

**COVER PAGE**

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

**CDCA307-2/MOPAH  
SEPTEMBER 2015**

**BLM**

**Needles Field Office**



### Summary of Analysis\*

**Area Unique Identifier:** CDCA307-2/Mopah

#### 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,  
September 10, 2015

#### Reviewed by (District or Field Manager):

Name: *Taloch* Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 10-20-15

\* 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.

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**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):** CDCA307

c) **Map Name(s)/Number(s):** USGS, California 1:100,000: 34114-e1 Needles  
 USGS, California 1:100,000: 34114-a1 Parker

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
CDCA307-2	Y	Y	N	N	Y

**FORM 2**

**Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics**

Area Unique Identifier: **CDCA307-2/Mopah**

Acreage: **62,514 acres**

(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.):

**The boundary for this unit are NS434 Turtle Mountain Road for the northern boundary, to Mailbox Road where it follows the Turtle Mountains Wilderness Boundary to Prospector Trail (NS474), to Lisa Dawn Trail (NS494), to Coffin Springs Trail (NS497) to Mopah Trail (NS634) all of which form the southwest boundary. U. S. Highway 95 which forms the eastern boundary.**

(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):

**This area is part of the Turtle Mountain National Natural Area its naturalness is high, but the area was heavily used for mining since 1880. Many of the mines have been closed by the Lost Arch Historic Mining District in the western end of the unit and the area has been turned into a developed recreation area, with two fully developed ADA compliant campsites with ramadas. Numerous kiosks have been installed throughout the area.**

**In addition, this area included the Chemehuevi Wash, an extensive desert woodland area with Palo Verde, Mesquite, Ironwood and other species. This wash is extremely large and carries water from four different mountain ranges. During heavy flooding this wash can be a ¼ mile wide.**

**Because of the desert woodland, bird life within the area is also very extensive, with both songbird and bird of prey populations in abundance.**

(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):

**This area is recognized for its uniqueness by all that visit. Most visitors to the area take care to leave it as they found it. Both hikers and off-highway vehicle visitors find solitude in many corners of this unit.**

(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):

**The large size of the unit offers ample space for both vehicular recreation and primitive and unconfined recreation. Lost Arch Historic Mining Camp with developed campsites was developed as a recreation site in 2010 with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding. Since that time, visitation to areas along NS434 Turtle Mountain Road has increased. Visitation to Mopah Trail has also been very popular for backcountry hiking both inside and outside of the Turtle Mountains Wilderness. Local Off-Highway Vehicle Clubs drive to many of these trailheads to stop and park and take two and three-hour hikes back into the wilderness areas. The Needles Field Office has centered many projects around this area so that the visiting public can come to identify with this unique landscape and become stewards to the land they love.**

**Naturalness values are high in the center of this unit against the wilderness boundary.**

(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**

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**western exploration and settlement, and sites exemplifying the mining, ranching and railroading history of the Old West". Most recently, the former California/Arizona WWII Troop Camps have been added to areas of protection.**

## WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS INVENTORY

### APPENDIX C – ROUTE ANALYSIS<sup>1</sup>

*(Factors to consider when determining whether a route is a road<sup>2</sup> for wilderness characteristics inventory purposes.)*

**Route Analysis Table**

Route #	Purpose	Row	Construction Mechanically or Improved Mechanically	Is it in regular or continuous use	Maintenance if needed	WIU Road	Photo Points
1	NS474	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
2	NS477	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
3	NS480	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
4	NS490	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
5	NS489	Recreation	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
6	NS491	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
7	NS493	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
8	NS497	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
9	NS499	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
10	NS495	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
11	NS627	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
12	NS634	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
13	NS651	Communication Tower	Yes	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
14	NS640	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
15	NS506	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
16	NS505	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
17	NS498	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
18	NS504	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
19	NS500	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes
20	NS536	Recreation	No	Yes	Yes	Not Currently	Yes

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### Route Map:

Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Area Unique Identifier: **CDCA307-2/Mopah**

Route or Route Segment<sup>3</sup> 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 to above map **CDCA307-2/Mopah** and BLM corporate data (GIS) located at the California State Office. List photo point references (where applicable) or reference attached photo log:

Describe:

**As stated in Form 2, the boundary for this unit are NS434 Turtle Mountain Road for the northern boundary, to Mailbox Road where it follows the Turtle Mountains Wilderness Boundary to Prospector Trail (NS474), to Lisa Dawn Trail (NS494), to Coffin Springs Trail (NS497) to Mopah Trail (NS634) all of which form the southwest boundary. U. S. Highway 95 which forms the eastern boundary.**

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<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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 cherry system 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 Purpose<sup>4</sup> (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:

**The BLM Needles Field Office (NFO) developed 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.). 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 placement of route signs and informational kiosks.

B. Right-of-Way (ROW):

1. Is there a ROW associated with this route?

Yes \_\_\_ No  Unknown \_\_\_

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

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

Yes \_\_\_ No  Unknown or N/A \_\_\_

Explain:

**Right-of-Ways are associated with all boundaries. Boundary routes support 250-foot electrical high-tension towers. Gasline easements area also in place both the north and south boundaries.**

### 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: **This information can be found in past inventories of the area.**

<sup>4</sup> 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: **BLM maintenance teams continue to maintain the area for ease of access after flooding events.**

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: Utility company makes semi-annual repairs to the area roads, BLM maintenance team monitors and signs annually as needed.**

2. If the route or route segment is in good<sup>5</sup> 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.**

<sup>5</sup> 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).<sup>6</sup>

**Describe: Eye witness accounts and traffic counters within the area.**

#### IV. CONCLUSION:

Does the route or route segment<sup>7</sup> 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

Explanation<sup>8</sup>:

**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.**

**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: \_\_\_\_\_

<sup>6</sup> 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.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> Describe and explain rationale for any discrepancies with citizen proposals.

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

