

6301 - Wilderness Characteristics Inventory

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Name and Number: CA-080-150-2 Chicago Valley

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).

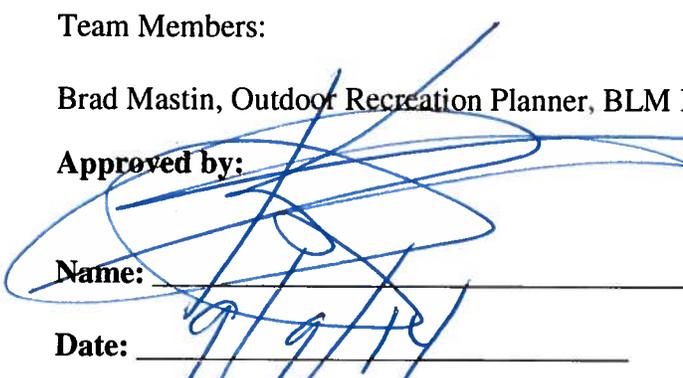
The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

Prepared by:

Team Members:

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Approved by:

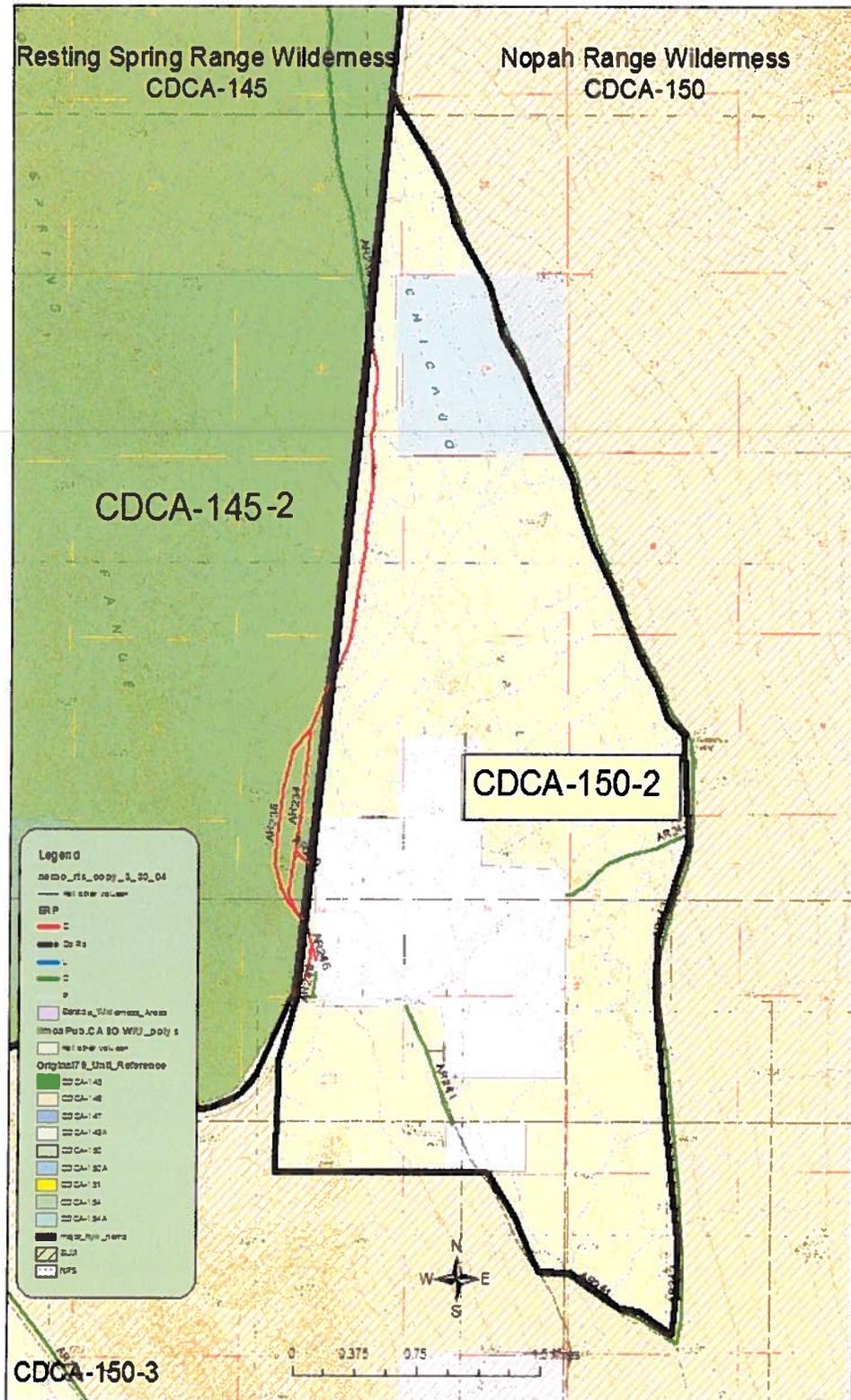
Name: 

Title: Barstow Field Manager

Date: 9/9/14

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.

Appendix B - Map 2 Land Status
Barstow WIU Area 150-2



Inventory Name/Unit Number : CA-080-150-2 Chicago Valley

Form 1

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): CA-080-150 Nopah Range

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: Yes.

Inventory Source: 1979 Wilderness Inventory files, BLM Barstow FO
1988 CDCA-150 Nopah Range Wilderness Study Report

Unit#/ Name	Size (historic acres)	Natural Condition? Y/N	Outstanding Solitude? Y/N	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Y/N	Supplemental Values? Y/N
150-2	4,000	N	Y	N	N/A

Summarize any known primary reasons for prior findings in this table: Enter Findings: The 1979 wilderness inventory for unit 150 includes a very basic and generic description for such a large and diverse land mass. This area is dominated by the large rugged Resting Spring and Nopah Range Mountains, with wide broad valleys and bajadas at the base and between ranges. The entire area 150 was described as "having retained its primeval character and generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable. The few man-made developments that do exist, such as the houses and roads along the northern border in Chicago Valley... and the roads and ways affecting the general natural condition of the landscape at the southern end of the Resting Spring Range east of Tecopa Hot Springs."

The area was found to contain "outstanding opportunities for solitude as the variation in topography screens potential visitors from works of man. The rugged folded topography of the mountains provides isolated and secluded canyons where outstanding opportunities for solitude can be found. The Chicago Valley is isolated from outside influences, also contributing to the outstanding opportunities for solitude. The area also contains out-standing opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation."

Form 2

Documentation of Current Wilderness Inventory Conditions

Unit Number/Name: CA-080-150-2 Chicago Valley

(1) Sufficient size: Yes. 4,000 acres adjacent to Wilderness

Acreage: This area contains approximately 4,000 acres of public land contiguous with designated Wilderness. This unit is bordered on three (3) sides by the Nopah Range Wilderness, and therefore meets the sufficient size requirement for units less than 5,000 acres.

Boundaries: This unit is in the shape of a three sided triangle, coming to a point in the north. The west boundary is Highway 178, the east is a dirt road bordered by the Nopah Range Wilderness, and the southeast is a mechanically constructed dirt road designated open.

Description of Current Conditions:

Land ownership: The unit contains about 5,700 acres total; roughly 4,000 are public, 500 state and 1,200 privately owned.

Location: Northeast Inyo County, California; mid-way between Shoshone Ca and Pahrump Nevada. This unit is surrounded on three sides by designated wilderness; the Nopah Range Wilderness is along the north, east and south sides. The Resting Spring Range Wilderness is kitty corner to the north end of the unit, on west side of Highway 178.

Topography: Description from 1979 report: "The Chicago Valley is predominately flat, with many winding light colored washes throughout its lower drainage." This is still an accurate description. In addition, the landscape is broken up by numerous small escarpments, spring mounds and washes. This is a relatively small valley trending northwest to southeast between the large and rugged Nopah and Resting Spring Range Mountains.

Vegetation features: "The vegetative cover is varied, but sparse. The mountains appear barren, with a few dwarfed creosote and other desert shrub and grass species. The surrounding bajadas and valley have more vegetative cover, which is basically composed of creosote, cacti, yucca, and other desert shrub species. In the lower wash drainage of Chicago Valley, the high water table affords other desert shrub species, such as desert willow, mesquite, and catclaw species."

This brief description from the 1979 report is a very generic description of the area. Both mountain ranges support a larger and a wider range of plants. The higher elevations include Juniper and Pinyon Pine trees, desert fir, large creosote, agave and numerous cacti. The washes running down into this unit are deep at the base of the mountains where the largest and thickest variety of plants are because of the water. The washes gradually spread out on the flat valley floor. On the valley floor are thick stands of mesquite and numerous spring mounds covered with mesquite, plus a healthy creosote cover, layers of grasses, shrubs and cactus.

Major human uses/activities: The 1979 study found that Chicago Valley contained outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. The finding was in large part because the valley was isolated from outside influences. Since then there has been more infrastructure development in Chicago Valley, including a few residents. The largest landowner in the valley is currently working to develop a series of mini-ranches on their land.

(2) Natural condition: No

Several developments have occurred throughout the center of this unit since 1979. These include new roads and tracks, powerlines, fences, wells, pumps, water tanks, homes and support structures. The majority of land accessible by vehicle on the valley floor contains obvious signs of various human works.

(3) Outstanding opportunities for solitude: N/A

(4) Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation: N/A

(5) Supplemental values: N/A