

# 6301 - Wilderness Characteristics Inventory

## Summary of Findings and Conclusion

**Unit Name and Number:** Coyote Lake CA-080-189

### Results of Analysis:

1. Does the area meet any of the size requirements?     Yes     No
2. Does the area appear to be natural?     Yes     No     N/A
3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation?     Yes     No     N/A
4. Does the area have supplemental values?     Yes     No     N/A

### Conclusion

The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as Land with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC).

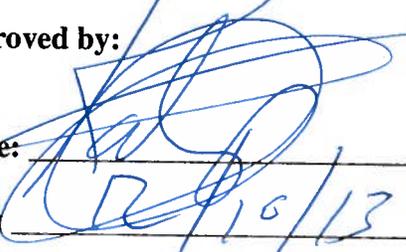
The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

### Prepared by:

Team Members:

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### Approved by:

Name: 

Title: Barstow Field Manager

Date: 12/10/13

*This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR parts 4 or 1610.5-2.*

Year 2013 Coyote Lake CA-080-189

## Documentation of BLM Wilderness Inventory Findings on Record

### 1. Is there existing BLM wilderness inventory information on all or part of this area?

Yes

**Inventory Source:** 1979 Wilderness Inventory files, California Desert Conservation Area

**Inventory Unit Name(s)/Number(s):** Coyote Lake CA-080-189

**Map Name(s)/Number(s):** USDI BLM California Desert Wilderness Final Inventory, Dec. 1979

**BLM District(s)/Field Office(s):** Barstow Field Office

### 2. BLM Inventory Findings on Record

Existing inventory information regarding wilderness characteristics:

Inventory Source: 1979 Wilderness Inventory files, BLM Barstow FO

Unit#/Name	Size (historic acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
189	N/A	N	N	N	N/A

Summarize any known primary reasons for prior findings in this table:

This area was a triangle shaped unit with various utility maintenance roads and Fort Irwin Military Reservation being the boundaries. The area was found to be shaped by the forces of humans either through off-highway vehicle use, mining operations or by military operations. Public comments at the time mentioned the possibility of mineral exploration and disagreed with official assessments about the natural condition of the unit. Lack of vegetation throughout most of the unit limited opportunities for solitude and unconfined and primitive recreation. The only location within the unit that did provide for these outlets was the Alvord Mountains; however this area was under the 5,000 acre threshold required for wilderness consideration. With approximately 60 percent of the lands checker-boarded being public and all the reasons stated above, further exploration of wilderness values was dropped for this unit.

## Documentation of Current Wilderness Inventory Conditions

**Unit Number/Name:** CA-080-189 Coyote Lake

### (1) Sufficient size

**Acreage:** Estimated at approximately 88,015 acres pending GIS calculation with a perimeter of roughly 56.3 miles.

**Boundaries:** The unit has a definitive boundary set that includes; Fort Irwin National Training Center to the north, a set of steel powerlines and associated maintenance roads to the south, a wooden telephone line and maintenance route to the west and Fort Irwin Road to the northwest.

### Description of Current Conditions

**Land ownership:** The roughly triangle shaped unit is checker-boarded throughout with a roughly fifty-fifty split between public and private. There is no contiguous public lands that would equal 5,000 acres and thus be considered for wilderness consideration.

**Location:** Area 189 is located in San Bernardino County in the center of the Barstow Resource Area. The unit is directly south of the Fort Irwin National Training Center and is twenty miles northeast of the City of Barstow.

**Topography:** This unit has an array of features. On the east side there are the Alvord Mountains with large mountains, many hills and assorted washes. The central part of the unit has a large valley basin with a centralized dry lake. The southwestern section has a small collection of hills while the western side is mainly a long upslope to the mountains outside the unit.

**Vegetation features:** The dominant vegetation type throughout the most of the unit is creosote bush scrub with saltbush scrub ringing the basin bottom and dry lake bed.

**Major human uses/activities:** The major human uses within this unit are motorized recreation which includes all types of off-highway vehicular (OHV) use on designated routes, target shooting, camping, mining and rock-hounding. This unit has a major right-of-way in the middle which is used by the U.S. Army to transport large military vehicles.

### (2) Natural condition

No

This area shows the evidence of human uses and not shaped by the forces of nature. The mountains and hills still show evidence of mining and rock-hounding. Coyote Dry Lake has off-highway vehicles tracks on much of it and the unit is crisscrossed with other routes, roads and assorted powerlines.

**(3) Outstanding opportunities for solitude**

No

Despite the presence of a large mountain range in the eastern section of this unit, an individual cannot escape the presence of humans or human structures. This unit lacks the natural screening either by vegetation or by natural land features required for a solitary experience.

**(4) Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation**

No

The unit does not support this form of recreation but is a more outstanding area for motorized use, rock-hounding and target shooting.

**(5) Supplemental values**

Yes

There are several historic mines in the unit.

Appendix A

Images & Photos of Area 189

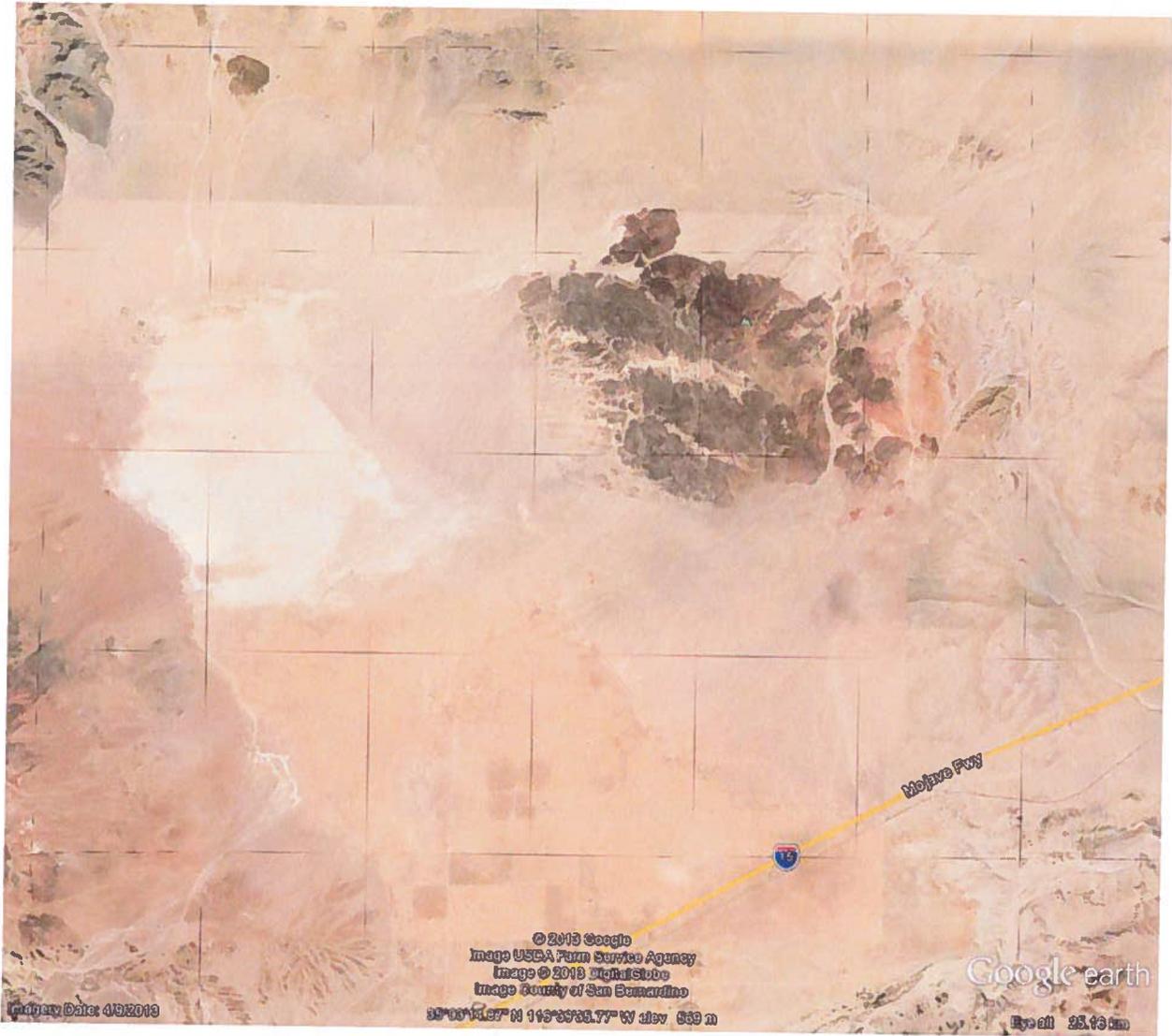


Image #1 - Google Earth™ View of Area 189



Photo #2 - Example of an old mining site within the Alvord Mountains in Area 189



Photo #3 - Area 189 a southward view of the Alvord Mountains from Designated Route CL 8105



Photo #4 - Coyote Dry Lake looking south within Area 189

Appendix B

BLM California Desert Conservation Area Wilderness Final Inventory, Dec. 1979

Written Description & Map of Area 189

## AREA 188

### I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

The area has as its eastern boundary Fort Irwin Road and, as its western boundary, Copper City Road and another maintained dirt road extending further north to the Old Goldstone site. Portions of the northern and eastern boundaries are formed by the Fort Irwin Military Reservation boundary and the Goldstone Tracking Station network boundary. The southern boundary is a maintained dirt road to Williams Well which turns southeast through a large wash just north of Lane Mountain to Fort Irwin Road.

### II. LAND OWNERSHIP

The roadless area is approximately 81 percent public lands. Non-public lands occur in a checkerboard pattern across the southern one-third of the area.

### III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

The area consists of an elevated plateau lying north of Lane Mountain with long sloping bajadas and scattered sharp hills and ridges. The largest feature is the Paradise Range which consists of a highly eroded east face of the plateau rather than a mountain range. Elevations in the area range from just under 1840 feet along Fort Irwin Road at the base of the Paradise Range to 4540 feet near the Montana Mine in the northern one-third of the area. Elevations on the rolling bajadas range between 3000 feet and 3400 feet. Vegetation across the bajadas and hills consists largely of creosote and related desert shrubs, with scattered Joshua trees and Mojave yucca. At lower elevations, along Fort Irwin Road, the Joshua trees are absent.

### IV. NATURAL CONDITION

Extensive mining with human habitation occurs around the Old Goldstone area and in the higher hills near the Montana Mine along the Fort Irwin Military Reservation boundary. Roads and ways lace the area around the mines further detracting from the primeval character of the land. Other development along Copper City Road also detracts from the primeval character and influence. Several structures and range improvements are found, such as developed watering sites and drift fences. Man's work is substantially noticeable throughout the area.

### V. OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE OR A PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED TYPE OF RECREATION

The area is of ample size, topographic relief, and vegetative density to provide screening and isolation from other visitors. Extensive roads and ways penetrate the area and serve to limit opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation. Opportunities for solitude are limited in several portions by the presence of human habitation.

### VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Most comments received acknowledged some impairment of the natural condition.

## AREA 189

### I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

The roughly triangular area has a steel-structure powerline and graded maintenance road as its southeast boundary. The west boundary is a maintenance road for a wooden pole utility line. The northern boundary is the Fort Irwin Military Reservation.

### II. LAND OWNERSHIP

The area is approximately 60 percent public lands which occur in a checkerboard pattern with random variation.

### III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

The western half of the area includes the Coyote Lake depression. The eastern half is dominated by Alvord Mountain and the adjacent bajada. Vegetation is very sparse; however, washes which penetrate the range and collect soil support a limited

number of low shrubs. The dominant plant community is Alkali Sink Scrub which may transcend into Shadscale Scrub away from the playas. In the southern hills the Creosote Scrub plant community becomes evident.

#### IV. NATURAL CONDITION

Man's works dominate the landscape in the Coyote Lake depression. The area has been used for military tank practice operations and is split into several sections by tracks or ways up to 50 feet wide. The scattered hills located at the south end are the scene of a major archaeological dig, administered by the San Bernardino County Museum, and surrounded by several ways which further detract from the primeval character and influence of the land. Much of the valley floor between Coyote Lake and the Alvord Mountains has been impacted by random off-road vehicle use and military operations; however, the mountains themselves are relatively unimpacted. Some minor mining activity has occurred, but it is screened from most angles.

#### V. OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE OR A PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED TYPE OF RECREATION

Lack of vegetative screening limits opportunities for solitude. In the southern hills, and in spite of a certain amount of topographic relief, opportunities for solitude are also absent, due to the constant presence of man at the archaeological site. Alvord Mountain does provide outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. This is the only region in the area where wilderness values are present, topography provides the necessary screening, and man is not present; however, it does not contain 5000 acres of contiguous public lands.

#### VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Most comments on file point out the mineral potential in the area; some disagreed with the assessment of natural conditions.

### AREA 190

#### I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

The eastern and northern boundaries are wooden pole utility lines and maintenance roads. The southern boundary is the frontage road on the north side of Interstate 40 and a paved access loop to Calico Ghost Town. The western border is the Yermo cutoff and Fort Irwin Road.

#### II. LAND OWNERSHIP

The area is 70 percent public lands. Non-public inholdings are scattered over the entire area and are usually irregularly-shaped, patented mining claims.

#### III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

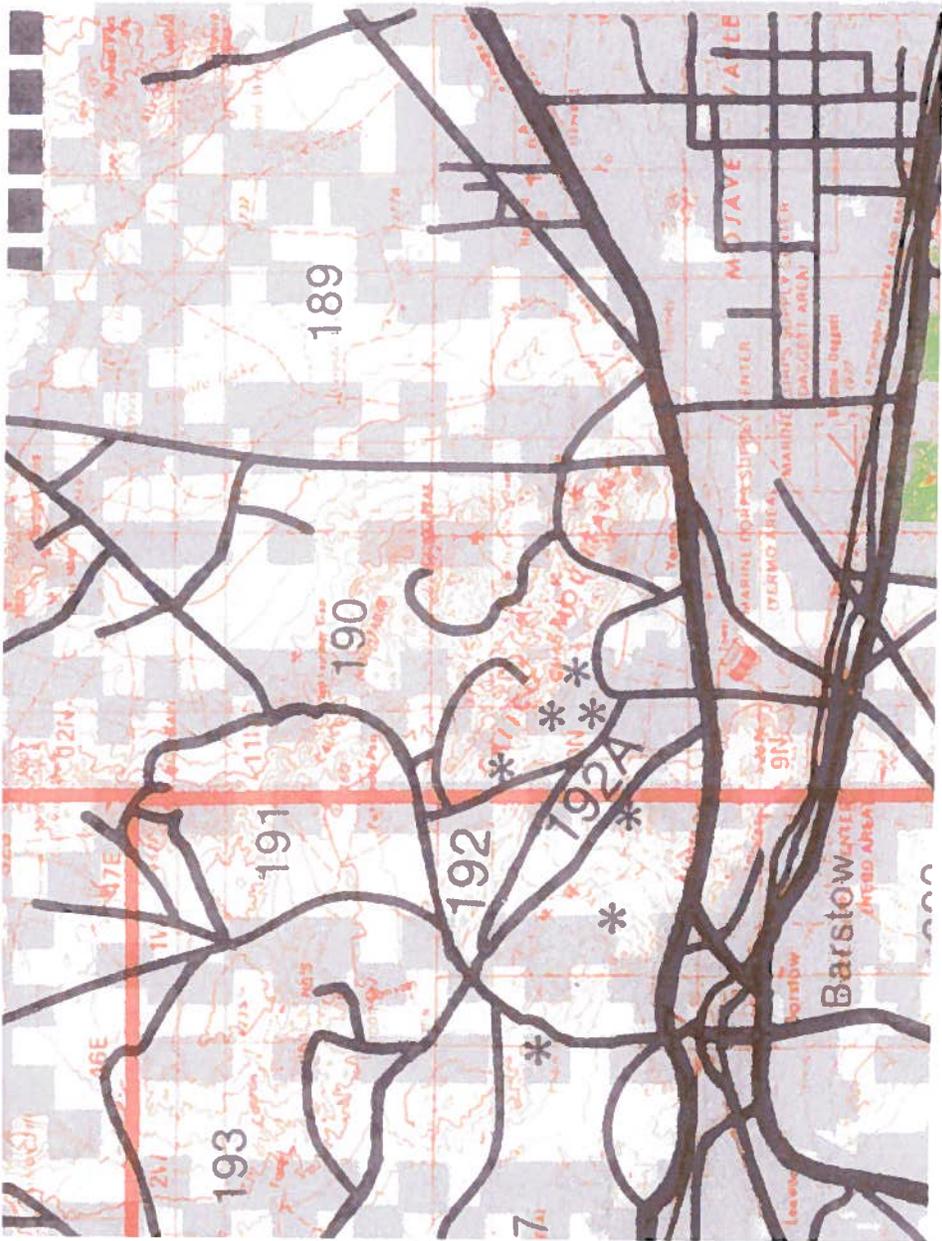
The major feature is the highly eroded and colorful Calico Mountain Range. From the desert floor at 2200 feet, the mountains rise to a maximum height of 4542 feet on Calico Peak. Terrain through these mountains is rugged and scenic. Though mostly barren, the Creosote Scrub community dominates the flats and lower alluvium.

#### IV. NATURAL CONDITION

Throughout most of this area, the imprint of man's work is substantially noticeable. Toward the southern end is Calico Ghost Town, which is refurbished, with restaurants and gift shops. Throughout the mountains north and west from Calico, extensive mining activity has resulted in a general restructuring of the face of the mountains. Access roads are stacked along the slopes and shafts riddle the hillsides. In the mountainous area southwest of Calico, the mining activity is heavy with several large patented claims. There is a communications site atop Calico Peak with a maintained road for access to the top through Mule Canyon. The Calico Mountains are an area where man's works dominate the landscape.

#### V. OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE OR A PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED TYPE OF RECREATION

The canyons and valley of the rugged Calico Mountains would provide screening and suitable terrain for a diversity of primitive types of recreation. The area would provide outstanding opportunities for solitude; however, imprints of man's work are



Appendix C

Current Land Status Map of Area 189

# Current Land Status of Area 189

