

ii.

Appendix A2 – Ridgecrest Priority Ranking Criteria

Sub-Region Priority Matrix

Sub Region	Biological	Wilderness	WSA	Cultural Resources	Proximity to Urban Area	Degree of Readiness	Total
Red Mountain	5	2	0	5	3	5	20
Sierras	4	3	0	5	3	5	21
El Paso	4	1	0	5	5	5	20
Ridgecrest	4	0	0	3	5	5	17
South Searles	3	0	0	3	3	5	14
North Searles	3	1	1	3	3	3	14
Darwin	1	3	0	5	1	1	11
Middle Knob	4	0	0	3	1	1	9
Rands	2	0	0	3	1	3	9
Jawbone	3	2	0	5	1	5	16
Lancaster	1	0	0	3	1	1	6

Biological

Sub Region	Priority Level	Rationale
Red Mountain	3	Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat (DWMA) with relatively high OHV use occurring.
Sierras	4	High Number of sensitive species due to riparian areas, some OHV use, high public profile, medium desert tortoise value.
El Paso	4	High desert tortoise value with a number of sensitive species, OHV use increasing with off-route intrusions increasing.
Ridgecrest	4	Medium to high desert tortoise value, high public profile with proximity to town, increasing OHV use.
South Searles	3	Medium Desert Tortoise value, some OHV use with proximity to the town of Trona.
North Searles	3	Medium to high Desert Tortoise value, some signing, restoration completed in Great Falls Basin, low to medium OHV use.
Darwin	1	Low number of sensitive species, low OHV use, low desert tortoise value.
Middle Knob	4	Kern Buckwheat protection needed through signing and restoration, off-route incursion
Rands	2	Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat (SWMA) with medium OHV use occurring but much restoration/signing already completed.
Jawbone	3	High number of sensitive species due to different ecosystems and riparian areas, medium to high desert tortoise value, high OHV use occurring, a lot of fencing/restoration/signing already completed.
Lancaster	1	Some Mojave Fringed-Toed lizard habitat, but hard to sign/enforce/monitor due to checkerboard pattern of public lands, medium desert tortoise value.

Sub Region ranked on five point scale: 5 = highest priority, 1 = lowest priority

Biological Rating Criteria

Used relative scale – a low number does not equate to site being free of concerns.

Considerations

- a. Number of potential listed species present - not based on a strict accounting, but on professional judgment
- b. Number of potential sensitive species present - not based on a strict accounting, but on professional judgment
- c. Areas with current management issues ranked higher than other areas - i.e., areas with more illegal OHV activity ranked higher
- d. Areas with greater short term future threat ranked higher - i.e., areas with imminent development potential ranked higher

Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas

Sub Region	Wilderness	WSA	Rational for Rating
Sierras	3	0	Near Owens Peak & Sacatar Trail Wildernesses, contains the Short Canyon & Sand Canyon ACECs, No WSAs
Red Mountain	2	0	Close proximity to Golden Valley Wilderness, no WSAs
El Paso	1	0	Close proximity to El Paso Wilderness, no WSAs
Ridgecrest	0	0	No Wilderness or WSAs
Jawbone	2	0	Close proximity to ACECS, no WSAs
South Searles	0	0	No Wilderness or WSAs
North Searles	1	1	Close proximity to ACEC & Great Falls WSA
Darwin	3	0	Near Darwin Falls & Argus Wildernesses, no WSAs
Middle Knob	0	0	No Wilderness or WSAs
Rands	0	0	No Wilderness or WSAs
Landcaster	0	0	No Wilderness or WSAs

Ratings:

- 5: Areas containing a Wilderness or WSA. May contain numerous ACECs
- 4: Areas bordering a wilderness subregion. Shares boundary with a single wilderness or WSA, Close proximity to wilderness or WSA but does not share a boundary. Close proximity to ACEC.
- 3: Close proximity to wilderness, WSA or ACEC
- 2: Contains an ACEC
- 1: Close to ACEC or WSA
- 0: No Wilderness or WSAs

Cultural

Subregion	Cultural Resources	Rational for Cultural Importance
Red Mountain	5	Large quantities of prehistoric and historic mining sites.
Sierras	5	Major prehistoric settlements at mouth of canyons & riparian zones.
El Paso	5	Last Chance Canyon NRHP District & hist mining sites.
Ridgecrest	3	Large quantities of prehistoric and historic mining sites.
South Searles	3	Pleistocene lake terraces-high potential for early sites.
North Searles	3	Pleistocene lake terraces-high potential for early sites.
Darwin	5	Coso Range, Rose Valley, Coso Hot Springs, Fossil Falls NRHP Districts.
Middle Knob	3	Large numbers of small prehistoric lithic scatter and campsites.
Rands	3	Large numbers of small prehistoric lithic scatter and campsites.
Jawbone	5	Large quantities of prehistoric and historic mining sites.
Lancaster	3	Large quantities of prehistoric and historic mining sites.

Ranking Criteria

- 1: Little known of cultural importance.
- 3: Fair Amount known of cultural importance
- 5: A Great degree of cultural importance, which includes sites and districts eligible for inclusion or listed in the National Register of Historic of Places, and/or sites of importance to Native American Tribes.

Sub-Region Priority Matrix for Proximity to Urban Areas

Sub Region		Rational for Importance
Sierras	3	Remote, visitors from OHV areas, requires route signing for resource protection. 3 wilderness moderate visitation
Red Mountain	3	Remote, visitors from OHV areas, requires route signing for resource protection. 2 wilderness moderate visitation
El Paso	5	Large area with visitation from Ridgecrest, Inyokern, and overflow from OHV areas on the fringes. Some wilderness visitation, lots of shooters, lots of mining claims.
Ridgecrest	5	Large urban influence from locals in Ridgecrest, and overflow from Spangler open OHV area. Lots of AML sites, mining claims, and shooters.
Jawbone	1	Remote but heavy OHV use, however the area has been signed and is being maintained.
South Searles	3	Remote but has overflow from OHV areas, requires route signing for resource protection.
North Searles	3	Remote but has visitors from small community of Trona and overflow from OHV areas, requires route signing for resource protection.
Darwin	1	Remote, few roads, small amount of visitors
Middle Knob	1	Remote, few roads, small amount of visitors
Rands	1	Remote but close to small communities, lots of OHV use but signing has been completed and is being maintained.
Landcaster	1	Remote, but close to small communities, some OHV use of Pacific Crest (hiking) trail.

Ranking Criteria – Proximity to Urban Areas

- 5- A rating of 5 indicates that proximity to urban areas is such that it tends to increase visitation and urban problems tend to overflow into the areas within the sub-region. These areas may be near cities or off-highway vehicle areas or other places that tend to be a destination.
- 4- Near urban areas but draws people to a lesser degree. Tends to not necessarily be a destination.
- 3- Somewhat near urbanization but requires additional drive time or specialized vehicle
- 2- Area is mostly in remote locations and requires knowledge of the area and a specialty vehicle
Area is remote and requires a very seasoned driver and vehicles capable of negotiating rough , rocky and/or soft surface roads or area has been signed and is being maintained
- 1 – Area is very remote and requires a very seasoned driver and vehicles capable of negotiating rough, rocky and/or soft surface roads.

Priority Criteria Degree of Readiness

Degree of Readiness Ratings are based on a scale of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, by completeness of routes per subregion. Completeness is determined by the extent that it is possible to correct linear features to reflect ground condition without further field reconnaissance, and that the background files have been prepared and clipped to the WEMO subregion boundaries.

5 rating 100% complete.

4 rating 75% complete.

3 rating 50% complete.

2 rating 25% complete.

1 rating 0% complete