

Summary of Analysis*

Area Unique Identifier: CDCA 1353-1

Summary

Results of analysis:

The northern half is quite checker-boarded with Private, Public and State Lands. There are very little areas of contiguous Public Lands. The southern half has numerous NECO designated routes of travel and the Union Pacific Railroad. Between the land ownership status in the north and the heavy OHV use in the south, this unit lacks wilderness characteristics.

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

Check one:

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

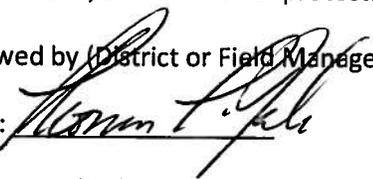
The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

Prepared by (team members):

Add names here

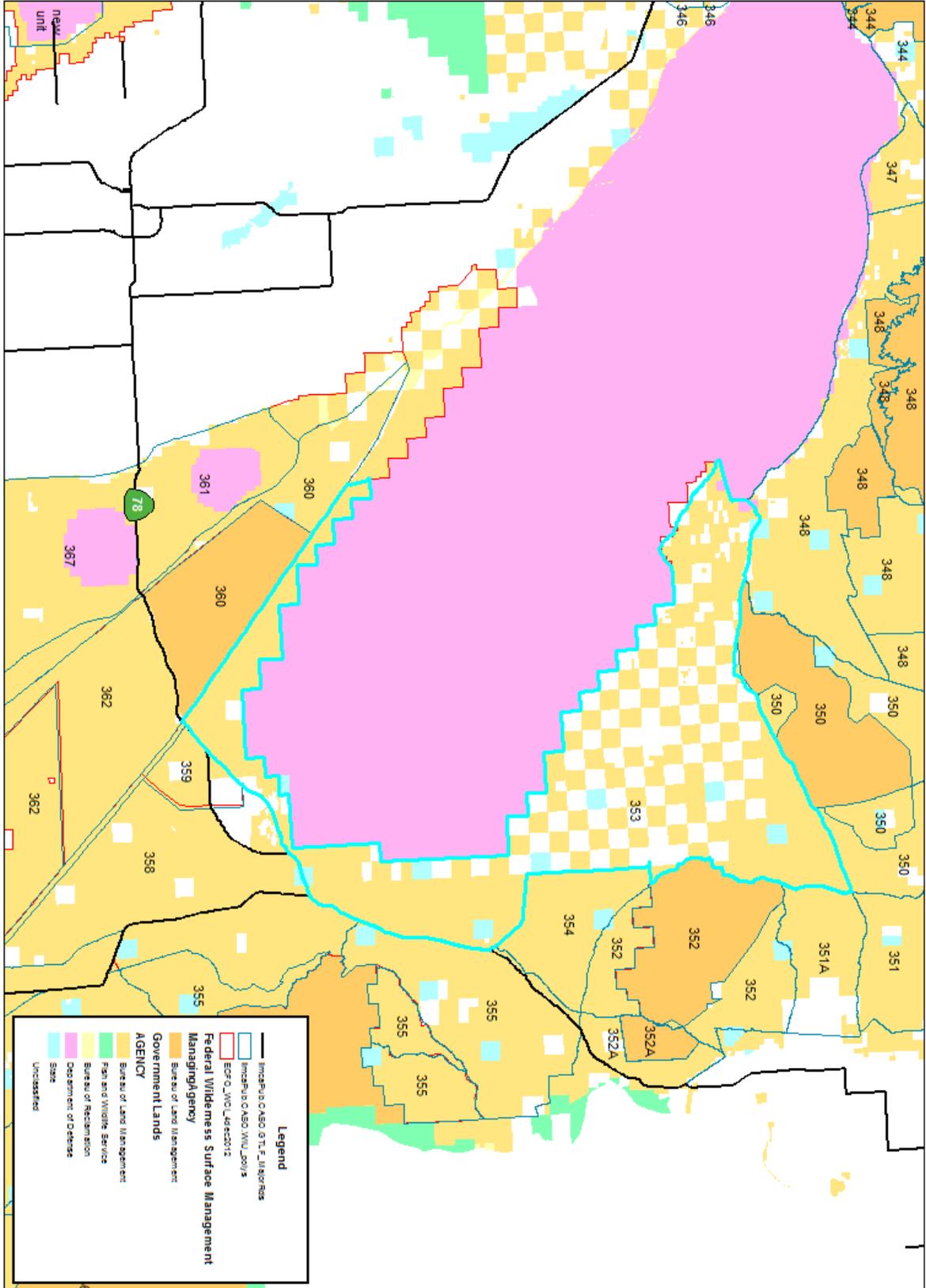
John Johnson, Environmental protection Specialist, 3/28/2012 (with input from ECFO Interdisciplinary Team)

Reviewed by (District or Field Manager):

Name:  Title: Acting Field Manager

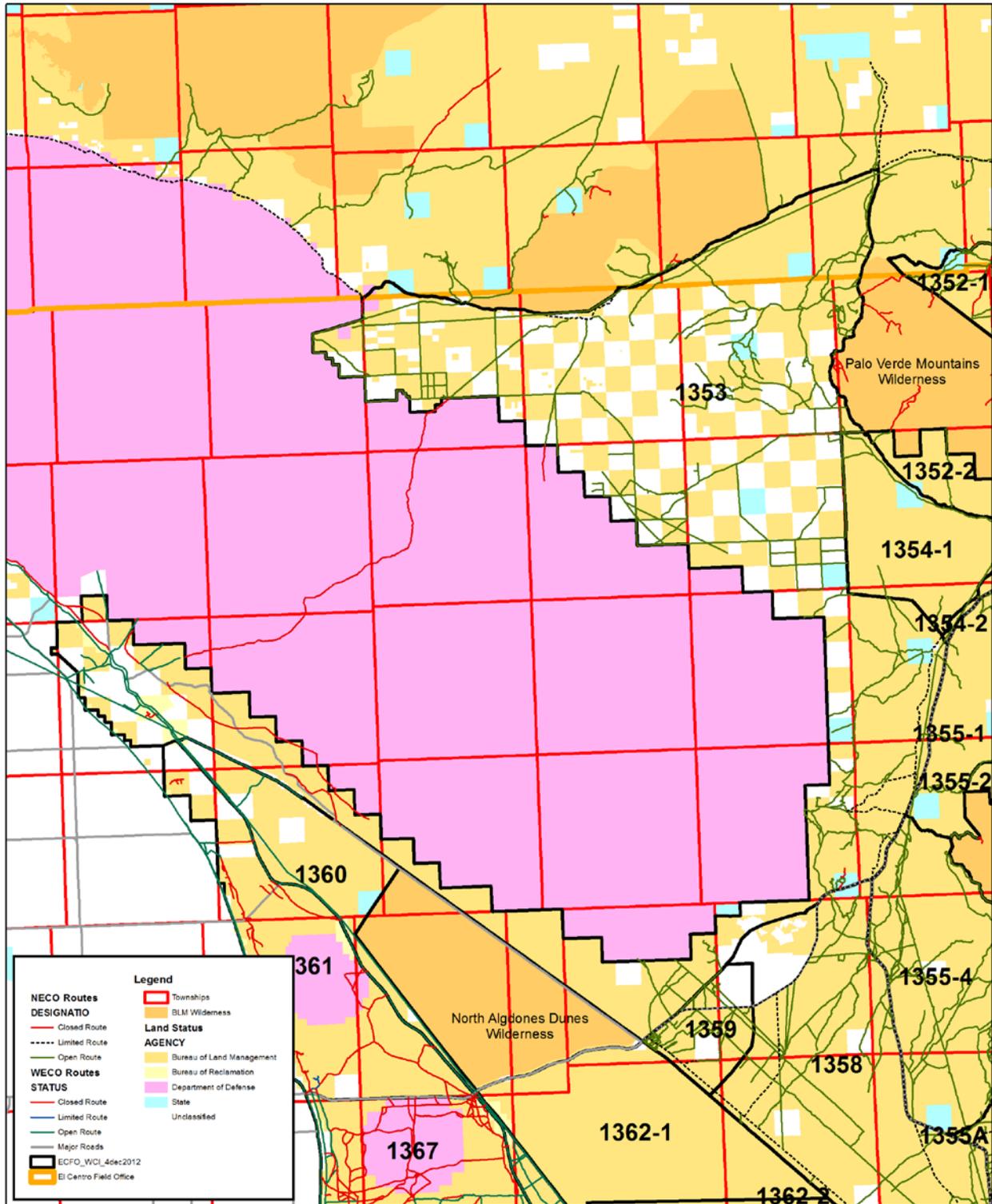
Date: 2/21/2013

*This form documents information that constitutes and 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 or 1610.5-3



Wilderness Character Inventory 1353-1 - Locator Map





Legend	
NECO Routes	DESIGNATION
— Closed Route	— Limited Route
— Open Route	— Major Roads
WECO Routes	STATUS
— Closed Route	— Limited Route
— Open Route	— Major Roads
— ECFO_WCI_4dec2012	— El Centro Field Office
Land Status	AGENCY
— Bureau of Land Management	— Bureau of Reclamation
— Department of Defense	— State
— Unclassified	— Unclassified

Wilderness Character Inventory - CDCA_1353



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

Numerous small, winding canyons and enclosed valleys create an area able to accommodate primitive recreation uses, yet still offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

The majority of the public comments dealt with study phase considerations such as oil, gas and geothermal potential and rockhounding. Several comments substantiated the findings; others identified roads which were validated and included in the narrative and on the map.

AREA 352A

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

This area is bordered by the Old Palo Verde Road on the west; on the south, by the Waiter's Camp Road; on the east, by Highway 78; and, on the north, by a maintained road that connects Highway 78 with the Old Palo Verde Road.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

About 50 percent of the area is non-public land in a checkerboard pattern.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

This area contains the eastern portion of the steep volcanic Palo Verde Mountains. These mountains have numerous narrow vertical canyons which lead into small interior valleys. There is little vegetation.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

This area generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature.

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

Outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation are severely limited due to the private ownership pattern which tends to confine and hinder freedom of movement and the ability to disperse.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comment supported the area for inclusion in the wilderness inventory.

AREA 353

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

This area is bounded on the north by a combination of the Bradshaw Stage Road and a power line support road; on the east, by the extension of the Milpitas Wash Road to Wiley Well; on the south, by maintained roads; and, on the west, by the Chocolate Mountain Aerial Gunnery Range.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

Approximately 45 percent of the area is non-public land with distribution in a checkerboard pattern. One portion, located in the northeast section of the roadless area, contains approximately 20 sections of contiguous public land.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

Terrain within the area varies between flat sandy surfaces, rock outcrops, foothills and small mountains. The Little Mule Mountains, the Black Hills and portions of the foothills of the Palo Verde Mountains combine with the broad Milpitas Wash to provide a

variety of topographical relief. Although generally sparse, vegetation in the areas of the washes becomes relatively dense. In addition to the creosote and desert shrubs, the washes support a large number of Smoke trees. Palo Verde, cat claw and mesquite can be found.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

The greatest percentage of this large area has been excluded from further consideration because of land ownership status. The remaining small area in the northeast corner was excluded because present use has degraded the naturalness of the site. Off-road vehicle tracks can be seen throughout. Heavy use is evident in the washes and along the borders. Large areas of desert pavement are permanently scarred and denuded of vegetation. In addition, a road penetrates the site, leading to and past a guzzler which is quite visible. The natural condition has been degraded to the point where it no longer meets minimal wilderness criteria.

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

Vegetation and landform would support only a sense of solitude and opportunities for an unconfined type of recreation would be limited.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Several public comments addressed the unique vegetative associations located in the Milpitas Wash. Other comments indicated strong rockhounding interests. As the narrative indicates, none of Area 353 is being considered for further wilderness study.

AREA 354

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

This area is bordered on the north by the Milpitas Wash Road; on the south and west, by a maintained road; and, on the east, by a utility pole line and access road and Highway 78.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

Approximately 50 percent of the area is non-public lands. The remainder does not contain 5000 acres of contiguous public lands and is not of sufficient size to make practical its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition.

III. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Only a few comments, and those were in favor of wilderness designation for the checkerboard sections.

AREA 355

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

The area is located beside the Colorado River, between Blythe and Yuma. Its western boundary is formed by Highways 78 and S-34; the southern border, by Indian Pass Road; the eastern boundary, by the edge of the California Desert Conservation Area; and, the short northern border, Walters Camp Road.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

The northern portion of the area, roughly north of Quartz Peak, is checkerboarded with public and non-public land. In the southern area there are three sections of non-public land which account for approximately 5 percent of the total land area.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

This relatively large area encompasses a large variety of terrain. A great deal of land is flat to low rolling hills, laced with washes of all widths and depths. Scattered rugged low mountains, canyons, and highly eroded surfaces occur throughout the

Wilderness Characteristics Inventory (Public)

FORM 2

Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

Area Unique Identifier CDCA 1353-1 Acreage 183,588

(If the inventory area consists of subunits, list the acreage of each and evaluate separately).

In completing steps (1) – (5), use additional space as necessary.

(1) Is the area of sufficient size? (If the area meets one of the exceptions to the size criterion, check “Yes” and describe the exception in the space provided below),

Yes _____ No X _____

Note: If “No is checked, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check “N/A” for the remaining questions below.

Description (describe the boundaries of the area—wilderness inventory roads, property lines, etc.):

The area is bounded to the north by a combination of the Bradshaw Trail, Little Chuckwalla Wilderness and a powerline support road; on the east by the Wiley Well Road, Milpitas Wash Road and the Midway Well Road; on the south by Highway 78; and the west by the Chocolate Mountains Gunnery Range and Union Pacific Railroad and the East Highline Canal. The northern half is quite checker-boarded with Private, Public and State Lands. There are very little areas of contiguous Public Lands. The southern half has numerous NECO designated routes of travel and the Union Pacific Railroad. This unit lacks the size criteria, because of the non-contiguous, roadless acres.

(2) Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes _____ No _____ N/A X _____

Note: If “No is checked, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check “N/A” for the remaining questions below.

Description (include land ownership, location, topography, vegetation, and summary of major human uses/activities):

(3) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remaining is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes _____ No _____ N/A X _____

Description (describe the area’s outstanding opportunities for solitude):

(4) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remaining is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?

Yes _____ No _____ N/A X _____

Note: If “No” is checked for both 3 and 4, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check “N/A” for question 5.

Description (describe the area’s outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation):

(5) Does the area have supplemental values (ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value)?

Yes _____

No _____

N/A X

Description:

(Add description here)