

6301 - Wilderness Characteristics Inventory

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Name and Number: Johnson Valley Southwest CA-080-214

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:

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Approved by:

Name:  _____

Title: Field Manager

Date: 11/20/13

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 Inventory Name/Unit Number Johnson Valley Southwest CA-080-214

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): Johnson Valley Southwest CA-080-214

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
214	N/A	N	N	N	N/A

This area was defined by large steel-structure powerline boundaries with accompanying maintenance roads with 75 percent public land. The principal human activity in the area was the use of Off Highway Vehicles. This area, designated as an open OHV area, included numerous routes that highly impacted the naturalness of the area. The impacts were most noticeable on Anderson Dry Lake. This is an area where human impacts dominate the landscape. The area was found to contain limited opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation.

Documentation of Current Wilderness Inventory Conditions

Unit Number/Name: CA-080-214-Johnson Valley Southwest

(1) Sufficient size

Acreage: Estimated at approximately 25,678 acres pending GIS calculation with a perimeter of roughly 31.8 miles.

Boundaries: The boundaries have not been changed from the original 1979 inventory. From southwest to northeast, the unit boundaries include two high voltage transmission lines and their associated maintenance roads. The west boundary is Camp Rock Road. The Northside Road forms the southern boundary.

Description of Current Conditions

Land ownership: The area is predominantly public land with four inholdings totaling approximately 1,540 acres.

Location: This area is located in central San Bernardino County, roughly in the middle of the Barstow Resource Area. The area is located approximately one hour southeast of the City of Barstow and 20 minutes northeast from the Community of Lucerne Valley. The northern Boundary is approximately 3 miles south of the Rodman Mountains Wilderness.

Topography: the area is relatively flat, especially on the Lucerne Valley and Anderson Dry Lake portion. The center of the unit contains the Wilson Hills, an abrupt rocky ridge.

Vegetation features: The area contains vegetation typical of this elevation/area of the Mojave Desert including yucca and creosote bush. The dominant vegetation type throughout the area is creosote bush scrub.

Major human uses/activities: The area continues to be open to OHV use and is part of the popular Johnson Valley OHV area. Use and associated impacts to naturalness have increased since the original inventory was conducted in 1979. Although much of the area is still vegetated, wheel tracks and evidence of use dominates the entire unit.

(2) Natural condition

No

The extensive array of vehicle tracks left by high levels of cross country vehicle use dominates the area and it does not appear natural.

(3) Outstanding opportunities for solitude

No

The sights and sounds of vehicle use dominate the area.

(4) Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation

No

The area provides outstanding motorized recreation opportunities more than primitive and unconfined.

(5) Supplemental values

Yes

There are several historic mines in the area as well as a portion of the Upper Johnson Valley Yucca Rings Area of Environmental Concern.

Appendix A
Photos of Area 214



Photo #1 - Aerial image from typical portion of unit showing extensive OHV impacts



Photo #2 - View from west side of unit showing topography, vegetation and vehicle tracks

Appendix B

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

Written Description of Area 214

AREA 214

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

This elongated triangular area has as its northern and southeastern boundaries large steel-structure powerline rights-of-way with accompanying maintenance roads. The west boundary is Camp Rock Road. A short two-mile section of Northside Road forms a southern boundary.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

This area is 75 percent public land. Non-public sections are in north-south strips of alternating sections.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

From southwest to northeast, the area boundaries include a small portion of Lucerne Valley; the Wilson Hills, an abrupt, rocky ridge oriented northwest to southeast across the area; Anderson Dry Lake, a small playa just north of the Wilson Hills; and scattered low, rugged hills and canyons associated with the north end of the Fry Mountains. With the exception of a small area around Anderson Dry Lake, where the Alkali Sink Scrub plant community is dominant, the Creosote Bush Scrub plant community is the characteristic type encountered. Scattered Mojave yucca and assorted species of cactus are evident in portions of the Fry Mountains. Desert wash plant species are found in the intervening washes among the scattered hills of the northern Fry Mountains.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

The principal activity of man within this area is the use of off-road vehicles. BLM has previously designated this area as "open" to use by motorized vehicles. Courses for the dozens of organized competitive events held here annually lace the entire area. The impact is most noticeable on Anderson Dry Lake. This playa retains none of its natural character. Commonly used as a pit and staging area, its formerly smooth surface is now a series of ruts and rolls one-half to three feet in height throughout its length. Scattered mining occurs in the northern Fry Mountains, but it is relatively unnoticeable when compared to the off-road vehicle impacts. This is an area where the works of man dominate the landscape. The forces of nature are no longer the primary forces at work.

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

The nature of the sparse Creosote Bush Scrub vegetation provides little in the way of screening in this area. Likewise, the topography offers little isolation except in relatively small portions of the northern Fry Mountains where washes separate the hills providing small areas of solitude. Opportunities for solitude are not outstanding and are rather limited. Opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation are severely limited also by the frequently encountered areas of intensive off-road vehicle use.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Most comments were general in nature and indicated motorized recreational interest.

AREA 215

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

This elongated area has as its long eastern boundary Bessemer Mine Road. The long northwestern border is a large steel-structure powerline right-of-way. The western boundary is Harrod Road and the southern border is Highway 247.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

This area is 62 percent public lands. Non-public sections are concentrated in the southwestern end, with scattered non-public sections in an alternating strip pattern in the northeast one-third.

Appendix C

Current Land Status Map of Area 214

Current Land Status of Area 214

