

COVER PAGE

BLM

**MEASURING ATTRIBUTES OF WILDERNESS CHARACTER
WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS INVENTORY**

**CDCA228B/TURQUOISE MOUNTAIN
AUGUST 2015**

Needles Field Office



Summary of Analysis*

Area Unique Identifier: CDCA228B/Turquoise Mountain

Summary

Results of analysis:

(Note: explain the inventory findings for the entirety of the inventory unit. When wilderness characteristics have been identified in an area that is smaller than the size of the total inventory unit, explain why certain portions of the inventory unit are not included within the lands with wilderness characteristics (e.g. the inventory found that certain parts lacked naturalness).

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

Check one:

The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as lands with wilderness characteristics.

The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

Prepared by (team members):

Ramona Daniels, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Wilderness Coordinator,
August 18, 2015

Reviewed by (District or Field Manager):

Name:  Title: Field Manager

Date: 10-7-15

* 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 1610.5-3.

FORM 1

Documentation of BLM Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Findings from Previous Inventory on Record

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

No (Go to Form 2)

Yes (If yes, and if more than one area is within the area, list the unique identifiers for those areas.):

a) Inventory Source: California Desert Conservation Area Wilderness Inventory 1979

b) Inventory Area Unique Identifier(s): CDCA228B

c) Map Name(s)/Number(s): USGS, California 1:100,000: 35115-e1 Mesquite Lake

d) BLM District(s)/Field Office(s): California Desert District/Needles 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 area and answer each question individually for each inventory area):

Inventory Source: Needles Field Office Inventory

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
CDCA228B	Y	N	N	N	Y

FORM 2

Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

Area Unique Identifier: CDCA228B

Acreage: **32,992**

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

Note: If "No" is checked the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "NA" for the remaining questions below.

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

Located east of the town of Baker, this unit's northern boundary is the Boulder Corridor energy right-of-way road; the western boundary is the Cree Camp Road; the southern boundary is the old wooden pole line utility road. The eastern boundary is a combination of a paved road from the Halloran Spring turnoff that leads to a relay station on Turquoise Mountain, and the wooden pole line utility road, and an improved dirt road leading northwest to the Boulder Corridor right-of-way.

(2) Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes No N/A

Note: If "No" is checked, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "NA" for the remaining questions below.

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

The marks of man are evident within this area. The area east of Cree Camp Road contains some ways and there are bulldozing scars around Hyten's well. The Turquoise Mountain area contains numerous roads, ways and a microwave relay station, and an old wooden pole line road. The Turquoise Mining area contains open-pit patented mines. An airway beacon is located just south of Squaw Mountain and there are some signs of vehicle activity in the area. Numerous abandoned mining areas exist on the western boundary. The area as a whole is not natural. The same applies within the current assessment.

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

Yes _____ No _____ N/A

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

The Needles Field Office developed a system of designated routes of travel in 2002 as a requirement to local land plans. These trails have been named the Mojave Adventure Routes System (MARS) and are present in this unit.

The trails between Turquoise Mountain and Squaw Mountain are located in high desert and receive higher rainfall and occasional snowfalls, which provide for ample springs and tanks, offer an excellent area for equestrian riding and backcountry touring. The rich vegetation offers natural screening for weekend car campers.

(4) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder 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 "NA" for question 5.

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

Solomon's Knob, Turquoise Mountain and Squaw Mountain attaches both primitive and unconfined recreational use but also backcountry touring, rockhounding and hunters. The Needles field office issues both Special Recreation Permits (SRPs) for multi-day equestrian endurance events and OHV riding tours.

(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 California Desert Protection Act states that the BLM must "protect and preserve historical and cultural values of the California desert associated with ancient Indian cultures, patterns of western exploration and settlement, and sites exemplifying the mining, ranching and railroading history of the Old West" inside wilderness. Therefore, for this inventory it is important that we recognize these items and places as unique and/or special features on public lands. Currently, the California-Arizona Maneuver Areas of 1942-1944 are also being considered as a special feature. This area contains one or more of the above items.

Office: Needles Field Office
Unit: CDCA228B/Turquoise Mountain

This area due to its high elevation and ample water resources was once a strongly used Native American area.

**WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS INVENTORY
 APPENDIX C – ROUTE ANALYSIS¹**

(Factors to consider when determining whether a route is a road² for wilderness characteristics inventory purposes.)

Route #	Purpose	Row	Construction Mechanically or Improved Mechanically	Is it in regular or continuous use	Maintenance if needed	WIU Road	Photo Points
1	NN474	Recreation, wildlife	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
2	NN135	Recreation, wildlife	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
3	NN476	Recreation, wildlife	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	
4	NN560	Recreation, utility, wildlife	No	No	Yes	Yes	
5	NN563	Recreation, wildlife	No	No	Yes	Yes	
6	NN566	Recreation, wildlife	No	No	Yes	Yes	
7	NN567	Recreation, wildlife	No	No	Yes	Yes	
8	NN571	Recreation, wildlife	No	No	Yes	Yes	
9	NN572	Recreation, wildlife	No	No	Yes	Yes	
10	NN577	Recreation, wildlife	No	No	Yes	Yes	
11	NN573	Recreation, wildlife	No	No	Yes	Yes	
12	NN581	Recreation, wildlife	No	No	Yes	Yes	
13	NN586	Recreation, wildlife	No	No	Yes	Yes	
14	NN595	Recreation, utility, wildlife	No	No	Yes	Yes	
15	NN553	Recreation, wildlife	No	No	Yes	Yes	
16	D041	Recreation, wildlife	No	No	Yes	Yes	

Route Map: See Attached

Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Area Unique Identifier: **CDCA228B**

Route or Route Segment³ Name and/or Identifier: **See Table**

(Include Transportation Plan Identifier, if known, and include route number supplied by citizen information, when available.)

I. LOCATION:

Refer attached map **Turquoise Mountain/CDCA228B** and BLM corporate data (GIS) located at the California State Office. List photo point references (where applicable) and/or reference attached photo log:

Describe:

As stated in Form 2, this area is located east of the town of Baker, this unit's northern boundary is the Boulder Corridor energy right-of-way road; the western boundary is the Cree Camp Road; the southern boundary is the old wooden pole line utility road. The eastern boundary is a combination of a paved road from the Halloran Spring turnoff that leads to a relay station on Turquoise Mountain, and the wooden pole line utility road, and an improved dirt road leading northwest to the Boulder Corridor right-of-way.

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² Road: An access route which has been improved and maintained by mechanical means to insure relatively regular and continuous use. A way maintained solely by the passage of vehicles does not constitute a road.

- a. Improved and maintained – Actions taken physically by people to keep the road open to vehicle traffic. —Improved does not necessarily mean formal construction. —Maintained does not necessarily mean annual maintenance.
- b. Mechanical means – Use of hand or power machinery or tools.
- c. Relatively regular and continuous use – Vehicular use that has occurred and will continue to occur on a relatively regular basis. Examples are: access roads for equipment to maintain a stock water tank or other established water sources, access roads to maintained recreation sites or facilities, or access roads to mining claims.

³ If a portion of a route is found to meet the wilderness inventory road criteria (see Part III) and the remainder does not meet these criteria (e.g., a cherrystem road with a primitive route continuing beyond a certain point), identify each segment and explain the rationale for the separate findings under pertinent criteria.

II. ROUTE CONTEXT

- A. Current Purpose⁴ (if any) of Route: (Examples: Rangeland/Livestock Improvements (stock tank, developed spring, reservoir, fence, corral), Inholdings (ranch, farmhouse), Mine Site, Concentrated Use Site (camp site), Recreation, Utilities (transmission line, telephone, pipeline), Administrative (project maintenance, communication site, vegetation treatment)).

Describe:

Within the Northern & Eastern Colorado Desert Coordinated Management Plan (NECO), an amendment to the California Desert Conservation Area Plan 1980 and Sikes Act Plan with the California Department of Fish and Game, a series of routes were designed for use for the public. On page 3-64, section 3.8.7. California Back Country Discovery Trails: "The California back Country Discovery Trails...will be a shared-use trail system providing recreational opportunities for all persons, including those who use street-legal and non-street legal (Green Sticker) vehicles, hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians. It will also provide a backcountry opportunity for non-traditional trail users such as persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and families with small

children.” BLM Needles Field Office (NFO) developed this system of California Back Country Discovery Trails for all designated routes within the field office boundaries and named it the Mojave Adventure Route System (MARS). This system of designated routes was developed to minimize resource damage, as well as providing a system of backcountry touring routes, which offer ample recreational experiences: (i.e., camping, hunting, rockhounding, etc.) for all members of the public. The NFO receives funding annually from both federal and state programs to maintain and monitor on a need to basis, the management of these routes also includes the placement of field cameras for the monitoring of use, repairing flood damage, and the installation of route signs and informational kiosks.

B. Right-of-Way (ROW):

1. Is there a ROW associated with this route(s)?

Yes No Unknown

2. If yes, what is the stated purpose of the ROW? **Energy Corridor**

3. Is the ROW still being used for this purpose?

Yes No Unknown or N/A

Explain:

***This unit either contains or is immediately adjacent to high-tension electrical lines.**

The Needles Field Office is immediately adjacent to the Colorado River much of the lands managed by the office also support the infrastructure of the Colorado River Energy Complex and the powerlines which move electric to outlying metropolitan areas. This area is situated between two major Utility Corridors which support the movement of energy into the Los Angeles Metropolitan area.

III. WILDERNESS INVENTORY ROAD CRITERIA

A. Evidence of construction or improvement using mechanical means:

Yes (if either A.1 or A.2 is checked “yes” below) No (if both A.1 and A.2 are checked “no” below)

1. Construction: (Is there evidence that the route or route segment was originally constructed using mechanical means?) Yes No

Examples: Paved Bladed Graveled Roadside Berms Cut/Fill Other

Describe:

Some of the roads within the area were installed as access to mining operations and the utility companies during the early 1900s. These routes were developed by use of heavy equipment.

⁴ The purpose of a route is not a deciding factor in determining whether a route is a road for wilderness characteristics inventory purposes. The purpose of a route does provide context for factors on which such a determination may be based, particularly the question of whether maintenance of the route ensures relatively regular and continuous use. The purpose also helps to determine whether maintenance that may so far have been unnecessary to ensure such use would be approved by BLM when the need arises.

2. Improvements: (Is there evidence of improvements using mechanical means to facilitate access?) Yes No If "yes": by Hand Tools by Machine

Examples: Culverts Hardened Stream Crossings Bridges Drainage Barriers
Other

Describe: The construction of high-tension lines within the area required graded roads in which heavy equipment could access the installation sites.

B. Maintenance: (Is there evidence of maintenance that would ensure *relatively* regular and continuous use?): Yes (if either B.1 or B.2 is checked "yes" below) No (if both B.1 and B.2 are checked "no" below)

1. Is there Evidence or Documentation of Maintenance using hand tools or machinery?

Yes No If "yes": by Hand Tools by Machine

Explain:

The Boulder Corridor is a major utility corridor and has played a major role in the impact to the local environment.

2. If the route or route segment is in good⁵ condition, but there is no evidence of maintenance, would mechanical maintenance with hand tools or machines be approved by BLM to meet the purpose(s) of the route in the event this route became impassable?

Yes No

Explain:

As part of the MARS, the route would continue to receive maintenance by the NFO on a need to basis.

⁵ Good condition would be a condition that ensures regular and continuous use relative to the purposes of the route. Consider whether the route can be clearly followed in the field over its entire course and whether all or any portion of the route contains any impediments to travel.

C. Relatively regular and continuous use: (Does the route or route segment ensure relatively regular and continuous use?) Yes No

Describe evidence (e.g., direct, vehicles or vehicle tracks observed, or indirect, evidence of use associated with purpose of the route such as maintenance of facility that route accesses) and other rationale for whether use has occurred and will continue to occur on a *relatively regular* basis (i.e., regular and continuous use relative to the purpose(s) of the route).⁶

Describe: **See above information.**

IV. CONCLUSION:

Does the route or route segment⁷ meet the definition of a wilderness inventory road (i.e., are items III.A and III.B and III.C all checked yes)?

Yes = Wilderness Inventory Road No = Not a road for wilderness inventory purposes

Explanation⁸:

Routes belonging to the Designated Route System will be maintained as needed. Routes not designated through the land plan will not be considered a route and therefore will be considered closed. Routes errors and/or realignments will be addressed through the NEPA Process.

Closed routes will be evaluated for their use. Routes used to maintain Grazing Infrastructure (Taylor Grazing Act), Herd Management Areas and facilities for the California Fish and Wildlife Department (California Desert Protection Act) will be closed with gates, and barricades, all other routes will be closed through restoration and/or barricades.

Evaluator(s):



Date:



⁶ Include estimate of travel rates for the stated purposes, e.g., trips/day or week or month or season or year or even multiple years in some facility maintenance cases.

⁷ If part of the route meets the wilderness inventory road definition and the remainder does not, describe the segment meeting the definition and any remaining portion not meeting the definition and why.

⁸ Describe and explain rationale for any discrepancies with citizen proposals.

Office: Needles Field Office
Unit: CDCA228B/Turquoise Mountain

**WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS INVENTORY
APPENDIX D – PHOTO LOG**

See Attached

