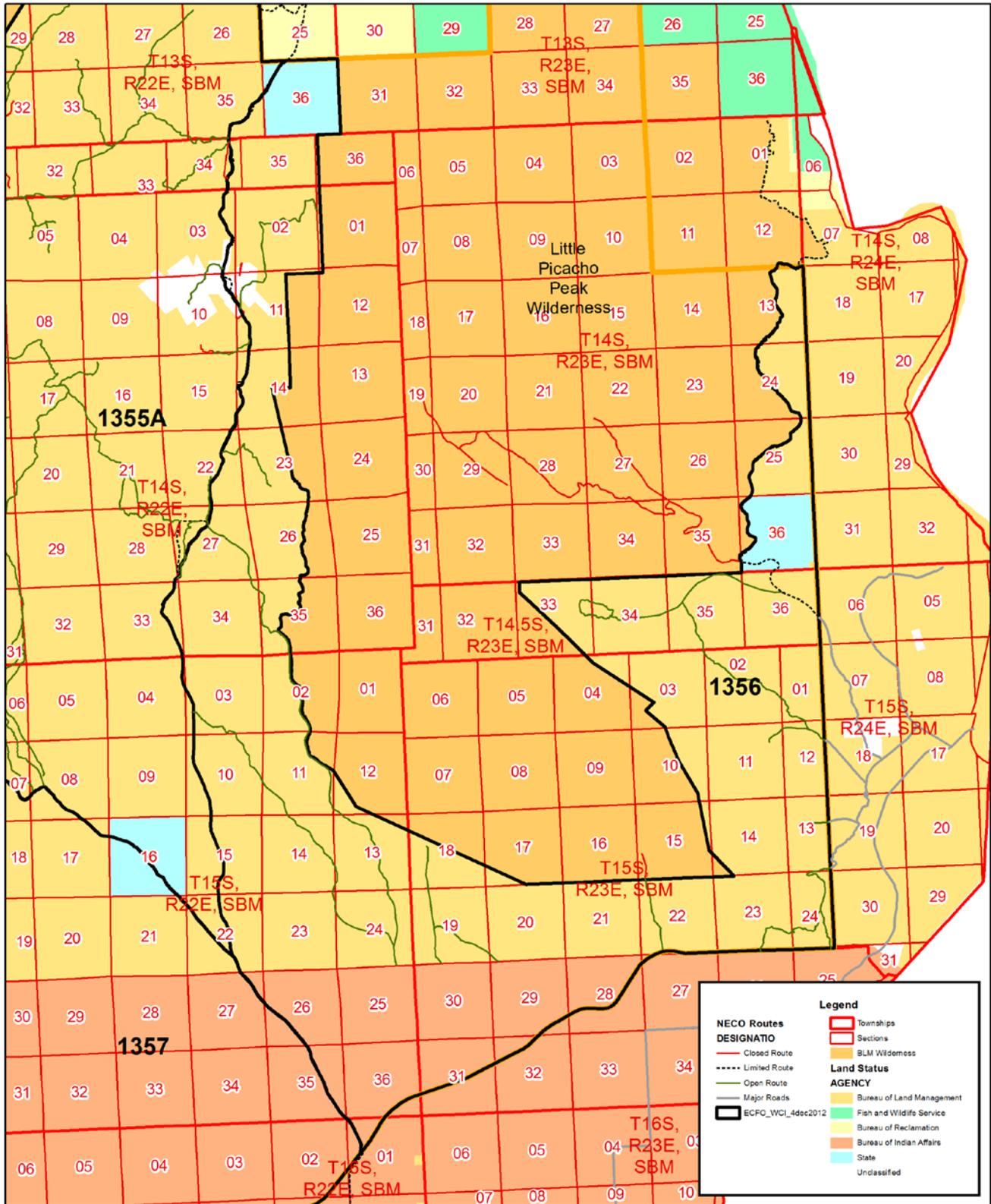
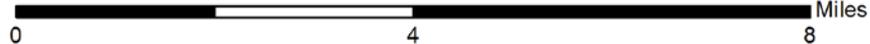


CA - 1356 - 1 Locator Map



Wilderness Character Inventory - CDCA_1356



Peak area. The northern portion of the area has been excluded due to a Bureau of Reclamation Withdrawal. Private land holdings in the central portion are abundant. The remaining area, which is located between Gatuna Wash and Gavilan Wash and adjoins the Picacho State Recreation area is pristine. A small mining area near the northern portion of the site has been excluded.

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

Many outstanding opportunities for solitude exist within the remaining area. The rugged terrain provides numerous spaces where solitude can be attained. Topographic and vegetative screening combine to insure isolation. The variety of terrain provides outstanding opportunities for primitive and unrestricted types of recreation.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments addressing inventory considerations were evenly divided on the status of natural condition. A few other comments were received concerning study phase considerations.

AREA 356

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

The area is located in the southeastern corner of California north of Yuma, Arizona. Roughly rectangular in shape, the site is bordered on the west by a graded road and on the east by a combination of the California Desert Conservation Area border and a graded road and, in the southeast corner, by a ridgeline. The northern border is formed by the Picacho State Recreation area and the southern edge is defined by a line just north of the All-American Canal.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

Approximately four sections of non-public lands are scattered through the area.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

This site includes a wide variety of terrain. Within its 260 square miles, flat meadow-like areas, low rolling hills, table-top mountains, rough and jagged peaks jutting up from the desert floor, deep canyons, and washes are all an integral part of the area. The surrounding river, canals, and lakes provide support for an abundance of vegetation not normally found in the desert. Tall, dense smoke trees, palo verde and mesquite grow near the water and in the washes thinning out rapidly near the center of the area where the more typical ocotillo creosote and cholla dominate the flat lands. Vegetation in the washes is lush and forms long lines of green. When contrasted against the rock and sand surfaces, this tends to visually divide the site.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

Within the area, the majority of the land has retained its primeval character and influence. Mining activity, claims, and mining roads have been excluded from the western, southern and eastern borders.

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

The complex landforms, which change rapidly between areas, provide the natural barriers necessary to separate the entire area into isolated spaces. Vegetation reinforces the topography to insure the screening necessary to provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. The area is large enough and diverse enough to provide outstanding opportunities for a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Many comments were received on this area. Most that were relevant to the inventory pointed out areas where ORV, rockhounding and mining took place. Some additional roads were also identified. A field evaluation has led to some additional changes that excluded additional areas not meeting wilderness criteria.

Wilderness Characteristics Inventory (Public)

FORM 2

Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

Area Unique Identifier CDCA 1356-1 Acreage 26,747

(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 X No _____

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.):

Roughly rectangular in shape, this unit is bordered on the west by Ogilby Road; to the south by the All American Canal; the east by Ferguson Road and the CDCA Boundary; and to the north by the Little Picacho Peak Wilderness. The unit is mostly Public Lands with 4 different sections of State, Reservation, and Private. The southeast corner of the unit has more than 4,000 acres of contiguous lands and is adjacent to Little Picacho Wilderness.

(2) Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes _____ No X N/A _____

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):

The unit includes a variety of terrain, including low rolling hills, table-top mountains, deep canyons and washes. The surrounding Colorado River and its backwater lakes provide support for an abundance of vegetation not normally found in the desert. There are tall, dense smoke trees, palo verde and mesquite growing near the water and in the washes, thinning out near the center of the unit to the more typical ocotillo, creosote and cholla. Mining activity, mining claims, and mining roads take away from the naturalness of this southeastern part of the unit.

(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)