

Summary of Analysis\*

Area Unique Identifier: ESDC 3

Summary

Results of analysis:

The unit is approximately 4,683 acres and adjacent to the west of Carrizo Gorge Wilderness and Carrizo Gorge Wilderness Study Area. The unit has rolling hills throughout, as seen in photos 8b and 9a-c (below), covered with a moderately dense stand of chaparral with steeper mountainous terrain along the eastern edge (see photos 10c-h), the edge adjacent to Carrizo Gorge Wilderness. This unit is generally unaffected by man, however, there are a few water developments that exist and are considered unnoticeable. With a moderately dense stand of chaparral and steeper mountainous terrain along the eastern edge combined with the Carrizo Gorge Wilderness and Wilderness Study Area, the area provides outstanding opportunities for solitude. If this unit is combined with the Carrizo Gorge Wilderness and Carrizo Gorge Wilderness Study Area, opportunities for unconfined recreation will exist. The unit is all Public Lands with a history of human uses including, but not limited to hiking, horseback riding, hunting, and mountain biking on existing routes.

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:

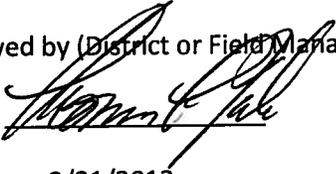
The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as Land with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC)

The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

Prepared by (team members):

John Johnson, Environmental Protection Specialist, 12/4/2011 (with input from ECFO Interdisciplinary Team)

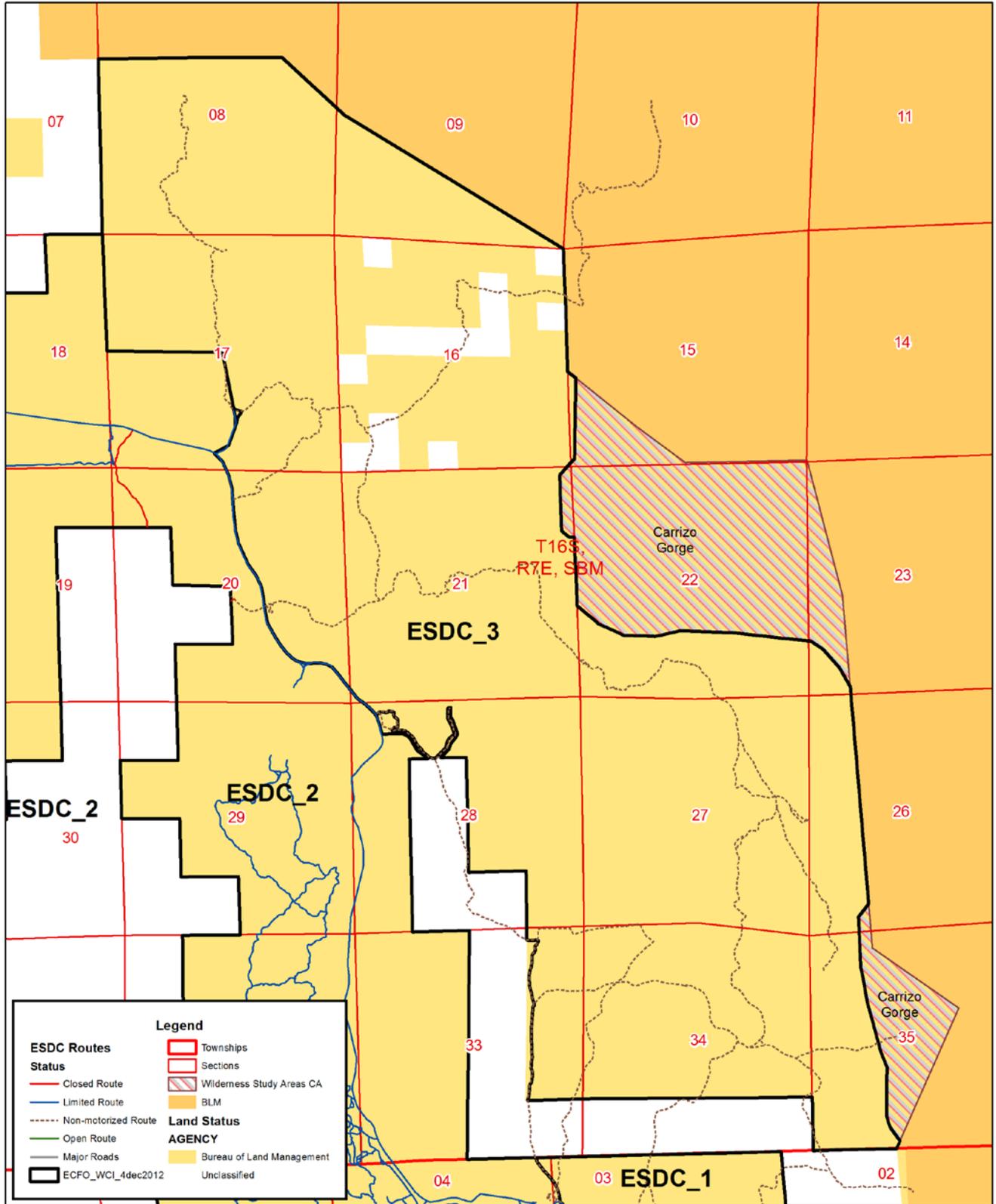
Reviewed by (District or Field Manager):

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 - ESDC\_3



## VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public has expressed the following varied viewpoints. The area is permeated with roads. Because the unit borders on Indian reservations and Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, the criteria for wilderness are not met. They expressed a belief that the protection of bighorn sheep is the reason for considering the unit as a wilderness area, but the bighorn sheep are not affected by man and do not need the protection of a wilderness area. The use of beehives, water troughs, and fences on public lands disqualify an area for wilderness designation. Some questioned the BLM's designation of the route to Inner Pasture as a road. Discrepancies between the Draft Initial Inventory map and the July 1979 map were noted.

Statements on land treatment and management are study phase considerations. The route to Inner Pasture is maintained and regularly used to provide access to private property and an airfield. Corrections are being made to maps as cartographic errors are detected.

CA-060-025A, Eastern McCain Valley A  
(Map 06-R)

### I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park borders the unit on the north and east. Nonpublic lands border on the south. The road through Redondo Flats to the McCain Valley Road, the Manzanita-Cottonwood Road, and nonpublic lands border on the west.

### II. LAND OWNERSHIP

The 22,082 acres of public land encompass 639 acres of private lands. The proposed wilderness study area contains 14,573 acres of public land.

### III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

The eastern portion of the unit is a plateau that drops off into steep canyons and mountainsides. The vegetation varies from chaparral to desert scrub. The unit is used by the peninsular bighorn sheep.

### IV. NATURAL CONDITION

The western portion of the unit contains many impacts of man. They consist of roads servicing grazing developments, numerous active mining sites near Sacatone Spring and Mt. Tule, and many visible off-road vehicle trails in the "Competition Hill" area. In contrast, the eastern portion of the unit, which is proposed as a wilderness study area, contains few off-road vehicle trails, no mining activity, and is generally unaffected by man. Bow Willow Canyon, a research natural area designated to protect its unique palm groves, enhances the natural values of the unit. A few water developments exist in the area, but are considered substantially unnoticeable.

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

In the western portion of the unit, evidence of ORV use and cattle grazing reduces the primitive recreation qualities. The same factors constantly remind the user that man still intrudes in the area. The eastern portion does provide an excellent opportunity for outstanding solitude in the winding canyons. The proposed Jacumba Mountains State Wilderness Area is contiguous with the eastern border. If the areas were combined as wilderness, an outstanding opportunity for an unconfined recreation experience would be provided.

## VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public has express the following varied viewpoints. Developed roads exist in the unit along with mines and a runway. Land was donated to the State Park for recreation and picnicking. To declare that land as wilderness would defy the terms of the donation. As a wilderness area, multiple use would be eliminated in Rockhouse Canyon. This should not be allowed. Developed campgrounds, such as Lark Canyon, should not be included within a wilderness area. A heavy concentration of mining occurs at Sacatone Springs. The area should be protected under wilderness classification because it is in a natural condition and would protect bighorn sheep habitat.

Because of the marked concern over developments such as the mining claims at Sacatone Springs, the developed portions of the unit were not recommended to become wilderness study areas. Statements on land treatment and management are study phase considerations.

CA-060-025B, Eastern McCain Valley B  
(Map 06-R)

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

The unit is bounded by the McCain Valley to the west and south. Nonpublic lands define the boundary to the north and east, with the Manzanita-Cottonwood Road forming a portion of the eastern boundary.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

The entire unit is composed of public lands.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

The rolling topography of this unit is covered with a moderately dense stand of chaparral. The unit is receiving intensive off-road vehicle use and some grazing.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

Numerous off-road vehicle trails substantially degrade the naturalness of this relatively small (1,002 acres) inventory unit.

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

Due to the unit's small size, intensive off-road vehicle use, and moderately dense vegetation, opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation are extremely limited.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

The public has expressed the following varied viewpoints. Developed roads exist in the unit along with mines and a runway. Land was donated to the State Park for recreation and picnicking. To declare that land as wilderness would defy the terms of the donation. As a wilderness area, multiple use would be eliminated in Rockhouse Canyon. This should not be allowed. Developed campgrounds, such as Lark Canyon, should not be included within a wilderness area. A heavy concentration of mining occurs at Sacatone Springs. The area should be protected under wilderness classification because it is in a natural condition and would protect bighorn sheep habitat.

Because of the marked concern over developments, such as the mining claims at Sacatone Springs, the developed portions of the unit were not recommended to become wilderness study areas. Statements on land treatment and management are study phase considerations.

CA-060-026, Table Mountain  
(Map 06-R)

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

Interstate 8 defines the unit's southern boundary. Anza-Borrego Desert State Park forms the western and northern boundaries. A powerline road and nonpublic lands comprise the eastern boundary.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

The entire area is composed of public land. The proposed wilderness study area, which lies in the northern portion of the intensive inventory unit, contains 708 acres.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

Table Mountain and Gray Mountain are the dominant features in the unit. A majority of the unit is composed of sparse desert scrub vegetation. The topography is broken by several drainages with rolling hills and steep mountain slopes. The northern portion, containing the proposed wilderness study area, is composed of low rolling mountains. The central portion of the unit supports intensive off-road vehicle use.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

Numerous intrusions, including off-road vehicle trails and mining scars, are scattered throughout the central and eastern portions of the unit. The northern portion contains a small area (708 acres) behind a rugged ridgeline which has received little mining and off-road vehicle use. This area is contiguous to the proposed Jacumba Mountains State Wilderness Area, and thus receives consideration as a proposed wilderness study area.

Wilderness Characteristics Inventory (Public)

FORM 1

Documentation of BLM Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Findings on Record

1. Is there existing BLM wilderness characteristics inventory information on all or part of the area?

No \_\_\_\_\_ (Go to Form 2) Yes  X  (If yes, and if more than one area is within the area, list the unique identifiers for those areas.):

a. Inventory Source:  1979 Wilderness Inventory Files

b. Inventory Area Unique Identifier (s):  CA-060-025-A+B

c. Map Name (s)/Number(s):  USDI BLM CASO Wilderness Final Inventory, Dec. 1979

d. BLM District (s)/Field Office (s):  LLCAD07000 – El Centro Field Office

2. BLM Inventory Findings on Record:

Existing inventory information regarding wilderness characteristics (if more than one BLM inventory area is associated with the area, list each and answer each question individually for each inventory area):

Inventory Source:  1979 Wilderness Inventory Files

Area Unique Identifier	Sufficient Size? Yes/No (acres)	Naturalness? Yes/No	Outstanding Solitude? Yes/No	Outstanding Primitive & Unconfined Recreation? Yes/No	Supplemental Values? Yes/No
CA-060-025-A	22,082	Yes, portion	Yes, portion	Yes, portion	Yes
CA-060-025-B	1,002	No	No	No	Yes

The eastern portion of this unit became Carrizo Gorge Wilderness Study Area having no mining activity and generally unaffected by man.

Wilderness Characteristics Inventory (Public)

FORM 2

Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

Area Unique Identifier ESDC 3 Acreage 4,683

(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.):

The unit is approximately 4,683 acres and adjacent to the west of Carrizo Gorge Wilderness and Carrizo Gorge Wilderness Study Area. McCain Valley Rd. mainly forms the boundary to the west as private property forms the boundaries to the north, south and southwest. There is a road mainly on private lands along the southwest boundary.

**(2) Does the area appear to be natural?**

Yes X No \_\_\_\_\_ 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 has rolling hills throughout, as seen in photos 8b and 9a-c (below), covered with a moderately dense stand of chaparral with steeper mountainous terrain along the eastern edge (see photos 10c-h), the edge adjacent to Carrizo Gorge Wilderness. This unit is generally unaffected by man, however, there are a few water developments that exist and are considered unnoticeable. The unit is all Public Lands with a history of human uses including, but not limited to hiking, horseback riding, hunting, and mountain biking on existing routes.

**(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 X No \_\_\_\_\_ N/A \_\_\_\_\_

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

This unit are generally unaffected by man as seen in photos 8b and 9a-c (below). With a moderately dense stand of chaparral and steeper mountainous terrain along the eastern edge combined with the Carrizo Gorge Wilderness and Wilderness Study Area, the area provides 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

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):

If this unit is combined with the Carrizo Gorge Wilderness and Carrizo Gorge Wilderness Study Area, opportunities for unconfined recreation will exist. The unit is popular for hiking, horseback riding, and hunting as it is easy access from the greater San Diego area.

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

Yes  No  N/A

Description:

The unit has historic archeological values as sites exist throughout the unit. The Visual Resources Inventory conducted in September of 2010 shows the area as being a VRM Class 2 with adjacent lands being VRM Class 1 in the Carrizo Gorge Wilderness and VRM Class 3 in areas west of McCain Valley Rd.



\*Frame # 8b looking east



\*\*Frame # 9a looking east



\*\*Frame # 9b looking northeast



\*\*Frame # 9c looking north



\*\*\*Frame # 10f looking south



\*\*\*Frame # 10g looking east



\*\*\*Frame # 10h looking north



\*\*\*Frame # 10a looking southwest



\*\*\*Frame # 10b looking west



\*\*\*Frame # 10c looking northwest



\*\*\*Frame # 10d looking north



\*\*\*\*Frame # 11a looking west

\*\*\*\*Frame # 11b looking north



\*Photo taken from McCain Valley Rd. north of Lark Canyon Campground

\*\*Photos taken from McCain Valley Rd. just north of the big rock

\*\*\*Photos taken from Carrizo Overlook

\*\*\*\*Photos taken from McCain Valley Rd. X graded dirt road to private lands near WCI\_04