines for California and Northwestern Nevada Final EIS).

Provide a sustained yield for forage to meet demand while maintaining the productivity of the land (*Hollister RMP*).

Increase forage productivity on lands producing below their potential through improved management and cost efficient development (*Hollister RMP*).

### *Decisions*

Coast MA: Approximately 6,100 of the 20,400 acres of the public land would be available for livestock grazing. The remainder of the MA, approximately 14,300 acres, would be classified as unavailable for livestock grazing (*Caliente RMP*).

Coast MA: Livestock grazing would continue to be authorized on about 4,000 acres of public land in seven allotments at levels [and under guidelines, Appendix F-2] described in the RMP [an area wide total of 491 Animal Unit Months (AUMs)] (*Caliente RMP*).

Valley MA: Approximately 275,000 acres of the public land would be available for livestock grazing [a large portion of which occurs within the CPNM]. The remainder of the public lands in the MA, approximately 18,000 acres, would be classified as unavailable for livestock grazing (*Caliente RMP*).

Valley MA: Livestock grazing would continue to be authorized on 270,200 acres of public land in 54 allotments at levels [and under guidelines, Appendix F-2] described in the RMP [an area wide total of 40,323 AUMs, including the CPNM] (*Caliente RMP*).

South Sierra MA: Approximately 220,800 acres of the public land would be available for livestock grazing. The remainder of the MA, approximately 55,200 acres, would be classified as unavailable for livestock grazing (*Caliente RMP*).

South Sierra MA: Livestock grazing would continue to be authorized on 188,400 acres of public land in 53 allotments at levels [and under guidelines, Appendix F-2] described in the RMP [an area wide total of 13,652 AUMs] (*Caliente RMP*).

Central San Joaquin MA: Manage 5 allotments (total 1,109 acres and 122 AUMs) on a custodial basis (*Hollister RMP*).

San Joaquin River Gorge MA: Manage 4 allotments (total 4,160 acres and 985 AUMs) intensively under existing management agreements with emphasis on protection of wildlife and recreation values (*Hollister RMP*).

## 2.1.10 MINERALS MANAGEMENT

### Leasable Minerals

#### *Goals*

Central San Joaquin MA: Oil, gas, and mineral resources will be managed to meet the demand for increased energy and mineral production while protecting other resource values (*Hollister RMP*).

#### *Objectives*

Valley MA: Collaborate with the oil and gas and livestock industries in meeting mutually beneficial management objectives (*Caliente RMP*).

#### *Decisions*

Coast MA: Public acreage that is currently leased will not be subject to additional stipulations; however, if leases expire, and new leasing occurs [or renewal leases are renewed], special stipulations may be applied (*Caliente RMP*).

Coast MA: Approximately 42,800 acres are proposed to be open to oil and gas leasing under standard terms and conditions; of that total 2,800 acres are currently leased (*Caliente RMP*).

Coast MA: Approximately 22,700 acres are proposed to be open to oil and gas leasing subject to a Controlled Surface Use (CSU) stipulation (*Caliente RMP*). Special categories of the CSU stipulations include:

- 16,500 acres open subject to the CSU - Protected Species stipulation.
- 6,000 acres open subject to the CSU - Sensitive Species stipulation.

- 4,300 acres open subject to the CSU - [Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats] stipulation.

Coast MA: Both the CSU-Protected Species and the CSU-Sensitive Species stipulations would apply to one township and range (25S, 10E) immediately southwest of Camp Roberts in an area with limited oil exploration potential (*Caliente RMP*)

Coast MA: The 69,700 acres of mineral estate under the administration of the Department of Defense (DOD) would be open subject to the CSU- Defense stipulation (*Caliente RMP*).

Coast MA: Approximately 1,500 acres are proposed to open with a No Surface Occupancy stipulation (*Caliente RMP*).

Coast MA: Approximately 100 acres are proposed to be closed to leasing (*Caliente RMP*).

Coast MA: Approximately 1,900 acres are proposed to be closed to leasing within designated Wilderness (*Caliente RMP*).

Valley MA: Public acreage that is currently leased will not be subject to additional stipulations; however, if leases expire, and new leasing occurs, special stipulations may be applied (*Caliente RMP*).

Valley MA: Approximately 5,800 BLM acres at Bitter Creek SMA would be closed to oil and gas leasing (*Caliente RMP*).

Valley MA: Approximately 500 BLM acres in Goose Lake and Alkali Sink ACEC would be open to oil and gas leasing with a No Surface Occupancy Stipulation (NSO). Approximately 300 acres are currently leased (*Caliente RMP*).

Valley MA: Approximately 18,000 acres would be open to oil and gas leasing under standard terms and conditions (*Caliente RMP*).

Valley MA: Approximately 348,300 acres would be open to oil and gas leasing with a Controlled Surface Use (CSU) stipulation; of that total, approximately 136,000 acres are currently under lease (*Caliente RMP*). Special categories of the CSU stipulations include:

- 212,300 acres would be subject to the CSU- Protected Species stipulation.
- 300 acres would be subject to the CSU- Critical Habitat stipulation.
- 126,500 acres would be subject to the CSU- Sensitive Species stipulation.
- 113,100 acres would be subject to the CSU- Raptor stipulation.

Valley MA: Areas within the Valley [MA] that would be subject to more than one category of the CSU stipulations include: the Carrizo Plain Natural Area ACEC where protected species, sensitive species and raptor stipulations apply; Lokern ACEC, where both protected species and sensitive species stipulations apply; and Kettleman Hills where protected species and raptor stipulations apply (*Caliente RMP*).

Valley MA: The 16,600 acres of Federal mineral estate under the administration of the Department of Defense (DOD at Lemoore Naval Air Station) would be open to oil and gas leasing subject to the CSU - Defense stipulation (*Caliente RMP*).

South Sierra MA: Approximately 10,100 BLM acres would be closed to oil and gas leasing, and an additional 18,500 acres would be closed to geothermal development (*Caliente RMP*).

South Sierra MA: Approximately 3,000 acres would be open to oil and gas leasing with a No Surface Occupancy (NSO) Stipulation (*Caliente RMP*).

South Sierra MA: Approximately 234,700 BLM acres would be open to oil and gas leasing under standard terms and conditions (*Caliente RMP*).

South Sierra MA: Approximately 95,600 acres would be open to oil and gas leasing under a Controlled Surface Use (CSU) stipulation (*Caliente RMP*). Special categories of the CSU stipulation will be applied as follows:

- 34,400 acres are subject to the CSU- Protected Species stipulation
- 22,300 acres are subject to the CSU- Critical Habitat stipulation
- 27,400 acres are subject to the CSU- Sensitive Species stipulation
- 18,500 acres are subject to the CSU- Raptor stipulation

## Locatable Minerals

### *Decisions*

Coast MA: Approximately 1,900 acres are in existing withdrawals from entry under the general mining laws within Wilderness Areas. Approximately 5,800 acres, in five areas are [recommended for proposal] for withdrawal from entry under the mining law. These areas would include the Pt. Sal, Tierra Redonda, and Salinas River (10 acres within riparian portions) ACECs and the Frog Pond and Hopper Mountain SMAs (*Caliente RMP*).

Valley MA: Approximately 7,900 acres are [recommended for proposal] for withdrawal from entry under the mining law in four areas. These areas would include the Alkali Sink, Carrizo Plain Natural Area (Soda Lake only), Chico Martinez and Goose Lake ACECs (*Caliente RMP*).

South Sierra MA: Existing land use allocations for Wilderness Areas have closed 109,000 acres to entry under the general mining law of 1872. Approximately 6,300 acres are [recommended for proposal] for withdrawal from entry under the mining law in four areas; these areas would include portions of the Blue Ridge and Case Mountain ACECs and Erskine Creek and Keyesville SMAs (*Caliente RMP*).

## Salable Minerals

### *Decisions*

Coast MA: The remaining 63,100 acres within the Coast [MA] would remain open to solid and mineral material exploration. Management objectives and guidelines would be utilized to evaluate applications for development of the solid mineral and mineral material resources (*Caliente RMP*).

Valley MA: The remaining 389,400 acres within the Valley [MA] would remain open to solid mineral and mineral material exploration and development under existing laws and regulations. Management objectives and guidelines would be utilized to evaluate applications for development of the solid mineral and mineral material resources (*Caliente RMP*).

South Sierra MA: The remaining 356,700 acres within the South Sierra [MA] would remain open to exploration and development under existing laws and regulations. Management objectives and guidelines would be utilized to evaluate applications for development of the solid mineral and mineral material resources (*Caliente RMP*).

### **2.1.11 RECREATION AND VISITOR SERVICES**

#### *Objectives*

Central San Joaquin MA: Provide/maintain recreation opportunities in the area while protecting other resources, and minimizing conflicts with other users and adjacent landowners (*Hollister RMP*).

San Joaquin River Gorge MA: Provide/maintain recreational opportunities in the area while protecting other resources and minimizing conflicts with other users and adjacent landowners (*Hollister RMP*).

#### *Decisions*

Camping up to 14 days per person within any 30-day period and up to 28 days in a one-year period is allowed in any location not specifically closed to camping. Dispersed camping is not permitted within 100 feet of any freshwater source (*Caliente RMP*).

Personal property left unattended on public land for more than 72 hours would be treated as abandoned (*Caliente RMP*).

Shooting is not allowed within ¼ mile of developed recreational sites, visitor facilities, livestock water improvements, guzzlers, the Poso Creek area (E½NE¼, Sec. 32, T. 27 S., R. 27 E., MDB&M) and all authorized facilities belonging to lessees or permittees of the Federal government, as well as buildings and residences on adjacent private lands. These areas are still available for the lawful taking of game. The restrictions do not apply to federal, state, and local law enforcement officers who are engaged in their official duties (*Caliente RMP*).

Central San Joaquin MA: Manage recreation use on a custodial basis (*Hollister RMP*).

San Joaquin River Gorge MA: Continue to manage the area as an SRMA; to provide hunting, hiking, horseback riding, camping, fishing and picnicking opportunities (*Hollister RMP*).

## SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS

### 2.1.12 AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

#### *Decisions*

Coast MA: Approximately 2,487 acres of Federal surface and subsurface and 915 acres of subsurface, in 5 areas would be identified for Area of Critical Environmental Concern designation (*Caliente RMP*).

The existing Pt. Sal ACEC, encompassing 77 acres surface and subsurface, would also retain its ACEC designation and would be managed to provide protection to unique visual, cultural, geologic, and wildlife resources, as well as, rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species.

- Closed to oil, gas, and geothermal leasing.
- Manage as a Day Use Area
- All public lands within the ACEC are [recommended for proposal] for withdrawal from the mining laws.
- Unavailable for livestock grazing.
- Designated as closed to OHV use.
- Access is limited to pedestrian travel on designated trails within the ACEC.

Cypress Mountain ACEC (1,090 acres surface and subsurface) would be managed to protect the rare and unique plant communities of serpentine chaparral and Northern Interior Cypress Forest, which is dominated by Sargent cypress.

- Open for leasing of oil, gas, and geothermal resources subject to CSU - Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats] stipulation.
- Unavailable for livestock grazing.

Salinas River ACEC (946 acres surface and subsurface and 658 acres subsurface only) would be managed to protect diverse vegetative communities and the exemplary riparian area.

- Manage the riparian zone as a Day Use area.
- Horse travel is limited to designated routes in the riparian zone.
- Withdraw riparian zone (c. 10 acres) from mining laws.
- Unavailable for livestock grazing.

Tierra Redonda ACEC (331 acres surface and subsurface and 81 acres subsurface only) would be managed to protect the paleontological resources, the unique sand dune formation, coast live oak woodland, and scenic and geologic values.

- Open to leasing of oil, gas, and geothermal resources subject to NSO stipulation.
- [Recommend for proposal] for withdrawal from entry under the mining law.

- Unavailable for livestock grazing.
- Sand dunes are limited to pedestrian access only.

Valley MA: Approximately 156,800 acres of federal surface and subsurface, 55,700 acres of surface only and 19,300 acres of subsurface in six areas would be identified for Areas of Critical Environmental Concern designation (*Caliente RMP*).

Lokern ACEC (3,002 acres surface and subsurface and 3,630 acres subsurface only) would be managed for the protection of listed plant and animal species and oil and gas production.

- Open for leasing of oil, gas, and geothermal resources subject to the following stipulations: CSU - Protected Species, CSU - Sensitive Species.
- If a suitable mineral materials site cannot be found outside of the ACEC, sales of mineral materials may be authorized at the site of the old Elk Hill[s] Community pit.
- Unavailable for livestock grazing, unless research shows grazing is necessary to meet management objectives.

Alkali Sink ACEC (402 acres surface and subsurface) would be managed to protect the rare alkali sink plant community and habitat for state and federally listed plants and animals.

- Open for the leasing of oil, gas, and geothermal resources subject to NSO stipulation.
- [Recommend for proposal] for withdrawal from entry under the mining laws.
- Manage as a Day Use area
- Access off designated routes of travel is restricted to pedestrian travel.
- Water diversions are prohibited.
- Collection of vegetative materials within the ACEC requires authorization.
- Unavailable for livestock grazing.

Goose Lake ACEC (40 acres Federal surface and subsurface) is an existing ACEC, and it would be continue to be managed for the protection of the rare alkali sink vegetation, habitat for numerous shorebirds and raptors, and cultural resource values.

- Open for leasing of oil, gas, and geothermal resources subject to NSO stipulation.
- [Recommend for proposal] for withdrawal from entry under mining laws.
- Manage as a Day Use area
- Access off designated routes of travel is limited to pedestrian travel.
- Collection of vegetative materials within the ACEC requires authorization.
- Unavailable for livestock grazing.

Kettleman Hills ACEC (6,727 acres Federal surface and subsurface and 3,067 acres subsurface only) would be managed to protect significant paleontological values and wildlife habitat for federally listed species and oil and gas production.

- Open for the leasing of oil, gas, and geothermal resources subject to the following stipulations: CSU - Protected Species and CSU – Raptors stipulation.
- Available for livestock grazing and is currently allotted and grazing will continue to be authorized.

Carrizo Plain Natural Area ACEC, encompassing [the remaining 122 acres not addressed by the Carrizo Plain National Monument RMP (BLM 2010)] would be managed for the protection of sensitive plant, animal, cultural, Native American traditional [cultural practices], and geologic resource values.

- Open for the leasing of oil, gas, and geothermal resources subject to the following special stipulations: CSU - Protected Species, CSU - Sensitive Species and CSU - Raptors.
- Implement the Carrizo Plain Natural Area Management Plan.
- Camping is restricted to designated locations.
- Portions are available for livestock grazing and portions are unavailable.

Chico Martinez ACEC (3,234 acres surface and subsurface and 1,373 acres subsurface only) encompasses and replaces the existing Reef Ridge ACEC. It would be managed to protect significant paleontological resources, as well as geologic type formations.

- Open for the leasing of oil, gas, and geothermal resources subject to the CSU - Protected Species stipulation.
- Access off designated routes of travel is limited to pedestrian and equestrian travel.
- Available for livestock grazing.

Southern Sierra MA: Approximately 24,120 Acres in 4 areas would be identified for Area of Critical Environmental Concern designation (*Caliente RMP*).

The existing Piute Cypress ACEC, encompassing 930 acres surface and subsurface and 174 acres subsurface only, would retain its designation and be slightly expanded. It would be managed to protect the Piute Cypress grove and other associated sensitive plant species.

- Closed to oil, gas, and geothermal leasing.
- Available for livestock grazing.
- Collection of vegetative materials within the ACEC requires authorization.
- Access off designated routes of travel is restricted to pedestrian travel.
- Manage as a Day Use area.

The existing Blue Ridge ACEC, encompassing 3,177 acres surface and subsurface and 1,581 acres subsurface only, would also retain its ACEC designation and would be managed for the protection of designated critical condor habitat.

- Closed to oil, gas and geothermal leasing.
- The area is [recommended for proposal] for withdrawal from entry under the mining laws.
- Unavailable for livestock use unless grazing is deemed necessary by the USFWS to assist in condor recovery.
- Designated as closed to OHV's.
- Public access may be restricted during condor use periods.

Case Mountain ACEC (26,468 acres) would be managed to protect the giant sequoia groves, sensitive plant/animal species, cultural resources, and riparian values.

- Open for the leasing of oil and gas resources subject to the CSU - Raptor stipulation.
- Closed to the leasing of geothermal resources.
- Lands within sequoia groves, approximately 250 acres, shall be withdrawn from the mining laws.
- The two access routes, Salt Creek Road and Oak Grove Road off Mineral King, are open to mountain biking but closed to other public vehicular travel until a management plan is written for the area. Off road public access is limited to pedestrians and equestrians only. Travel within the sequoia groves is limited to pedestrians.
- Available for livestock grazing. Grazing operations shall be adjusted or terminated within the sequoia community if studies show they have a negative effect upon the plant community.

Horse Canyon ACEC (1,530 acres federal surface and subsurface and 1,330 acres subsurface only) would be managed to enhance protection of significant cultural resource and paleontological resource values, and Native American traditional [cultural practices].

- Open for leasing of oil, gas, and geothermal resources subject to NSO stipulation.
- Unavailable for livestock grazing.

### **2.1.13 BACK COUNTRY BYWAYS**

#### *Decisions*

South Sierra MA: The Canebrake/Long Valley Loop Road would be managed as a Scenic Back Country Byway (*Caliente RMP*).

### **2.1.14 NATIONAL TRAILS**

#### *Decisions*

South Sierra MA: The Pacific Crest [National Scenic] Trail (116 miles) would be identified for Special Management Area designation (*Caliente RMP*).

- Continue closure of trail to vehicles, including bicycles.
- Manage the Lamont Peak spur trail to the PCNST as a hiking and equestrian trail, keeping it closed to motorized and mechanized vehicles.
- Spur trails will be established where possible and an equestrian trailhead will be pursued near Tehachapi.

## 2.2 MANAGEMENT COMMON TO ALL ACTION ALTERNATIVES

The following sections describe management common to all action alternatives (B-E), presented by program area. Where program management varies across alternatives, only management common to each alternative is presented. Total management decisions for each program are inclusive of the decisions in both this section and the separate alternatives section.

Management actions common to all alternatives can result because of specific limitations on management of resources and land use programs that guided the development of the management alternatives. These limitations are defined in various laws and regulations that govern BLM management decisions. They are also set forth in the planning criteria to ensure that management actions under all alternatives comply with nondiscretionary laws and regulations. In many cases, these laws and regulations preclude the development of alternatives to a given action; in some cases, they limit management either to implementing or not implementing the action. Where there is no variation in management across alternatives within a program, decisions for that program are only presented in this section. These include; Air and Atmospheric Values, Cultural Resources, Paleontological Resources, Soil Resources, Water Resources, Wildland Fire and Ecology Management.

The goals presented in this section are resource-specific, generally area-wide, and do not vary by alternative. The objectives state more specifically measurable targets to achieve goals; these are generally consistent among the alternatives.

In addition to the LUP level decisions presented throughout the action alternatives, key implementation level decisions are also described under a separate heading in each resource, as applicable. These implementation decisions are specifically analyzed in the RMP to allow implementation with the signing of the ROD. Although these decisions are presented in the RMP they cannot be protested in the same fashion as LUP level decisions; instead the implementation level decisions must be appealed against in accordance with Department of Interior appeal regulations (43 CFR Part 4). Beyond these key implementation level decisions, other non-LUP level decisions that aid in understanding of resource management are presented throughout the appendices; these decisions are not analyzed and may require additional environmental analysis and documentation prior to implementation.

## RESOURCES

### 2.2.1 AIR AND ATMOSPHERIC VALUES

#### *Goal*

Contribute to the achievement of good air quality.

#### *Objectives*

Contribute to the attainment of National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

Reduce emissions and the particulate level impacts from BLM management activities and BLM authorized actions in accordance with State Implementation Plans (SIPs).

### *Decisions*

Design BLM program and management activities and authorize projects to meet air quality standards in conformance with State Implementation Plans. Reduce emissions resulting from such actions by implementing BMPs (Appendix L) and other control measures.

Prevent BLM actions from degrading Federal Class I areas including Domelands Wilderness, San Raphael Wilderness, and Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks.

## **2.2.2 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

### *Goals*

Contribute to maintaining the biotic diversity within the Planning Area. Ensure public lands provide for a diversity of native species, ecosystems, and ecosystem processes.

Woodland and forest ecosystems are healthy, being resistant to and resilient from stand-replacing fire and/or catastrophic insect/disease infestations.

Promote the recovery of state and federally listed species. Promote conservation of other plant and animal species to prevent future listings.

Promote the success of recovery plans, conservation plans, wildlife management plans, vegetation and weed management plans, and other regional conservation strategies.

### *Objectives*

Maintain or improve the quality and diversity of biological resources through the maintenance, enhancement, and restoration of habitats. Manage public lands to meet or exceed the Standards of Rangeland Health (see Appendix F-1).

Meet or exceed proper functioning condition of wetland or riparian habitats, maintain the hydrologic regime of vernal pools, and provide for riparian-dependent native species through habitat maintenance, restoration and enhancement.

Promote active vegetative management and treatments on our forested landscapes to manage toward healthy woodland ecosystems.

Restore, as appropriate, native plants and animals whose populations have been depleted or extirpated from the local area.

Conserve and recover state and federally listed species through the maintenance, enhancement and restoration of their habitats.

Minimize impacts on biological resources and the effectiveness of regional conservation strategies, including essential habitat linkages, from BLM actions and authorizations.

Reduce the impact that the urban interface, recreation activities, and other public uses have on listed species recovery, natural community and species conservation by coordination and collaboration with other agencies, local communities, and user groups.

Protect additional ecologically important areas, important linkages, and scarce limited habitats through land tenure adjustments and partnerships with other agencies and organizations.

Retain in public ownership lands that are important for species recovery or conservation, that contain ecologically important areas or scarce limited habitats, or contribute to regional conservation strategies.

Manage lands, interest in lands or funds acquired through compensation to benefit the species identified in the applicable USFWS or CDFG biological opinion, agreement, or other document, or to promote recovery of the target species

Control, decrease, or eradicate known populations of invasive nonnative plants and prevent new populations from becoming established. Control the spread of noxious weeds as identified by the California Department of Food and Agriculture and the California Invasive Plants Council (CALIPC, 2009).

Address at a landscape level, widespread nonnative species that displace and compete with the native flora through collaboration with weed management area members, state agencies, federal agencies, conservation organizations, and other interested parties.

Reduce the impacts, including disease transmissions, harassment, and competition, and limit the spread of nonnative animals.

### *Decisions*

Complete land tenure adjustments (disposal) of designated critical habitat and essential habitat only with concurrence from USFWS.

Require land tenure adjustments (repositioning) of compensation lands to have concurrence from both USFWS and CDFG.

Manage lands acquired specifically for the protection of biological resources in a manner consistent with the terms of acquisition.

Allow transplants, augmentation, and reestablishment of native species populations that have been approved by CDFG or USFWS.

Control and eliminate, when necessary and possible, nonnative animals, such as bullfrogs, feral cats, wild pigs, and wild honeybees that have negative impacts on habitats or native species.

Eliminate, relocate, or redesign uses, after site specific NEPA analysis, that may result or have resulted in unacceptable impacts on important biological resources, through actions such as, making

seasonal closures, modifying grazing prescriptions, installing bat compatible closures, restricting equestrian access, relocating camping areas, and closing or realigning travel routes.

Apply SOPs, as appropriate to new BLM actions and authorizations (see Appendix L).

Implement a variety of measures (such as controlling weeds, seeding native species, performing prescribed burns, improving water availability, prescribed grazing, reducing raven nesting structures and the installing artificial dens or structures) to enhance or restore habitat conditions.

Implement actions and recommendations from recovery plans, including those to reduce mortality, provide information and education, and restore habitat to maintain, enhance and restore listed species habitats.

Seek and accept acquisition of biologically important lands and interest in lands, including compensation lands.

Propose all existing and future parcels of compensation land (including lands not specifically labeled as “compensation” within the parcel) for inclusion in the Compensation Lands ACEC (see *ACEC* Section of this chapter).

Prevent the issuance of an opening order to locatable mineral exploration and development in compensation lands where both surface and mineral estate are acquired.

Implement a variety of measures (such as fencing, planting native riparian vegetation to stabilize channels, installing in-stream structures, removing or redesigning spring alterations, removing weeds and seeding or planting appropriate native species) to restore degraded riparian areas and protect healthy riparian areas.

Manage naturally occurring waters on public lands, including public water reserves, to maintain, improve, or benefit hydrologic processes, such as in-stream flow requirements, needed for riparian systems.

Implement a variety of measures (such as removal, restriction, exclusion and education) if pets from public land users or private lands are causing wildlife depredation or other ecological damage.

Identify lands within the range of federally proposed and listed species as open to fluid mineral leasing unless otherwise closed, subject to major constraints including project relocation or exclusion, seasonal activity restriction, and extended application processing time as described in the Controlled Surface Use- Protected Species stipulation (Appendix G);

Identify lands within the range of federal candidate, state listed or bureau sensitive species as open to fluid mineral leasing unless otherwise closed, subject to moderate constraints as described in the Controlled Surface Use- Sensitive Species stipulation (Appendix G);

Identify designated or proposed critical habitat as open to fluid mineral leasing unless otherwise closed, subject to major constraints as described in the Controlled Surface Use- Critical Habitat stipulation (Appendix G);

Identify important foraging, wintering or nesting habitat for raptors as open to fluid mineral leasing unless otherwise closed, subject to major constraints as described in the Controlled Surface Use- Raptor stipulation (Appendix G), such areas include, but are not limited to: Hopper Mountain, Kaweah, San Joaquin River Gorge, Kettleman Hills, Chico Martinez, and the Temblor and Caliente NCLWMAs.

Designate the following species as priority species for management and protection:

- Special Status Species;
- species of interest to CDF&G, USFWS and NMFS (such as game species, furbearers, migratory birds, marine mammals, raptors);
- species that are rare;
- species with declining populations or with limited distributions; or
- species with high ecological importance (such as keystone, pollinator or host species)

Designate as priority plant communities and habitats; examples of which include alkali sink, Bishop pine forest, California bay forest, central maritime chaparral, coastal scrub, cypress woodlands, giant sequoia forest, oak woodland, riparian communities, serpentine chaparral, wetland and vernal pool communities, based on the following criteria:

- designated critical habitat;
- rarity,
- limited geographic distribution;
- high ecological importance;
- unique species assemblages; or
- at risk from climate change, pathogens, or other factors.

Implement the following specific management as appropriate in areas of ecological importance, ACECs, and where priority communities, habitats and species occur;

- Closure to mineral material disposal;
- Limitations on modes of travel and travel routes;
- Restrictions on fluid mineral leasing (CSU, NSO, Closure);
- Restrictions on livestock grazing;
- Restrictions on recreational opportunities (camping, campfires, hunting, shooting sports, seasonal closures);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from all or a portion of the mining laws; and/or
- Prohibition of the casual collection of plants or their parts without prior BLM authorization.

Identify and manage the following areas as areas of ecological importance;

Atwell Island: for protection of sensitive biological resources and to restore retired farmlands to native habitat, including wetlands.

- Identify as available for livestock grazing but only for the purpose of vegetation management to meet resource objectives other than the production of livestock forage;
- Prohibit campfires;
- Prohibit overnight camping and use except for; future specific areas identified for nocturnal visitation for wildlife viewing and stargazing;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel;
- Seasonally prohibit access to wetland areas, as needed to support restoration objectives;
- Coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting except as allowed by Special Recreation Permit and/or specially organized hunt activity; furthermore prohibit the discharge of firearms for shooting sport activities;
- Prohibit pets and other domesticated animals (not including authorized livestock) from wetland areas;
- Require all pets and domestic animals (not including authorized livestock) to be on a leash. Special Recreation Permits may be issued for activities allowing off-leash activity, such as, dog trial events; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Deer Spring: for protection of riparian resources and deer habitat.

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law; and
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing.

Caliente Creek: for protection of the riparian ecosystem and conservation of habitat for Tehachapi slender salamander, Yellow-blotched salamander, and Bakersfield cactus.

Frog Pond: for protection of riparian ecosystems including California bay forest.

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (CSU-Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulations);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;

- Prohibit equestrian use;
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization; and
- Manage water resources for the benefit of the riparian ecosystem.

NCLWMA(s) (Caliente/Monache/Temblor): for improvement and maintenance of diverse assemblage of vegetative communities to benefit wildlife species, including raptors and game species, such as, deer, quail and chukar.

- Continue the withdrawal from application under the non-mineral public land laws and from disposition under the homestead, desert land entry, and script selection laws.
- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Raptor stipulations)

South Fork of the Kern River: for protection of the riparian forest and critical habitat for the southwestern willow flycatcher; promote nesting habitat for both the southwestern willow flycatcher and the California yellow-billed cuckoo.

- Identify southwestern willow flycatcher critical habitat as unavailable for livestock grazing.

Table Mountain and Kennedy Table: for protection of vernal pools, listed vernal pool species and critical habitat for vernal pool species.

Recommend the following areas as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) based on their significant biological resource values; Ancient Lakeshores ACEC; Bitter Creek ACEC, Blue Ridge ACEC; Compensation Lands ACEC; Erskine Creek ACEC; Hopper Mountain ACEC; Kaweah ACEC; Kettleman Hills ACEC; Lokern-Buena Vista ACEC; Los Osos ACEC; Piute Cypress ACEC; and Pt. Sal ACEC.

### *Key Implementation*

Partner with other agencies, institutions, organizations, and individuals to improve knowledge of the species within the Bakersfield FO and their understanding of the natural and ecological processes that influence local ecosystems. With partner agencies, coordinate monitoring of special status species for changes in population size, distribution, habitat use, and potential and existing threats.

Inventory species that are not well studied or understood, such as insects and other invertebrates, fungi, lichens, and bryophytes (such as, mosses and liverworts). Continue to improve inventories of other species.

Support inventories, monitoring, and research that identifies and defines factors that influence species population trends, especially listed and special status species. Support other research on the biology of species found in the Bakersfield FO.

Control and eliminate weeds through collaboration with weed management area members, state agencies, federal agencies, conservation organizations, and other interested parties.

Treat weed populations following integrated pest management principles (BLM 1992). Monitor to determine effectiveness of control measures and to ensure that known target weed populations are stable or diminishing.

Eliminate founder invasive nonnative weed populations before they can spread. Survey to detect new nonnative populations and begin treatment of newly discovered populations within five years of discovery.

Minimize the introduction and spread of weeds by BLM employees and public land users. For example, promote weed education, monitor corrals, promote or require weed-free hay, wash vehicles and equipment coming from other areas, and prohibit livestock and horse trailers from being cleaned on public lands.

Acquire within the Caliente Creek area of ecological importance, lands with Tehachapi slender salamander and Bakersfield cactus.

Acquire within the Upper Cuyama Valley area of ecological importance, lands with California jewelflower or Kern primrose sphinx moth.

Establish partnerships and collaborate with adjacent landowners, interested publics, stakeholders, conservation organizations, and other agencies to coordinate management and protect areas of ecological importance and ACECs.

### **2.2.3 CAVES AND KARST RESOURCES**

#### *Goal*

To secure, protect, and preserve significant caves and their associated cave resources on public lands for the perpetual use, enjoyment, and benefit of all people and to foster increased cooperation and exchange of information between the Bakersfield Field Office and those who utilize caves for scientific, education, or recreational purposes, in accordance with the Federal Cave Resources Protection Act of 1988.

#### *Objectives*

Through a designation of significance by the authorized officer and determination within the RMP, protect those known caves that possess significant cave resources, in accordance with 43 CFR 37.11(c).

Provide management framework to protect significant cave and karst resources, in accordance with BLM policy and guidelines.

### *Decisions*

All newly discovered caves or sections of caves within the RMP decision area will be studied and inventoried for significant values. On determination of significance, the cave will be classified as Class I (open), Class II (restricted) or Class III (closed), described below. Interim management shall be as Class II to protect cave resources and may be restricted to permitted/authorized users.

**Class I:** These caves possess few or no sensitive features, their locations are generally widely known, and interpretive information may be available. These caves require no permit or notice to enter, but entry is recommended only for skilled and experienced cave users.

**Class II:** These caves may possess sensitive features, including cultural resources, pristine examples of geological formations, and sensitive biological resources. Restricted caves may be closed or further restricted to permitted and approved entry for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to: seasonal closures for the protection of sensitive biological resources, closures during periods of extreme public safety concerns (e.g., flooding), or restriction to permitted/authorized users only for scientific study, educational purpose and/or organized recreational experiences.

**Class III:** These caves are closed to protect sensitive cave resources. Entry requires specific authorization and may be provided only for scientific research or education.

## **2.2.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES**

### *Goals*

Identify, preserve, and protect significant cultural resources and ensure that they are available for appropriate uses by present and future generations (FLPMA, Section 103 (c), 201(a) and (c); National Historic Preservation Act, Section 110(a); Archaeological Resources Protection Act, Section 14(a).

Seek to reduce imminent threats and resolve potential conflicts from natural or human-caused deterioration, or potential conflict with other resource uses (FLPMA Sec. 103(c), NHPA 106, 110 (a) (2)) by ensuring that all authorizations for land use and resource use will comply with the NHPA Section 106.

Native Americans have access to public lands to conduct traditional cultural and religious practices.

### *Objectives*

Manage evaluated cultural resources and those projected to occur within the decision area within one of six cultural use allocations: scientific use; conserve for future use; traditional use; public use; experimental use; or discharged from use, as described in BLM guidance.

Design BLM actions and authorizations to minimize impacts on cultural resources including places of traditional cultural and religious importance to Native Americans.

Identify places of religious and cultural importance to Native Americans and facilitate access to these locations for traditional use.

### *Decisions*

Allocate evaluated cultural resources within the decision area as “scientific use” for study, determination of eligibility and appropriate recordation, pending assignment to another use category, with the exception of the following:

- Allocate the Huasna Peak as “traditional use”.
- Allocate the Keyesville historic sites of Walker Cabin, Keyes Mine, and Keyes Cemetery as “conserve for future use”, until such time as stabilization and restoration work allows for public use.
- Allocate the Piedras Blancas Light Station ONA as “public use”.
- Allocate all rock art sites, known and projected to occur, as “conserve for future use”.
- Allocate the Walker Pass NHL as “public use”.

Eliminate, relocate, or redesign uses following site specific NEPA that may result or have resulted in impacts on significant cultural resources including places of traditional cultural and religious importance to Native Americans.

Restore or stabilize cultural resources when they are damaged or deteriorating.

Identify lands containing significant cultural resources as open to fluid mineral leasing unless otherwise closed, subject to major constraints as described in the Controlled Surface Use (CSU) - Cultural Resources stipulation (Appendix G).

### **2.2.5 LANDS WITH WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS**

#### *Goal*

Ensure that adequate consideration and protection, where appropriate, is given to lands with wilderness characteristics outside of designated Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas and that these areas are managed so as not to impair these characteristics.

#### *Objective*

Provide a management framework to protect wilderness characteristics as an integral component of multiple use management of Planning Area BLM lands when it is consistent with other goals and objectives of the RMP.

### **2.2.6 PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

#### *Goal*

Identify, manage, and protect paleontological resources for scientific research, educational purposes, and public use.

#### *Objective*

Identify, manage, and protect important paleontological sites.

*Decisions*

Implement measures to protect paleontological resources including, but not be limited to:

- Avoidance,
- Fencing,
- Stabilization,
- Data recovery through collection or excavation,
- Interpretation, or
- Administrative closure.

Identify areas at risk of damage from illegal activities and implement management to discourage those activities.

Eliminate, relocate, or redesign uses following site specific NEPA (which may include a field inventory and data recovery) that may result or have resulted in impacts on fossil-bearing geologic units identified as Potential Fossil Yield Class (PFYC) 4 or 5.

Minimize or prevent human-caused damage to paleontological resources through educational and interpretive outreach programs focusing use on less significant paleontological resources.

Accommodate permit requests for scientific research by qualified individuals or institutions.

**2.2.7 SOIL RESOURCES***Goal*

Soils exhibit functional biological and physical characteristics that are appropriate to soil type, climate, and land form.

*Objective*

Manage soils to meet or exceed the Soil Standard of Rangeland Health (Appendix F-1), as indicated by ground or plant cover, diversity of plant species, minimal evidence of accelerated wind and water erosion and the presence of the biological soil crusts where appropriate.

*Decisions*

Design BLM programs and management activities and authorize projects to minimize impacts on soil productivity by implementing BMPs (Appendix L). Specifically minimize disturbance of the following soils types:

- Serpentine Soils;
- Soils supporting “Biological Crusts” – hosting communities of cyanobacteria, mosses, lichens and liverworts;
- Soils highly susceptible to erosion or compaction; and
- Soils hosting high levels of Valley Fever spores.

### 2.2.8 VISUAL RESOURCES

#### *Goal*

Public lands demonstrate a range of visual resource values that allow for development and provide opportunities for scenic appreciation.

#### *Objective*

Utilize visual resource management classes for all public lands within the decision area to preserve and enhance scenic quality for present and future generations.

Ensure approval of projects outside the CPNM boundary but within its viewshed comply with the visual resource management objectives as described in the CPNM RMP (BLM 2010).

### 2.2.9 WATER RESOURCES

#### *Goal*

Surface and groundwater comply with the objective of the Clean Water Act and all other applicable water quality requirements.

#### *Objectives*

Manage water resources to meet or exceed the Standards of Rangeland Health (Appendix F-1) by maintaining the existing quality and beneficial uses of water, protecting them where they are threatened, and restoring them where they are currently degraded.

Manage riparian/wetland vegetation, structure, and diversity and stream channels and floodplains so that they are functional and achieving physical and biological objectives.

#### *Decisions*

Design BLM program and management activities and authorize projects to meet water quality standards and maintain beneficial uses by implementing State approved BMPs (Management Measures for Polluted Runoff, see Appendix L) within the Central Coast, South Coast and Tulare basins.

Implement management actions to reduce non-point source pollution contributing to impaired water quality in any basin or segment listed as impaired in accordance with Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act (e.g., a segment of Salinas River).

Implement BMPs for riparian/wetland health for maintenance of vegetation cover and diversity, and the physical stability of stream banks (Appendix L).

Applications for water developments or diversions on public lands would be approved only if resource objectives including wildlife, riparian, and livestock grazing needs, have been met.

Complete State water rights reporting requirements to maintain existing licenses and continue water diversion and use authorizations. Apply for new licenses and use authorizations as appropriate.

## 2.2.10 WILDLAND FIRE ECOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT

### *Goals*

Firefighter and public safety is the single, overriding priority in every fire management activity.

Minimize suppression costs while considering firefighter and public safety, benefits, and human and resource values to be protected.

Recognize fire as an essential ecological process and use wildland fire (both planned and unplanned ignitions) to restore or sustain ecosystem health, where appropriate.

### *Objectives*

Maintain areas in all Fire Management Units (FMUs) that are currently in Fire Regime Condition Class 1 and manage to improve conditions in Class 2 and Class 3 areas.

Prevent, to the extent possible, the movement of wildfires from the wildlands into the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) area, and out the WUI area into the wildlands.

### *Decisions*

Conduct fire management planning, preparedness, prevention, suppression, fire use, restoration and rehabilitation, monitoring and education on an interagency basis with the involvement of cooperators and partners.

Identify the following three geographic areas as suitable for the use of wildland fire for resource benefit (see Map 2.1):

- South Sierra Fire Management Unit
- Domeland Fire Management Unit
- Portion of the Three Rivers Fire Management Unit protected by the National Park Service

Take suppression actions in the remainder of the Decision Area, commensurate with human and natural resource values at risk. Where possible, use existing natural and human-made fire control barriers, such as roads, trails, fuelbreaks and rock outcroppings rather than constructing new firelines.

Use a decision support process to analyze and document fire suppression strategies and tactics. Suppression actions may not necessarily be limited to those that result in the fewest number of acres burned, after consideration of firefighter and public safety, values at risk, resource protection needs and current and expected conditions at the time of the fire.

Use Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) or other modified suppression techniques when suppressing fires in sensitive areas, including but not limited to: Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas, lands managed for wilderness characteristics, culturally significant areas and ACECs. Fire managers will consult a resource advisor or archaeologist to ensure resource protection needs are addressed.

Assess all wildland fire areas for post-fire Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ESR) needs and submit ESR plans for funding. Implement approved activities in a timely manner.

Participate in local Fire Safe Councils or other community organizations to develop and implement collaborative fire mitigation and prevention strategies with communities at risk, and coordinate on the preparation of Community Wildfire Protection Plans.

Implement, as appropriate, the full range of wildland fire and fuels management practices, including prescribed fire, mechanical, chemical, biological, and cultural treatments that will support hazardous fuels reduction in coordination with vegetation and habitat management objectives and resource protection needs.

## RESOURCE USES

### 2.2.11 COMPREHENSIVE TRAIL AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

#### *Goal*

Improve access and recreational opportunities that complement the character of each geographic zone and the surrounding regions.

#### *Objectives*

Provide reasonable, safe, and environmentally sound access to visitors, local residents, licensed and permitted activities, and property owners through coordination and collaboration on travel systems with other agencies, state and local governments and interested stakeholders.

Reduce or halt proliferation of motorized and non-motorized routes.

Maintain an accurate route inventory for management purposes, and for the production of both general and recreation specific Transportation Management Network maps.

Manage OHV use to protect environmental resources, promote public safety, and provide OHV use opportunities where appropriate. Administratively designate the specific areas on public lands on which the use of OHVs is, and is not permitted.

#### *Decisions*

Delineate Travel Management Areas (TMAs) and associated modes of access and travel, as follows;

Primitive TMA (approximately 135,800 acres): Primarily recreational traffic, access essentially cross country, with few designated and maintained trails. Area entirely restricted to non-motorized and non-mechanized modes of transport. Aircraft take-off and landing, except emergency, would be prohibited.

Keyesville TMA (approximately 10,810 acres): Primarily recreational traffic, no area-wide mode of transport restrictions, motorized and mechanized use limited to designated routes

for these uses. Over time specific routes may be redesignated to limit to specific modes of transport in order to maintain recreational opportunity and experience.

**Temblor TMA** (approximately 20,860 acres): Primarily recreational traffic, no area-wide mode of transport restrictions, motorized and mechanized use limited to designated routes for these uses. Permits for motorized and mechanized competitive events would not be issued. Over time specific routes may be redesignated to limit to specific modes of transport in order to maintain recreational opportunity and experience.

**Intensive TMA** (approximately 40,150 acres): Primarily industrial/commercial traffic, all travel on designated routes. No area-wide mode of transport restrictions. Implement a program of route reduction addressing route construction, use, and abandonment (including restoration) based on a balance between industrial needs and environmental concerns.

**Extensive TMA** (approximately 196,360 acres): General traffic from multiple uses, motorized and mechanized use limited to routes designated for these uses. No area-wide mode of transport restrictions.

Close areas where off-highway vehicles are causing or will cause unacceptable adverse effects upon soil, vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitat, cultural resources, historical resources, threatened or endangered species, wilderness suitability, other authorized uses, or other resources to the type(s) of vehicle causing the adverse effect until the adverse effects are eliminated and measures implemented to prevent recurrence.

Define route designations and limitations as follows:

**Motorized:** a route allowing all modes of transport, motorized vehicles including, standard (street legal) passenger vehicles and OHVs (motorcycles, ATVs, jeeps, and specialized vehicles etc.).

**Non-motorized:** a route allowing modes of transport that are not motor driven (regardless of motor type e.g., gas, diesel, electric). Allowable modes of transport include, moving by foot, stock or pack animal, non-motorized boat (kayak, raft etc.), or mechanical vehicle such as a bicycle.

**Non-mechanized:** a route allowing only travel by natural means, such as by foot or horseback, except for approved, non-motorized access devices covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

**Authorized:** a route restricted to use by authorized user including, permittees, lessees and any other form of authorization from the BLM, for a specific route. Mode of travel restrictions may be applied in the specific BLM authorization.

**Closed:** a route prohibiting all types and modes of transport (including all public, authorized and administrative uses); Closed routes can be restored.

Apply the following criteria in route designation including the criteria defined in 43 CFR 8342.1;

- [Designated] trails shall be located in a manner to minimize impacts to physical resources (soils, watershed, vegetation, air, and other resources) and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability;
- [Designated] trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitats. Special attention will be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats; and
- [Designated] trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreation uses.
- [Designated] areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use in such locations will not adversely affect their natural, aesthetic, scenic or other values for which the areas are established.

Consider, in addition to the previously identified criteria the following in all route designations (including re-designations);

- Environmental conditions, such as: soil stability, important wildlife habitat, special status species habitat, proximity to riparian areas or 303(d) streams, and visual resources.
- User conflicts, such as: motorized versus non-motorized and motorized or mechanized versus non-mechanized.
- Administrative purposes, such as: wildland fire suppression activities, safety, and resource management and permitted activities.
- Public purposes, such as: accessing public or private land, destinations for specific activities, and types of desired use (motorized, mechanized, non-motorized/ or non-mechanized).
- Route, mode-of-transport and size limitations, such as: > 50-inch wheel base (full size vehicles), < 50-inch wheel base (all-terrain vehicles), single-track vehicles (motorcycles or mountain bikes), and equestrian or pedestrian only trails.

Apply the following principles when making route designation modifications:

- Encourage public involvement in the travel management processes at all times;
- Coordinate route designations with individual stakeholders, user groups, tribes, agencies and local governments;
- Document and record route designation changes appropriately;
- Provide opportunity for public review and comment on route designation changes; and

Implement the following guidelines for management and maintenance of the travel network:

- Designate routes within newly acquired properties, rights-of-way, and easements at the time of, and in conjunction with the acquisition;

- Provide designations for newly constructed, modified, or realigned routes and routes missed by the 2009 Digital Inventory.
- Designate routes associated with new authorizations in conjunction with the normal application process and approval. As existing authorizations are renewed, their designation may be altered accordingly. These redesignations would be documented in the associated NEPA documentation, and amended in the route database and GIS. Information on new and redesignations would be available to the public;
- Address route redesignations as physical route conditions changes (erosion, washout etc.); and

Establish protocols to effectively monitor and gather data on route usage, route condition, and noncompliance with designations. These protocols would include:

- Identification of high traffic routes and areas;
- Annual monitoring of a random selection of routes to gauge effectiveness of travel management decisions and identify resource conflicts; and
- Annual review of a minimum of 10% of designated routes, and appropriate updates to the existing route inventory.

### *Key Implementation Decisions*

Ensure existing use of public lands in the Temblor area does not result from inappropriate travel across private property through the acquisition of legal public access routes to the Temblor area.

## **2.2.12 LANDS AND REALTY**

### *Goal*

Provide lands, interests in land, and authorizations for public and private uses while maintaining and improving resource values and public land administration.

### *Objectives*

Meet other resource objectives through retention and/or land tenure adjustments.

Meet public, private, and Federal agency needs for realty-related land use authorizations and land withdrawals, including those authorizations necessary for wind, solar, biomass, and other forms of renewable energy development

Increase public access to public lands when consistent with other resource objectives.

### **Land Tenure**

#### *Decisions*

Disposal of the following areas is not deemed to serve national interest; components of the NLCS; lands managed for wilderness characteristics; Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

acquisitions; leased fluid mineral estate; mineral estate with significant fluid mineral potential<sup>3</sup>; and SRMAs.

Retain all lands and interest in lands in federal ownership unless disposal is deemed to serve national interest. Disposal is deemed to serve national interest if the following criteria are determined to be met through site specific investigation and, therefore, would be considered available for disposal:

- Disposal of lands would promote effective administration;
- Lands do not contain important cultural, biological, recreational, or other resource values, the loss of which cannot be adequately mitigated;
- Lands do not contribute to a regional conservation strategy;
- Lands do not have overriding public values or interests; and
- Lands do not represent substantial public investments.

Lands considered available for disposal that meet the following criteria as described in section 203(a) of FLPMA may be sold under direct, competitive, or modified sale:

- such tract because of its location or other characteristics is difficult and uneconomic to manage as part of the public lands, and is not suitable for management by another department or agency; or
- such tract was acquired for specific purpose and the tract is no longer required for that or any other purpose; or
- disposal of such tract will serve important public objectives, including but not limited to, expansion of communities and economic development, which cannot be achieved prudently or feasibly on land other than public land and which outweigh other public objectives and values, including, but not limited to, recreation and scenic values, which would be served by maintaining such tract in federal ownership.

Seek acquisition of lands and interest in lands meeting the following criteria from willing grantors;

- Demonstrate high cultural, biological or other natural resource values, important recreational opportunities or mineral potential;
- Located within specially designated areas (e.g., ACECs, Components of the NLCS, SRMAs);
- Provide access to existing parcels of public lands; and
- Promote effective administration.

## Land Use Authorizations

### *Decisions*

Continue the designation of existing and potential utility corridors delineated in the Western Regional Utility Corridor Study of 1993 as right-of-way corridors.

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<sup>3</sup> Retention of mineral estate does not preclude disposal of public lands surface.

Identify Wilderness and lands within the PCNST corridor as exclusion areas for all types of rights-of-way.

Identify WSAs as rights-of-way avoidance areas in accordance with H 8550-1 (IMP).

Resolve unauthorized uses or occupancy to assure consistency with RMP goals and objectives.

Apply resource specific, Best Management Practices (such as BMPs for VRM, air, soil, water, biological resources, etc., see Appendix L) as terms and conditions to ROW authorizations to minimize environmental impacts.

### *Key Implementation Decisions*

Commercial filming permits that are routine in nature (such as less than 14 days in duration and less than 50 people, use designated routes or previously disturbed areas, effect no present traditional cultural values) would be issued pursuant to FLPMA, where no surface disturbance is proposed, and where there will be minimal to no impacts on resources.

### **Withdrawals**

#### *Decisions*

Continue the existing withdrawal from application under the non-mineral public land laws and from disposition under the homestead, desert land entry and script selection laws for the Caliente, Monache-Walker Pass and Temblor National Cooperative Land and Wildlife Management Areas (NCLWMAs) (183,620 acres)(Public Land Order 2460).

Continue the existing withdrawal from settlement, sale, location, or entry under the general land laws, including the United States mining laws, 30 U.S.C. Ch. 2 (1994), mineral leasing laws, 30 U.S.C. 181 *et seq.* (1994) and mineral material sale laws 30 U.S.C. 601-604 (1994), of Piedras Blancas Light Station (20 acres) (Public Land Order 7501).

Continue the existing withdrawal from all forms of appropriation under the public land laws, including the mining laws, 30 U.S.C. Ch. 2, but not from leasing under the mineral leasing laws, of the Piute Cypress Natural Area (760 acres) (Public Land Order 3510).

Recommend the amendment of the existing withdrawal from location under the General Mining Law, 30 U.S.C. Ch. 2, of the Keyesville (390 acres) and San Joaquin River Gorge (3,070 acres) areas to include the conditioning of entry to exclude such mining operations that require a Notice or Plan of Operations.

### **2.2.13 LIVESTOCK GRAZING**

#### *Goal*

Manage livestock grazing authorizations in a manner that meets or exceeds the standards of Rangeland Health (Appendix F-1) and is consistent with other RMP goals.

*Objective*

Manage grazing authorizations to meet or exceed the Standards of Rangeland Health.

*Decisions*

Apply the appropriate central California grazing management guidelines (Appendix F-1) to the applicable grazing authorizations as needed to meet the Standards of Rangeland Health.

Manage livestock grazing on individual pastures of allotments or entire allotments which lie primarily within the Bakersfield FO Planning Area in conformance with this RMP's goals and objectives. Allow management of livestock grazing on individual pastures of allotments or entire allotments which lie primarily within other Field Office or BLM jurisdictional boundaries in conformance with the goals and objectives applicable to the managing office's land use plan (Maps LG-A, LG-B, LG-C, LG-D and LG-E, in separate map packet).

**2.2.14 MINERALS MANAGEMENT***Goal*

Support development of mineral resources on public lands in an environmentally sound manner.

**Leasable Minerals***Objective*

Facilitate reasonable, economical, and environmentally sound exploration and development of leasable minerals while minimizing impacts to resources.

**Fluid Minerals***Decisions*

Identify 0 acres as open to fluid mineral leasing, subject to existing regulations and formal orders; and the terms and conditions of the standard lease form.

Identify 0 acres as open to fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints.

Identify 149,200 acres as closed to fluid mineral leasing:

- Non-discretionary closures – Wilderness, WSAs, Piedras Blancas ONA, and the PCNST
- Discretionary closures – some ACECs (Blue Ridge, Erskine Creek, Piute Cypress, and Point Sal) and Deer Spring area of ecological importance.

Identify 26,440 acres, in addition to that closed to all fluid mineral leasing as closed only to geothermal leasing:

- Discretionary closures – Kaweah ACEC.

Establish the major constraint “CSU - Protected Species” for the purpose of minimizing or eliminating adverse effects associated with fluid mineral development on federally proposed and listed species with the following stipulation language:

*All or a portion of the lease occurs within the range of one or more plant or animal species that are either listed or proposed for listing as threatened or endangered by the USFWS. A list of such species will be provided at the time of leasing and updated as necessary over the term of the lease. To determine whether species on this list or their habitat are present, a preliminary environmental review will be conducted for all surface disturbing activities. Presence of habitat or species may result in the proposed action being moved, modified, or delayed to mitigate project effects. Offsite compensation that would satisfactorily offset the loss of habitat may be required. Prohibition of all surface disturbing activities on the lease will only occur as needed to avoid jeopardizing the continued existence of a listed or proposed species, or when the proposed action is inconsistent with the recovery needs of a species as identified in an approved USFWS Recovery Plan through consultation with USFWS. Furthermore, processing times for proposed actions may be delayed beyond established standards to accommodate species surveys, and consultation or conferencing with the USFWS. This stipulation shall not be waived; however, it may be modified or an exception may be granted as follows:*

**Exception:** *The Authorized Officer may grant an exception if an environmental review determines the action as proposed or conditioned would have no effect on listed or proposed species.*

**Modification:** *The Authorized Officer may modify this stipulation to reflect new information with regard to the range of listed or proposed species through the expansion or reduction of lands subject to this stipulation for a specific species.*

Establish the major constraint “CSU - Sensitive Species” for the purpose of minimizing or eliminating adverse effects associated with fluid mineral development on federal candidate, State listed and BLM sensitive species with the following stipulation language:

*All or a portion of this lease is within the range of one or more plant or animal species that are either federal candidates for listing as threatened or endangered (federal candidate), are listed by the State of California as threatened or endangered (state listed), or are designated by the BLM as sensitive (BLM sensitive). A list of species will be provided at the time of leasing and updated as necessary over the term of the lease. To determine whether species on this list or their habitat are present, a preliminary environmental review will be conducted for all surface disturbing activities. Presence of habitat or species may result in the proposed action being moved more than 200 meters (656 feet) but not more than a quarter-mile or off of the lease and prohibition of activities during seasonal use period. Furthermore, processing times for proposed actions may be delayed beyond established standards to accommodate species surveys, and coordination with the USFWS and California Department of Fish and Game. This stipulation shall not be waived; however, it may be granted exception or modified as follows:*

**Exception:** *The Authorized Officer may grant an exception if an environmental review determines the action as proposed or conditioned would have no effect on federal candidate, state listed, and BLM sensitive species.*

**Modification:** *The Authorized Officer may modify the stipulation to reflect new information with regard to federal candidate, state listed or BLM sensitive species lists. Furthermore, the authorized officer may modify the maximum distance that a potential location could be moved to extend farther than the stated quarter-mile to maintain the sensitive species protection goals.*

Establish the major constraint “CSU - Raptor” for the purpose of minimizing or eliminating adverse effects associated with fluid mineral development on sensitive raptor foraging areas, winter roosting areas, or nest sites with the following stipulation language:

*All or a portion of this lease has been identified as an important raptor foraging, wintering, or nesting area. Any proposed surface disturbing activity will be reviewed to determine if the activity would affect raptor foraging, wintering, or nesting habitat. Determination of effects to raptor foraging, wintering, or nesting habitat may result in the proposed action being moved more than 200 meters (656 feet) but not more than a half-mile and prohibition of activities during seasonal use period. This stipulation may be granted exception, modified, or waived as follows:*

**Exception:** *The Authorized Officer may grant an exception if the operator submits a plan that demonstrates that impacts from the proposed action are minimal or can be adequately mitigated.*

**Modification:** *The Authorized Officer may modify the distance and other provisions of this stipulation based on new information and increasing or decreasing levels of the impacts anticipated from fluid mineral development.*

**Waiver:** *The Authorized Officer may waive the stipulation should new information show the area no longer contains sensitive raptor habitat for foraging, winter roosting, or nesting.*

Establish the major constraint “CSU – Critical Habitat” for the purpose of minimizing or eliminating adverse effects associated with fluid mineral development on habitat designated as critical, or is proposed for designation as critical habitat by the USFWS with the following stipulation language:

*All or a portion of this lease lies within an area that is designated as critical habitat, or is proposed for designation as critical habitat by the USFWS. A list of these areas affecting this lease will be provided at the time of leasing and will be updated as necessary over the term of the lease. Any proposed surface disturbing activity occurring on the affected portions of this lease will be reviewed to determine if the activity would affect designated or proposed critical habitat. Determination of effects to designated or proposed critical habitat may result in the proposed action being moved, modified, seasonally restricted, or delayed. Consultation or conference with the USFWS is required if designated or proposed critical habitat may be affected. Off-site compensation that would satisfactorily offset the loss of habitat may be required. Prohibition of all surface disturbing activities on the lease will only occur as needed to avoid destroying or adversely modifying critical habitat or proposed critical habitat, or when the proposed action is inconsistent with the recovery needs identified in an approved USFWS Recovery Plan based on consultation with USFWS. Furthermore, processing times for proposed actions may be delayed beyond established standards to*

*accommodate species surveys, and consultation or conferencing with the USFWS. This stipulation shall not be waived; however, it may be granted exception or modified as follows:*

***Exception:*** *The Authorized Officer may grant an exception if an environmental review determines the action as proposed or conditioned would have no effect on critical habitat or proposed critical habitat.*

***Modification:*** *The Authorized Officer may modify this stipulation to reflect new information with regard to the critical habitat or proposed critical habitat through the expansion or reduction of lands subject to this stipulation for a specific species.*

Establish the major constraint “CSU – Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats” for the purpose of minimizing or eliminating adverse effects associated with fluid mineral development on rare and/or endemic vegetation, plants, and communities, including riparian and serpentine endemics, with the following stipulation language:

*All or a portion of the lease has been identified by the current RMP (i.e., ACECs and areas of ecological importance with this stipulation prescribed) as containing priority species, plant communities, or habitat that may be adversely affected by fluid mineral development. A list of affected parcels or portions of the lease will be provided at the time of leasing. To identify the possibility of adverse impact resulting from fluid mineral development, a preliminary environmental review will be conducted for all surface disturbing activities. Identification of adverse impacts may result in the proposed action being moved, modified, seasonally delayed, or prohibited from all or a portion of this lease. Furthermore, processing times for proposed actions may be delayed beyond established standards to accommodate species surveys. This stipulation shall not be waived, but may be granted exception or modified as follows:*

***Exception:*** *The Authorized Officer may grant an exception if an environmental review determines the action as proposed or conditioned would have no effect on priority species, plant communities, or habitats.*

***Modification:*** *The Authorized Officer may modify the stipulation to reflect new information with regard to the presence of priority species, plant communities, or habitat through the expansion or reduction of lands subject to this stipulation.*

Establish the major constraint “CSU – Cultural Resources” for the purpose of minimizing or eliminating adverse effects associated with fluid mineral development on National Register-listed or eligible cultural properties with the following stipulation language:

*All or a portion of the lease contains National Register-listed or potentially eligible cultural properties that may be adversely affected by fluid mineral development. A list of affected parcels or portions of the lease will be provided at the time of leasing. To identify the possibility of adverse impacts resulting from fluid mineral development, a preliminary cultural resource review/survey will be conducted for all surface disturbing activities. Identification of adverse impacts may result in the proposed action being moved or modified. Surface-disturbing activities would be prohibited on the portion of the lease where National Register-listed properties or properties potentially eligible for listing on the National Register occur. This stipulation may be modified, waived, or granted exception as follows:*

**Exception:** *The Authorized Officer may grant an exception, with concurrence from the California State Historic Preservation Office and Native American tribes, if a subsequent formal eligibility evaluation indicates the cultural property is ineligible.*

**Modification:** *The Authorized Officer may modify the stipulation to reflect new information from formal eligibility evaluations for cultural properties through the expansion or reduction of land where surface disturbing activities would be prohibited.*

**Waiver:** *The Authorized Officer may grant a waiver to the stipulation should the results of formal eligibility evaluation determine all cultural properties ineligible for listing on the National Register.*

Establish the major constraint “CSU – Defense” for the purpose of minimizing or eliminating conflict between fluid mineral development and military base operations with the following stipulation language:

*All or a portion of this lease contains federal mineral estate under the surface administration of the Department of Defense. Surface disturbing activities may be moved, modified, or prohibited at the discretion of the Base Commander(s) to ensure these activities do not interfere with military activity on the base and to ensure personnel safety. Furthermore, processing times for proposed actions may be delayed beyond established standards to accommodate review and coordination with the Base Commander(s). This stipulation shall not be modified or granted exception; however, it may be waived as follows:*

**Waiver:** *The Authorized Officer may grant a waiver to this stipulation if the surface administration changes from the Department of Defense to another entity.*

Establish the major constraint “CSU – Existing Surface Use/Management” for the purpose of minimizing or eliminating conflict between fluid mineral development and existing surface use on both public lands and split estate overlying federal minerals, including risk to public health and safety, and social and economic impacts (noise, aesthetics, etc.) with the following stipulation language:

*All or a portion of the lease contains federal mineral estate underlying surface with an established use or management that may be incompatible with fluid mineral development. A preliminary environmental review will be conducted for all surface disturbing activities to identify possible conflict between surface use and fluid mineral development. Surface disturbing activities may be moved, modified, or prohibited to accommodate the existing surface use should the Authorized Officer determine the incompatibility of these uses. Specifically, fluid mineral development shall not occur:*

- (1) *Closer to any development (e.g., public highway, institution, or place of public assembly) than allowed by the county/ city regulation or statute applicable to the area in which the proposed action occurs (including those exceptions where closer spacing is allowed);*
- (2) *Within 200 feet of an occupied dwelling;*

- (3) *In a manner that significantly and adversely impacts natural and/or cultural resources of which the surface owner/ administrator is charged with the management and protection; or*
- (4) *In a manner that significantly and adversely impacts existing recreation opportunity of which the surface owner/ administrator is charged with the management and protection.*

*Furthermore, processing times for proposed actions may be delayed beyond established standards to accommodate review and coordination with the surface owner/ administrator. This stipulation shall not be waived, but may be granted exception or modified as follows:*

***Exception:*** *The Authorized Officer may grant an exception where a surface use agreement exists between the lessee and surface owner/ administrator that allows for the proposed fluid mineral development. Furthermore, exception may be granted where the proposed action is deemed, following an environmental review, to have discountable or insignificant impacts on the existing surface use.*

***Modification:*** *The Authorized Officer may modify this stipulation to further restrict surface use for mineral development on a portion of or all the lease if a more stringent requirement with regard to the location of facilities is deemed necessary following an environmental review (e.g., greater than county/ city restrictions on fluid mineral development).*

Establish the major constraint of “NSO – General” that prohibits surface disturbance on the entire lease for the purpose of minimizing or eliminating adverse effects on unique or significant natural and cultural resources that are incompatible with fluid mineral development with the following stipulation language:

*All or a portion of this lease has been identified by the current RMP (e.g., ACECs and areas of ecological importance with this stipulation prescribed) as containing unique or significant natural or cultural values. No new surface disturbing activity is allowed on the lease. This stipulation may be granted exception, modified, or waived as follows:*

***Exception:*** *The Authorized Officer may grant an exception if, after coordination with appropriate agency (e.g., CDFG, SHPO, and USFWS), an environmental review determines the action as proposed or conditioned would not impair the values present because of temporary conditions.*

***Modification:*** *The Authorized Officer may modify this stipulation to allow surface use on a portion or even all of the lease if an environmental review determines the action as proposed or conditioned would not impair the values present.*

***Waiver:*** *The Authorized Officer may grant a waiver if an environmental review determines the values for which the NSO was applied no longer exist.*

These stipulations and decisions do not apply to geophysical exploration.

### **Solid (Non-Energy) Leasable Minerals**

#### *Objective*

Provide opportunities for reasonable, economical, and environmentally sound exploration and development of Solid (Non-Energy) leasable minerals while minimizing impacts to resources.

#### *Decisions*

Identify all ACECs, lands managed for wilderness characteristics and suitable segments of WSRs as closed to Solid (Non-Energy) leasable mineral development.

### **Locatable Minerals**

#### *Objective*

Facilitate reasonable, economical, and environmentally sound exploration and development of locatable minerals, while ensuring compatibility with other resources and uses including public health and safety.

#### *Decisions*

Determine and designate the ACECs (as described in ACEC management); suitable WSR corridors; lands managed for wilderness characteristics; Frog Pond and Deer Spring areas of ecological importance; Huasna Peak and South Lake Cultural Area; and developed campgrounds as unsuitable for Casual Use, Notice, and Plan of Operation levels mining operations (43 CFR 3809.10).

Segregate these areas and recommend proposal for its withdrawal from appropriation and all forms of mineral entry under the General Mining Law.

### **Salable Minerals**

#### *Objectives*

Provide salable minerals needed for community and economic purposes and facilitate their reasonable, economical, and environmentally sound development where available and compatible with resource objectives.

#### *Decisions*

Identify all ACECs, lands managed for wilderness characteristics and suitable segments of WSRs as closed to mineral material disposal, unless otherwise noted for administrative purposes only.

## **2.2.15 RECREATION AND VISITOR SERVICES**

#### *Goal*

Support growing demand for recreation access to public lands and maintain a diversity of recreation opportunities promoting a multiple use philosophy.

#### *Objective*

Coordinate recreation management activities through an ecosystem-based management style that considers the landscape setting and patterns of land ownership to fully realize program goals.

### *Decisions*

Designate 22,550 acres as the Atwell Island Extensive Recreation Management Area with the following recreation objective, management actions and allowable use decisions;

Within the life of the RMP the Atwell Island ERMA will offer recreation opportunities in a front country setting (restored wetland from abandoned farmland), that focus on wildlife viewing and appreciation, through the non-motorized/non-mechanized exploration of the restored area(s).

- Prohibit overnight camping and use except for; future specific areas identified for nocturnal visitation for wildlife viewing and stargazing.
- Coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting except as allowed by Special Recreation Permit and/or specially organized hunt activity; furthermore prohibit the discharge of firearms for shooting sport activities;
- Seasonally prohibit access to wetland areas, as needed to support restoration objectives.
- Prohibit pets and other domesticated animals (not including authorized livestock grazing) from wetland areas.
- Require all pets and domestic animals (not including authorized livestock grazing) to be on a leash. Special Recreation Permits may be issued for activities allowing off-leash activity, such as, dog trial events.

Designate 21,160 acres as the Case Mountain Extensive Recreation Management Area with the following recreation objective, management actions and allowable use decisions;

Within the life of the RMP the Case Mountain ERMA will offer recreation opportunities in an unchanged middle country setting, which facilitates the visitors' freedom to participate in non-motorized activities that includes; mountain bicycling, camping and hunting.

- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species.
- Acquire legal public access to suitable parking/staging area.
- Develop suitable facilities to support use at parking/staging areas; establishing standard amenity fees for use of such facilities.
- Manage and maintain connected trails for mountain bicycling experiences.
- Limit available commercial Special Recreation Permits for guide and outfitting services to no more than five (5). Special Recreation Permits for competitive events would not be issued.

Designate 12,240 acres (Map 2.2) as the Keyesville Special Recreation Management Area, established with a “destination” market strategy for southern and central California, including the population centers of Bakersfield, Los Angeles, Riverside and San Bernardino, along with nearby rural communities. The SRMA is subdivided into four (4) Recreational Management Zones, each with the following recreation objectives, management actions and allowable use decisions (see Appendix

H for a complete description of each RMZs targeted activities, experiences, benefits, and Natural Resource Recreation Settings);

**Gold Fever RMZ:** In visitor assessments, 65% of respondents who participated in targeted activities report the ability to realize the targeted experiences and benefits.

**Targeted Activities:** Cultural/historical discovery; trail use (motorized, mechanized and non-mechanized uses); and recreational gold prospecting

**Targeted Experiences:** Savoring the total sensory experience of a natural landscape; escaping everyday responsibilities for awhile; feeling good about the way shared cultural heritage is being protected; learning about things; just knowing this attraction is in or near the community

**Targeted Benefits:** *Personal:* Greater respect for shared cultural heritage; closer relationship with the natural world. *Community:* Greater understanding of the community's cultural identity; greater community involvement in recreation and other land use decisions. *Economic:* Improved local economic stability; maintenance of community's distinctive recreation tourism market. *Environmental:* Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes; reduced negative human impacts such as litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails.

- Provide extensive opportunities for interpretation and education, establishing expanded amenity fees for some of these experiences.
- Establish a permit system and fee for recreational gold prospecting.
- Stabilize and maintain historic buildings and facilities to support public use.
- Establish visitor contact station to originate interpretive and educational activities from.
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species.

**French Gulch RMZ:** In visitor assessments, 50% of respondents who participated in targeted activities report the ability to realize the targeted experiences and benefits.

**Targeted Activities:** Trail use (motorized, mechanized and non-mechanized uses); dispersed camping; and recreational gold prospecting

**Targeted Experiences:** Developing skills and abilities; testing personal endurance; gaining a greater sense of self-confidence; telling others about the trip; enjoying risk-taking adventure; and discussing equipment with others

**Targeted Benefits:** *Personal:* Improved mental well being; greater self-reliance; improved skills for outdoor enjoyment. *Community:* Heightened sense of satisfaction with the community. *Economic:* Improved local economic stability; maintenance of community's distinctive recreation tourism market. *Environmental:* Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes; reduced negative human impacts such as litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails.

- Create a versatile trail system supporting a variety of uses, skill levels and experiences through collaboration with user groups and partners.
- Support competitive and commercial activities through the Special Recreation Permit process including maintaining the designated “Keyesville Classic” race course.
- Allow specialized vehicle recreation (motorcycle and mountain bicycle trials experiences) at a number of sites identified for the purpose.
- Establish a permit system and fee recreational gold prospecting.

The Dam RMZ: In visitor assessments, 50% of respondents who participated in targeted activities report the ability to realize the targeted experiences and benefits.

**Targeted Activities:** White-water boating; water-play; and fishing

**Targeted Experiences:** High adventure; personal challenge; self discovery; appreciation for the power of the natural world

**Targeted Benefits:** *Personal:* Increase self-respect; sense of achievement. *Community:* Bonding through shared experiences. *Economic:* Increased draw to destination; promotion of local business (outfitters); improved local economic stability; maintenance of community’s distinctive recreation tourism market. *Environmental:* Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes; reduced negative human impacts such as litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails.

- Manage Special Recreation Permitting for white-water boating in collaboration and through interagency agreement with the US Forest Service.
- Maintain existing white-water boating facilities at “Slippery Rock” and “BLM South” for use by both commercial and private boaters. Limit use of “Granite Launch” to authorized Special Recreation Permit holders. Prohibit use of the “Low-water Launch” by boaters upon completion of Granite Launch.
- Prohibit overnight camping and use of campfires.
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms and coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting.
- Establish a permit system and fee for recreational gold prospecting.
- Cables, ropes, or tethers shall not cross the river and must not create hazards for boaters or other river users.

Wallow Rock RMZ: In visitor assessments, 75% of respondents who participated in targeted activities report the ability to realize the targeted experiences and benefits.

**Targeted Activities:** Camping/Group Camping

**Targeted Experiences:** Enjoying the closeness of friends and family; relishing group affiliation and togetherness; enjoying meeting new people with similar interests

**Targeted Benefits:** *Personal:* Stronger ties with family and friends; restore mind from unwanted stress. *Community:* Greater interaction with visitors from different cultures.

*Economic:* Improved local economic stability; maintenance of community’s distinctive recreation tourism market. *Environmental:* Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes; reduced negative human impacts such as litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails.

- Identify group and individual campsites within a developed campground, establishing *standard amenity* fees for use of facilities.
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms and coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting.
- Prohibit recreational gold prospecting.

Designate 9,250 acres (Map 2.3) as the San Joaquin River Gorge Special Recreation Management Area, established with a “community” market strategy for local communities, nearby rural areas and the population centers of Fresno-Clovis and Madera. The SRMA is subdivided into three (3) Recreational Management Zones, each with the following recreation objectives, management actions and allowable use decisions (see Appendix H for a complete description of each RMZs targeted activities, experiences, benefits, and Natural Resource Recreation Settings);

Pa’San RMZ: In visitor assessments, 50% of respondents who participated in targeted activities report the ability to realize the targeted experiences and benefits.

**Targeted Activities:** Hiking; mountain biking; and horseback riding

**Targeted Experiences:** Developing skills and abilities; testing personal endurance; savoring the total sensory experience of a natural landscape; escaping everyday responsibilities for awhile

**Targeted Benefits:** *Personal:* Greater self-reliance; improved skills for outdoor enjoyment; closer relationship with the natural world. *Community:* Greater freedom from urban living. *Economic:* More positive contributions to local and regional economies. *Environmental:* Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes; reduced negative human impacts such as litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails.

- Maintain, improve and expand a network of recreational trails.

Tahoot RMZ: In visitor assessments, 75% of respondents who participated in targeted activities report the ability to realize the targeted experiences and benefits.

**Targeted Activities:** Interpretation; environmental education; and camping

**Targeted Experiences:** Enjoying easy access to natural landscapes; enjoying access to hands-on environmental learning; enjoying needed physical exercise

**Targeted Benefits:** *Personal:* Better-informed and more responsible visitor; enhanced awareness and understanding of nature; increased appreciation of the area’s cultural history. *Community:* Greater community valuation of its ethnic diversity; greater protection of the area’s historic and archaeological sites. *Economic:* More positive contributions to local and

regional economies. *Environmental:* Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes; reduced negative human impacts such as litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails.

- Maintain, improve and expand a network of recreational facilities including trails, campgrounds, parking areas, visitor contact location and outdoor classrooms; establishing standard and expanded amenity fees as appropriate.
- Ensure that management balances the preservation of natural and cultural resources with the opportunity to provide for public recreation, interpretation and education about the natural and cultural heritage of the area.
- Provide nature-based educational opportunities locally and regionally to include outdoor classrooms and interpretation of natural and cultural resources.

Wu Ki'Oh RMZ: In visitor assessments, 50% of respondents who participated in targeted activities report the ability to realize the targeted experiences and benefits.

**Targeted Activities:** Fishing; water play; gold panning; and kayaking

**Targeted Experiences:** Developing skills and abilities; testing personal endurance; enjoying risk-taking adventure; savoring the total sensory experience of a natural landscape; escaping everyday responsibilities for awhile

**Targeted Benefits:** *Personal:* Greater self-reliance; improved skills for outdoor enjoyment; closer relationship with the natural world. *Community:* Greater freedom from urban living. *Economic:* More positive contributions to local and regional economies. *Environmental:* Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes; reduced negative human impacts such as litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails.

- Restrict recreational gold prospecting activities to gold panning and sluicing only in addition to the following;
- All mining and prospecting activity must be confined to within 25 ft of the current water level.
- Prohibit disturbance of the river bank vegetation.
- Prohibit dry sluicing.

Limit dispersed camping within the Decision Area; unless otherwise noted, to 14 days within a 90 day period. After the 14th day, campers must move beyond a 25-mile radius of their previous camp. In addition:

- Prohibit dispersed camping within 100ft of any fresh water source
- Prohibit dispersed camping within 300ft of any suitable or designated WSR categorized as wild or scenic.
- Prohibit dispersed camping within 100ft of any suitable or designated WSR categorized as recreational.

Limit parking for dispersed camping (including cars, trucks, recreation vehicles, and trailers [“fifth wheels”]) to one vehicle width from the edge of the designated route.

Limit Specialized Vehicle Recreation to those areas, trails, and routes designated for that purpose within the Decision Area. Through a Special Recreation Permit, this activity could be allowed on a case-by-case basis, pending the NEPA process on each application.

Identify and support the establishment of recreation gold prospecting and mining areas within the Decision Area. Recreational mining and prospecting (casual use as defined in 43 CFR 3809.5) would be restricted by the following and may be further restricted in specific areas:

- Prohibit explosives, mercury, and other hazardous chemicals;
- Prohibited motorized equipment, including pumps (except dredges), chainsaws, and mechanized earth-moving equipment (such as backhoes and bulldozers);
- Prohibit any removal of material (dirt) for recreational mining and prospecting from site;
- Require suction dredging activities to be in compliance with California Department of Fish and Game regulations, including holding a valid permit for operation;
- Prohibit pumping of water from water courses for any purpose;
- Prohibit high-banking, hydraulic mining, and ground sluicing;
- Restrict sluices, riffle boxes, and dry washers to collecting surfaces of no greater than six square feet;
- Prohibit disturbance to trees and shrubs; including their root areas, as a result of recreational mining and prospecting;
- Rectify any surface disturbance upon completion of activities;
- Prohibit recreational mining and prospecting on or within 30ft of the centerline of designated routes and trails; and
- Require any subsurface archaeological, historical, or paleontological remains discovered during mining to be left intact; all work in the area should stop, and BLM should be notified immediately; work may resume on clearance by the BLM.

### *Key Implementation Decisions*

Establish Special Rules (Appendix N) to implement and enforce allocations, management restrictions, and decisions within the RMP.

## **2.2.16 INTERPRETATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**

### *Goal*

Instill a public stewardship ethic of natural and cultural resources, and foster an appreciation of multiple-use public lands.

Establish an emotional connection to the landscape and its natural and cultural resources.

*Objectives*

Incorporate “Tread Lightly” and “Leave No Trace”, into BLM interpretive and education programs and visitor information media.

Provide interpretive and educational opportunities to allow all visitors to explore public lands and learn about the natural and cultural environment and reduce their impacts on biological and cultural resources.

Educate public land users and affected communities on the role of wildland fire in ecosystems, its risk to public health and safety, and the safe use of fire in the recreational environment.

*Decisions*

Identify San Joaquin River Gorge, Piedras Blancas Light Station, and Keyesville Historic Mining District as important cultural and historic resources available for interpretation and educational programs.

Identify Atwell Island and Piedras Blancas Light Station as important biological resource areas available for interpretation and educational programs.

Identify wildland fire as important resource requiring interpretation and education programs.

Identify SRMAs as suitable locations to conduct and promote “Take It Outside” and “Hands on the Land” interpretive and education programs.

**SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS****2.2.17 AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN***Goals*

Ancient Lakeshores ACEC: Protect and preserve important cultural resources, natural systems and processes, and habitat for listed species.

Bitter Creek ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for federally listed species

Blue Ridge ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for federally listed species.

Compensation Lands ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for listed species, and protection for various natural systems.

Erskine Creek ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for sensitive species and protection for various natural processes and geologic formations.

Hopper Mountain ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for federally listed species.

Kaweah ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for sensitive species and protection for various natural processes, geologic formations, and cultural resources.

Kettleman Hills ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for federal and state listed species and protection for natural systems and processes.

Lokern-Buena Vista ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for federal and state listed species and protection for natural systems and processes.

Los Osos ACEC: Protect and preserve important cultural resources, natural systems and processes, and habitat for listed species.

Piute Cypress ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for sensitive species and protection for natural systems.

Pt. Sal ACEC: Protect and preserve important cultural resources, natural systems and processes, and habitat for listed species.

### *Objectives*

Ancient Lakeshores ACEC: Protect significant cultural resources from degradation. Maintain rare alkali sink plant communities and ensure no net loss of associated habitat for state and federally listed plants and animals.

Bitter Creek ACEC: Provide suitable foraging and roosting habitat for California condor in support of the California Condor Recovery Program and Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge.

Blue Ridge ACEC: Provide suitable roosting habitat for California condor.

Compensation Lands ACEC: Manage habitat for the benefit the species identified in the applicable USFWS or CDFG biological opinion, agreement, or other document associated with the acquisition.

Erskine Creek ACEC: Protect the limestone caves, riparian areas, manage habitat to support populations of Kern County larkspur and Piute Mountain jewelflower.

Hopper Mountain ACEC: Provide suitable roosting and nesting habitat for California condor in support of the California Condor Recovery Program.

Kaweah ACEC: Protect the Case Mountain giant sequoia groves, limestone caves and other karst features, riparian areas, and cultural resources. Manage habitat to support populations of California spotted owl, Pacific fisher, and Kaweah monkey flower.

Kettleman Hills ACEC: Protect significant paleontological resources and provide habitat for the suite of San Joaquin Valley listed species including ecologically functioning valley upland habitats.

Lokern-Buena Vista ACEC: Provide habitat for the suite of San Joaquin Valley listed species including ecologically functioning valley upland habitats.

Los Osos ACEC: Protect significant cultural resources from damage and degradation. Maintain rare and endemic plant communities including coastal dune scrub, central maritime chaparral, and pygmy oak forest. Ensure no net loss of associated habitat for special status plants and animals.

Piute Cypress ACEC: Ensure no net loss of Piute Cypress groves and associated habitat for special status plants.

Pt. Sal ACEC: Preserve significant cultural resources and maintain habitat for sensitive and listed species and unique plant species assemblages.

### *Decisions*

Ancient Lakeshores ACEC: Recommend for designation 1,985 acres of public lands; within a boundary of 2,041 acres (encompassing the existing Alkali Sink and Goose Lake ACECs with the expansion to include the Sand Ridge portion of Atwell Island), as the Ancient Lakeshores ACEC (Map 2.7, 2.11, 2.16) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open to fluid mineral leasing subject to major constraints (NSO);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects (i.e., those producing electricity for the national grid);
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing, except for the Sand Ridge unit which is identified as available for livestock grazing but only for the purpose of vegetation management to meet resource objectives other than the production of livestock forage;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel; and
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species.

Blue Ridge ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 3,177 acres of public lands and 1,572 of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 9,250 acres, as the Blue Ridge ACEC (Map 2.7, 2.11, 2.16) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects (i.e., those producing electricity for the national grid);
- Restrict public access through temporary emergency closure or in coordination with adjacent land managers, as needed for Condor protection; and
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species.

Erskine Creek ACEC: Recommend for designation 3,015 acres of public lands and 1,004 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 4,141 acres, as the Erskine Creek ACEC (Map 2.7, 2.11, 2.16) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects (i.e., those producing electricity for the national grid);
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law approximately 320 acres in E ½, SE ¼, Section 8; E ½, SW ¼, W ½, SE ¼, Section 15; and NE ¼, NW ¼, NW ¼, NE ¼, Section 22, T. 27, S., R. 33 E., MDB&M. If additional caves are discovered within the ACEC, these would also be recommended for proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law.

## 2.2.18 OUTSTANDING NATURAL AREAS

### *Goal*

Protect, conserve, and enhance, for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations, the Piedras Blancas Light Station Outstanding Natural Area for its unique and nationally important historical, natural, cultural, scientific, educational, scenic, and recreational values.

### *Objective*

Reconstruct, preserve and interpret the Piedras Blancas Light Station to during the period of its greatest historic significance (1875 and 1940), while providing for resource protection and managed use by the visiting public.

Provide support for international research of coastal ecosystems surrounding the Piedras Blancas Light Station.

Protect and coordinate the interpretation of the important archaeological sites with the affected Native American communities.

Coordinate and collaborate management of the Piedras Blancas Light Station with California Department of Parks and Recreation, San Luis Obispo County, local communities, and other interested entities.

### *Decisions*

The following features and structures would be restored or reconstructed to provide an accurate representation of what Piedras Blancas looked like in its early years:

- Lighthouse
- Fog Signal Building
- Fuel/Oil House

- Tank Storage Building
- Fuel and Storage Building
- Laundry
- Watchroom
- Keeper's Triplex
- Head Keeper's Residence
- Barn
- Historic Landscape

Close, prohibit, or otherwise make unavailable the Piedras Blancas Light Station to the following:

- All forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws;
- Operation of the mineral leasing and geothermal leasing laws and the mineral materials laws;
- Livestock grazing;
- Public access except for BLM tours, permits, and other specific authorizations;
- Equestrian use;
- Discharge of firearms and hunting; and
- Authorization of commercial communications transmission equipment.

Continue the withdrawal of the Piedras Blancas Light Station ONA from location, entry, and patent under the public land mining laws beyond the legislatively provided 20-year withdrawal to extend for the life of this RMP.

Manage the Piedras Blancas Outstanding Natural Area as VRM Class I, in accordance with its special designation, with special consideration of the importance of the cultural modifications and to restoring the historic lighthouse and facilities. This VRM Class I is adjusted to consider these cultural artifacts as an important facet of the visual landscape and to allow for the maintenance, repair, and continued restoration to preserve the outstanding visual landscape of the area.

Provide access to Native Americans for traditional cultural and religious purposes. The site may be closed to the general public to protect the privacy of traditional cultural and religious activities in such areas by the Native American religious community.

Acquire water supply conveyance rights on a corridor between the Light Station boundary and a nearby spring or water source and acquire an appropriate water right from the State of California for all water use.

Acquire access rights on a corridor between the Light Station boundary and the nearest public road. Add and administer as part of the Outstanding Natural Area any additional lands or interest in lands next to the Outstanding Natural Area acquired by the United States.

### **2.2.19 BACK COUNTRY BYWAYS**

#### *Goal*

Where appropriate and feasible, highlight the spectacular nature of the western landscapes through education and interpretation along linear travel routes which provide recreational driving opportunities that allow for the experiences of solitude and isolation.

#### *Objectives*

Provide an appropriate level of driving opportunity commensurate with route conditions.

### **2.2.20 NATIONAL TRAILS**

#### *Goal*

Provide continued protection and support for national trails, to preserve, improve and restore the character for which they were designated.

#### *Objectives*

Coordinate and collaborate on the management of the PCNST to maintain its integrity, continue maintenance, and enforce allowable uses, while providing appropriate access and facilities for users and maintaining the scenic character and quality of the trail.

Provide for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs of an expanding population, promoting the preservation of, public access to, travel within, and enjoyment of the outdoor areas through the support of National Recreation Trails.

#### *Decisions*

Support and incorporate management of the PCNST Dove Springs and Cache Peak segments by the BLM Ridgecrest Field Office where the trail crosses into the Bakersfield Decision area.

Establish a 0.25-mile wide corridor along the PCNST (Owens Peak segment) to apply specific management incorporating and amended by the comprehensive PCNST Management Plan (Pacific Crest Trail Management Options Plan, BLM 1980), as follows:

- Close to fluid mineral and geothermal leasing;
- Close to the mineral material disposal;
- Designate as VRM Class I;
- Identify the corridor as a ROW exclusion area; and
- Identify the corridor as lands to be retained.

Continue designation and management of the Wu Ki' Oh Trail (formerly named the Squaw Leap Trail) as a National Recreation Trail.

### **2.2.21 WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS**

#### *Goal*

River segments suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (NWSRS) would be free-flowing in nature, meet water quality standards, and continue to possess outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs) that make them eligible.

#### *Objectives*

Determine suitable river segments for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (NWSRS). Manage those suitable river segments so to maintain their free-flowing nature, water quality, ORVs, and tentative classification, pending congressional action or for the duration of the RMP.

#### *Decisions*

Establish a corridor extending 0.25 miles from each edge suitable river segment, in which the following interim protective management guidelines would apply:

- Approve no actions altering the free-flowing nature of the suitable segment through impoundments, diversions, channeling, or riprapping;
- Approve no actions that would measurably diminish the stream segment's identified outstandingly remarkable value(s); and
- Approve no actions that would modify the setting or level of development of the suitable river segment to a degree that would change its identified classification.

### **2.2.22 WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS**

#### *Goal*

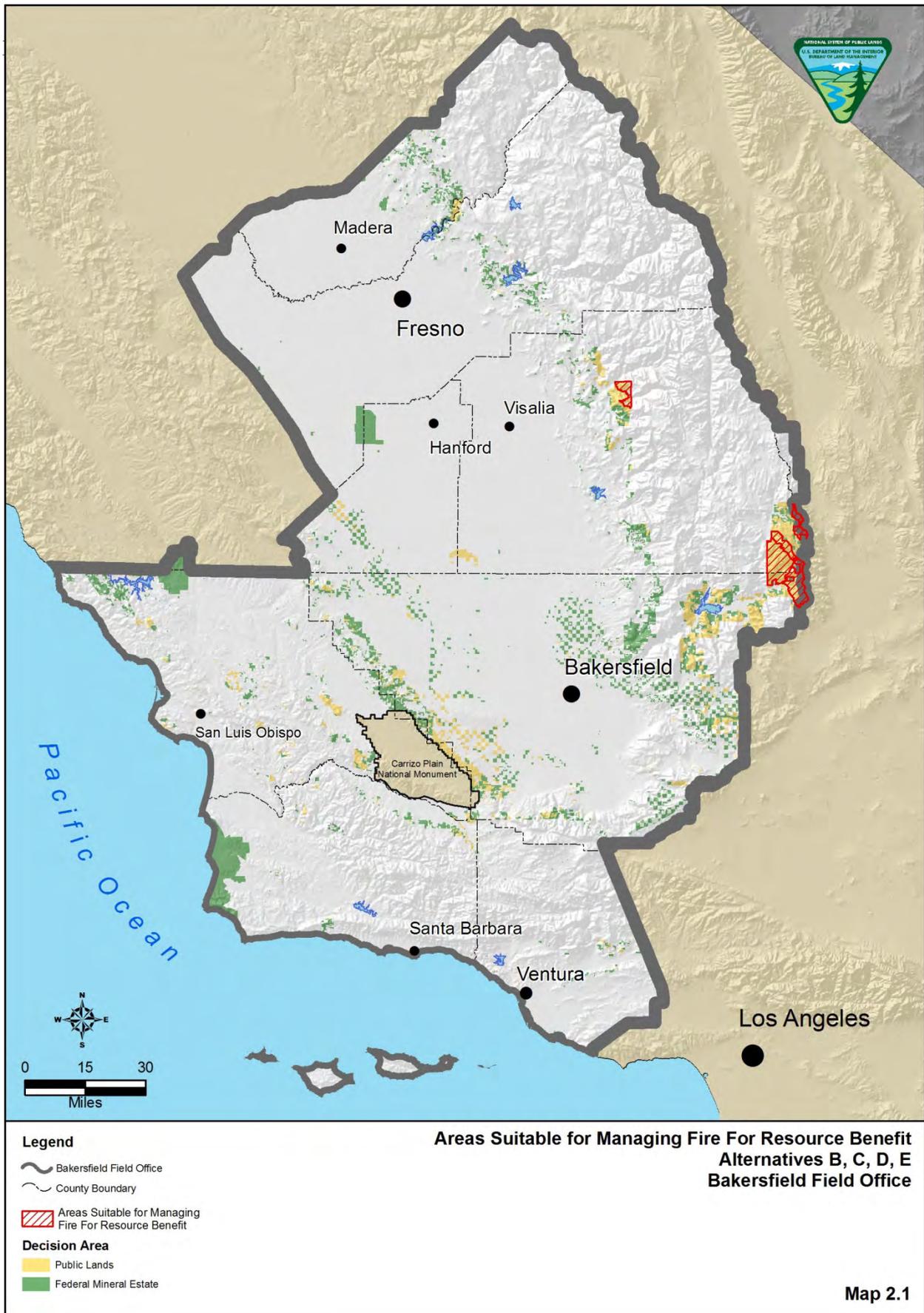
WSAs would continue to be suitable for future designation as wilderness until such time that congress either designates as wilderness or releases the area.

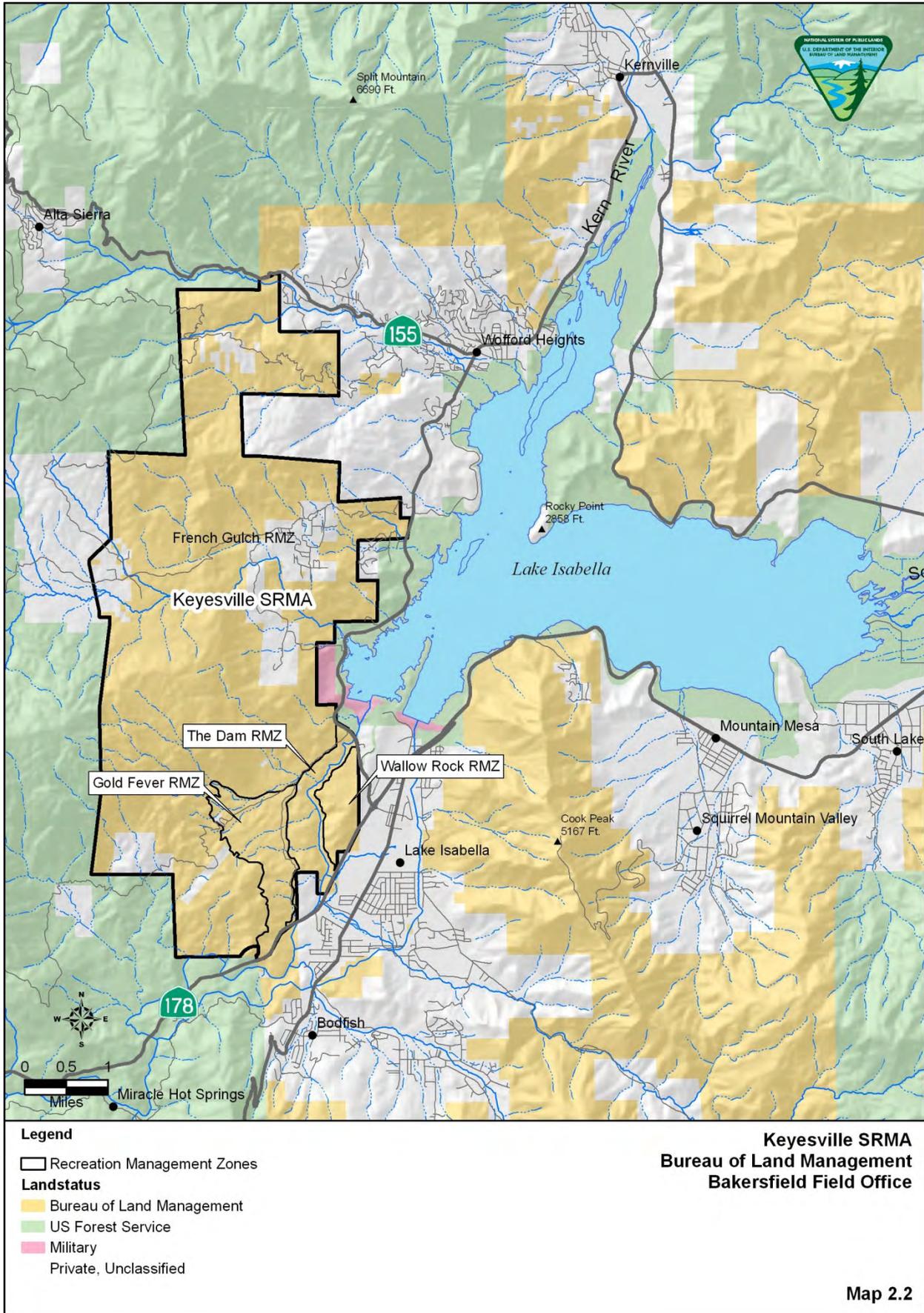
#### *Objective*

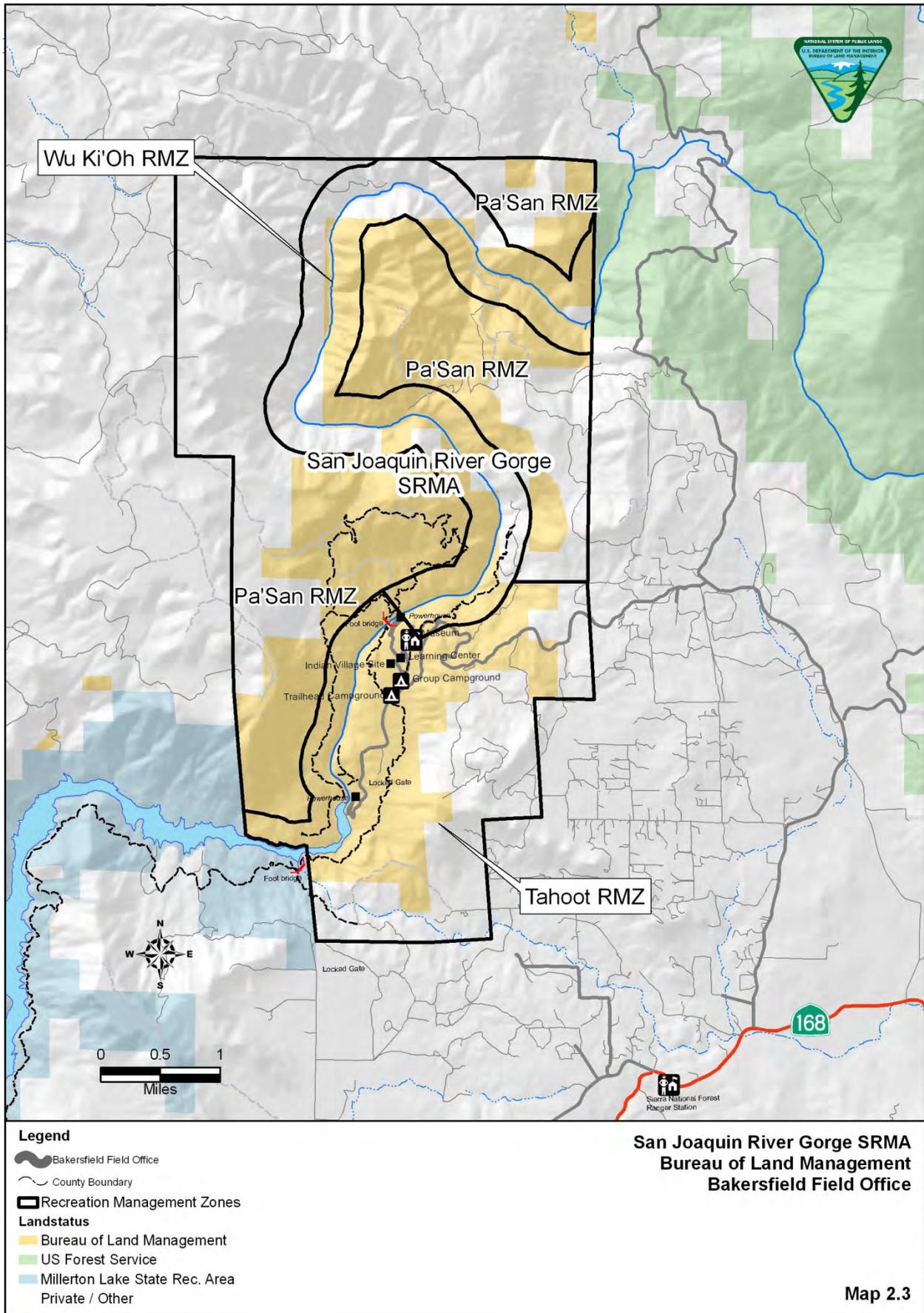
Manage WSAs in a manner that does not impair the suitability of the area for the future designation as wilderness until such time that Congress releases them from study status.

#### *Decision*

Manage WSAs in accordance with BLM Interim Management Policy for Lands under Wilderness Review (IMP) (BLM Handbook H-8550-1 [BLM 1995])







## 2.3 ALTERNATIVE B

The following section describes management that would be established under Alternative B, presented by program area. Where program management is the same across all action alternatives, it is presented above under *Management Common to All Action Alternatives*. Total management decisions for each program are inclusive of the decisions in both the common to all and this section.

The goals for each resource are common to all and, therefore, are presented in that section above. Some objectives do vary within the individual alternatives those that do are described below under the *Objective* headings.

### RESOURCES

#### 2.3.1 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

##### *Decisions*

Prohibit the release of un-retrieved nonnative animals, except for the use of approved biocontrol agents, authorized livestock, and the augmentation of naturalized species in accordance with a CDFG permit or plan.

Allow removal of dead and downed woody materials from public lands only with administrative approval. Collection of fire wood from dead and down woody material for on-site campfires is permissible provided woody material is less than four inches in diameter.

Identify split estate with surface managed as compensation for biological resources as open to fluid mineral leasing subject to major constraint (CSU – Compensation Lands).

Identify the Compensation Lands ACEC as open to fluid mineral leasing subject to major constraints (NSO – Compensation Lands ACEC), if consistent with the USFWS, CDFG, or other compensation document or agreement.

Identify public lands with mineral estate adjacent to or within the boundary of the Chimineas unit of the Carrizo Plain Ecological Reserve as open to fluid mineral leasing subject to major constraint (CSU-Chimineas Ranch).

Identify split estate with federal mineral estate within the boundary of the Chimineas unit of the Carrizo Plain Ecological Reserve as open to fluid mineral leasing subject to major constraint (CSU-Existing Surface Use/Management).

Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law federal mineral estate underlying compensation lands regardless of surface ownership.

Identify the following areas as areas of ecological importance with specific management, as appropriate:

Conserved Lands: for protection and recovery of federally listed species on public lands identified as reserves or corridors by the USFWS and CDFG (see *A Conservation Strategy for Threatened and Endangered Species in the San Joaquin Valley* in Appendix B).

- Manage public lands within reserves or corridors as conserved land consistent with the direction established by the USFWS and CDFG through the Recovery Plan for Upland Species of the San Joaquin Valley and other pertinent recovery of conservation plans and the Kern Valley Floor HCP and other pertinent HCPs.
- Manage reserves to restrict surface disturbance on public lands in reserves to not exceed 10 percent of any 640-acre section, aliquot section, or aggregate of adjacent aliquot sections.
- Manage corridors to restrict surface disturbance on public lands in corridors to not exceed 25 percent of any 640-acre section, aliquot section, or aggregate of adjacent aliquot sections.
- Allow certain areas of high intensity oil and gas development within reserves and corridors to be identified and managed separately from the reserve and corridor system. These areas will not be subject to the 10 percent and 25 percent surface disturbance limit.
- Include certain areas outside the reserve and corridor system to be managed as corridors including the application of corridor disturbance restrictions.

Irish Hills: for protection of diverse coastal plant communities, including Bishop pine forest, rare plant habitat, and notably large oaks and manzanita.

- Identify as open to fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU – Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulation);
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires;
- Prohibit overnight camping, except in any future developed recreation sites developed in partnership with adjacent land owners;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms and coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Rusty Peak: for protection of serpentine chaparral, coastal live oak woodland, perennial grassland, San Luis serpentine dudleya, and other sensitive plant species.

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU- Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulation);
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Salinas River: for protection of diverse vegetation communities and the exemplary riparian area.

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulations);
- Recommend proposal of the riparian zone (approximately 10 acres) for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel; and
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species.

Recommend the following areas as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) based on their significant biological resource values; Cypress Mountain ACEC; Cyrus Canyon ACEC; Tierra Redonda ACEC; and Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC.

### **2.3.2 CAVES AND KARST RESOURCES**

#### *Decisions*

Designate Granite Cave as a significant cave, based on its important and significant cave resources, which include both cultural and biotic resources, that are within and dependent on the cave. This cave will be managed as Class III to fully protect the cultural integrity of the area and its associated cave resources.

Designate Millerton Cave as a significant cave, based on its important and significant cave resources, including geological formations, resources of known cultural importance, biotic resources, and the potential for resource-based recreation. This cave will be managed as Class I to allow occasional recreational use; but it shall not be interpreted or otherwise advertised, other than through general area/geological interpretation.

All caves within ACECs whose importance and significance speaks directly to the protection of known or potential cave and karst resources shall be determined significant, in accordance with 43 CFR 37.11(e). The ACECs whose designation relates to cave and karst resources are Erskine Creek and Kaweah. Further investigation and study of these cave and karst resources may be required to assign management objectives and prescriptions. Interim management shall be as Class II to protect cave resources.

### **2.3.3 LANDS WITH WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS**

#### *Decisions*

Manage the following areas (3,470 acres as shown on Map 2.8) for the protection of wilderness characteristics: Bear Mountain, Big Pine Meadow, Chappell D Parcel, Edgar Ranch West, Lamont Meadow Parcels, and Roszewska Property.

Establish prescriptive management for the protection of wilderness characteristics as follows:

- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from mineral entry;
- Identify as closed to mineral leasing;
- Identify as closed to mineral material sales;
- Identify as Rights-of Way avoidance areas;
- Designate as OHV Closed area;
- Designate as VRM Class II, unless a more stringent overlapping designation (e.g., WSR or PCNST Corridor) exists.
- Livestock grazing and the activities and facilities that support a grazing program may be permitted to continue at the same level and degree after initial authorization;
- Prohibit new structures unrelated to preserving wilderness characteristics; and
- Retain in Federal ownership.

#### **2.3.4 VISUAL RESOURCES**

##### *Decisions*

Designate VRM classes for the Decision area as shown on Map 2.4 and summarized by the following;

- Class I: 144,730 acres
- Class II: 207,790 acres
- Class III: 525,860 acres
- Class IV: 271,380 acres

## **RESOURCE USES**

#### **2.3.5 COMPREHENSIVE TRAIL AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT**

##### *Decisions*

Designate in accordance with 43 CFR 8342 as defined in 43 CFR 8340.05(f), (g), and (h) the following OHV areas:

- Open: 0 acres
- Closed: 142,940 acres
- Limited: 261,140 acres

##### *Key Implementation Decisions*

Designate roads and/or trails as identified on Travel Management Network Maps B1-B9, summarized by the following mileages:

- Motorized: 770 miles

- Non-motorized: 31 miles
- Non-mechanized: 45 miles
- Authorized: 783 miles
- Closed: 308 miles

### **2.3.6 LANDS AND REALTY**

#### **Land Tenure**

##### *Decisions*

Determine the public lands (61,440 acres) and federal mineral estate (337,440 acres) shown on Map LR-B (Appendix O) as available for consideration of a disposal action (sale, exchange, or other means) in so much that these lands meet the “isolated, difficult or expensive to manage, or are needed for community expansion” disposal criteria contained in FLPMA Section 203(a). However, site-specific investigation to ascertain whether a specific parcel meets the disposal criteria outlined in this RMP would still be required prior to any disposal action being taken.

#### **Land Use Authorizations**

##### *Decisions*

Identify all ACECs and the Piedras Blancas ONA as Right-of-way avoidance areas, except for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects.

Identify the Piedras Blancas ONA, SRMAs, and VRM Class I and II areas as exclusion areas for utility scale renewable energy Rights-of-way.

Identify lands with wilderness characteristics and suitable Wild and Scenic River Corridors as Rights-of-way avoidance areas.

#### **Withdrawals**

##### *Decisions*

Recommend proposal for withdrawal all or certain types of mining operations under the mining laws 29,050 acres, in 19 areas.

### **2.3.7 LIVESTOCK GRAZING**

#### *Objectives*

Provide for livestock grazing opportunities on lands in the grazing decision area in a manner that limits impacts on other resources and meets RMP goals.

#### *Decisions*

Allocate 328,700 acres of public land as available for livestock grazing; of which 7,800 acres (Atwell Island) would be available only for the purpose of vegetation management objectives other than producing livestock forage. Allocate the remaining 66,200 acres as unavailable for livestock grazing,

including the Deer Spring, Frog Pond, South Fork of the Kern River, Irish Hills, Rusty Peak and the Salinas River areas of ecological importance and Big Pine Meadow and Rosewska Meadow (Map LG-B, in separate map packet).

Allocate newly acquired lands to match allocations given to the surrounding or adjacent lands, except where land is unsuitable for livestock grazing or the purpose for which the land was acquired is incompatible with livestock grazing including restrictions placed on future use through acquisition documents.

Apply the appropriate Bakersfield FO-specific livestock grazing management guidelines (Appendix F-2) to the applicable grazing authorizations within the grazing decision area as follows:

For Allotments within San Joaquin Valley listed species habitat;

- Mulch Readiness at 500 lbs/acre and 2" green growth, or 700 lbs/acre without green growth
- Mulch Threshold at 500 lbs/acre
- with Saltbush Scrub; Dec.1-May 31 season of use or meet form class, foliage density, and reproductive uniformity criteria

For Riparian areas in;

- Poor-Fair Condition; Nov.1-May 31 season of use and apply the Central CA Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management
- Good-Excellent Condition - Maintain current season of use and apply the Central CA Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management as needed.

For known occupied habitats and/or known populations of;

- California jewelflower - No grazing unless in approved study or research show grazing to be beneficial.
- San Joaquin woolly threads - Apply the Central CA Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.
- Kern mallow - No grazing unless in approved study or research shows grazing to be beneficial.
- Hoover's woolly Star - Apply the Central CA Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.
- Kelso Creek monkeyflower - No grazing.
- Kern primrose sphinx moth - No grazing.
- Tehachapi slender salamander - Apply the Central CA Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.
- Other species that become listed - Prescription that takes into account specific species requirements.

### *Key Implementation Decisions*

Authorize livestock grazing at the initial implementation levels (Appendix F-5). Based on existing authorizations, projected new authorizations and application of the central California and Bakersfield FO Specific livestock grazing management guidelines, forage authorized for livestock grazing within the Decision Area would total approximately 40,000 AUMs.

## **2.3.8 MINERALS MANAGEMENT**

### **Leasable Minerals**

#### *Decisions*

Establish the major constraint of “NSO – Compensation Lands ACEC” that prohibits surface disturbance on the entire lease for the purpose of minimizing or eliminating adverse effects associated with fluid mineral development on lands acquired as compensation lands with the following stipulation language:

*All or a portion of this lease occurs within the boundaries of the Compensation Lands ACEC. These lands may have a governing document that prohibits certain activities. No new surface disturbing activity is allowed on the lease. Furthermore, access to federal minerals within the lease will only be allowed from off-site sources not considered to be compensation lands (e.g., compensation land in private ownership). This stipulation shall not be waived, however may be granted exception or modified as follows:*

**Exception:** *The Authorized Officer may grant an exception if, after coordination with appropriate agency (e.g., CDFG and USFWS), an environmental review determines the action as proposed or conditioned would not impair the values present and is consistent with the document that established the compensation land.*

**Modification:** *The Authorized Officer may modify this stipulation to allow surface use on a portion or the entire lease if, after coordination with appropriate agency (e.g., CDFG and USFWS), an environmental review determines the action as proposed or conditioned would not impair the values present and is consistent with the document that established the compensation land.*

Establish the major constraint of “CSU – Compensation Lands” for the purpose of minimizing or eliminating adverse effects associated with fluid mineral development on lands managed as compensation land with the following stipulation language:

*All or a portion of this lease underlies lands managed as compensation land by the BLM or an entity other than the BLM that may have a governing document that prohibits certain activities. To allow only a compatible amount of disturbance to unique or significant biological values, no more than ten (10) percent of the surface within any parcel may be disturbed on the surface reserve lands overlaying the lease. Furthermore, access to federal minerals within the lease will not disturb more than ten (10) percent of the surface within any parcel from off-site sources that are compensation lands (e.g., compensation land in private ownership). This stipulation may be granted exception, modified, or waived as follows:*

**Exception:** *The Authorized Officer may grant an exception if, after coordination with appropriate agency (e.g., CDFG and USFWS), an environmental review determines the action as proposed or conditioned would not impair the values present and is consistent with the document that established the compensation land.*

**Modification:** *The Authorized Officer may modify this stipulation if, after coordination with appropriate agency (e.g., CDFG and USFWS), an environmental review determines the action as proposed or conditioned would not impair the values present and is consistent with the document that established the compensation land.*

**Waiver:** *The Authorized Officer may grant a waiver to the stipulation if the lease parcel no longer considered as compensation land by the appropriate agency (e.g., CDFG and USFWS).*

Establish the major constraint of “CSU – Chimineas Ranch” for the purpose of preventing or reducing disturbance to unique or significant natural resources from fluid mineral development with the following stipulation language:

*This lease is within the boundaries of, or adjacent to, the State of California’s Chimineas Ranch Ecological Reserve, an area that contains unique or significant natural or cultural values. Prior to the authorization of any surface disturbing activities, a preliminary environmental review will be conducted to identify the potential presence of natural or cultural values. Authorizations may be delayed until completion of the necessary surveys during the appropriate time period for these resources. Surface disturbing activities may be prohibited on portions or the entire lease, and some activities may be prohibited during seasonal time periods. This stipulation shall not be waived, however may be granted exception or modified as follows:*

**Exception:** *The Authorized Officer may grant an exception if, after coordination with CDFG, an environmental review determines that the activity, as proposed or conditioned, would not impair the values present and is consistent with the management of the ecological reserve.*

**Modification:** *The Authorized Officer may modify this stipulation to further restrict surface use on a portion of or the entire lease if a more stringent requirement is deemed necessary to protect resource values following an environmental review.*

Identify approximately 999,950 acres as open to fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (both CSU – Protected Species and CSU – Sensitive Species). Of this at least 3,880 acres would also be subject to a No Surface Occupancy stipulation. Additional CSU stipulations may be applied to all new leases in conjunction with the lease sale as determined appropriate and in conformance with the RMP.

Identify 13,060 acres as closed to fluid mineral leasing;

- Discretionary closures –Bitter Creek ACEC, lands with wilderness characteristics and suitable segments of WSR.

### Solid (Non-Energy) Leasables

#### *Decisions*

Identify 818,330 acres as open to solid (non-energy) mineral leasing and development.

### Locatable Minerals

#### *Decisions*

Determine and designate the following areas as unsuitable for Notice and Plan of Operation levels mining operations: Granite Cave and The Dam, Wallow Rock, and Gold Fever RMZs. Segregate these areas and recommend proposal for their withdrawal from location under the General Mining Law and condition mineral entry to permit only Casual Use operations (43 CFR 3809.5).

### Salable Minerals

#### *Decisions*

Identify 818,090 acres as open to mineral material disposal.

## 2.3.9 RECREATION AND VISITOR SERVICES

#### *Decisions*

Identify 191,520 acres as lands not designated within a Recreation Management Area. Close 10,965 of these acres (Map 3.30) to public access located within producing oilfields, with well densities averaging higher than 20 wells per 40 acres (or 0.5 wells per acre).

Designate 123,450 acres (Map 2.5) as the Chimney Peak Extensive Recreation Management Area with the following recreation objective, management actions and allowable use decisions;

Throughout the life of the RMP the Chimney Peak Extensive Recreation Management Area will offer recreation opportunities, in an unchanged backcountry/primitive physical recreation setting, that facilitate the visitors' freedom to participate in primitive unconfined recreation types through easy access to designated Wilderness including camping grounds, trailheads and trails.

- Maintain and improve designated camping areas at Chimney Creek, Long-Valley and Walker Pass.
- Establish *standard amenity* fees for overnight camping at designated camping areas.

Designate 160 acres (T 7 S, R 20 E, Section 2) as the Fresno River Extensive Recreation Management Area with the following recreation objective, management actions and allowable use decisions;

Within the life of the RMP the Fresno River ERMA will offer limited recreation opportunities in a rural setting, facilitating various interpretative and educational opportunities.

- Prohibit overnight camping.
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms and coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting.

- Require an authorization or mining notice for casual use prospecting activity, other than gold panning.

Designate 23,750 acres (Maps 2.5-2.6) as the Temblor Special Recreation Management Area, established with a “community” market strategy (Appendix H) for local communities (Taft), nearby rural areas and the population center of Bakersfield. The SRMA is subdivided into two Recreational Management Zones, each with the following recreation objectives, management actions and allowable use decisions (Appendix H contains a complete description of each RMZs targeted activities, experiences, benefits, and Natural Resource Recreation Settings);

Temblor North RMZ: In visitor assessments, 50% of respondents who participated in targeted activities report the ability to realize the targeted experiences and benefits.

**Targeted Activities:** OHV trail riding; hunting; target shooting

**Targeted Experiences:** Developing skills and abilities; testing personal endurance; enjoying risk-taking adventure; savoring the total sensory experience of a natural landscape; escaping everyday responsibilities for awhile

**Targeted Benefits:** *Personal:* Greater self-reliance; improved skills for outdoor enjoyment; Closer relationship with the natural world. *Community:* Providing a place near but outside the community to recreate; removing unwanted use from industrial areas; addressing health and safety concerns. *Economic:* Improved local economic stability; maintenance of community’s distinctive recreation tourism market. *Environmental:* Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes; reduced negative human impacts such as litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails.

- Develop high quality trail system, including maintenance of many existing trail, creating additional recreation trails and closure of inappropriate routes in partnership with user groups and adjacent land owners.
- Limit commercial Special Recreation Permits available within the SRMA to no more than three (3) active permits. Special Recreation Permits for competitive events would not be issued.
- Establish appropriate “Special Area” fees for OHV activity within the SRMA.

Urban Interface RMZ: In visitor assessments, 65% of respondents who participated in targeted activities report the ability to realize the targeted experiences and benefits.

**Targeted Activities:** OHV trail riding; driving for pleasure; dispersed camping

**Targeted Experiences:** Developing skills and abilities; testing personal endurance; enjoying risk-taking adventure; savoring the total sensory experience of a natural landscape; escaping everyday responsibilities for awhile

**Targeted Benefits:** *Personal:* Greater self-reliance; improved skills for outdoor enjoyment; closer relationship with the natural world. *Community:* Providing a place near but outside the

community to recreate; removing unwanted use from industrial areas; addressing health and safety concerns. *Economic*: Improved local economic stability; maintenance of community's distinctive recreation tourism market. *Environmental*: Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes; reduced negative human impacts such as litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails.

- Acquire legal public access from the community of Taft.
- Establish parking/staging area in cooperation with adjacent land owners.
- Develop high quality trail system, including maintenance of many existing trails, creating additional recreation trails and closure of inappropriate routes in partnership with user groups and adjacent land owners.
- Limit commercial Special Recreation Permits available within the SRMA to no more than three (3) active permits. Special Recreation Permits for competitive events would not be issued.
- Establish appropriate "Special Area" fees for OHV activity within the SRMA.

## **SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS**

### **2.3.10 AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN**

#### *Goal*

Cypress Mountain ACEC: Protect and preserve natural systems and processes.

Cyrus Canyon ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for sensitive species and protection for natural systems.

Horse Canyon ACEC: Protect cultural resources, and various natural processes.

Tierra Redonda ACEC: Protect geologic formations, and various natural processes.

Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for sensitive and listed species and protection for natural systems.

#### *Objectives*

Cypress Mountain ACEC: Preserve unique plant communities of serpentine chaparral and northern interior cypress forest dominated by Sargent cypress.

Cyrus Canyon ACEC: Protect sensitive biological resources including Kelso Creek monkeyflower and riparian values.

Horse Canyon ACEC: Protect significant cultural sites, including traditional cultural properties associated with Native American values and important paleontological resources.

Tierra Redonda ACEC: Preserve significant paleontological resources, unique sand dune formation and coast live oak woodland.

Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC: Protect habitat for blunt-nosed leopard lizard and its hybrid zone, Kern primrose sphinx moth, and California jewelflower. Maintain the link between the Sierra Madre and the San Emigdio Mountains.

### *Decisions*

Bitter Creek ACEC: Recommend for designation 1,026 acres of public lands and 5,095 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 20,914 acres, as the Bitter Creek ACEC (Map 2.7) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects (i.e., those producing electricity for the national grid);
- Prohibit public access to lands adjacent to USFWS surface (434 acres);
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping; and
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms and coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting.

Compensation Lands ACEC: Recommend for designation 283 acres of public lands and any future parcels of compensation land as the Compensation Lands ACEC (Map 2.7) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (NSO);
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Manage all existing and future parcels of compensation land (including lands not specifically labeled as “compensation” within the parcel) as part of the Compensation Lands ACEC;
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law if necessary, otherwise lands and minerals would remain unopened to entry under the mining laws;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel in areas that are not grazed by livestock;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Require all pets to be leashed (maximum eight-foot length) at all times. Require removal of pet fecal matter by owners or handlers.

Cypress Mountain ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 1,080 acres of public lands; within a boundary of 3,035 acres, as the Cypress Mountain ACEC (Map 2.7) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU- Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulations);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;

- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit cross county equestrian travel;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Cyrus Canyon ACEC: Recommend for designation 5,373 acres of public lands and 1 acre of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 5,374 acres, as the Cyrus Canyon ACEC (Map 2.7) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit equestrian use;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species;
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization; and
- No new apiary permits will be authorized. The existing apiary permit may be renewed but not transferred. The existing apiary site will be retired when the current holder does not renew the permit.

Hopper Mountain ACEC: Recommend for designation 2,027 acres of public lands and 2,947 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 4,978 acres, as the Hopper Mountain ACEC (Map 2.7) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (CSU-Protected Species and CSU-Raptor stipulations)
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify portions as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Restrict public access through temporary emergency closure or in coordination with adjacent land managers, as needed for Condor protection;
- Implement Best Management Practices to minimize impacts on condors from public use and oil field activities;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping; and

- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species.

Horse Canyon ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 1,491 acres of public lands and 1,339 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 6,897 acres, as the Horse Canyon ACEC (Map 2.7) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (NSO);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Prohibit rock hounding, including the casual collection of fossils, mineral agates, and semi-precious stones.

Kaweah ACEC: Recommend for designation 26,891 acres of public lands and 150 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 33,559 acres (expanding the existing Case Mountain ACEC), as the Kaweah ACEC (Map 2.7) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for leasing oil and gas resources, subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Raptor stipulations);
- Identify as closed to geothermal leasing;
- Recommend proposal of cave and karst resources and the giant sequoia groves for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify the giant sequoia groves as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Restrict public access seasonally (closed from May 1 to September 30) to recreation sites along the North Fork of the Kaweah River.
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species;
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization; and
- Protect the giant sequoia groves and mixed conifer forest through implementation of fuels reduction techniques including prescribed burning and vegetation thinning, and removal of ladder fuels.

Kettleman Hills ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 6,726 acres of public lands and 6,969 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 28,874 acres (expanding the existing 9,794-acre ACEC), as the Kettleman Hills ACEC (Map 2.7) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (CSU-Protected Species, CSU-Sensitive Species, and CSU-Raptor stipulations);
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects; and
- Prohibit campfires.

Lokern-Buena Vista ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 11,352 acres of public lands and 4,113 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 69,474 acres (combining the existing Lokern ACEC with the expansion to include the Buena Vista Hills and Valley), as the Lokern-Buena Vista ACEC (Map 2.7) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (CSU-Protected Species and CSU-Sensitive Species stipulations);
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes);
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects; and
- Prohibit campfires.

Los Osos ACEC: Recommend for designation 5 acres of public lands; within a boundary of 32 acres, as the Los Osos ACEC (Map 2.7) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Designate as OHV Closed area;
- Prohibit mechanized use, equestrian use, and cross-country travel by pedestrians;
- Require all pets to be leashed (maximum eight-foot length) at all times. Require removal of pet fecal matter by owners or handlers.
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Piute Cypress ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 2,305 acres of public lands and 212 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 2,544 acres (expanding the existing 1,104-acre ACEC), as the Piute Cypress ACEC (Map 2.7) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes;

- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Protect Piute cypress communities from livestock grazing if deemed necessary through appropriate studies;
- Prohibit campfires; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Pt. Sal ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 77 acres of public lands; within a boundary of 77 acres, as the Pt. Sal ACEC (Map 2.7) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit all cross-country travel;
- Designate as OHV Closed area;
- Prohibit mechanized and equestrian use;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms and coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Tierra Redonda ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 331 acres of public lands and 81 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 1,311 acres, as the Tierra Redonda ACEC (Map 2.7) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (NSO);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC: Recommend for designation 6,351 acres of public lands and 2,584 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 15,247 acres, as the Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC (Map 2.7) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing subject to major constraints (CSU-Protected Species and CSU-Sensitive Species) stipulations;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing habitat containing California jewelflower or Kern primrose sphinx moth;
- Prohibit equestrian use in habitat containing California jewelflower or Kern primrose sphinx moth;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel outside of livestock grazing allotments; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

### **2.3.11 BACK COUNTRY BYWAYS**

#### *Decision*

Revoke the Back Country Byway designation of Canebrake and Long Valley Loop Roads as the Chimney Peak Back Country Byway.

### **2.3.12 NATIONAL TRAILS**

#### *Decision*

Recommend for designation the San Joaquin River Trail as a National Recreation Trail in coordination with other affected entities.

### **2.3.13 WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS**

#### *Decision*

Determine as suitable and recommended for congressional designation in the NWSRS for the classifications identified the North Fork of the Kaweah (Scenic/Recreational) and San Joaquin River Segment 1 (Wild/Scenic).

### **2.3.14 WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS**

#### *Objective*

If released by Congress from study status, maintain wilderness character, where present, within WSAs.

#### *Decisions*

Manage for wilderness characteristics the following WSAs if released from study status by Congress, unless congressional release language provides other specific management guidance;

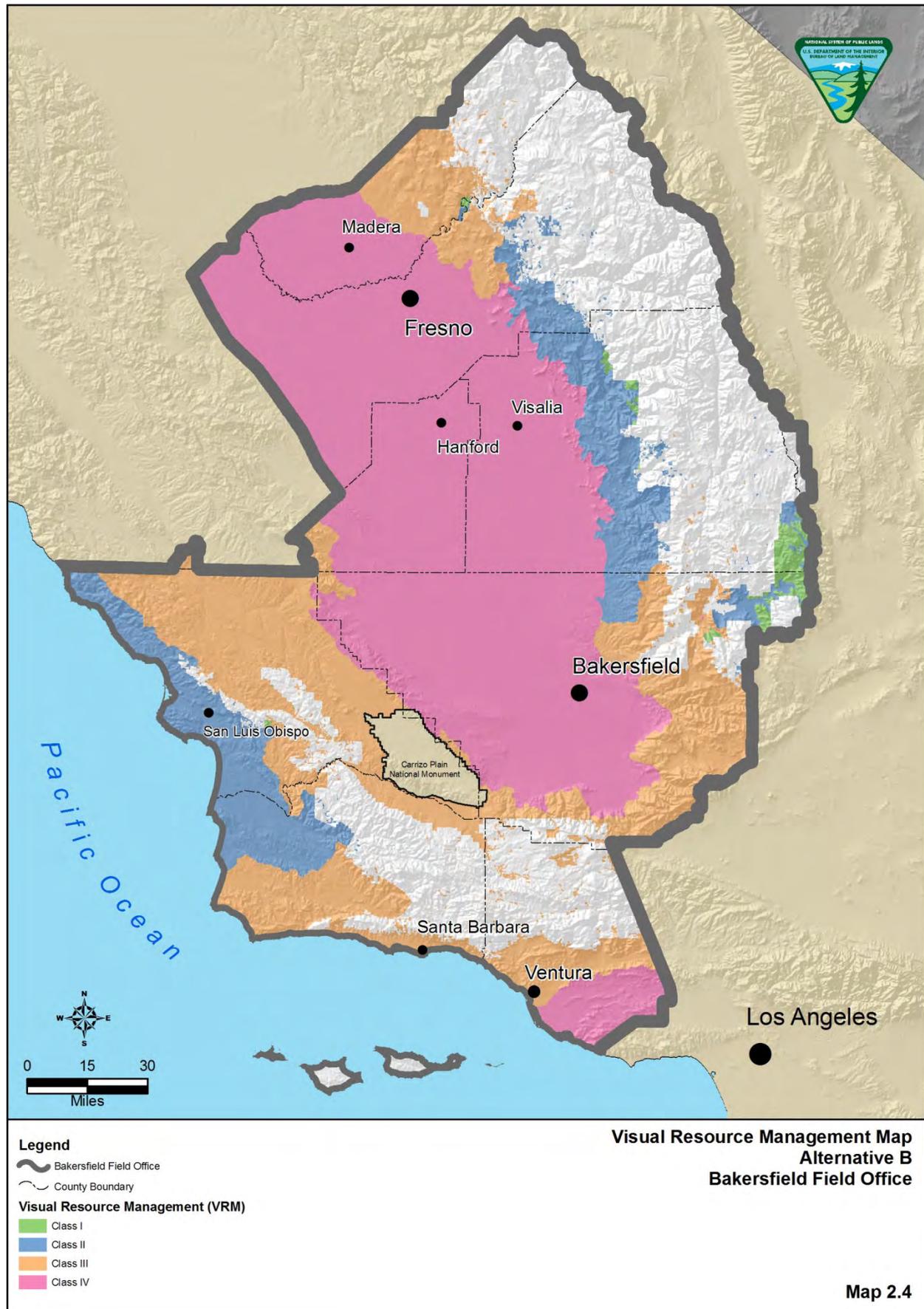
- Machesna WSA (adjacent to USFS Machesna Mountain Wilderness);

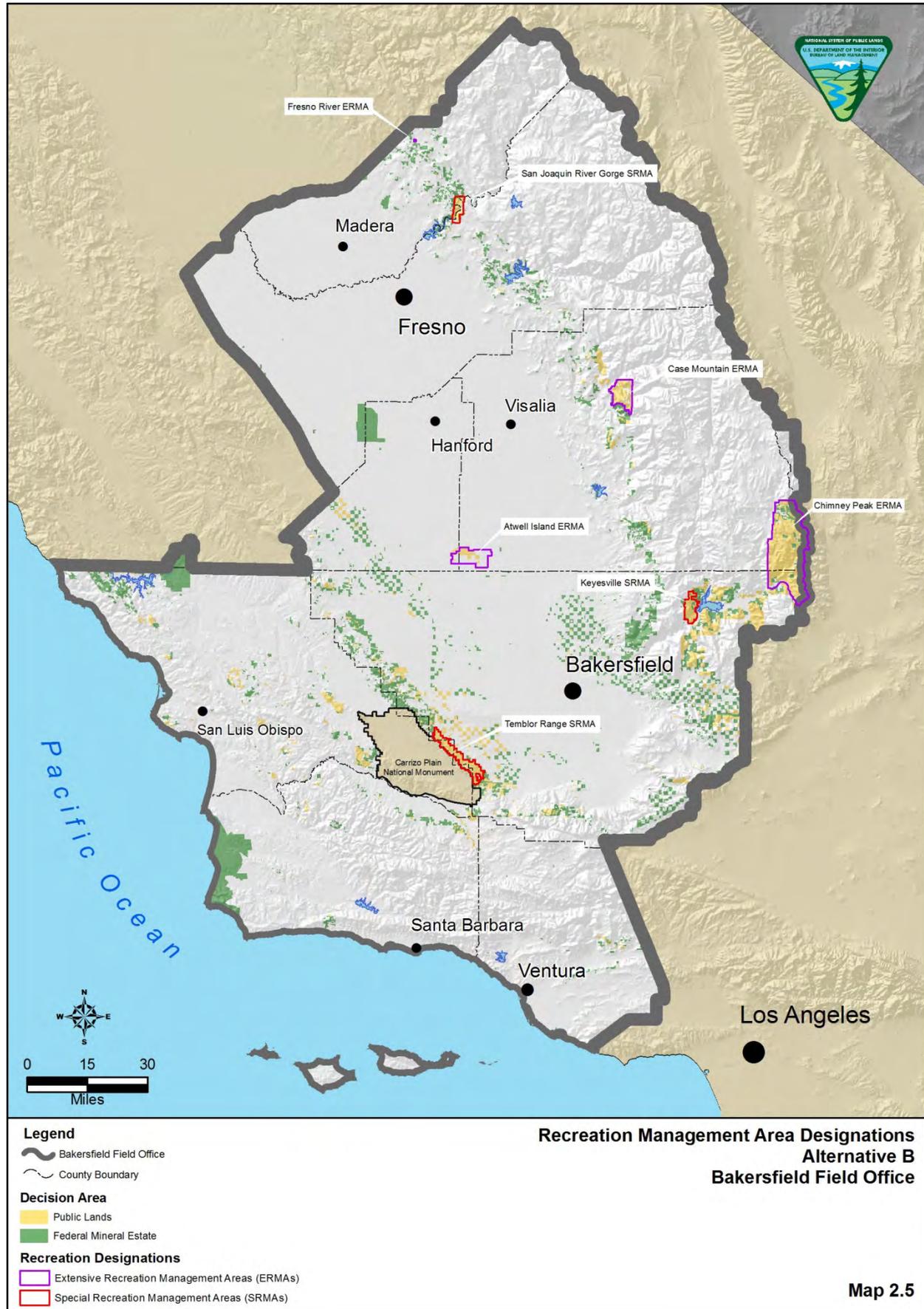
- Owens Peak WSA;
- Rockhouse WSA;
- Sacatar Meadows WSA;
- Scodie WSA; and
- Garcia Mountain WSA (adjacent to USFS Garcia Mountain Wilderness).

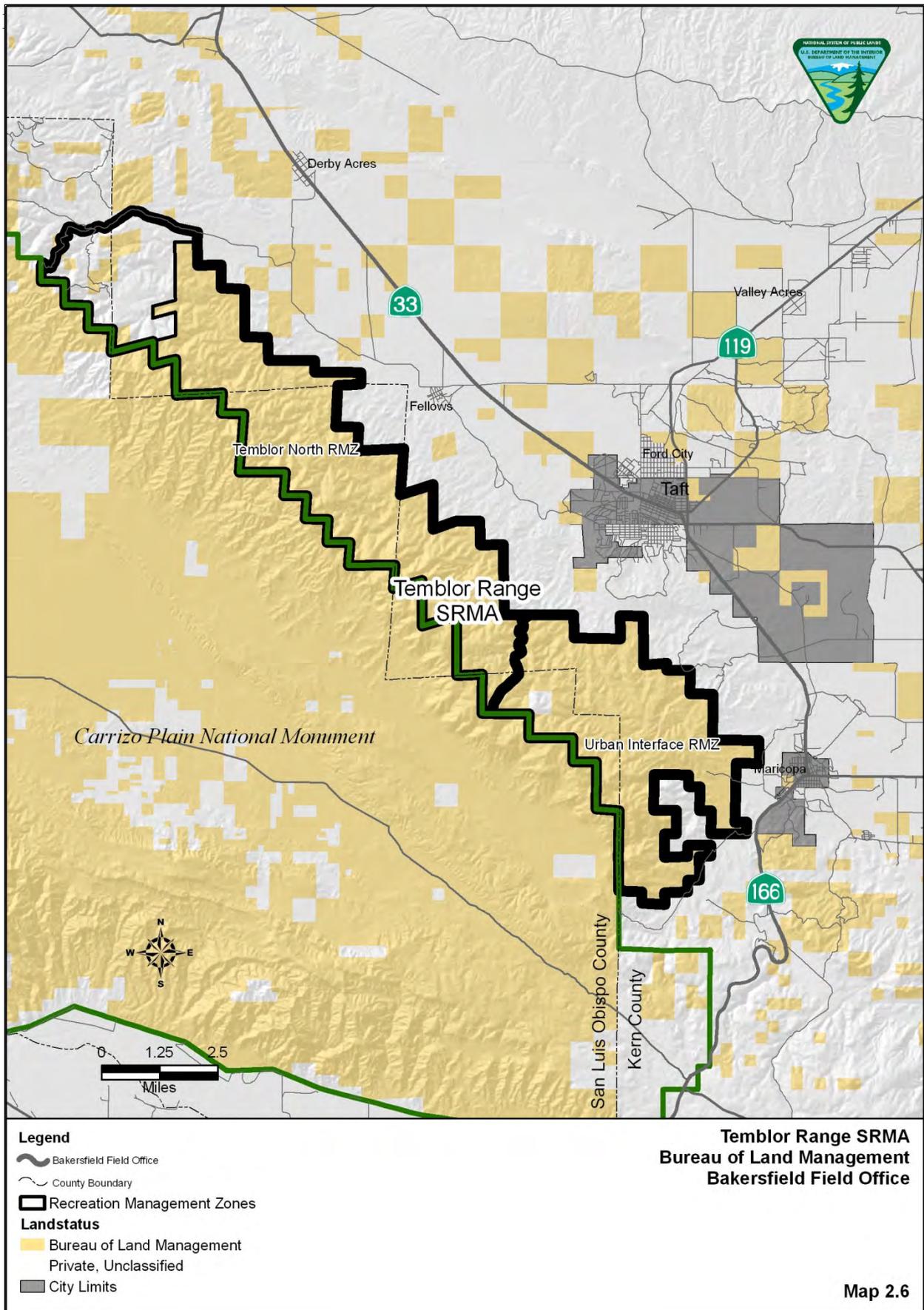
Manage the Milk Ranch/Case Mountain WSA and Sheep Ridge WSA if released from study status by Congress, in accordance with the Kaweah ACEC, unless congressional release language provides other specific management guidance

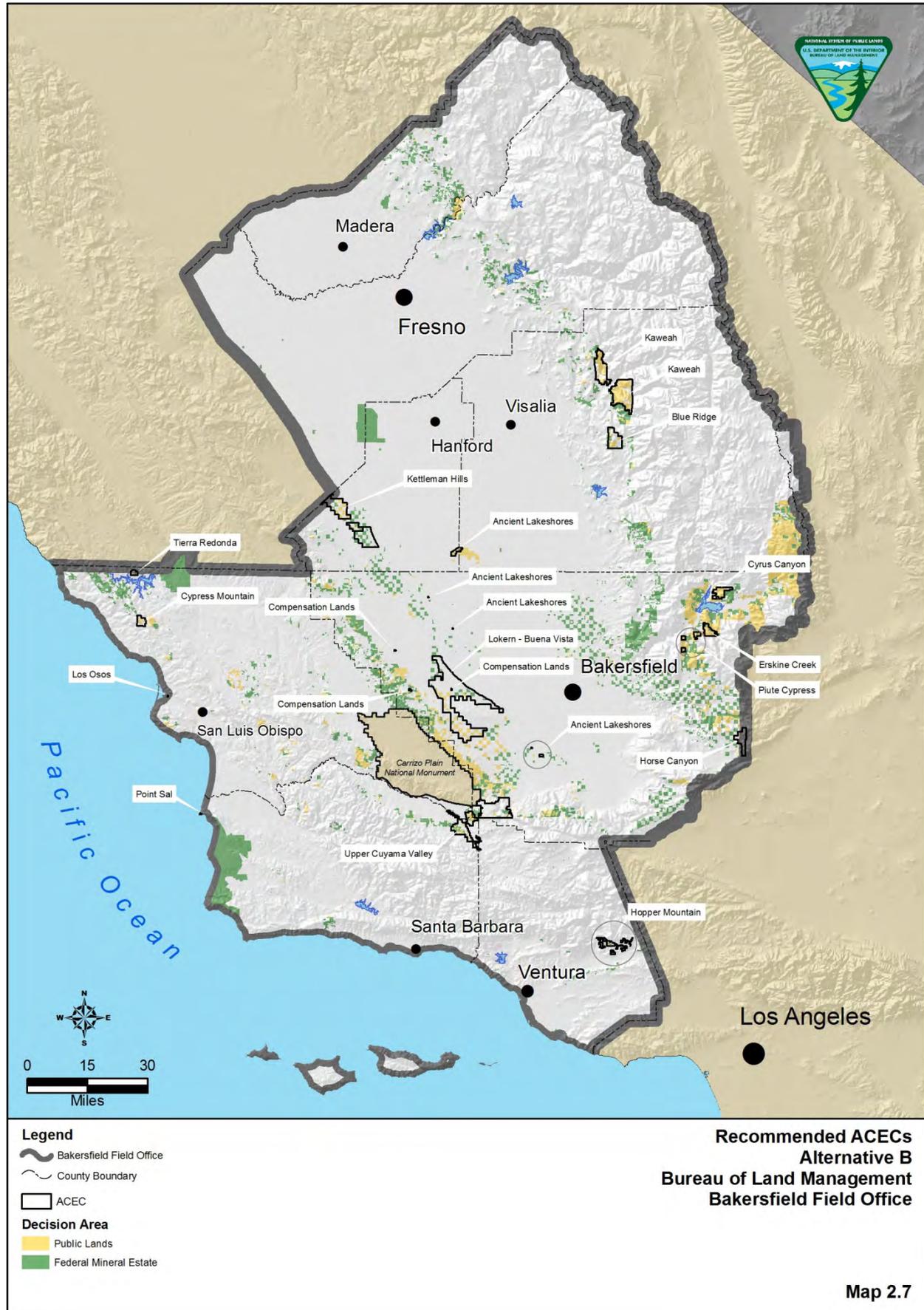
Manage portions of the Piute Cypress WSA in accordance with both the Erskine Creek ACEC and Piute Cypress ACEC if released from study status by Congress, unless congressional release language provides other specific management guidance. The portion not within either ACEC would be managed as multiple-use dispersed public lands.

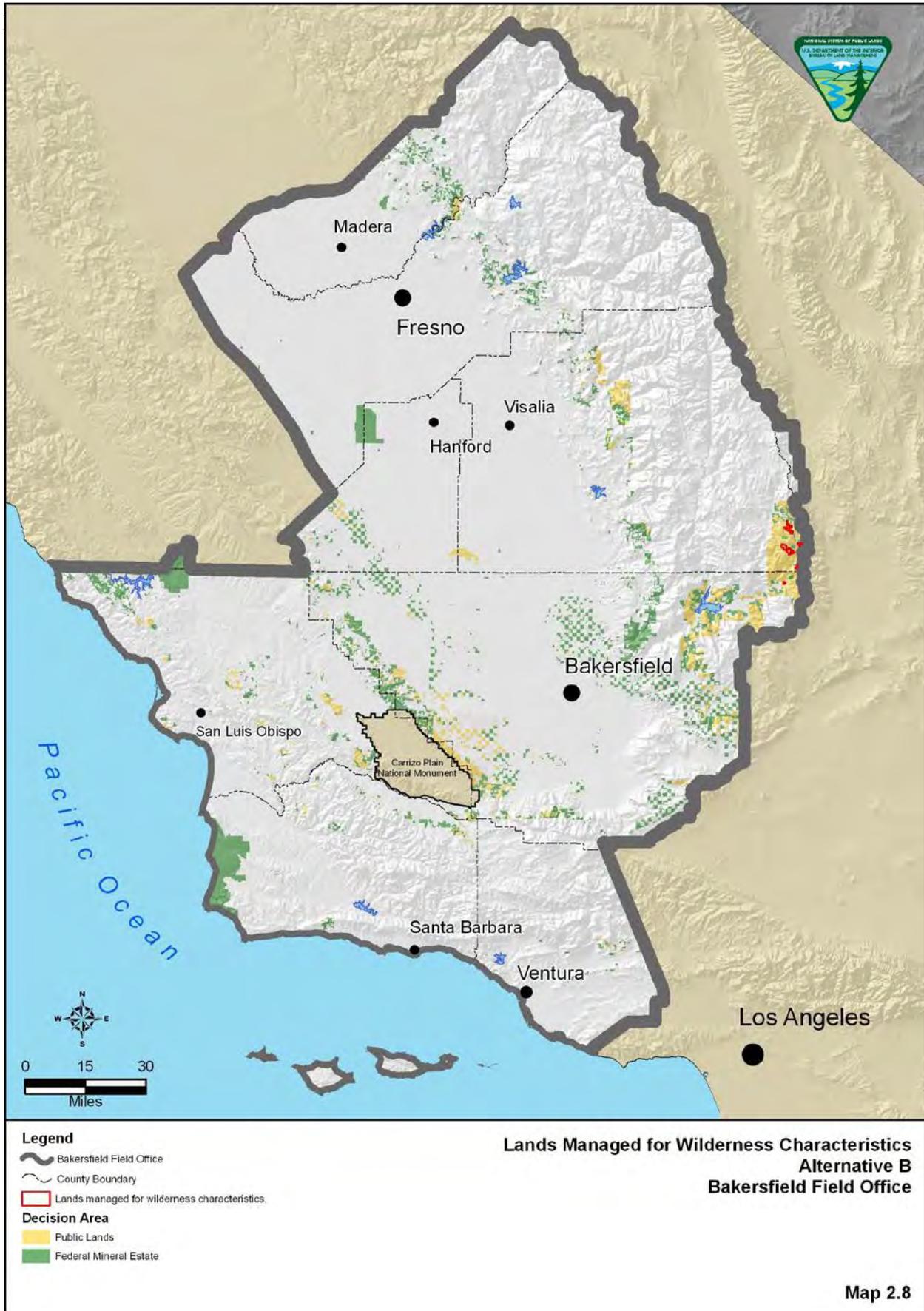
Manage the Black Mountain WSA and Moses WSA multiple-use dispersed public lands.











## 2.4 ALTERNATIVE C

The following section describes management that would be established under Alternative C, presented by program area. Where program management is the same across all action alternatives, it is presented above under *Management Common to All Action Alternatives*. Total management decisions for each program are inclusive of the decisions in both the common to all and this section.

The goals for each resource are common to all and, therefore, are presented in that section above. Some objectives do vary within the individual alternatives those that do are described below under the *Objective* headings.

### RESOURCES

#### 2.4.1 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

##### *Decisions*

Prohibit the release of un-retrieved nonnative animals, except for the use of approved biocontrol agents, authorized livestock, and the augmentation of naturalized species in accordance with a CDFG permit or plan.

Prohibit collection of dead and downed woody materials from public lands for any purpose, except where administratively approved.

Identify split estate with surface managed as compensation for biological resources as closed to fluid mineral leasing.

Identify the Compensation Lands ACEC as closed to fluid mineral leasing.

Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law federal mineral estate underlying compensation lands regardless of surface ownership.

Identify public lands with mineral estate adjacent to or within the boundary of the Chimineas unit of the Carrizo Ecological Reserve as closed to fluid mineral leasing.

Identify the following areas as areas of ecological importance with the specific management as described:

Conserved Lands: for protection and recovery of federally listed species on public lands identified as reserves or corridors by the USFWS and CDFG (see A Conservation Strategy for Threatened and Endangered Species in the San Joaquin Valley in Appendix B).

- Manage public lands within reserves or corridors as conserved land consistent with the direction established by the USFWS and CDFG through the Recovery Plan for Upland

Species of the San Joaquin Valley and other pertinent recovery of conservation plans and the Kern Valley Floor HCP and other pertinent HCPs.

- Manage reserves to restrict surface disturbance on public lands in reserves to not exceed 10 percent of any 640-acre section, aliquot section, or aggregate of adjacent aliquot sections.
- Manage corridors to restrict surface disturbance on public lands in corridors to not exceed 25 percent of any 640-acre section, aliquot section, or aggregate of adjacent aliquot sections.
- Allow certain areas of high intensity oil and gas development within reserves and corridors to be identified and managed separately from the reserve and corridor system. These areas will not be subject to the 10 percent and 25 percent surface disturbance limit.
- Include certain areas outside the reserve and corridor system to be managed as corridors including the application of corridor disturbance restrictions.

Recommend the following areas as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) based on their significant biological resource values; Bitter Creek ACEC; Cypress Mountain ACEC; Cyrus Canyon ACEC; Irish Hills ACEC; Rusty Peak ACEC; Salinas River ACEC; Tierra Redonda ACEC; and Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC.

#### **2.4.2 CAVES AND KARST RESOURCES**

##### *Decisions*

Granite Cave would be managed as part of the Granite Cave ACEC.

Designate Millerton Cave as significant cave, based on its important and significant cave resources, including geological formations, resources of known cultural importance, biotic resources, and the potential for resource-based recreation. This cave will be managed as Class III to fully protect the integrity of the area and its associated cave resources.

All caves within ACECs whose importance and significance speaks directly to the protection of known or potential cave and karst resources shall be determined significant, in accordance with 43 CFR 37.11(e). The ACECs whose designation relates to cave and karst Resources are Erskine Creek, Granite Cave, and Kaweah. Further investigation and study of these cave and karst resources may be required to assign management objectives and prescriptions. Interim management shall be as Class III to protect cave resources.

#### **2.4.3 LANDS WITH WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS**

##### *Decisions*

Manage the following areas (17,890 acres as shown on Map 2.12) for the protection of wilderness characteristics: Bear Mountain, Big Pine Meadow, Chappell D Parcel, Cyrus Canyon Audubon Donation, Edgar Ranch West, Lamont Meadow Parcels, Patterson Bend, Public Proposal I (Spoor

Canyon), Public Proposal II & III (Cuyama), Public Proposal IV (Santiago Creek), Public Proposal V (Bright Star Additions), and Roszewska Property.

Establish prescriptive management for the protection of wilderness characteristics as follows:

- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from mineral entry;
- Identify as closed to mineral leasing;
- Identify as closed to mineral material sales;
- Identify as Rights-of Way exclusion areas;
- Designate as OHV Closed area;
- Designate as VRM Class I;
- Livestock grazing and the activities and facilities that support a grazing program may be permitted to continue at the same level and degree after initial authorization;
- Prohibit new structures unrelated to preserving wilderness characteristics; and
- Retain in Federal ownership.

#### **2.4.4 VISUAL RESOURCES**

##### *Decisions*

Designate VRM classes for the Decision area (Map 2.9) and summarized by the following;

- Class I: 163,110 acres
- Class II: 250,060 acres
- Class III: 475,560 acres
- Class IV: 261,030 acres

## **RESOURCE USES**

#### **2.4.5 COMPREHENSIVE TRAIL AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT**

##### *Decisions*

Designate in accordance with 43 CFR 8340.05(f), (g), and (h) the following OHV areas:

- Open: 0 acres
- Closed: 166,300 acres
- Limited: 237,780 acres

##### *Key Implementation Decisions*

Designate roads and/or trails as identified on Travel Management Network Maps C/D 1-9, summarized by the following mileages:

- Motorized: 656 miles

- Non-motorized: 39 miles
- Non-mechanized: 45 miles
- Authorized: 617 miles
- Closed: 580 miles

## 2.4.6 LANDS AND REALTY

### Land Tenure

#### *Decisions*

Determine the public lands (62,610 acres) and federal mineral estate (337,560 acres) shown on Map LR-C/D (Appendix O) as available for consideration of a disposal action (sale, exchange, or other means) in so much that these lands meet the “isolated, difficult or expensive to manage, or are needed for community expansion” disposal criteria contained in FLPMA Section 203(a). However, site-specific investigation to ascertain whether a specific parcel meets the disposal criteria outlined in this RMP would still be required prior to any disposal action being taken.

### Land Use Authorizations

#### *Decisions*

Identify all ACECs, the Piedras Blancas ONA, and designated critical habitat as Right-of-way avoidance areas, except for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects.

Identify the Piedras Blancas ONA, designated critical habitat, SRMAs, and VRM Class I and II areas as exclusion areas for utility scale renewable energy Rights-of-way.

Identify lands managed for wilderness characteristics, and Wild and Scenic River Corridors as Rights-of-way exclusion areas.

### Withdrawals

#### *Decisions*

Recommend proposal for withdrawal all or certain types of mining operations under the mining laws 62,670 acres in 21 areas.

## 2.4.7 LIVESTOCK GRAZING

### *Objective*

Provide for livestock grazing opportunities on lands in the grazing decision area so as to enhance other resources while meeting RMP goals.

### *Decisions*

Allocate 322,200 acres of public land as available for livestock grazing; of which 7,800 acres (Atwell Island) would be available only for the purpose of vegetation management objectives other than producing livestock forage. Allocate the remaining 72,700 acres as unavailable for livestock grazing,

including riparian corridors of the San Joaquin River, North Fork of the Kaweah River, Caliente Creek, Canebrake Creek and the Deer Spring, Frog Pond and South Fork of the Kern River areas of ecological importance and Big Pine Meadow and Rosewska Meadow (Map LG-C, separate map packet).

Allocate newly acquired lands to match allocations given to the surrounding or adjacent lands, except where land is unsuitable for livestock grazing or the purpose for which the land was acquired is incompatible for livestock grazing including restrictions placed on future use through acquisition documents.

Apply the appropriate Bakersfield FO-specific livestock grazing management guidelines (Appendix F-2) to the applicable grazing authorizations within the grazing decision area as follows:

For Allotments within San Joaquin Valley listed species habitat;

- Mulch Readiness at 500 lbs/acre and 2" green growth, or 700 lbs/acre without green growth
- Mulch Threshold at 500 lbs/acre
- with Saltbush Scrub; Dec.1-May 31 season of use or meet form class, foliage density, and reproductive uniformity criteria

For Riparian areas in;

- Poor-Fair Condition; No grazing, use exclusionary fencing if needed.
- Good-Excellent Condition; No grazing, use exclusionary fencing if needed.

For known occupied habitats and/or known populations of;

- California jewelflower - No grazing unless in approved study or research show grazing to be beneficial.
- San Joaquin woolly threads - Apply the Central CA Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.
- Kern mallow - No grazing unless in approved study or research shows grazing to be beneficial.
- Hoover's woolly Star - Apply the Central CA Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.
- Kelso Creek monkeyflower - No grazing.
- Kern primrose sphinx moth - No grazing.
- Tehachapi slender salamander - No grazing.
- Other species that become listed - Prescription that takes into account specific species requirements.

### *Key Implementation Decisions*

Authorize livestock grazing at the initial implementation levels (Appendix F-5). Based on existing authorizations, projected new authorizations and application of the central California and Bakersfield FO Specific livestock grazing management guidelines, forage authorized for livestock grazing within the Decision Area would total approximately 37,800 AUMs.

## **2.4.8 MINERALS MANAGEMENT**

### **Leasable Minerals**

#### *Decisions*

Identify approximately 966,160 acres as open to fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (both CSU – Protected Species and CSU – Sensitive Species). Of this at least 8,400 acres would also be subject to a No Surface Occupancy stipulation. Additional CSU stipulations may be applied to all new leases in conjunction with the lease sale as determined appropriate and in conformance with the RMP.

Identify 46,850 acres as closed to fluid mineral leasing:

- Discretionary closures –ACECs (Bitter Creek and Compensation Lands), Chimineas Unit of the Carrizo Ecological Reserve, federal minerals below lands managed as compensation, lands managed for wilderness characteristics, and suitable WSR corridors.

### **Solid (Non-Energy) Leasables**

#### *Decisions*

Identify 0 acres as open to solid (non-energy mineral) leasing and development.

Deny applications for all new non-energy leasables.

### **Locatable Minerals**

#### *Decisions*

Determine and designate the Keyesville SRMA as unsuitable for Casual Use, Notice, and Plan of Operation levels mining operations (43 CFR 3809.10). Segregate this area and recommend proposal for its withdrawal from appropriation and all forms of mineral entry under the General Mining Law.

### **Salable Minerals**

#### *Decisions*

Identify 781,120 acres as open to mineral material disposal.

## 2.4.9 RECREATION AND VISITOR SERVICES

### *Decisions*

Identify 191,680 acres as lands not managed within a Recreation Management Area. Close 10,965 of these acres (Map 3.30) to public access located within producing oilfields, with densities averaging higher than 20 wells per 40 acres (or 0.5 wells per acre).

Designate 123,450 acres (Map 2.10) as the Chimney Peak Extensive Recreation Management Area with the following recreation objective, management actions and allowable use decisions;

Throughout the life of the RMP the Chimney Peak ERMA will offer recreation opportunities, in an unchanged backcountry/primitive physical recreation setting, that facilitate the visitors' freedom to participate in primitive unconfined recreation types through easy access to designated Wilderness including camping grounds, trailheads and trails.

- Maintain and improve designated camping areas at Chimney Creek, Long-Valley and Walker Pass.

Designate 23,750 acres as the Temblor Extensive Recreation Management Area with the following established recreation objective and management actions and allowable use decisions;

Within the life of the RMP the Temblor ERMA will offer recreation opportunities in a back country physical setting, that facilitate the visitor's ability to participate in a variety of dispersed recreation activities commensurate with other resource values.

- Acquire legal public access.

## SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS

### 2.4.10 AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

#### *Goal*

Chico Martinez ACEC: Protect cultural resources, geologic formations, and various natural processes.

Cypress Mountain ACEC: Protect and preserve natural systems and processes.

Cyrus Canyon ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for sensitive species and protection for natural systems.

Granite Cave ACEC: Protect cultural resources, geologic formations, and various natural processes.

Horse Canyon ACEC: Protect cultural resources and various natural processes.

Irish Hills ACEC: Protect and preserve natural systems and processes.

Rusty Peak ACEC: Protect and preserve natural systems and processes

Salinas River ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for special status species and protection for natural systems.

Tierra Redonda ACEC: Protect geologic formations, and various natural processes.

Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for sensitive and listed species and protection for natural systems.

### *Objectives*

Chico Martinez ACEC: Protect important cultural, paleontological resources, and the Zemorrian stage geologic formations. Provide habitat for the San Joaquin Suite of listed species.

Cypress Mountain ACEC: Preserve unique plant communities of serpentine chaparral and northern interior cypress forest dominated by Sargent cypress.

Cyrus Canyon ACEC: Protect sensitive biological resources including Kelso Creek monkeyflower and riparian values.

Granite Cave ACEC: Protect several sensitive species and significant cultural resources including those associated with traditional Native American values.

Horse Canyon ACEC: Protect significant cultural sites, paleontological resources, and traditional cultural properties associated with Native American values.

Irish Hills ACEC: Preserve unique plant communities including coastal live oak forest, southern bishop pine, and chaparral, including numerous rare and endemic plants.

Rusty Peak ACEC: Preserve unique plant communities of serpentine chaparral, coast live oak woodland, and valley and foothill grassland, including San Luis serpentine dudleya and other sensitive plant species.

Salinas River ACEC: Maintain rare plant communities including central coast live oak riparian forest, central coast arroyo willow riparian forest, sycamore alluvial woodland, and central coast riparian scrub. Ensure no net loss of associated habitat for special status plants and animals.

Tierra Redonda ACEC: Preserve significant paleontological resources, unique sand dune formation and communities of coast live oak woodland.

Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC: Protect habitat for blunt-nosed leopard lizard and its hybrid zone, Kern primrose sphinx moth, and California jewelflower. Maintain the link between the Sierra Madre and the San Emigdio Mountains.

### *Decisions*

Bitter Creek ACEC: Recommend for designation 1,026 acres of public lands and 5,095 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 20,914 acres, as the Bitter Creek ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Prohibit public access to lands adjacent to USFWS surface (434 acres);
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping; and
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms and coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting.

Chico Martinez ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 3,234 acres of public lands and 1,374 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 7,217 acres, as the Chico Martinez ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Protected Species, CSU-Sensitive Species and CSU-Raptor stipulations);
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes; and
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects.

Compensation Lands ACEC: Recommend for designation 283 acres of public lands and any future parcels of compensation land as the Compensation Lands ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Manage all existing and future parcels of compensation land (including lands not specifically labeled as “compensation” within the parcel) as part of the Compensation Lands ACEC;
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law if necessary, otherwise lands and minerals would remain unopened to entry under the mining laws;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel in areas that are not grazed by livestock;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Require all pets to be leashed (maximum eight-foot length) at all times. Require removal of pet fecal matter by owners or handlers.

Cypress Mountain ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 1,080 acres of public lands; within a boundary of 3,035 acres, as the Cypress Mountain ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU- Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulations);

- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit cross county equestrian travel;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Cyrus Canyon ACEC: Recommend for designation 5,373 acres of public lands and 1 acre of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 5,374 acres, as the Cyrus Canyon ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit equestrian use;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species;
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization; and
- No new apiary permits will be authorized. The existing apiary permit will not be renewed on expiration.

Granite Cave ACEC: Recommend for designation 31 acres of public lands and 11 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 42 acres, as the Granite Cave ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (NSO);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects; and
- Prohibit public access.

Hopper Mountain ACEC: Recommend for designation 2,027 acres of public lands and 2,947 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 4,978 acres, as the Hopper Mountain ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (NSO).

- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify portions as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Restrict public access through temporary emergency closure or in coordination with adjacent land managers, as needed for Condor protection;
- Implement Best Management Practices to minimize impacts on condors from public use and oil field activities;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping; and
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species.

Horse Canyon ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 1,491 acres of public lands and 1,339 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 6,897 acres, as the Horse Canyon ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (NSO);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Prohibit rock hounding, including the causal collection of fossils, mineral agates, and semi-precious stones.

Irish Hills ACEC: Recommend for designation 1,090 acres of public land and 564 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 1,814 acres, as the Irish Hills ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open to fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU - Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulation);
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping, except in any future developed recreation sites developed in partnership with adjacent land owners;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms and coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Kaweah ACEC: Recommend for designation 26,891 acres of public lands and 150 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 33,559 acres (expanding the existing Case Mountain ACEC), as the Kaweah ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for leasing oil and gas resources, subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Raptor stipulations);
- Identify as closed to geothermal leasing;
- Recommend proposal of cave and karst resources and the giant sequoia groves for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify the giant sequoia groves as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit public access to recreation sites along the North Fork of the Kaweah River.
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species;
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization; and
- Protect the giant sequoia groves and mixed conifer forest through implementation of fuels reduction techniques including prescribed burning and vegetation thinning, and removal of ladder fuels.

Kettleman Hills ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 6,726 acres of public lands and 6,969 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 28,874 acres (expanding the existing 9,794-acre ACEC), as the Kettleman Hills ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Protected Species, CSU-Sensitive Species, and CSU-Raptor stipulations);
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects; and
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping.

Lokern-Buena Vista ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 11,352 acres of public lands and 4,113 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 69,474 acres (combining the existing Lokern ACEC with the expansion to include the Buena Vista Hills and Valley), as the Lokern-Buena Vista ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (CSU-Protected Species and CSU-Sensitive Species stipulations);
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes);
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;

- Prohibit public access except for travel through the area on county or state roads;
- Designate as an OHV Closed area; and
- Prohibit discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species.

Los Osos ACEC: Recommend for designation 5 acres of public lands; within a boundary of 32 acres, as the Los Osos ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Designate as OHV Closed area;
- Prohibit mechanized use, equestrian use, and cross-country travel by pedestrians;
- Prohibit all pets;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Piute Cypress ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 2,305 acres of public lands and 212 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 2,544 acres (expanding the existing 1,104-acre ACEC), as the Piute Cypress ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes;
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law if the WSA is released by congress from study status;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Protect Piute cypress communities from livestock grazing if deemed necessary through appropriate studies;
- Prohibit overnight camping and campfires;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Pt. Sal ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 77 acres of public lands; within a boundary of 77 acres, as the Pt. Sal ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;

- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit public access; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Rusty Peak ACEC: Recommend for designation 786 acres of public lands and 1 acre of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 789 acres, as the Rusty Peak ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU- Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulation);
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Salinas River ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 946 acres of public lands and 658 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 2,383 acres, as the Salinas River ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU- Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulations);
- Recommend proposal of the riparian zone (approximately 10 acres) for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel; and
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species.

Tierra Redonda ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 331 acres of public lands and 81 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 1,311 acres, as the Tierra Redonda ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (NSO);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;

- Designate as an OHV Closed area;
- Prohibit mechanized and equestrian use;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms and coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC: Recommend for designation 6,351 acres of public lands and 2,584 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 15,247 acres, as the Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Protected Species and CSU-Sensitive Species) stipulations;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing habitat containing California jewelflower or Kern primrose sphinx moth;
- Prohibit equestrian use in habitat containing California jewelflower or Kern primrose sphinx moth;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel outside of livestock grazing allotments; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

#### **2.4.11 BACK COUNTRY BYWAYS**

##### *Decision*

Revoke the Back Country Byway designation of Canebrake and Long Valley Loop Roads.

#### **2.4.12 WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS**

##### *Decision*

Determine as suitable and recommended for congressional designation in the NWSRS for the classifications identified the;

- Lower Kern River (Recreational);
- South Fork of the Kern River (Recreational);
- East Fork of the Kaweah (Recreational);
- Middle Fork of the Kaweah (Recreational);
- North Fork of the Kaweah (Scenic/Recreational);
- The Salinas River (Scenic);
- Chimney Creek (Wild/Recreational); and
- San Joaquin River Segment 1 (Wild/Scenic).

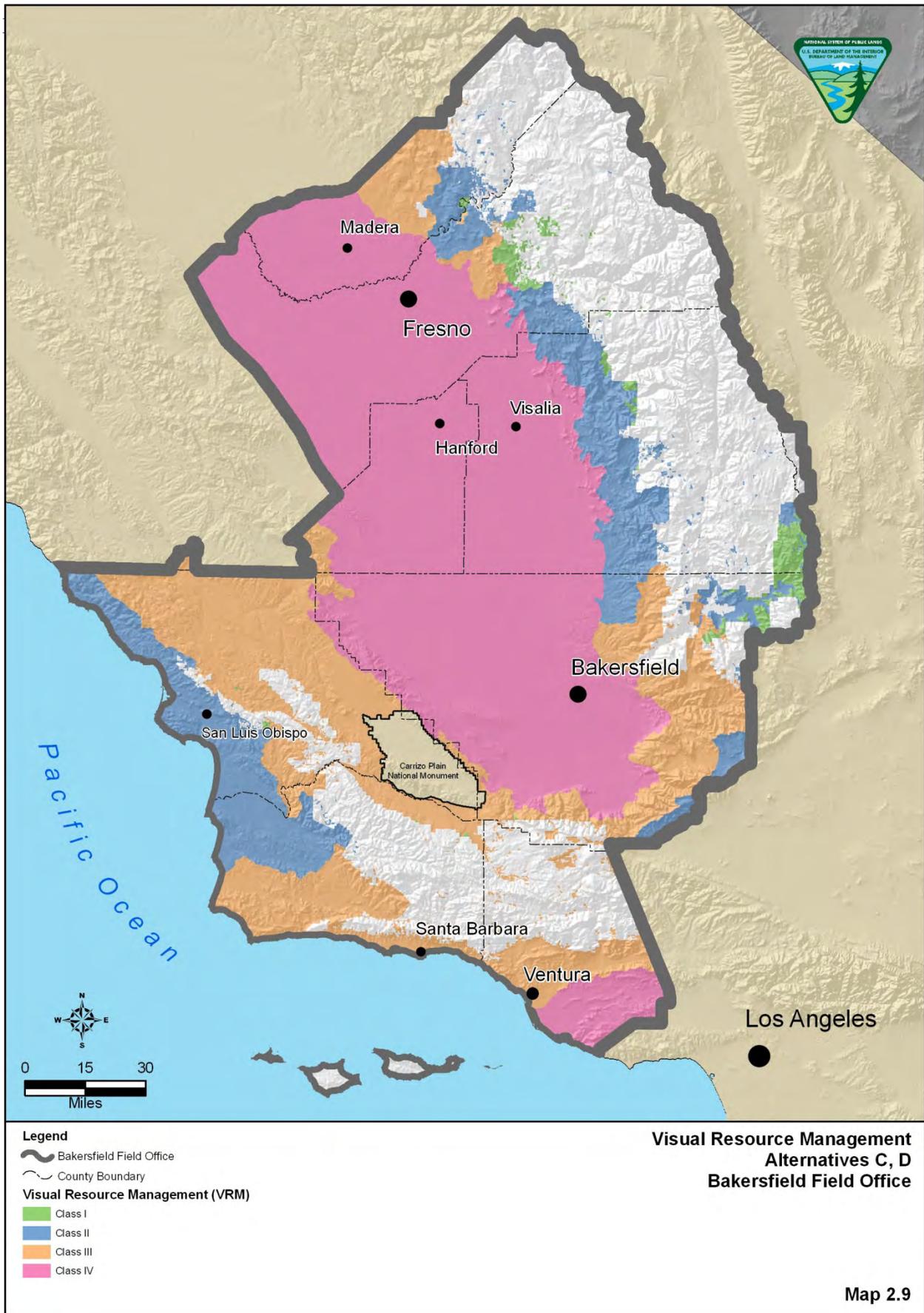
### **2.4.13 WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS**

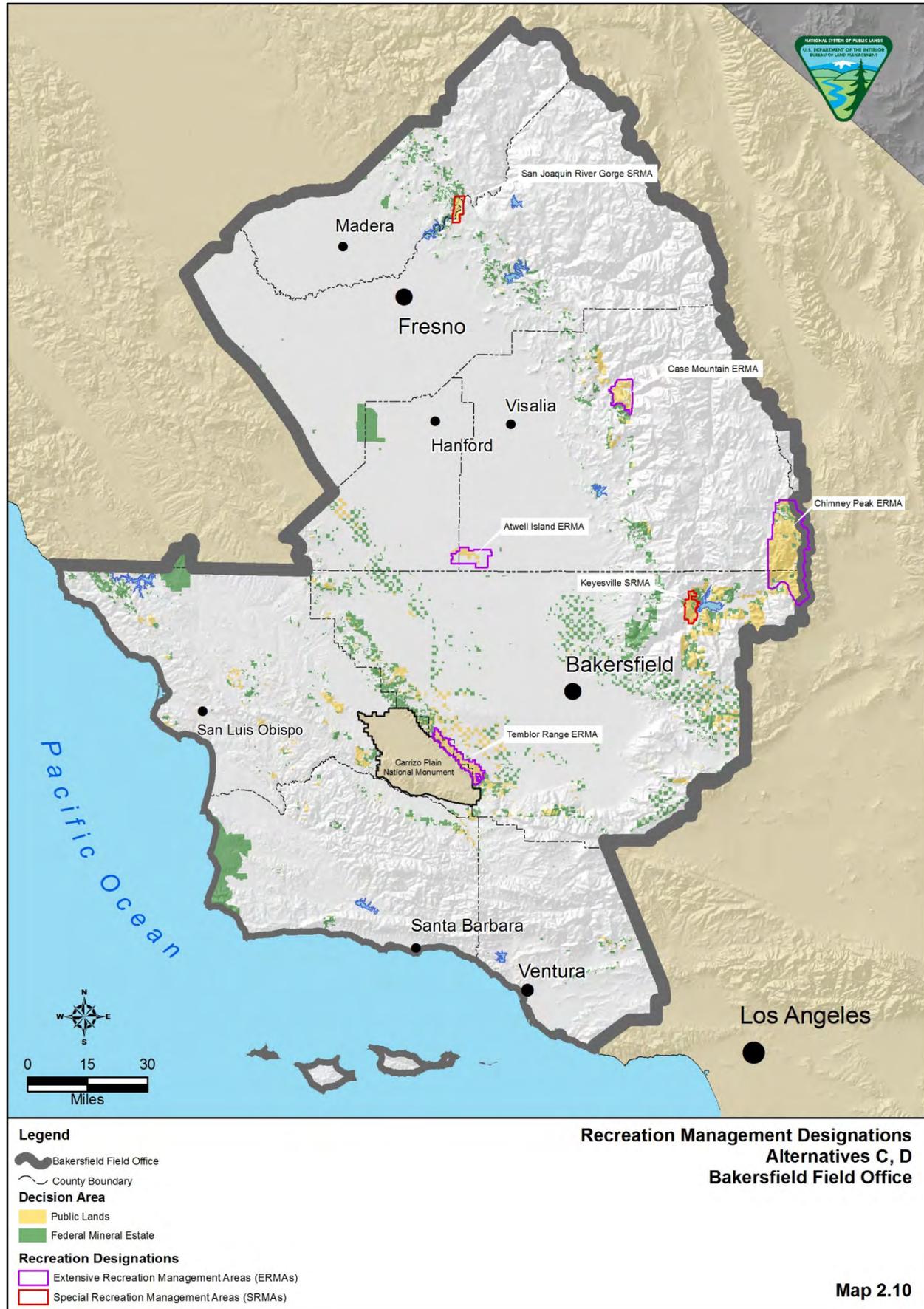
#### *Objective*

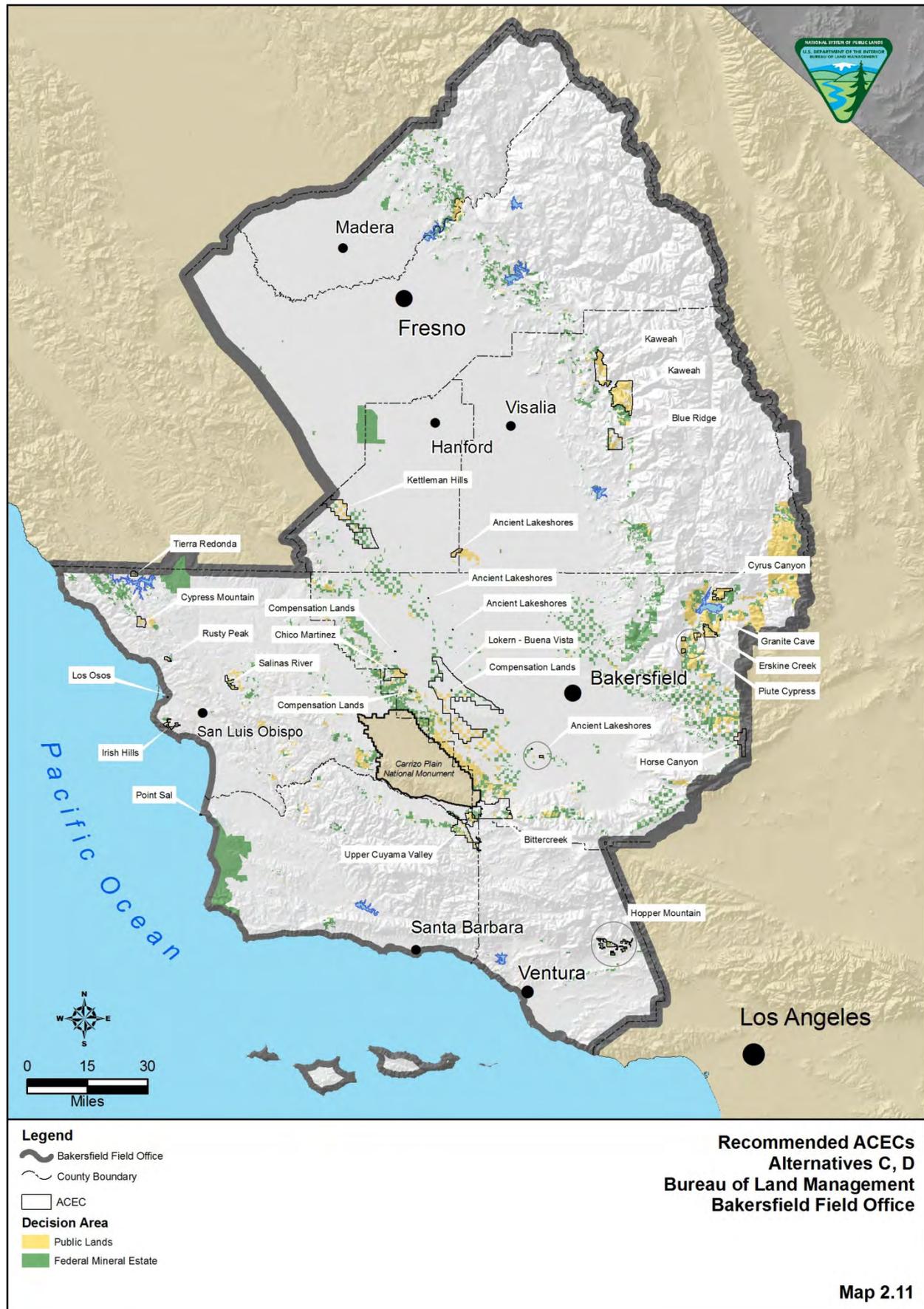
Provide continued protection of wilderness character within WSAs if released by Congress from study status.

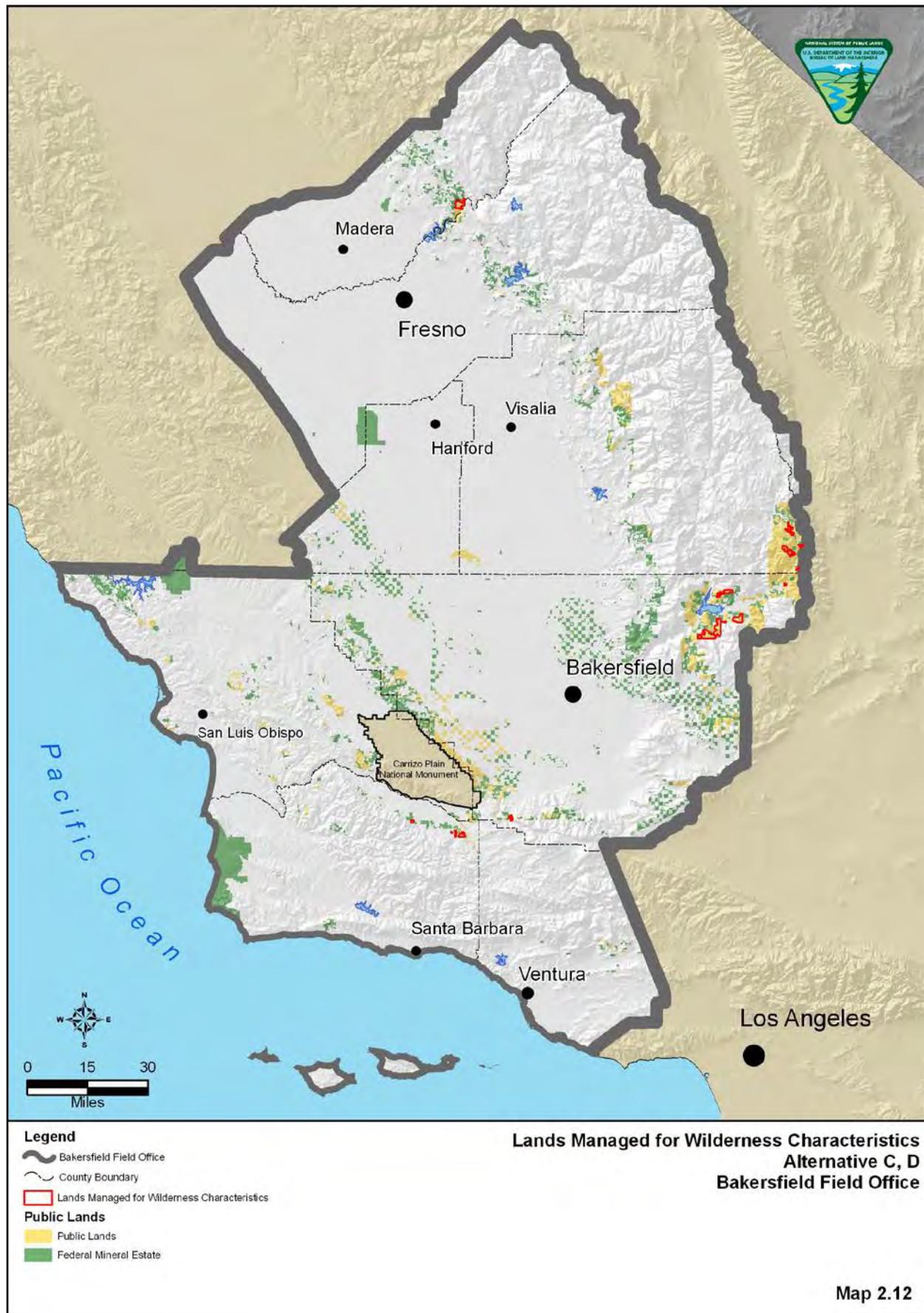
#### *Decision*

Manage as lands with wilderness characteristics all WSAs released from study status by congress, unless congressional release language provides other specific management guidance.









## 2.5 ALTERNATIVE D

The following section describes management that would be established under Alternative D, presented by program area. Where program management is the same across all action alternatives, it is presented above under *Management Common to All Action Alternatives*. Total management decisions for each program are inclusive of the decisions in both the common to all and this section.

The goals for each resource are common to all and, therefore, are presented in that section above. Some objectives do vary within the individual alternatives those that do are described below under the *Objective* headings.

### RESOURCES

#### 2.5.1 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

##### *Decisions*

Prohibit the release of un-retrieved nonnative animals, except for the use of approved biocontrol agents, authorized livestock, and the augmentation of naturalized species in accordance with a CDFG permit or plan.

Prohibit collection of dead and downed woody materials from public lands for any purpose, except where administratively approved.

Identify split estate with surface managed as compensation for biological resources as closed to fluid mineral leasing.

Identify the Compensation Lands ACEC as closed to fluid mineral leasing.

Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law federal mineral estate underlying compensation lands regardless of surface ownership.

Identify public lands with mineral estate adjacent to or within the boundary of the Chimineas unit of the Carrizo Ecological Reserve as closed to fluid mineral leasing.

Identify the following areas as areas of ecological importance with the specific management as described:

Conserved Lands: for protection and recovery of federally listed species on public lands identified as reserves or corridors by the USFWS and CDFG (see A Conservation Strategy for Threatened and Endangered Species in the San Joaquin Valley in Appendix B).

- Manage public lands within reserves or corridors as conserved land consistent with the direction established by the USFWS and CDFG through the Recovery Plan for Upland Species of the San Joaquin Valley and other pertinent recovery of conservation plans and the Kern Valley Floor HCP and other pertinent HCPs.

- Manage reserves to restrict surface disturbance on public lands in reserves to not exceed 10 percent of any 640-acre section, aliquot section, or aggregate of adjacent aliquot sections.
- Manage corridors to restrict surface disturbance on public lands in corridors to not exceed 25 percent of any 640-acre section, aliquot section, or aggregate of adjacent aliquot sections.
- Allow certain areas of high intensity oil and gas development within reserves and corridors to be identified and managed separately from the reserve and corridor system. These areas will not be subject to the 10 percent and 25 percent surface disturbance limit.
- Include certain areas outside the reserve and corridor system to be managed as corridors including the application of corridor disturbance restrictions.

Recommend the following areas as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) based on their significant biological resource values; Bitter Creek ACEC; Cypress Mountain ACEC; Cyrus Canyon ACEC; Irish Hills ACEC; Rusty Peak ACEC; Salinas River ACEC; Tierra Redonda ACEC; and Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC.

### **2.5.2 CAVES AND KARST RESOURCES**

#### *Decisions*

Granite Cave would be managed as part of the Granite Cave ACEC.

Designate Millerton Cave as significant cave, based on its important and significant cave resources, including geological formations, resources of known cultural importance, biotic resources, and the potential for resource-based recreation. This cave will be managed as Class III to fully protect the integrity of the area and its associated cave resources.

All caves within ACECs whose importance and significance speaks directly to the protection of known or potential cave and karst resources shall be determined significant, in accordance with 43 CFR 37.11(e). The ACECs whose designation relates to cave and karst Resources are Erskine Creek, Granite Cave, and Kaweah. Further investigation and study of these cave and karst resources may be required to assign management objectives and prescriptions. Interim management shall be as Class III to protect cave resources.

### **2.5.3 LANDS WITH WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS**

#### *Decisions*

Manage the following areas (17,890 acres as shown on Map 2.12) for the protection of wilderness characteristics: Bear Mountain, Big Pine Meadow, Chappell D Parcel, Cyrus Canyon Audubon Donation, Edgar Ranch West, Lamont Meadow Parcels, Patterson Bend, Public Proposal I (Spoor Canyon), Public Proposal II & III (Cuyama), Public Proposal IV (Santiago Creek), Public Proposal V (Bright Star Additions), and Roszewska Property.

Establish prescriptive management for the protection of wilderness characteristics as follows:

- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from mineral entry;
- Identify as closed to mineral leasing;
- Identify as closed to mineral material sales;
- Identify as Rights-of Way exclusion areas;
- Designate as OHV Closed area;
- Designate as VRM Class I;
- Prohibit new structures unrelated to preserving wilderness characteristics; and
- Retain in Federal ownership.

#### **2.5.4 VISUAL RESOURCES**

##### *Decisions*

Designate VRM classes for the Decision Area (Map 2.9, above) and summarized by the following;

- Class I: 163,110 acres
- Class II: 250,060 acres
- Class III: 475,560 acres
- Class IV: 261,030 acres

## **RESOURCE USES**

#### **2.5.5 COMPREHENSIVE TRAIL AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT**

##### *Decisions*

Designate in accordance with 43 CFR 8340.05(f), (g), and (h) the following OHV areas:

- Open: 0 acres
- Closed: 166,300 acres
- Limited: 237,780 acres

##### *Key Implementation Decisions*

Designate roads and/or trails as identified on Travel Management Network Maps C/D 1-9, summarized by the following mileages:

- Motorized: 656 miles
- Non-motorized: 39 miles
- Non-mechanized: 45 miles
- Authorized: 617 miles
- Closed: 580 miles

## 2.5.6 LANDS AND REALTY

### Land Tenure

#### *Decisions*

Determine the public lands (62,610 acres) and federal mineral estate (337,560 acres) shown on Map LR-C/D (Appendix O) as available for consideration of a disposal action (sale, exchange, or other means) in so much that these lands meet the “isolated, difficult or expensive to manage, or are needed for community expansion” disposal criteria contained in FLPMA Section 203(a). However, site-specific investigation to ascertain whether a specific parcel meets the disposal criteria outlined in this RMP would still be required prior to any disposal action being taken.

### Land Use Authorizations

#### *Decisions*

Identify all ACECs, the Piedras Blancas ONA, and designated critical habitat as Right-of-way avoidance areas, except for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects.

Identify the Piedras Blancas ONA, designated critical habitat, SRMAs, and VRM Class I and II areas as exclusion areas for utility scale renewable energy Rights-of-way.

Lands managed for wilderness characteristics and suitable Wild and Scenic River Corridors are identified as Right-of-way exclusion areas.

### Withdrawals

#### *Decisions*

Recommend proposal for withdrawal all or certain types of mining operations under the mining laws 62,670 acres in 21 areas.

## 2.5.7 LIVESTOCK GRAZING

### *Objective*

Eliminate livestock grazing on lands in the grazing decision area for the life of the plan.

### *Decisions*

Allocate 0 acres of public land as Available for livestock grazing and 402,800 acres of land as unavailable for livestock grazing, as shown on Map LG-D, in separate map packet.

Allocate newly acquired lands as unavailable for livestock grazing.

### *Key Implementation Decisions*

Initiate the process (43 CFR 4110.4-2(b) and 43 USC 1712 (e)) to terminate existing grazing permits/leases for the life of the plan. Forage available for livestock grazing within the Decision Area managed under other RMPs would total 900 AUMs (Appendix F-5).

## 2.5.8 MINERALS MANAGEMENT

### Leasable Minerals

#### *Decisions*

Identify approximately 966,160 acres as open to fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (both CSU – Protected Species and CSU – Sensitive Species). Of this at least 8,400 acres would also be subject to a No Surface Occupancy stipulation. Additional CSU stipulations may be applied to all new leases in conjunction with the lease sale as determined appropriate and in conformance with the RMP.

Identify 46,850 acres as closed to fluid mineral leasing:

- Discretionary closures –ACECs (Bitter Creek and Compensation Lands), Chimineas Unit of the Carrizo Ecological Reserve, federal minerals below lands managed as compensation, lands managed for wilderness characteristics, and suitable WSR corridors.

### Solid (Non-Energy) Leasables

#### *Decisions*

Identify 0 acres as open to solid (non-energy) mineral leasing and development.

Deny applications for all new non-energy leasables.

### Locatable Minerals

#### *Decisions*

Determine and designate the Keyesville SRMA as unsuitable for Casual Use, Notice, and Plan of Operation levels mining operations (43 CFR 3809.10). Segregate this area and recommend proposal for its withdrawal from appropriation and all forms of mineral entry under the General Mining Law.

### Salable Minerals

#### *Decisions*

Identify 781,120 acres as open to mineral material disposal.

## 2.5.9 RECREATION AND VISITOR SERVICES

#### *Decisions*

Identify 191,680 acres as lands not managed within a Recreation Management Area. Close 10,965 of these acres to public access located within producing oilfields, with densities averaging higher than 20 wells per 40 acres (or 0.5 wells per acre).

Designate 123,450 acres (Map 2.10) as the Chimney Peak Extensive Recreation Management Area with the following recreation objective, management actions and allowable use decisions;

Throughout the life of the RMP the Chimney Peak Extensive Recreation Management Area will offer recreation opportunities, in an unchanged backcountry/primitive physical recreation setting, that facilitate the visitors' freedom to participate in primitive unconfined recreation types through easy access to designated Wilderness including camping grounds, trailheads and trails.

- Maintain and improve designated camping areas at Chimney Creek, Long-Valley and Walker Pass.

Designate 23,750 acres (Map 2.10) as the Temblor Extensive Recreation Management Area with the following recreation objective and management actions and allowable use decisions;

Within the life of the RMP the Temblor ERMA will offer recreation opportunities in a back country physical setting, that facilitate the visitor's ability to participate in a variety of dispersed recreation activities commensurate with other resource values.

- Acquire legal public access.

## **SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS**

### **2.5.10 AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN**

#### *Goal*

Chico Martinez ACEC: Protect cultural resources, geologic formations, and various natural processes.

Cypress Mountain ACEC: Protect and preserve natural systems and processes.

Cyrus Canyon ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for sensitive species and protection for natural systems.

Granite Cave ACEC: Protect cultural resources, geologic formations, and various natural processes.

Horse Canyon ACEC: Protect cultural resources, and various natural processes.

Irish Hills ACEC: Protect and preserve natural systems and processes.

Rusty Peak ACEC: Protect and preserve natural systems and processes

Salinas River ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for special status species and protection for natural systems.

Tierra Redonda ACEC: Protect geologic formations, and various natural processes.

Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC: Provide suitable habitat for sensitive and listed species and protection for natural systems.

### *Objectives*

Chico Martinez ACEC: Protect important cultural, paleontological resources, and the Zemorrian stage geologic formations. Provide habitat for the San Joaquin Suite of listed species.

Cypress Mountain ACEC: Preserve unique plant communities of serpentine chaparral and northern interior cypress forest dominated by Sargent cypress.

Cyrus Canyon ACEC: Protect sensitive biological resources including Kelso Creek monkeyflower and riparian values.

Granite Cave ACEC: Protect cultural and paleontological resources, Native American traditional values and several sensitive species.

Horse Canyon ACEC: Protect significant cultural sites, paleontological resources, and traditional cultural properties associated with Native American values.

Irish Hills ACEC: Preserve unique plant communities including coastal live oak forest, southern bishop pine, and chaparral, including numerous rare and endemic plants.

Rusty Peak ACEC: Preserve unique plant communities of serpentine chaparral, coast live oak woodland, and valley and foothill grassland, including San Luis serpentine dudleya and other sensitive plant species.

Salinas River ACEC: Maintain rare plant communities including central coast live oak riparian forest, central coast arroyo willow riparian forest, sycamore alluvial woodland, and central coast riparian scrub. Ensure no net loss of associated habitat for special status plants and animals.

Tierra Redonda ACEC: Preserve significant paleontological values, unique sand dune environment formation and communities of coast live oak woodland.

Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC: Protect habitat for blunt-nosed leopard lizard and its hybrid zone, Kern primrose sphinx moth, and California jewelflower. Maintain the link between the Sierra Madre and the San Emigdio Mountains.

### *Decisions*

Bitter Creek ACEC: Recommend for designation 1,026 acres of public lands and 5,095 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 20,914 acres, as the Bitter Creek ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Prohibit public access to lands adjacent to USFWS surface (434 acres);
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping; and
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms and coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting.

Chico Martinez ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 3,234 acres of public lands and 1,374 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 7,217 acres, as the Chico Martinez ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Protected Species, CSU-Sensitive Species and CSU-Raptor stipulations);
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes; and
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects.

Compensation Lands ACEC: Recommend for designation 283 acres of public lands and any future parcels of compensation land as the Compensation Lands ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Manage all existing and future parcels of compensation land (including lands not specifically labeled as “compensation” within the parcel) as part of the Compensation Lands ACEC;
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law if necessary, otherwise lands and minerals would remain unopened to entry under the mining laws;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel in areas that are not grazed by livestock;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Require all pets to be leashed (maximum eight-foot length) at all times. Require removal of pet fecal matter by owners or handlers.

Cypress Mountain ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 1,080 acres of public lands; within a boundary of 3,035 acres, as the Cypress Mountain ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU- Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulations);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit cross county equestrian travel;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and

- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Cyrus Canyon ACEC: Recommend for designation 5,373 acres of public lands and 1 acre of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 5,374 acres, as the Cyrus Canyon ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit equestrian use;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species;
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization; and
- No new apiary permits will be authorized. The existing apiary permit will not be renewed on expiration.

Granite Cave ACEC: Recommend for designation 31 acres of public lands and 11 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 42 acres, as the Granite Cave ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (NSO);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects; and
- Prohibit public access.

Hopper Mountain ACEC: Recommend for designation 2,027 acres of public lands and 2,947 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 4,978 acres, as the Hopper Mountain ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (NSO);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify portions as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Restrict public access through temporary emergency closure or in coordination with adjacent land managers, as needed for Condor protection;
- Implement Best Management Practices to minimize impacts on condors from public use and oil field activities;

- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping; and
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species.

Horse Canyon ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 1,491 acres of public lands and 1,339 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 6,897 acres, as the Horse Canyon ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (NSO);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Prohibit rock hounding, including the causal collection of fossils, mineral agates, semi-precious stones.

Irish Hills ACEC: Recommend for designation 1,090 acres of public land and 564 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 1,814 acres, as the Irish Hills ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open to fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU - Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulation);
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping, except in any future developed recreation sites developed in partnership with adjacent land owners;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms and coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Kaweah ACEC: Recommend for designation 26,891 acres of public lands and 150 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 33,559 acres (expanding the existing Case Mountain ACEC), as the Kaweah ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for leasing oil and gas resources, subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Raptor stipulations);
- Identify as closed to geothermal leasing;
- Recommend proposal of cave and karst resources and the giant sequoia groves for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;

- Identify the giant sequoia groves as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit public access to recreation sites along the North Fork of the Kaweah River.
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species;
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization; and
- Protect the giant sequoia groves and mixed conifer forest through implementation of fuels reduction techniques including prescribed burning and vegetation thinning, and removal of ladder fuels.

Kettleman Hills ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 6,726 acres of public lands and 6,969 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 28,874 acres (expanding the existing 9,794-acre ACEC), as the Kettleman Hills ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Protected Species, CSU-Sensitive Species, and CSU-Raptor stipulations);
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects; and
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping.

Lokern-Buena Vista ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 11,352 acres of public lands and 4,113 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 69,474 acres (combining the existing Lokern ACEC with the expansion to include the Buena Vista Hills and Valley), as the Lokern-Buena Vista ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (CSU-Protected Species and CSU-Sensitive Species stipulations);
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes);
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Prohibit public access except for travel through the area on county or state roads;
- Designate as an OHV Closed area; and
- Prohibit discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species.

Los Osos ACEC: Recommend for designation 5 acres of public lands; within a boundary of 32 acres, as the Los Osos ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;

- Designate as OHV Closed area;
- Prohibit mechanized use, equestrian use, and cross-country travel by pedestrians;
- Prohibit all pets;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Piute Cypress ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 2,305 acres of public lands and 212 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 2,544 acres (expanding the existing 1,104-acre ACEC), as the Piute Cypress ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes;
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law if the WSA is released by congress from study status;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Protect Piute cypress communities from livestock grazing if deemed necessary through appropriate studies;
- Prohibit overnight camping and campfires;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Pt. Sal ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 77 acres of public lands; within a boundary of 77 acres, as the Pt. Sal ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit public access; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Rusty Peak ACEC: Recommend for designation 786 acres of public lands and 1 acre of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 789 acres, as the Rusty Peak ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU- Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulation);
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Salinas River ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 946 acres of public lands and 658 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 2,383 acres, as the Salinas River ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU- Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulations);
- Recommend proposal of the riparian zone (approximately 10 acres) for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel; and
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species.

Tierra Redonda ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 331 acres of public lands and 81 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 1,311 acres, as the Tierra Redonda ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (NSO);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Designate as an OHV Closed area;
- Prohibit mechanized and equestrian use;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms and coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC: Recommend for designation 6,351 acres of public lands and 2,584 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 15,247 acres, as the Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC (Map 2.11) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Protected Species and CSU-Sensitive Species) stipulations;

- Identify as an exclusion area for rights-of-way related to utility scale renewable energy projects;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel;
- Prohibit equestrian use in habitat containing California jewelflower or Kern primrose sphinx moth; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

### **2.5.11 BACK COUNTRY BYWAYS**

#### *Decision*

Revoke the Back Country Byway designation of Canebrake and Long Valley Loop Roads.

### **2.5.12 WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS**

#### *Decision*

Determine as suitable and recommended for congressional designation in the NWSRS for the classifications identified the;

- Lower Kern River (Recreational);
- South Fork of the Kern River (Recreational);
- East Fork of the Kaweah (Recreational);
- Middle Fork of the Kaweah (Recreational);
- North Fork of the Kaweah (Scenic/Recreational);
- The Salinas River (Scenic);
- Chimney Creek (Wild/Recreational); and
- San Joaquin River Segment 1 (Wild/Scenic).

### **2.5.13 WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS**

#### *Objective*

Provide continued protection of wilderness characteristics present within WSAs if released by Congress from study status.

#### *Decision*

Manage as lands with wilderness characteristics all WSAs released from study status by congress, unless congressional release language provides other specific management guidance.

## 2.6 ALTERNATIVE E

The following section describes management that would be established under Alternative E, presented by program area. Where program management is the same across all action alternatives, it is presented above under *Management Common to All Action Alternatives*. Total management decisions for each program are inclusive of the decisions in both the common to all and this section.

The goals for each resource are common to all and, therefore, are presented in that section above. Some objectives do vary within the individual alternatives those that do are described below under the *Objective* headings.

### RESOURCES

#### 2.6.1 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

##### *Decisions*

Prohibit removal of dead and downed woody materials from public lands, except where administratively approved. Collection of fire wood from dead and down woody material for on-site campfires is permissible provided woody material is less than four inches in diameter.

Prohibit the release of un-retrieved nonnative animals, except for the use of approved biocontrol agents, authorized livestock, and for recreational purpose and the augmentation of naturalized species in accordance with a CDFG permit or plan.

Identify lands managed by the BLM or an entity other than BLM (split estate) as compensation for biological resources as open to fluid mineral leasing subject to major constraint (CSU – compensation lands).

Identify the following areas as areas of ecological importance with the specific management as described:

Conserved Lands: for protection and recovery of federally listed species on public lands identified as reserves or corridors by the USFWS and CDFG (see A Conservation Strategy for Threatened and Endangered Species in the San Joaquin Valley in Appendix B).

- Manage public lands within reserves or corridors as conserved land consistent with the direction established by the USFWS and CDFG through the Recovery Plan for Upland Species of the San Joaquin Valley and other pertinent recovery of conservation plans and the Kern Valley Floor HCP and other pertinent HCPs.
- Manage reserves to restrict surface disturbance on public lands in reserves to not exceed 10 percent of any 640-acre section, aliquot section, or aggregate of adjacent aliquot sections.

- Manage corridors to restrict surface disturbance on public lands in corridors to not exceed 25 percent of any 640-acre section, aliquot section, or aggregate of adjacent aliquot sections.
- Allow certain areas of high intensity oil and gas development within reserves and corridors to be identified and managed separately from the reserve and corridor system. These areas will not be subject to the 10 percent and 25 percent surface disturbance limit.

Cypress Mountain: for protection of the rare and unique plant communities of serpentine chaparral and northern interior cypress forest, dominated by Sargent cypress.

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (CSU- Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulations);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires;
- Prohibit overnight camping;
- Prohibit cross county equestrian travel;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Cyrus Canyon: to protect sensitive plant populations, especially habitat for Kelso Creek monkeyflower.

- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes;
- Identify as available for livestock grazing, except areas excluded for protection of monkeyflower species (*Mimulus* spp.);
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit equestrian use;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species;
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization; and
- No new apiary permits will be authorized. The existing apiary permit may be renewed but not transferred.

Irish Hills: for protection of diverse coastal plant communities, including Bishop pine forest, rare plant habitat, and notably large oaks and manzanita.

- Identify as open to fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (CSU - Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulation);
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;

- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping, except in any future developed recreation sites developed in partnership with adjacent land owners.
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Rusty Peak: for protection of serpentine chaparral, coastal live oak woodland, perennial grassland, San Luis serpentine dudleya and other sensitive plant species.

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulation);
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Salinas River: for protection of diverse vegetation communities and the exemplary riparian area.

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Priority Species, Plant Communities and Habitats stipulations);
- Recommend proposal of the riparian zone (approximately 10 acres) for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel; and
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species.

Tierra Redonda: for protection of the, coast live oak woodland and habitat associated with the unique sand dune formation.

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (NSO);
- Recommend proposal for withdrawal from appropriation and entry under the General Mining Law;
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals and solid mineral leasing;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Upper Cuyama Valley: for protection of habitat for blunt-nosed leopard lizard, Kern primrose sphinx moth, and California jewelflower, to protect the leopard lizard hybrid zone, and to maintain a linkage between the Sierra Madre and the San Emigdio Mountains.

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing subject to major constraints (CSU-Protected Species and CSU-Sensitive Species) stipulations;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing habitat containing California jewelflower or Kern primrose sphinx moth;
- Prohibit equestrian use in habitat containing California jewelflower or Kern primrose sphinx moth;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel outside of livestock grazing allotments; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

## **2.6.2 CAVES AND KARST RESOURCES**

### *Decisions*

Designate Granite Cave as a significant cave, based on its important and significant cave resources, which include both cultural and biotic resources, that are within and dependent on the cave. This cave will be managed as Class III to fully protect the cultural integrity of the area and its associated cave resources.

Designate Millerton Cave as a significant cave, based on its important and significant cave resources, including geological formations, resources of known cultural importance, biotic resources, and the potential for resource-based recreation. This cave will be managed as Class I to allow occasional recreational use.

All caves within ACECs whose importance and significance speaks directly to the protection of known or potential cave and karst resources shall be determined significant, in accordance with 43 CFR 37.11(e). The ACECs whose designation relates to cave and karst resources are Erskine Creek and Kaweah. Further investigation and study of these cave and karst resources may be required to assign management objectives and prescriptions. Interim management shall be as Class II to protect cave resources.

## **2.6.3 LANDS WITH WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS**

### *Decisions*

Establish prescriptive management for the protection of wilderness characteristics on 0 acres.

## **2.6.4 VISUAL RESOURCES**

### *Decisions*

Designate VRM classes for the Decision Area (Map 2.13) and summarized by the following;

- Class I: 143,300 acres

- Class II: 36,740 acres
- Class III: 361,620 acres
- Class IV: 608,100 acres

## RESOURCE USES

### 2.6.5 COMPREHENSIVE TRAIL AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT

#### *Decisions*

Designate in accordance with 43 CFR 8340.05(f), (g), and (h) the following OHV areas:

- Open: 70 acres
- Closed: 136,280 acres
- Limited: 264,560 acres

#### *Key Implementation Decisions*

Designate roads and/or trails as identified on Travel Management Network Maps E 1-9, summarized by the following mileages:

- Motorized: 1683 miles
- Non-motorized: 31 miles
- Non-mechanized: 45 miles
- Authorized: 112 miles
- Closed: 65 miles

### 2.6.6 LANDS AND REALTY

#### Land Tenure

##### *Decision*

Determine the public lands (63,730 acres) and federal mineral estate (328,790 acres) shown on Map LR-E (Appendix O) as available for consideration of a disposal action (sale, exchange, or other means) in so much that these lands meet the “isolated, difficult or expensive to manage, or are needed for community expansion” disposal criteria contained in FLPMA Section 203(a). However, site-specific investigation to ascertain whether a specific parcel meets the disposal criteria outlined in this RMP would still be required prior to any disposal action being taken.

Disposal of unleased mineral estate with no fluid mineral potential may be deemed to serve national interest therefore may be considered for disposal.

## Land Use Authorizations

### *Decision*

Identify all ACECs and the Piedras Blancas ONA as Right-of-way avoidance areas.

## Withdrawals

### *Decisions*

Recommend proposal for withdrawal all or certain types of mining operations under the mining laws 17,770 acres in 14 areas.

## 2.6.7 LIVESTOCK GRAZING

### *Objectives*

Increase or improve livestock grazing opportunities on lands in the grazing decision area so as to meet the RMP goals.

### *Decisions*

Allocate 345,800 acres of public land as available for livestock grazing; of which 7,800 acres (Atwell Island) would be available only for the purpose of vegetation management objectives other than producing livestock forage. Allocate the remaining 49,100 acres as unavailable for livestock grazing, including the Deer Spring, Frog Pond, South Fork of the Kern River, Irish Hills, Rusty Peak, Salinas River and Tierra Redonda areas of ecological importance and Big Pine Meadow and Rosewska Meadow (Map LG-E, in separate map packet).

Allocate newly acquired lands as available for livestock grazing, unless the purpose for the acquisition cannot be achieved under any level or management of livestock grazing.

Apply the appropriate Bakersfield FO-specific livestock grazing management guidelines (Appendix F-2) to the applicable grazing authorizations within the grazing decision area as follows:

For Allotments within San Joaquin Valley listed species habitat;

- Mulch Readiness at 500 lbs/acre and 2" green growth, or 700 lbs/acre without green growth
- Mulch Threshold at 500 lbs/acre
- with Saltbush Scrub; Dec.1-May 31 season of use or meet form class, foliage density, and reproductive uniformity criteria

For Riparian areas in;

- Poor-Fair Condition; Nov.1-May 31 season of use and apply the Central CA Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management
- Good-Excellent Condition - Maintain current season of use and apply the Central CA Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management as needed.

For known occupied habitats and/or known populations of;

- California jewelflower - No grazing unless in approved study or research show grazing to be beneficial.
- San Joaquin woolly threads - Apply the Central CA Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.
- Kern mallow - No grazing unless in approved study or research shows grazing to be beneficial.
- Hoover's woolly Star - Apply the Central CA Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.
- Kelso Creek monkeyflower - No grazing.
- Kern primrose sphinx moth - No grazing.
- Tehachapi slender salamander - Apply the Central CA Guidelines for Livestock Grazing Management.
- Other species that become listed - Prescription that takes into account specific species requirements.

### *Key Implementation Decisions*

Authorize livestock grazing at the initial implementation levels (Appendix F-5). Based on existing authorizations, projected new authorizations and application of the central California and Bakersfield FO Specific livestock grazing management guidelines, forage authorized for livestock grazing within the Decision Area would total approximately 42,300 AUMs.

## **2.6.8 MINERALS MANAGEMENT**

### **Leasable Minerals**

#### *Decisions*

Establish the major constraint of "CSU – Bitter Creek ACEC" for the purpose of preventing or reducing disturbance to current or future refuge resources from fluid mineral development with the following stipulation language:

*All or a portion of this lease occurs within the boundaries of the Bitter Creek ACEC and the Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge. No new surface disturbing activity is allowed on the lease. Furthermore, access to federal minerals within the lease will only be allowed from off-site sources not within the Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge boundary. This stipulation shall not be waived, however may be granted exception or modified as follows:*

**Exception:** *The Authorized Officer may grant an exception if, after coordination with USFWS, an environmental review determines the action as proposed or conditioned would not impair the values present and is consistent with the management of the National Wildlife Refuge.*

**Modification:** *The Authorized Officer may modify this stipulation to allow surface use on a portion or the entire lease if, after coordination with USFWS, an environmental review determines the action as proposed or*

*conditioned would not impair the values present and is consistent with the management of the National Wildlife Refuge.*

Identify approximately 1,013,010 acres as open to fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (both CSU – Protected Species and CSU – Sensitive Species). Of this at least 3,590 acres would also be subject to a No Surface Occupancy stipulation. Additional CSU stipulations may be applied to all new leases in conjunction with the lease sale as determined appropriate and in conformance with the RMP.

### **Solid (Non-Energy) Leasables**

#### *Decision*

Identify 897,070 acres as open to solid (non-energy) mineral leasing and development.

### **Locatable Minerals**

#### *Decision*

Determine and designate the following areas as unsuitable for Notice and Plan of Operation levels mining operations (43 CFR 3809.10): The Dam, Wallow Rock, and Gold Fever RMZs. Segregate these areas and recommend proposal for their withdrawal from location under the General Mining Law and condition mineral entry to permit only Casual Use operations (43 CFR 3809.5).

Determine and designate the following areas as unsuitable for Casual Use, Notice, and Plan of Operation levels mining operations (43 CFR 3809.10): the Sargent Cypress Groves in the Cypress Mountain area of ecological importance and Tierra Redonda area of ecological importance. Segregate these areas and recommend proposal for their withdrawal from appropriation and all forms of mineral entry under the General Mining Law.

Allow mining operations in designated ACECs, but only in a manner that would not impair or degrade those significant resource values that led to the ACEC designation. Require a Plan of Operations in all designated ACECs. Approve the Plan of Operations only if operations would not irreparably damage those resource values for which the ACEC was designated.

### **Salable Minerals**

#### *Decisions*

Identify 896,830 acres as open to mineral material disposal.

## **2.6.9 RECREATION**

### *Decisions*

Identify 188,120 acres as lands not managed within a Recreation Management Area.

Designate 160 acres (T 7 S, R 20 E, Section 2) (Map 2.14) as the Fresno River Extensive Recreation Management Area with the following recreation objective, management actions and allowable use decisions;

Within the life of the RMP the Fresno River ERMA will offer limited recreation opportunities in a rural setting, facilitating various interpretative and educational opportunities.

- Prohibit the discharge of firearms and coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting.

Designate 3,400 acres (Map 2.14) as the North Fork Extensive Recreation Management Area with the following recreation objective, management actions and allowable use decisions;

Throughout the life of the RMP the North Fork ERMA will offer recreation opportunities in a middle country setting, facilitating visitor participation in fishing, hunting and water-play.

- Provide public access to the North Fork ERMA at Advance and Cherry Falls.
- Maintain parking facilities at the Advance and Cherry Falls recreation sites.
- Close the Paradise recreation site, unless land ownership issues can be resolved.

Designate 123,450 acres (Maps 2.14-2.15) as the Chimney Peak Special Recreation Management Area, established with an “undeveloped” market strategy (Appendix H) serving the wider southern and central California communities. The SRMA is subdivided into three (3) Recreational Management Zones, each with the following recreation objectives, management actions and allowable use decisions (Appendix H contains a complete description of each RMZs targeted activities, experiences, benefits, and Natural Resource Recreation Settings);

Byway RMZ: In visitor assessments, 65% of respondents who participated in targeted activities report the ability to realize the targeted experiences and benefits.

**Targeted Activities:** Driving for Pleasure; Wildlife Viewing; Scenic Appreciation

**Targeted Experiences:** Enjoying closeness of family and friends; learning more about the things that are there; enjoying having easy access to natural landscapes

**Targeted Benefits:** *Personal:* Improved outdoor knowledge and self-confidence; enhanced awareness and understanding of nature. *Community:* Heightened sense of satisfaction with the community. *Economic:* More positive contributions to local and regional economies; increased local tourism revenues. *Environmental:* Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes; reduced negative human impacts such as litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails.

- Maintain and improve designated camping areas at Chimney Creek, Long-Valley and Walker Pass.
- Establish standard amenity fees for overnight camping at designated camping areas.
- Expand interpretive and education efforts along the Chimney Peak Byway.

PCNST RMZ: In visitor assessments, 75% of respondents who participated in targeted activities report the ability to realize the targeted experiences and benefits.

**Targeted Activities:** Destination Hiking; Horseback Riding/Packing; Primitive Camping

**Targeted Experiences:** Developing skills and abilities; enjoying the esteem of others; testing personal endurance; gaining a greater sense of self-confidence; telling others about the trip

**Targeted Benefits:** *Personal:* Improved mental well being; greater self-reliance; improved skills for outdoor enjoyment; a spiritual connection to the world. *Community:* Heightened sense of satisfaction with the community. *Economic:* More positive contributions to local and regional economies; increased local tourism revenues. *Environmental:* Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes; reduced negative human impacts such as litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails.

- Maintain and improve existing trail head facilities.
- Increase access to PCNST through the development of additional connector trails and trailhead facilities.

Wilderness RMZ: In visitor assessments, 50% of respondents who participated in targeted activities report the ability to realize the targeted experiences and benefits.

**Targeted Activities:** Hiking; Horseback Riding; Primitive Camping

**Targeted Experiences:** Gaining a greater sense of self-confidence; testing personal endurance; savoring the total sensory experience (sight sound, and smell) of a natural landscape; feeling good about solitude, being isolated and independent; enjoying an escape from crowds of people; nurturing personal spiritual values and growth.

**Targeted Benefits:** *Personal:* A more holistic sense of wellness; a greater sensitivity to awareness of outdoor aesthetics, nature’s art and elegance; greater self-reliance; a closer relationship with the natural world. *Community:* Greater freedom from urban living. *Economic:* More positive contributions to local and regional economies; increased local tourism revenues. *Environmental:* Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes; reduced negative human impacts such as litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails.

Designate 23,750 acres (Maps 2.6, 2.14) as the Temblor Special Recreation Management Area, established with a “community” market strategy for local communities (Taft), nearby rural areas and the population center of Bakersfield. The SRMA is subdivided into three (2) Recreational Management Zones, each with the following recreation objectives, management actions and allowable use decisions (Appendix H contains a complete description of each RMZs targeted activities, experiences, benefits, and Natural Resource Recreation Settings);

Temblor North RMZ: In visitor assessments, 50% of respondents who participated in targeted activities report the ability to realize the targeted experiences and benefits.

**Targeted Activities:** OHV trail riding; hunting; target shooting

**Targeted Experiences:** Developing skills and abilities; testing personal endurance; enjoying risk-taking adventure; savoring the total sensory experience of a natural landscape; escaping everyday responsibilities for awhile

**Targeted Benefits:** *Personal:* Greater self-reliance; improved skills for outdoor enjoyment; Closer relationship with the natural world. *Community:* Providing a place near but outside the community to recreate; removing unwanted use from industrial areas; addressing health and safety concerns. *Economic:* Improved local economic stability; maintenance of community's distinctive recreation tourism market. *Environmental:* Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes; reduced negative human impacts such as litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails.

- Develop high quality trail system, including maintenance of many existing trail and creating additional recreation trails in partnership with user groups and adjacent land owners.

Urban Interface RMZ: In visitor assessments, 65% of respondents who participated in targeted activities report the ability to realize the targeted experiences and benefits.

**Targeted Activities:** OHV trail riding; driving for pleasure; dispersed camping

**Targeted Experiences:** Developing skills and abilities; testing personal endurance; enjoying risk-taking adventure; savoring the total sensory experience of a natural landscape; escaping everyday responsibilities for awhile

**Targeted Benefits:** *Personal:* Greater self-reliance; improved skills for outdoor enjoyment; closer relationship with the natural world. *Community:* Providing a place near but outside the community to recreate; removing unwanted use from industrial areas; addressing health and safety concerns. *Economic:* Improved local economic stability; maintenance of community's distinctive recreation tourism market. *Environmental:* Increased awareness and protection of natural landscapes; reduced negative human impacts such as litter, vegetative trampling, and unplanned trails.

- Acquire legal public access.
- Establish parking/staging area in cooperation with adjacent land owners.
- Develop high quality trail system, including maintenance of many existing trail and creating additional recreation trails in partnership with user groups and adjacent land owners.

## SPECIAL DESIGNATIONS

### 2.6.10 AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN

#### *Decisions*

Bitter Creek ACEC: Recommend for designation 1,026 acres of public lands and 5,095 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 20,914 acres, as the Bitter Creek ACEC (Map 2.16) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (NSO – Bitter Creek ACEC).
- Prohibit public access to lands adjacent to USFWS surface (434 acres);
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping; and
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms and coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting.

Compensation Lands ACEC: Recommend for designation 283 acres of public lands and any future parcels of compensation land as the Compensation Lands ACEC (Map 2.16) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraint (CSU-Compensation Lands).
- Manage all existing and future parcels of compensation land (including lands not specifically labeled as “compensation” within the parcel) as part of the Compensation Lands ACEC;
- As appropriate, lands and minerals would remain unopened to entry under the General Mining Laws;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Prohibit cross country equestrian travel in areas that are not grazed by livestock;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Require all pets to be leashed (maximum eight-foot length) at all times. Require removal of pet fecal matter by owners or handlers.

Hopper Mountain ACEC: Recommend for designation 2,027 acres of public lands and 2,947 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 4,978 acres, as the Hopper Mountain ACEC (Map 2.16) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Protected Species and CSU-Raptor stipulations).
- Identify portions as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Restrict public access through temporary emergency closure or in coordination with adjacent land managers, as needed for Condor protection;
- Implement Best Management Practices to minimize impacts on condors from public use and oil field activities;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping; and

- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species.

Kaweah ACEC: Recommend for designation 26,891 acres of public lands and 150 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 33,559 acres (expanding the existing Case Mountain ACEC), as the Kaweah ACEC (Map 2.16) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for leasing oil and gas resources, subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Raptor stipulations);
- Identify as closed to geothermal leasing;
- Identify the giant sequoia groves as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping at the Kaweah River recreation sites.
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species;
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization; and
- Protect the giant sequoia groves and mixed conifer forest through implementation of fuels reduction techniques including prescribed burning and vegetation thinning, and removal of ladder fuels.

Kettleman Hills ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 6,726 acres of public lands and 3,070 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 16,483 acres, as the Kettleman Hills ACEC (Map 2.16) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to moderate constraints (CSU-Protected Species, CSU-Sensitive Species, and CSU-Raptor stipulations);
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes; and
- Prohibit campfires.

Lokern-Buena Vista ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 11,352 acres of public lands and 4,113 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 69,474 acres (combining the existing Lokern ACEC with the expansion to include the Buena Vista Hills and Valley), as the Lokern-Buena Vista ACEC (Map 2.16) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as open for fluid mineral leasing, subject to major constraints (CSU-Protected Species and CSU-Sensitive Species stipulations);
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes); and
- Prohibit campfires.

Los Osos ACEC: Recommend for designation 5 acres of public lands; within a boundary of 32 acres, as the Los Osos ACEC (Map 2.16) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Designate as OHV Closed area.

- Prohibit mechanized use, equestrian use, and cross-country travel by pedestrians;
- Require all pets to be leashed (maximum eight-foot length) at all times. Require removal of pet fecal matter by owners or handlers
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms, except the legal taking of game species; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Piute Cypress ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 2,305 acres of public lands and 212 acres of federal mineral estate; within a boundary of 2,544 acres (expanding the existing 1,104-acre ACEC), as the Piute Cypress ACEC (Map 2.16) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Identify as closed to mineral materials disposals, except for administrative purposes;
- Protect Piute cypress communities from livestock grazing if deemed necessary through appropriate studies;
- Prohibit campfires; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

Pt. Sal ACEC: Recommend to continue the designation of 77 acres of public lands; within a boundary of 77 acres, as the Pt. Sal ACEC (Map 2.16) administered with the following special management:

- Identify as closed to fluid mineral leasing;
- Identify as unavailable for livestock grazing;
- Prohibit campfires and overnight camping;
- Designate as OHV Closed area;
- Prohibit mechanized and equestrian use;
- Prohibit the discharge of firearms and coordinate with CDFG to prohibit hunting; and
- Prohibit the casual collection of plants or their parts without BLM authorization.

## **2.6.11 BACK COUNTRY BYWAYS**

### *Decisions*

Continue designation of Canebrake and Long Valley Loop Roads as the Chimney Peak Backcountry Byway. Maintain Chimney Peak Backcountry Byway as a Type II Byway.

### *Key Implementation Decisions*

Restore connectivity of the Long Valley Loop Road across private property.

### **2.6.12 NATIONAL TRAILS**

#### *Decisions*

Designate and manage the PCNST corridor as the Pacific Crest Recreation Management Zone (RMZ), within the Chimney Peak Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA).

Recommend for designation the San Joaquin River Trail as a National Recreation Trail in coordination with other affected entities.

### **2.6.13 WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS**

#### *Decisions*

Determine all river segments as not suitable, and not recommended for Congressional designation.

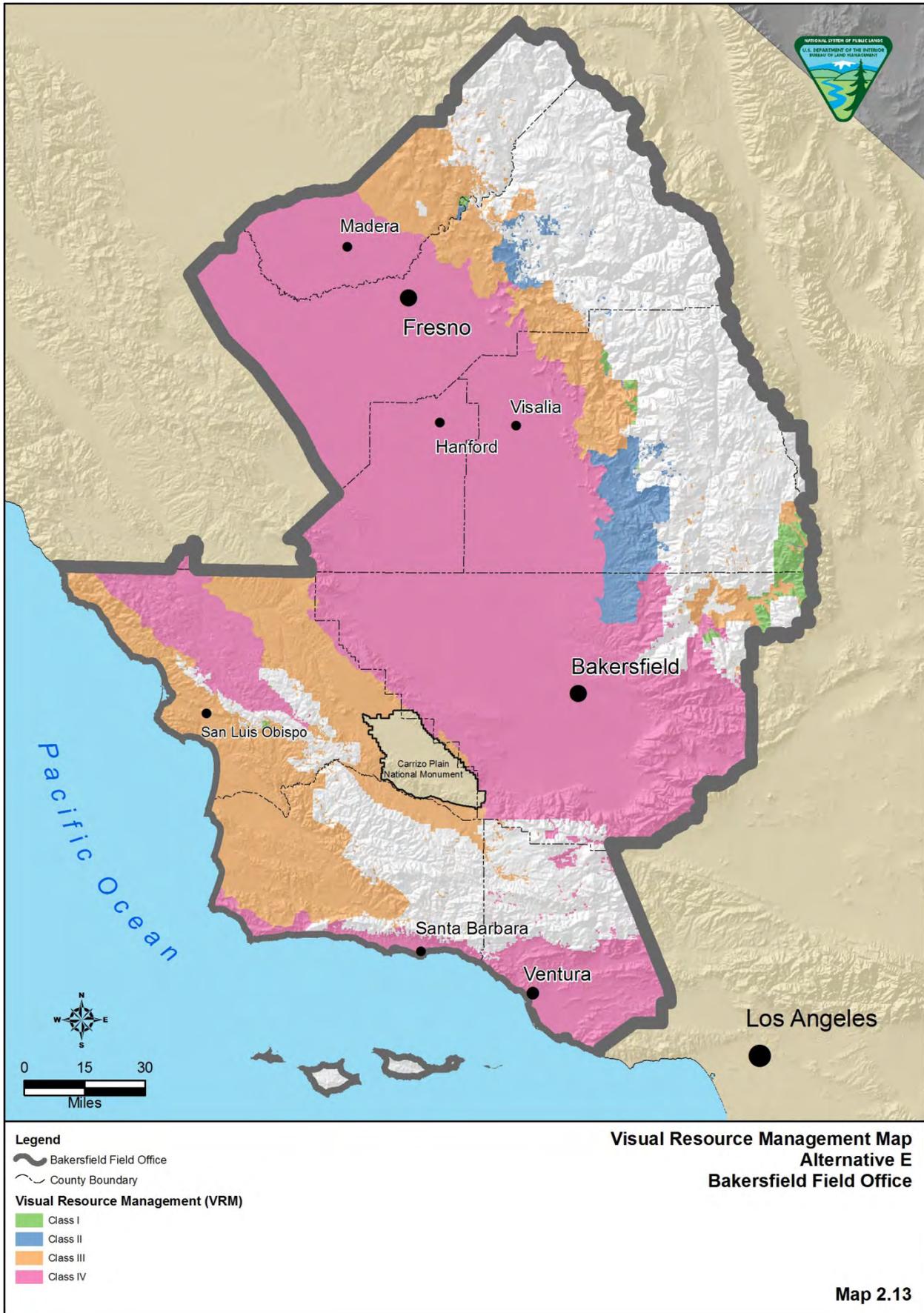
### **2.6.14 WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS**

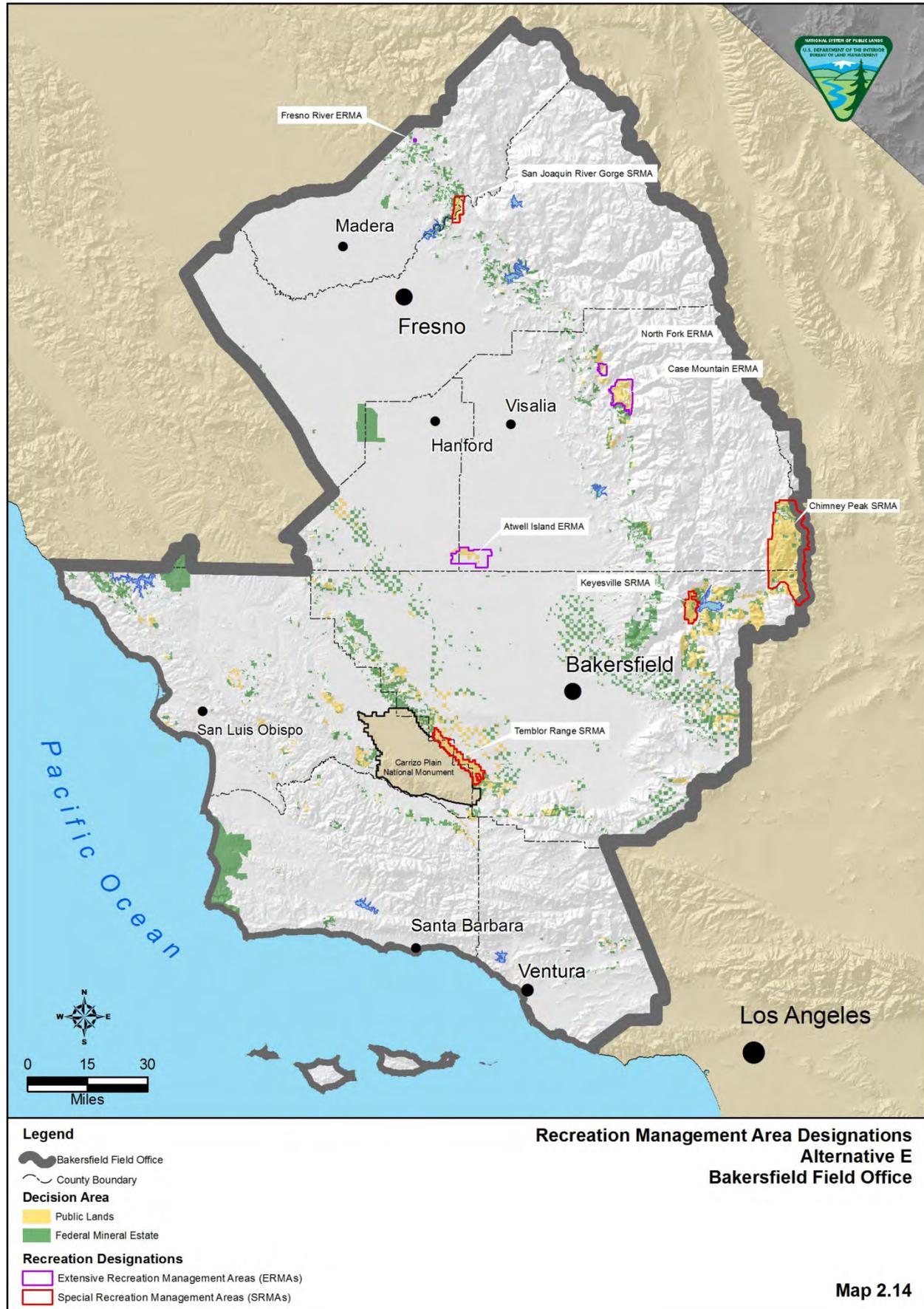
#### *Objectives*

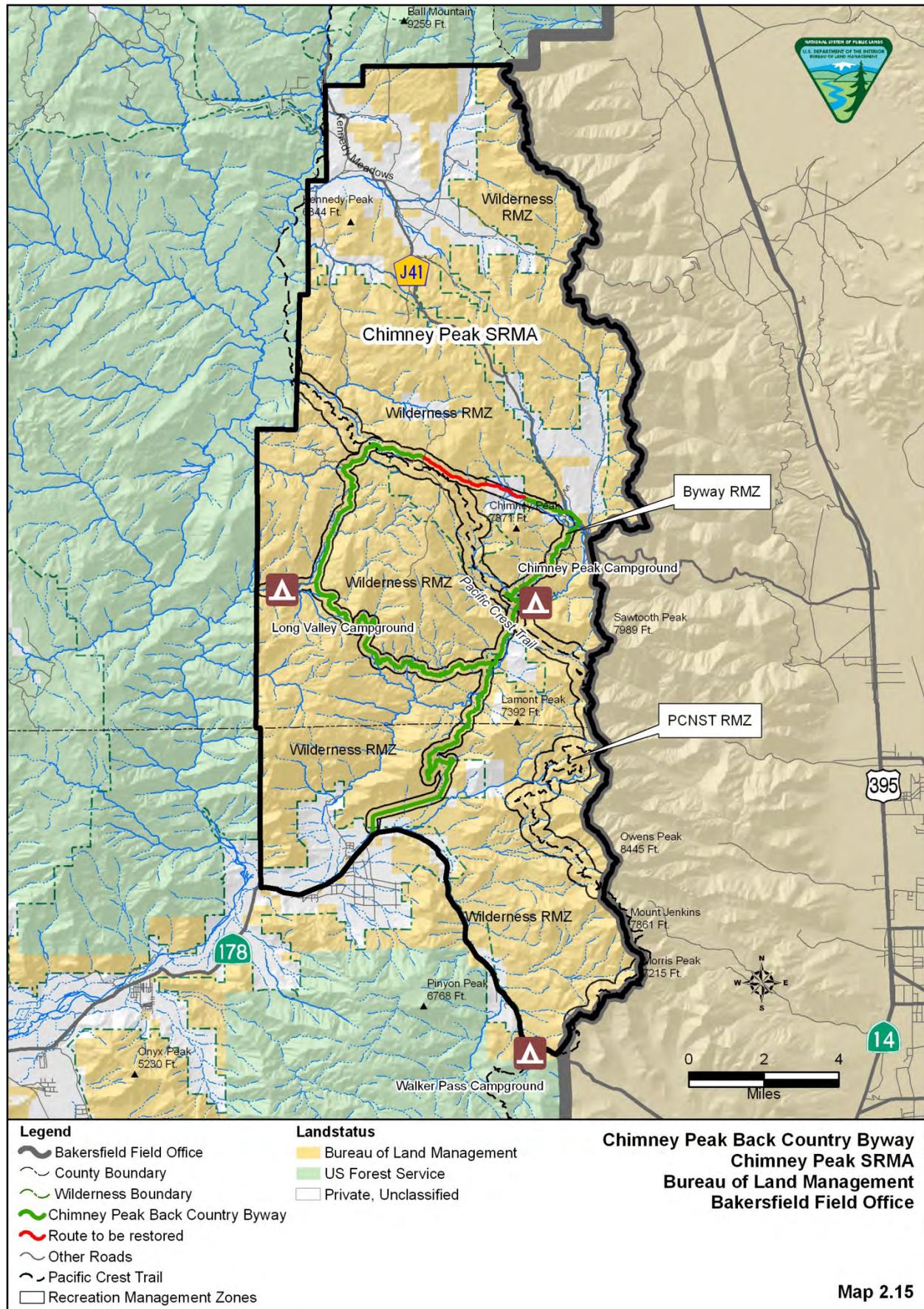
If released by congress, manage WSAs commensurate with the resources values present.

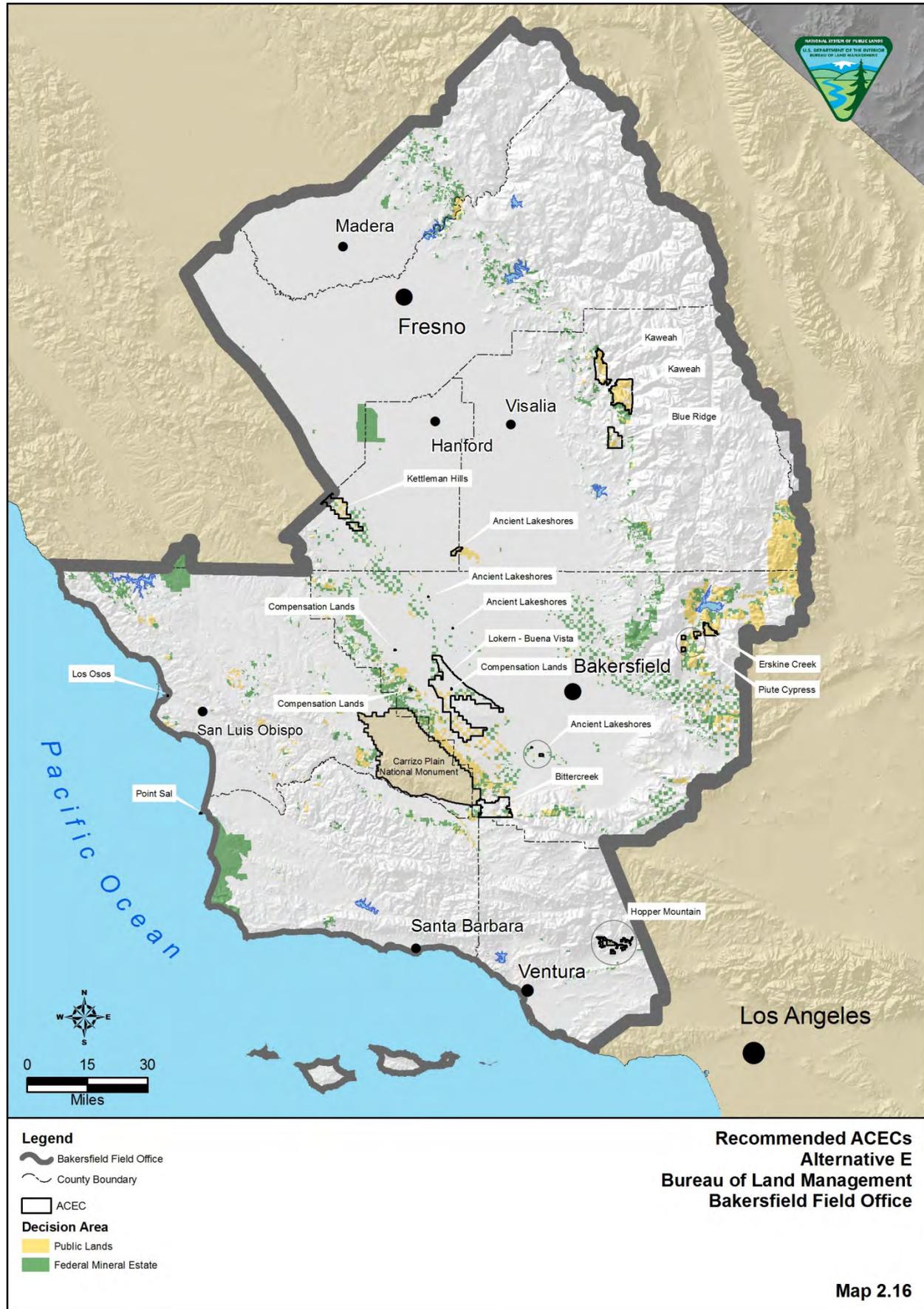
#### *Decisions*

Manage all released WSAs a multiple-use dispersed public lands unless congressional release language or existing overlapping management designation dictates otherwise.









## **2.7 ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT ANALYZED IN DETAIL**

The following alternative was eliminated from detailed study because it did not meet the purpose and need for the proposal or was outside of the technical, legal, or policy constraints of developing a land use plan for public land resources and uses.

### **2.7.1 PROACTIVE LAND DISPOSAL ALTERNATIVE**

Consideration was given to an alternative that would proactively market or offer parcels for sale on either an individual basis or by grouping a number of parcels and marketing them together. In this scenario, lands outside of designated areas (ACECs, Special Recreation Management Areas, Wilderness, etc.) would be actively sold or otherwise disposed of. Equity would either flow to the federal treasury, or be used to acquire additional lands within the designated areas; the number of designated areas might be reduced to allow for an even greater concentration of management.

This alternative was dismissed for several reasons. In many cases, even public lands outside of special designations have public values - the oilfields are one notable example. Many scattered parcels have been considered for disposal in the past, but were found to have unique biological, cultural, and or recreation values. Some are integral to landscape conservation strategies. It is expected that a land tenure adjustment program will continue within each of the alternatives that are carried forward. After considering the above points and weighing public comments during public scoping, this alternative was deemed to be inconsistent with RMP goals and objectives and not in the public interest.

### **2.7.2 PROHIBIT OIL AND GAS DEVELOPMENT**

Oil and gas development is an authorized use of BLM-administered lands and encouraged by national energy policy. Therefore it would be arbitrary and inconsistent with existing laws to analyze closing the entire Decision Area to development. Moreover, that analysis would be disingenuous since extensive valid lease rights exist that could be developed regardless of changes in management in this RMP revision. The action alternatives do include minor modifications to the approach under Alternative A, specifically the application of Controlled Surface Use stipulations on areas previously subject to standard terms and conditions. The concept of placing greater restriction (i.e., more closed acres or no surface occupancy (NSO) stipulation) was considered, however, closure of lands with little or no oil and gas development potential was deemed to be unnecessary. Furthermore, a large portion of the developable area is already developed and productive.

### **2.7.3 RESTRICT SOLID (NON-ENERGY) LEASABLE AND SALABLE MINERAL DEVELOPMENT**

Mineral developments are an authorized use of BLM-administered lands. Therefore it would be arbitrary and inconsistent with existing laws to analyze closing the entire Decision Area to development. Generally the Decision Area has limited potential for these mineral resources. The concept of placing greater restriction (i.e., more closed acres) was considered, however, closure of lands with little or no potential for these minerals was deemed to be unnecessary.

#### **2.7.4 MODIFIED GRAZING ALTERNATIVES**

Livestock grazing is an authorized use of BLM-administered lands. In development of the alternatives a greater range of acres allocated as Available/Unavailable (besides total elimination of this use) was considered, however, additional restrictions (i.e., less Available acres) were deemed to be arbitrary and unnecessary as further resource conflicts did not exist or could be addressed through site-specific use of livestock exclusions and adjustments to the permit/lease terms and conditions. In addition, less restriction of livestock grazing (i.e., more Available acres) was deemed to not adequately address the purpose and need, and issues identified in the RMP as they relate to biological resources.

### **2.8 COMPARISON OF ALTERNATIVES**

This section (Table 2.1) provides a summary of the primary differences between the five alternatives (A through E). Due to the breadth of management prescriptions in the alternatives, this section describes only the key elements of each alternative; considered to be those that address (or are related to) a planning issue previously identified, those that may have the biggest impact on resources and those that may be considered to be controversial.

Differences between the wording of the objectives, allocations, and management actions from the main text of this chapter should not be construed to confine or redefine management contained within the complete alternatives. Some wording was modified to be more concise in the summary table. In addition acreage presented reflects the total Decision Area (surface and/or federal mineral estate) affected by the decision

**Table 2.1  
Summary of Alternatives**

	<b>Decision</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
	<b>Air and Atmospheric Values</b>					
	Design BLM program and management activities and authorize projects to meet air quality standards. Reduce emissions resulting from such actions by implementing BMPs.	-	X	X	X	X
	Prevent BLM actions from degrading Federal Class I areas including Domeland Wilderness, San Raphael Wilderness, and Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks.	-	X	X	X	X
	<b>Biological Resources</b>					
	Identified as Special Management Areas (SMAs) for biological resource management:	10 areas	-	-	-	-
	Identified areas of ecological importance, with specific management:	-	11 areas	8 area	8 areas	15 areas
	Proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) for the protection of biological resources:	11 ACECs 52,350 acres	16 ACECs 96,660 acres	20 ACECs 101,010 acres	20 ACECs 101,010 acres	12 ACECs 74,920 acres
	Identified, for fluid mineral leasing, split estate with surface managed as compensation for biological resources as:	-	CSU Compensation	Closed	Closed	CSU Compensation
	Identified, for fluid mineral leasing, Compensation Lands (ACEC) as:	-	NSO	Closed	Closed	CSU
	Recommend proposal for withdrawal from the mining laws compensation lands for biological resources regardless of surface owner.	-	X	X	X	-
	Identified, for fluid mineral leasing, Chimineas Unit of the Carrizo Ecological Reserve as:	-	CSU	Closed	Closed	CSU
	Apply various CSU stipulations to all new fluid mineral leases including CSU-Protected Species and CSU-Sensitive Species on every lease, and CSU-Critical Habitat and CSU-Raptor as appropriate.	X	X	X	X	X
	Manage Conserved Lands as reserves or corridors subject to surface disturbance limitations.	-	X	X	X	X
	Acquire biologically important lands (including compensation lands) and manage consistent with the terms of acquisition.	X	X	X	X	X
	Implement a variety of management actions (including recommendation from recovery plan) to enhance and restore habitat, including degraded riparian areas and habitat for listed species.	X	X	X	X	X
	Control and eliminate, as appropriate nonnative animals and weeds.	-	X	X	X	X

**Table 2.1**  
**Summary of Alternatives**

<b>Decision</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
Eliminate, relocate or redesign uses that may result in unacceptable impacts on important biological resources	-	X	X	X	X
<b>Cave and Karst Resources</b>					
Designate Granite Cave as a significant cave and assign a management class of:	-	Class III (Closed)	-	-	Class III (Closed)
Designate Millerton Cave as a significant cave and assign a management class of:	-	Class I (Open)	(Class III) Closed	(Class III) Closed	Class I (Open)
Designate all caves within ACECs, whose importance and relevance values identifies cave resources, as significant and assign a management class of:	-	Class II (Restricted)	Class III (Closed)	Class III (Closed)	Class II (Restricted)
Assign an interim specific management class to as yet undiscovered caves or cave segments until a significance determination is made:	-	Class II (Restricted)	Class II (Restricted)	Class II (Restricted)	Class II (Restricted)
<b>Cultural Resources</b>					
Protect significant cultural resources through the application of a Controlled Surface Use- Cultural Resources stipulation on fluid mineral leasing, on new leases, as appropriate:	-	X	X	X	X
Eliminate, relocate, or redesign uses following site specific NEPA that may result or have resulted in impacts on significant cultural resources	-	X	X	X	X
Allocate evaluated cultural resources within the decision area as “scientific use” except Huasna Peak, Keyesville historic sites, Piedras Blancas Light Station, rock art sites and Walker Pass NHL.	-	X	X	X	X
<b>Lands with Wilderness Characteristics</b>					
Lands managed for wilderness characteristics:	-	6 areas 3,470 acres	13 areas 17,890 acres	13 areas 17,890 acres	0 areas 0 acres
<b>Paleontological Resources</b>					
Consider surface-disturbing activities that affect fossil-bearing geologic units identified as PFYC 4 in site specific analyses, which may include a field inventory.	-	X	X	X	X
Minimize or prevent damage to paleontological resources through educational and interpretive outreach programs focusing use on areas of PFYC 3 or less.	-	X	X	X	X

**Table 2.1**  
**Summary of Alternatives**

	<b>Decision</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
	<b>Soil Resources</b>					
	Design BLM activities and authorizations to minimize impacts on soils by implementing BMPs. Specifically protecting; Serpentine Soils; Soils supporting “Biological Crusts”; and Soils highly susceptible to erosion.	-	X	X	X	X
	<b>Visual Resources</b>					
	Designate as VRM Class I	120,820 acres <sup>4</sup>	144,730 acres	163,110 acres	163,110 acres	143,300 acres
	Designate as VRM Class II	-	207,790 acres	250,060 acres	250,060 acres	36,740 acres
	Designate as VRM Class III	4,760 acres	525,860 acres	475,560 acres	475,560 acres	361,620 acres
	Designate as VRM Class IV	3,820 acres	271,380 acres	261,030 acres	261,030 acres	608,100 acres
	<b>Water Resources</b>					
	Design BLM activities and authorizations to meet water quality standards and maintain beneficial uses by implementing State approved BMPs (Management Measures for Polluted Runoff).	-	X	X	X	X
	Implement management actions to reduce non-point source pollution contributing to impaired water quality in any basin or segment listed as impaired.	-	X	X	X	X
	Authorize water developments or diversions on public lands only after resource objectives have been met.	-	X	X	X	X
	<b>Wildland Fire Ecology and Management</b>					
	Identify the South Sierra, Domeland and a portion of the Three Rivers FMU as suitable for the use of wildland fire for resource benefit.	-	X	X	X	X
	Use a decision support process to analyze and document fire suppression strategies and tactics.	-	X	X	X	X
	Use Minimum Impact Suppression Tactics (MIST) or other modified suppression techniques when suppressing fires in sensitive areas	-	X	X	X	X
	Participate in local Fire Safe Councils or other community organizations to develop and implement collaborative fire mitigation and prevention strategies with communities at risk, and coordinate on the preparation of Community Wildfire Protection Plans.	-	X	X	X	X

<sup>4</sup> Established by BLM Policy and Guidance for Wilderness and ONA management

**Table 2.1**  
**Summary of Alternatives**

<b>Decision</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>Comprehensive Trail and Travel Management</b>					
Designate as OHV Open area:	0 acres	0 acres	0 acres	0 acres	70 acres
Designate as OHV Closed area:	139,490 acres	142,940 acres	166,300 acres	166,300 acres	136,280 acres
Designate as OHV Limited Use area:	264,590 acres	261,140 acres	237,780 acres	237,780 acres	264,560 acres
Routes designated Motorized:	1895 miles	770 miles	656 miles	656 miles	1683 miles
Routes designated Non-Motorized:	0 miles	31 miles	39 miles	39 miles	31 miles
Routes designated Non-Mechanized:	41 miles	45 miles	45 miles	45 miles	45 miles
Routes designated Authorized:	0 miles	783 miles	617 miles	617 miles	112 miles
Routes designated Closed:	0 miles	308 miles	580 miles	580 miles	65 miles
<b>Lands and Realty</b>					
Identify as Rights-of-Way avoidance areas:	-	128,000 acres	157,920 acres	157,920 acres	96,080 acres
Identify as Rights-of-Way exclusion areas:	-	121,300 acres	151,410 acres	151,410 acres	121,300 acres
<b>Livestock Grazing</b>					
Allocate as available for livestock grazing:	314,600 acres	328,700 acres	322,200 acres	0 acres	345,800 acres
Allocate as available for livestock grazing only for the purpose of vegetation management:	0 acres	7,800 acres	7,800 acres	0 acres	7,800 acres
Allocate as unavailable for livestock grazing:	61,200 acres	66,200 acres	72,700 acres	402,800 acres	49,100 acres
Unallocated for livestock grazing:	26,900 acres	0 acres	0 acres	0 acres	0 acres
Estimated annual AUMs	36,700 AUMs	39,100 AUMs	36,200 AUMs	0 AUMs	41,400 AUMs
<b>Minerals</b>					
Open to fluid mineral leasing subject to standard terms and conditions:	304,080 acres	0 acres	0 acres	0 acres	0 acres
Open to fluid mineral leasing subject to moderate constraints:	0 acres				
Open to fluid mineral leasing subject to major constraints:	707,280 acres	999,950 acres	966,160 acres	966,160 acres	1,013,010 acres
Open with a No Surface Occupancy Stipulation:	4,910 acres	3,880 acres	8,400 acres	8,400 acres	3,590 acres
Closed to fluid mineral leasing:	150,850 acres	162,260 acres	196,050 acres	196,050 acres	149,200 acres
Closed to geothermal leasing:	169,350 acres	188,700 acres	209,310 acres	209,310 acres	175,640 acres
Open to Solid (non-energy) mineral leasing:	817,690 acres	818,330 acres	0 acres	0 acres	897,070 acres
Open to mineral material disposal:	817,690 acres	818,090 acres	781,120 acres	781,120 acres	896,830 acres
Recommend proposal for withdrawal from the mining laws:	10,130 acres	29,050 acres	62,670 acres	62,670 acres	17,770 acres
<b>Recreation and Visitor Services</b>					
Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs) designations:	1 SRMAs 4,760 acres	3 SRMAs 45,240 acres	2 SRMAs 21,490 acres	2 SRMAs 21,490 acres	4 SRMAs 168,690 acres
Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMAs) designations:	2 ERMAs 399,320 acres	4 ERMAs 167,320 acres	4 ERMAs 190,910 acres	4 ERMAs 190,910 acres	4 ERMAs 47,270

**Table 2.1**  
**Summary of Alternatives**

<b>Decision</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
Total area not designated as Recreation Management Areas (RMAs):	0 acres	191,520 acres	191,680 acres	191,680 acres	188,120 acres
Total area open to public access:	404,080 acres	392,660 acres	380,680 acres	380,680 acres	404,080 acres
Total area open to overnight camping:	400,230 acres	361,240 acres	328,890 acres	328,890 acres	383,720 acres
Total area open to unrestricted (trails and cross country) equestrian use:	402,000 acres	358,530 acres	335,050 acres	335,050 acres	381,370 acres
Total area open to the discharge of firearms:	276,141 acres	204,950 acres	167,970 acres	167,970 acres	229,280 acres
Total area open recommended to remain open to hunting:	404,080 acres	373,140 acres	349,480 acres	349,480 acres	397,070 acres
<b>Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)</b>					
Propose for designation as ACEC:	13 ACECs 59,808 acres	17 ACECs 99,490 acres	22 ACECs 108,248 acres	22 ACECs 108,248 acres	12 ACECs 74,918 acres
Ancient Lakeshores ACEC – Biological & Cultural Resources	-	1,985 acres	1,985 acres	1,985 acres	1,985 acres
Alkali Sink ACEC - Biological & Cultural Resources	402 acres	* <sup>5</sup>	*	*	*
Bitter Creek ACEC – Biological Resources	-	6,121 acres	6,121 acres	6,121 acres	6,121 acres
Blue Ridge ACEC - Biological Resources	4,758 acres	4,749 acres	4,749 acres	4,749 acres	4,749 acres
Case Mountain ACEC – Biological Resources	26,468 acres	* <sup>6</sup>	*	*	*
Chico Martinez ACEC – Cultural Resources	4,607 acres	-	4,608 acres	4,608 acres	-
Compensation Lands ACEC – Biological Resources	-	283 acres	283 acres	283 acres	283 acres
Cypress Mountain ACEC – Biological Resources	1,080 acres	1,080 acres	1,080 acres	1,080 acres	-
Cyrus Canyon ACEC – Biological Resources	-	5,374 acres	5,374 acres	5,374 acres	-
Erskine Creek ACEC - Cave/Karst & Biological Resources	-	4,019 acres	4,019 acres	4,019 acres	4,019 acres
Goose Lake ACEC - Biological & Cultural Resources	40 acres	*	*	*	*
Granite Cave ACEC – Cultural Resources	-	-	42 acres	42 acres	-
Hopper Mountain ACEC – Biological Resources	-	4,974 acres	4,974 acres	4,974 acres	4,974 acres
Horse Canyon ACEC – Cultural Resources	2,830 acres	2,830 acres	2,830 acres	2,830 acres	-
Irish Hills ACEC – Biological Resources	-	-	1,654 acres	1,654 acres	-
Kaweah ACEC – Cave/Karst & Biological Resources	-	27,041 acres	27,041 acres	27,041 acres	27,041 acres
Kettleman Hills ACEC – Biological Resources	9,794 acres	13,695 acres	13,695 acres	13,695 acres	9,796 acres
Lokern ACEC – Biological Resource	6,632 acres	* <sup>7</sup>	*	*	*
Lokern-Buena Vista ACEC – Biological Resources	-	15,465 acres	15,465 acres	15,465 acres	15,465 acres
Los Osos ACEC – Biological & Cultural Resources	-	5 acres	5 acres	5 acres	5 acres
Piute Cypress ACEC – Biological Resources	1,104 acres	2,517 acres	2,517 acres	2,517 acres	2,517 acres

<sup>5</sup> Incorporated into the Ancient Lakeshores ACEC

<sup>6</sup> Incorporated into the Kaweah ACEC

<sup>7</sup> Incorporated into the Lokern-Buena Vista ACEC

**Table 2.1**  
**Summary of Alternatives**

<b>Decision</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
Pt. Sal ACEC (acres) - Biological & Cultural Resources	77 acres	77 acres	77 acres	77 acres	77 acres
Rusty Peak ACEC – Biological Resources	-	-	787 acres	787 acres	-
Salinas River ACEC – Biological Resources	1,604 acres	-	1,604 acres	1,604 acres	-
Tierra Redonda ACEC – Biological & Paleontological Resources	412 acres	412 acres	412 acres	412 acres	-
Upper Cuyama Valley ACEC – Biological Resources	-	8,935 acres	8,935 acres	8,935 acres	-
<b>Back Country Byways</b>					
Designate Long Valley Loop and Canebrake Roads as the Chimney Creek Back Country Byway:	X	-	-	-	X
<b>National Trails</b>					
Recommend the San Joaquin River Trail for designation as a National Recreation Trail:	-	X	-	-	X
<b>Wild and Scenic Rivers</b>					
Determine as suitable for congressional designation in the National Wild and Scenic River System (NWSRS):	0 river segments	2 river segments	8 river segments	8 river segments	0 river segments
Establish management corridor for suitable river segments affecting:	-	3,880 acres	12,220 acres	12,220 acres	0 acres
<b>Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs)</b>					
Manage WSAs, if released by congress, for wilderness characteristics:	-	6 areas 1,880 acres	11 areas 21,140 acres	11 areas 21,140 acres	0 areas 0 acres
Manage WSAs, if released by congress as part of an ACEC:	-	3 areas 18,650 acres	0 areas 0 acres	0 areas 0 acres	0 areas 0 acres
Manage WSAs, if released by congress as multiple-use dispersed land:	-	2 areas 610 acres	0 areas 0 acres	0 areas 0 acres	11 areas 21,140 acres

## **2.9 COMPARISON OF IMPACTS**

The Summary of Environmental Consequences by Alternative (Table 2.2) summarizes potential impacts under alternatives A through E. Due to the breadth of management prescriptions and range of resulting impacts, this section describes only the key impacts of each alternative; considered to be those that address (or are related to) a planning issue previously identified, those that may have the biggest impact on resources and those that may be considered to be controversial.

Where appropriate, the table quantifies (e.g., more acreage implies more impact, either beneficial or adverse) potential impacts anticipated from BLM-authorized actions or qualitative descriptions comparing the impact potential among the alternatives (e.g., highest potential, lowest potential, or moderate potential) with brief descriptions of the qualifying rationale. This summary does not present the cumulative impacts occurring from non-BLM actions.

The environmental consequences of alternatives are not anticipated to exceed known legal thresholds or standards over the life of this RMP. Standard practices, BMPs, and guidelines for surface-disturbing activities are built into each alternative to avoid and minimize potential impacts (Appendix L). The BLM would consider mitigation of residual impacts during subsequent implementation-level projects and any associated environmental analyses performed at that time. All alternatives include reclamation of surface disturbance to reduce long-term impacts.

**Table 2.2**  
**Summary of Environmental Consequences by Alternative**

<b>Summary of Impact</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>Air and Atmospheric Values</b>					
Potential change in emission trends for Ozone	No Change	Slight Increase	Slight Increase	Slight Increase	Slight Increase
Potential change in emission trends for PM10	No Change	Slight Decrease	Decrease	Greatest Decrease	Very Slight Decrease
Potential change in emission trends for PM2.5	No Change	Slight Increase	Slight Increase	Slight Increase	Slight Increase
<b>Biological Resources</b>					
Number of special status species afforded protection through special management within ACECs from a total of 328 species.	93 species (28%)	83 species (25%)	124 species (38%)	124 species (38%)	57 species (17%)
Number (percent) of federally listed species known or with potential to occur in the Decision Area, afforded protection through special management within ACECs from a total of 53 species.	14 species (27%)	19 species (36%)	23 species (43%)	23 species (43%)	16 species (30%)
Percent of motorized routes available to the public potentially resulting in habitat loss and disturbance to wildlife in areas specifically identified for biological resources management (including Conserved Lands).	95%*	88%	80%	80%	95%
<b>Cave and Karst Resources</b>					
Potential for loss or diminishment of cave resources	Highest potential	Low potential	Lowest potential	Lowest potential	Low potential
<b>Cultural Resources</b>					
Area (percent of Decision Area) with reduced potential for degradation of factors contributing to eligibility as a result of surface disturbance from BLM actions:	13%	14%	18%	18%	12%
Number of recorded sites (percent of known) at risk from disturbance related to Motorized access (direct destruction, accessibility for looting etc.):	439 (63%)	134 (19%)	119 (17%)	119 (17%)	344 (49%)
Number of recorded sites (percent of known) protected from disturbance related to Motorized access (i.e., in proximity of closed routes):	0 (0%)	58 (8%)	165 (24%)	165 (24%)	1 (<1%)
Potential for destruction of sites and diminishment of TCP values at Horse Canyon:	High potential	Low potential	Lowest potential	Lowest potential	Highest potential
<b>Lands with Wilderness Characteristics</b>					
Protection of lands with wilderness characteristics through prescriptive management on (percent of lands with wilderness characteristics):	0% 0 acres	21% 3,470 acres	100% + 17,890 acres	100% + 17,890 acres	0% 0 acres

**Table 2.2**  
**Summary of Environmental Consequences by Alternative**

<b>Summary of Impact</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
Protection of Lands with wilderness characteristics through overlapping designations e.g., ACECs, Backcountry RMZs (percent of lands with wilderness characteristics):	0% 0 acres	24% 3,820 acres	Some overlapping designations with more stringent management	Some overlapping designations with more stringent management	36% 5,830 acres
Lands at risk of loss of wilderness characteristics (percent of lands with wilderness characteristics):	100% 16,190 acres	55% 8,900 acres	0% 0 acres	0% 0 acres	64% 10,360 acres
<b>Paleontological Resources</b>					
Areas of PFYC 4 (acres) protected from surface disturbance impacts resulting from BLM authorizations	2 areas (1,050 acres)	3 areas (14,710 acres)	4 areas (16,670 acres)	4 areas (16,670 acres)	2 areas (13,820 acres)
<b>Soil Resources</b>					
Area (acres/percent of Decision Area) with reduced potential for degradation of soils as a result of surface disturbance associated with BLM authorizations:	155,760 acres 39%	166,140 acres 41%	204,450 acres 51%	204,450 acres 51%	152,790 acres 38%
Portion of motorized route network crossing in areas susceptible to erosion potentially resulting in accelerated erosion rates.	3%	1%	1%	6%	3%
<b>Visual Resources</b>					
VRI Class I preserved (VRM Class I):	81%	82%	84%	84%	81%
VRI Class II preserved or retained (VRM Class I & II):	0%	85%	98%	98%	47%
VRI Class III partially retained (VRM Class III)	0%	61%	31%	31%	84%
VRI Class IV with major modification (VRM Class IV)	0%	32%	30%	30%	70%
<b>Water Resources</b>					
Area (percent of Decision Area) indirectly maintaining or improving of water quality resulting from protective prescriptive applied through area designations.	225,120 acres (56%)	301,140 acres (75%)	322,110 acres (80%)	322,110 acres (80%)	279,650 acres (69%)
<b>Wildland Fire Ecology and Management</b>					
Increased incidence of human-caused fires as a result of increased recreational visitation	Moderate potential	Moderate potential	Lowest potential	Low potential	Highest potential
Improvement in fire regime condition class as a result of vegetation management.	Lowest potential	Moderate potential	High potential	Highest potential	Low potential
<b>Comprehensive Trail and Travel Management</b>					
Change (percent) to areas of travel opportunity and potential for travel network to extend for motorized and mechanized uses:	No change	4% decrease in area	6% decrease in area	6% decrease in area	1% increase in area
Change (percent) to motorized route opportunities for all users:	50% increase	18% decrease	30% decrease	30% decrease	43% increase

**Table 2.2**  
**Summary of Environmental Consequences by Alternative**

<b>Summary of Impact</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
<b>Lands and Realty</b>					
Probability of a net loss of public lands and federal mineral estate as a result of land tenure adjustments (acquisitions and disposals) based on criteria in the RMP:	High probability (99% available for disposal)	Low probability (greater than 99% retained)			
Loss of opportunity to establish new rights-of-way (increased percent of areas with ROW restrictions [avoidance and exclusion areas])	0% increase in restricted areas	62% increase in restricted areas	77% increase in restricted areas	77% increase in restricted areas	55% increase in restricted areas
Loss of opportunity for utility scale renewable energy projects in areas with potential for development beyond standard ROW exclusion areas.	No additional exclusions for renewable energy projects	25% of area with potential excluded	60% of area with potential excluded	60% of area with potential excluded	No additional exclusions for renewable energy projects
<b>Livestock Grazing</b>					
Change (percent) to the opportunity to utilize public lands for grazing operations:	No change	6% increase	4% increase	100% decrease	10% increase
Potential grazing opportunity (AUMs) <sup>8</sup>	37,600 AUMs	40,000 AUMs	37,800 AUMs	900 AUMs	42,300 AUMs
<b>Minerals Management</b>					
Area with potential, available for Oil & Gas development (percent of area with potential closed):	154,760 acres (2%)	154,760 acres (2%)	142,890 acres (10%)	142,890 acres (10%)	156,400 acres (1%)
Area with potential, available for Solid (non-energy) leasable development (percent of area with potential closed):	34,590 acres (1%)	34,340 acres (2%)	0 acres (100%)	0 acres (100%)	34,760 acres (1%)
Area with potential, available for locatable mineral development (percent of area with potential withdrawn):	236,360 acres (8%)	228,780 acres (10%)	222,180 acres (13%)	222,180 acres (13%)	236,080 acres (8%)
Area with potential, available for salable mineral development (percent of area with potential closed):	43,330 acres (16%)	30,300 acres (41%)	30,170 acres (41%)	30,170 acres (41%)	33,700 acres (34%)
<b>Recreation and Visitor Services</b>					
Area (percent of Decision Area) lost to all public opportunities for recreation (i.e., permanent public closure).	0 acres (0%)	11,000 acres (3%)	23,000 acres (6%)	23,000 acres (6%)	0 acres (0%)
Area (percent of Decision Area) lost to camping opportunities.	2,890 acres (<1%)	42,840 acres (11%)	75,190 acres (19%)	75,190 acres (19%)	20,360 acres (5%)
Area (percent of Decision Area) lost to unrestricted equestrian activities.	450 acres (<1%)	45,550 acres (11%)	69,030 acres (17%)	69,030 acres (17%)	22,710 acres (6%)

<sup>8</sup> These figures include 900 AUMs authorized by other RMPs.

**Table 2.2**  
**Summary of Environmental Consequences by Alternative**

<b>Summary of Impact</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>
Area (percent of Decision Area) lost to recreation shooting sports (e.g., Target Shooting, paintball etc.)	127,930 acres (32%)	199,130 acres (49%)	236,110 acres (58%)	236,110 acres (58%)	174,800 acres (43%)
<b>Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)</b>					
Potential for degradation and loss of relevant values on (number of areas, acres):	4 20,940 acres	0 0 acres	0 0 acres	0 0 acres	1 2,830 acres
<b>Back Country Byways</b>					
Change to the visual and social values, and administrative setting of the Chimney Peak Backcountry Byway	Values and settings maintained	Special designation revoked	Special designation revoked	Special designation revoked	Values and settings enhanced, potential increase in use
<b>National Trails</b>					
Potential for visual and social values to be diminished along trails.	Highest potential	Lowest potential	Lowest potential	Lowest potential	Low potential
<b>Wild and Scenic Rivers</b>					
Free flowing characteristics and ORVs protected by recommendation for inclusion in the NWSRS on (number and miles of river segment):	0 river segments 0 miles	2 river segments 8 miles	8 river segments 31 miles	8 river segments 31 miles	0 river segments 0 miles
ORVs (river corridor acres) protected by overlapping designations (ACECs, areas of ecological importance, etc.):	12,220 acres	12,220 acres	12,220 acres	12,220 acres	12,220 acres
<b>Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs)</b>					
Continued protection, if released by congress, of wilderness values through overlapping designations or management direction on (percent of lands currently WSAs):	54% 11,470 acres	97% 20,530 acres	100% 21,140 acres	100% 21,140 acres	88% 18,650 acres
<b>Social and Economic Resources</b>					
Contribution to local employment opportunities and income as a result of BLM actions and authorizations:	503 jobs \$19.7 million in labor income	491 jobs \$19 million in labor income	468 jobs \$17.8 million in labor income	462 jobs \$17.6 million in labor income	503 jobs \$19.4 million in labor income
Potential to disproportionately impact minority or low income populations:	Lowest	Low	Low	Moderate	Lowest
<b>Public Safety and Health</b>					
Risks to public health from industrialized areas reduced from (acres)	0 acres	10,000 acres	10,000 acres	10,000 acres	0 acres
Risks to public health from travel across serpentine soils remain from routes (miles)	6 miles	5 miles	5 miles	5 miles	6 miles