

6301 - Wilderness Characteristics Inventory

Summary of Findings and Conclusion

Unit Name and Number: Silver Mountain CA-080-200

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: 11/21/13

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 Silver Mountain CA-080-200

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): Silver Mountain CA-080-200

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
200	N/A	N	N	N	N/A

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

The boundaries of the area included an unnamed dirt road, Interstate 15, Oro Grande Road and Old National Trails Highway. Extensive evidence of mining, quarries, paved and other maintained roads, and communication site was noted. The presence of permanent structures, human activity and access routes limit the opportunity for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. This area was indicated as having a lack of wilderness characteristics.

Documentation of Current Wilderness Inventory Conditions

Unit Number/Name: CA-080-200 Silver Mountain

(1) Sufficient size

Acreage: Area 200 totals 19,507.85 acres and is comprised of both BLM and private lands.

Boundaries: The unit is bounded by Boulder Road and Interstate 15 to the east, Oro Grande Canyon Road to the south, and National Trails Highway to the west. A small portion of Crystal Aire Road forms a small segment of the western frame, which then meets an unidentifiable road. Here the western border of the unit ambiguously travels north east where it joins the northern boundary, another unidentifiable road.

Description of Current Conditions

Land ownership: Private land covers 8,773.87 acres (44.97%) and BLM land covers 10,733.97 acres (55.03%) of this unit. One small section of BLM land in the southwest is not contiguous and is too small to be considered for wilderness characteristics.

Location: This area is located in San Bernardino County, roughly in the western half of the Barstow Resource Area. The area is located approximately twenty miles southeast from the City of Barstow and 20 minutes northeast from the Town of Apple Valley. The northern Boundary is approximately two miles southwest of the Stoddard Valley Open OHV Area.

Topography: The area contains many hills and small mountains. To the west is the Mojave River Basin which slopes upwards on that side. There are many small washes and valleys in the area.

Vegetation features: The dominant vegetation type throughout the area is creosote bush scrub.

Major human uses/activities: Mining and OHV activity, among other human developments, have irreversibly scarred the landscape. A series of wilderness inventory roads and a network of OHV routes blanket the land. A main OHV artery enters the BLM section in the north of the unit, runs south along the western side of the unit, and feeds a dense web of countless additional routes. While this section of area contains a high level of OHV activity, the remainder of the unit is also far from roadless. Collectively, these ways occur at a very high frequency and are visibly inescapable throughout the unit.

(2) Natural condition

No

Natural forces are virtually absent amidst the widespread and dominating impacts of man within the contiguous portion of BLM land inside the area. The naturalness of this section has been adversely affected through human activities. The primeval character of this area has been so

deteriorated by human-made impacts that it is no longer logical to consider this unit for wilderness.

(3) Outstanding opportunities for solitude

No

OHV activity and mining in the area, along with the lack of contiguous public lands make solitude unattainable.

(4) Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation

No

OHV activity and mining in the area, along with the lack of contiguous public lands make opportunities for primitive and unconfined difficult for the recreational user.

(5) Supplemental values

No

Appendix A

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

Written Description of Area 200

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

The Kramer Hills are low ridges which do not provide screening from other visitors or give any feeling of isolation due to the proximity of U.S. 395, the large powerlines, and the nearby commercial development at Kramer Junction. The vast creosote plain provides no vegetative screening; however, its size does provide for outstanding opportunities for solitude. The topography lacks diversity and is impacted by many ways which negate opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Most comments indicate the natural condition of the area has been impaired.

AREA 199

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

This extremely elongated roadless area is bordered on its long sides by Interstate 15 and a gas pipeline and maintenance road. The southern end is bordered by a graded dirt road, and the northern end tapers nearly to a point.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

The area is 80 percent public lands with non-public sections scattered along the length.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

The area consists of a two-mile-wide strip of creosote plain approximately 15 miles long. Elevations range from 2350 feet at the northern end to 3320 feet at the southern end. Other than a barely discernible ridge near the center, no topographical features are present.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

Several ways used by recreationists are visible, including several motorcycle trails. Camping areas which are habitually used reflect some reduction in the apparent naturalness. Overall, however, the works of man do not dominate the landscape.

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

The elongated shape and lack of topographic and vegetative screening allows the constant noise and visual intrusion of I-15 to dominate the entire roadless area. Opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined types of recreation are severely limited.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Most comments received agreed with the evaluation.

AREA 200

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

The area is bordered on the north by a maintained dirt road. The eastern border is Interstate 15. The southern border is Oro Grande Canyon Road. The western boundary is Old National Trails Highway.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

The area is about 50 percent public lands in a contiguous block through the center. The largest concentration of non-public lands occurs along the western boundary.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

In the center of the area, Silver Mountain rises to 4211 feet. Alluvium to the west slopes into the Mojave Valley. On the other sides of the mountain, scattered

hills strewn with large boulders and canyons are dominant features. The Creosote Scrub plant community is evident where soil accumulation occurs.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

Throughout the entire area, extensive active mines of various size and several large-scale quarry operations dominate the landscape. Graded gravel and blacktop access roads enter the area especially from the south and west though ways are present all around the mountain. The peak of Silver Mountain is a communications site which is currently being used by several agencies with several structures visible. These extensive permanent improvements severely alter the primeval character and influence of this roadless area.

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

The presence of permanent improvements, human activity, and access routes negate opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined types of recreation.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Most comments received indicated a lack of wilderness characteristics.

AREA 201

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

The western border is Interstate 15. In three segments, the southern and eastern boundary is defined by a major steel-structure powerline corridor, a minor steel-structure powerline, and Stoddard Well Road. The northern border is a pipeline and streets associated with suburban development at the south end of Barstow.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

The area is 60 percent public lands. Non-public sections occur in north-south strips.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

The area includes the western end of Daggett Ridge, the west side of Stoddard Valley, scattered hills and ridges in the valley and, to the extreme south, Ritz Peak: at 4456 feet, a mountain of dark rock with well-vegetated bajadas of creosote and scattered yucca with a variety of small cactus species. Elsewhere, ridges and hills through the valley are light in color. The vegetation consists largely of Creosote Scrub and is accented with scattered Mojave yucca and cactus.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

Mining occurs in isolated areas on a small scale and does not have a noticeable impact. The dominant factor reducing the primeval character and influence of the land is off-road vehicle use. This is a traditional off-road vehicle race site for two major four-wheel drive events and dozens of motorcycle races annually. The four-wheel vehicle course runs some 40 miles through the valley and, in some areas, is four to five lanes wide of denuded land. Large pit and staging areas are also denuded of vegetation. Many hills have tracks and trails over the slopes from random use and organized competition. There is a highly visible communications site on Daggett Ridge. The only area where the apparent naturalness is retained is at Ritz Peak, a very small segment of the area.

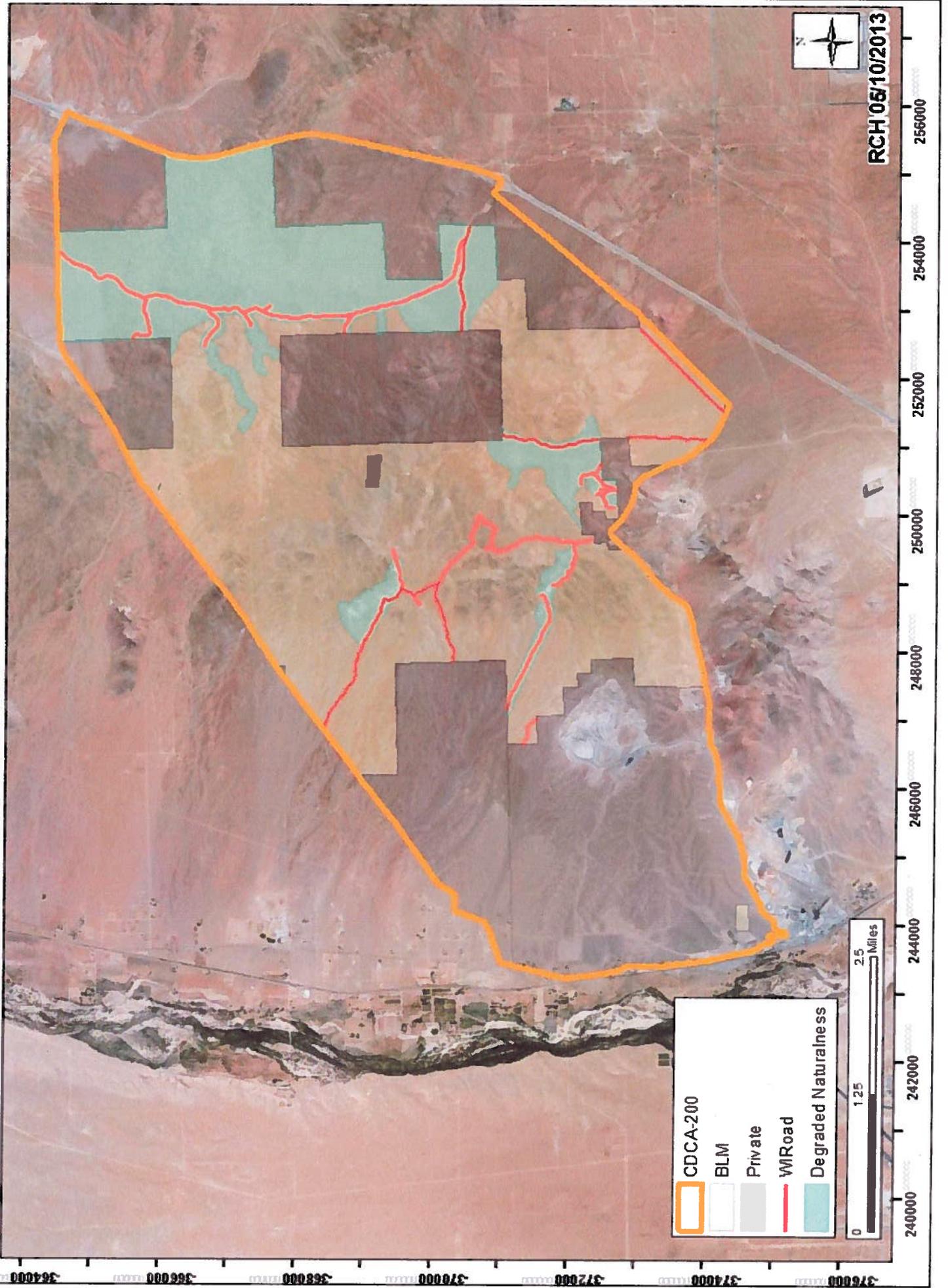
V. OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE OR A PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED TYPE OF RECREATION

The low ridges in Stoddard Valley provide screening to only small areas, as canyons are usually shallow and slopes fairly gentle. Vegetation is not tall and does little to enhance the screening effect. Though attainable in some small areas, such as Ritz Peak, opportunities for solitude are not outstanding in the area. Opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation are also limited by the sheer number of trails and ways.

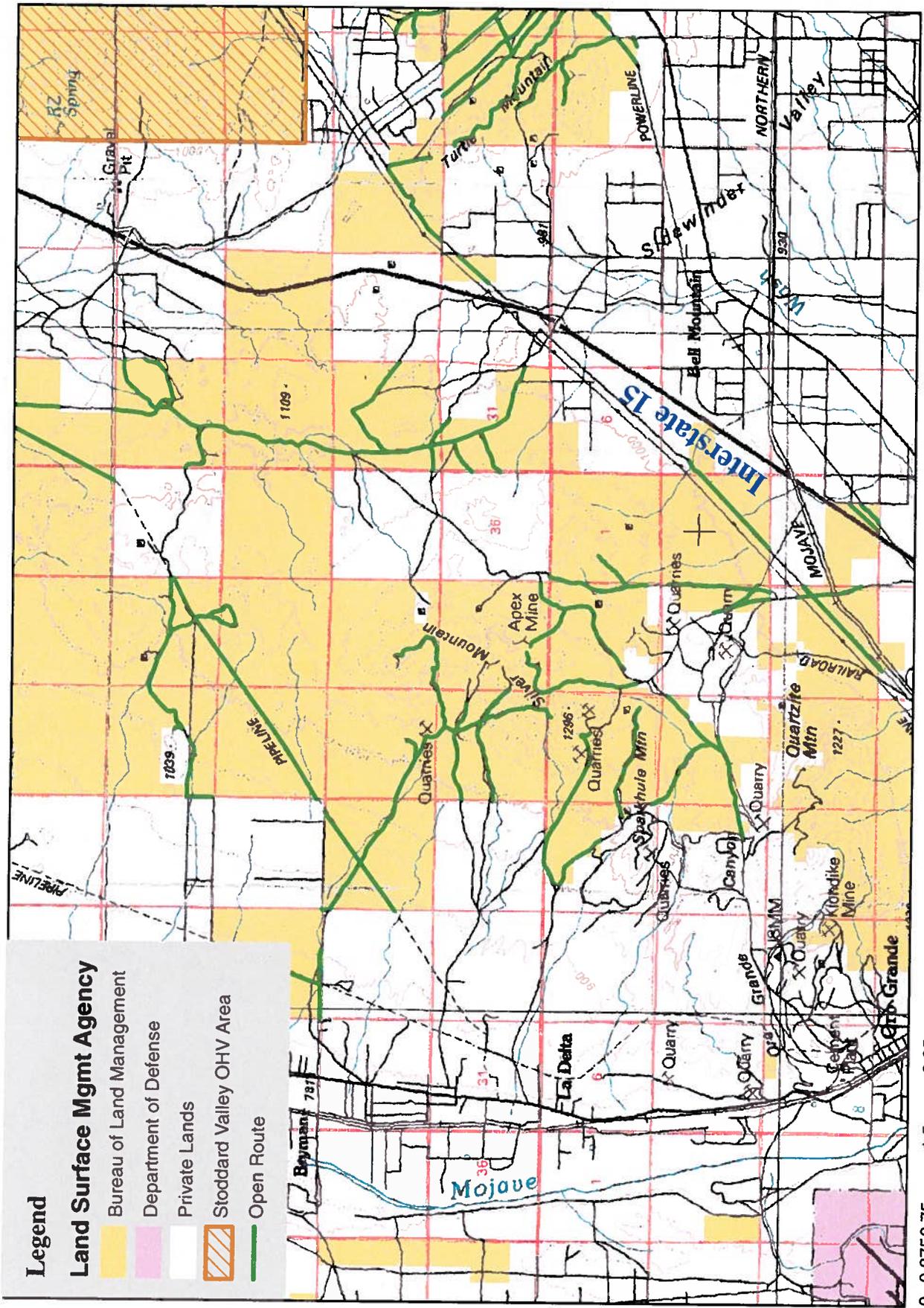
Appendix B

Boundary and Current Land Status Maps of Area 200

CDCA-200 Wilderness Characteristics Inventory - Map 5



Land Status for Area 200



Legend

Land Surface Mgmt Agency

- Bureau of Land Management
- Department of Defense
- Private Lands
- Stoddard Valley OHV Area
- Open Route

