U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
CALIFORNIA DESERT DISTRICT
RIDGECREST RESOURCE AREA

A SIKES ACT

MANAGEMENT PLAN

FOR THE

JAWBONE - BUTTERBREDT
AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN
(CA-06-ACEC 20)

AND THE

SIERRA - MOJAVE - TEHACHAPI ECOTONE
WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT AREA
(CA-06-WHA-20)

SEPTEMBER, 1982

APPROVED

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Mark E. Lawrence — Sept. 27, 1982
Mark E. Lawrence — Date
Area Manager

Gerald E. Hillier — 9/29/82
Gerald E. Hillier — Date
District Manager
California Desert District

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

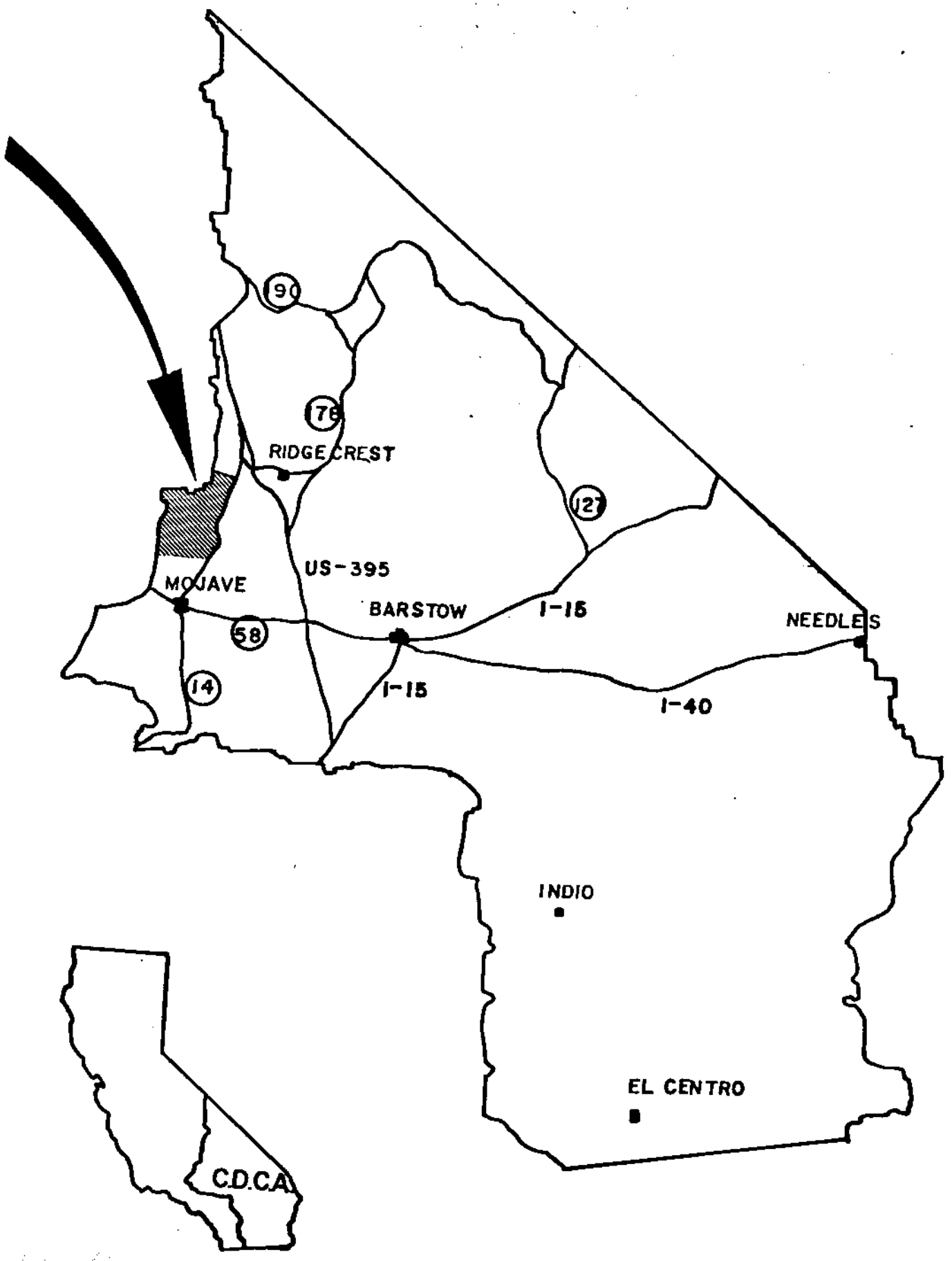
George D. Nokes — 10/28/82
George D. Nokes — Date
Regional Manager
Region IV

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS (CON'T)

MAP NO. 1

MANAGEMENT AREA LOCATION



A SIKES ACT

MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE JAWBONE/BUTTERBREDT

AREA OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN (ACEC)

AND THE

SIERRA/MOJAVE/TEHACHAPI ECOTONE

WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT AREA (WHMA)

I. PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES:

A. Purpose: The Jawbone/Butterbredt ACEC and the Sierra/Mojave/Tehachapi Ecotone WHMA was established to protect and enhance wildlife and Native American values on public land and is located on the eastern slope of the southern Sierra Nevada, from Jawbone Canyon north to Highway 178. Habitat in the area supports a variety of both game and non-game species and provides forage for livestock. The fauna and flora are especially diverse because of the ecotone created by the Tehachapi Mountains and Sierra Nevada with the Mojave Desert.

B. Objectives: The objectives for this area are to protect and improve wildlife species and habitats, Native American, and other natural and cultural resources, while allowing appropriate land uses.

C. Relationship to the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan: The ACEC was established under the CDCA PLan (Bureau of Land Management 1980) and the management prescriptions are identified in Volume C, Appendix IV, on pages 16-17. Modification of the ACEC boundary, as identified in the CDCA Plan, is recommended to include additional public land in the Cottonwood Creek and Kelso Valley areas. This proposed change allows for essentially complete overlap of this management area with the Rudnick Common Grazing Allotment and inclusion of lands affected by the Vehicle Management Boundary

Agreement between the BLM and the Rudnick Estate Trust. This is an appropriate change because the ACEC, WHMA and grazing allotment are interrelated and need to be managed accordingly. The Jawbone - Butterbredt ACEC is also synonymous in terms of affected public land with the Sierra - Mojave - Tehachapi Ecotone WHMA (refer to the CDCA Plan, Table 2, and Map No. 3 - Planned Management Areas for Fish and Wildlife). Management prescriptions or actions affecting the area are both ACEC and wildlife habitat management related. Since the ACEC and WHMA planned actions both address wildlife habitat enhancement, this management plan will satisfy the requirements of both prescriptions. Additionally, the Special Area status assures that the habitat and associated species of known significance or importance will be considered as key environment components during the Environmental Assessment process for future proposed land uses. The wildlife portions of the Plan are to be developed cooperatively with the California Department of Fish and Game for Sikes Act implementation.

Changes in livestock grazing practices will be implemented through the Allotment Management Plan for the Rudnick and Walker Pass Common Allotments, which will be completed in 1982. Livestock grazing practices in the ACEC have been significantly changed through the CDCA Plan. Prior to the CDCA Plan, 26,210 Animal Unit Months (AUM's) were authorized by Preference for the Rudnick Common Allotment. CDCA inventories established that the perennial forage range carrying capacity was 9,194 AUM. Additional AUM's will be allowed based upon*

* *Forage required to support one 1000 lb. cow and one calf or equivalent for one month.*

annual vegetation production on a seasonal basis. In addition, a 25 percent reduction of AUM's (based on 9,194) was implemented to provide favorable conditions for changing the overall condition of the allotment from fair to good. Authorized AUM's will be phased over a five-year period with the 1982 allocation (perennial forage) totaling 8251 AUM's. Public land affected by the Walker Pass Common Allotment is minimal and is located immediately adjacent to Highway 178. Grazing intensity has been reduced in degree similiar to that in the Rudnick Common Allotment. Livestock AUM allocation also will be determined based on perennial forage with annual additions authorized based upon ephemeral forage production.

Five Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) have been established in the ACEC and will be managed according to BLM policy as stated in the Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review. Refer to the CDCA Plan, Map No. 7, for WSA locations. These areas and the corresponding acreage are as follows:

WSA Number	WSA Name	ACREAGE
159	- Cow Haven*	6,600
160	- Horse Canyon*	4,150
160B	- Kelso Peak	9,750
160C	- Skinner Peak*	1,100
163	- Frog Creek,	10,600

* Common boundary with RARE II - Sequoia National Forest

These WSA's have been recommended as non-suitable for wilderness designation. Detailed information for each area is contained in the CDCA Plan, Volume B, Appendix III: Wilderness.

II. MAJOR RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

	Prescription/Action	Component: ACEC	Component: WHMA	Comments
1.	Allow vehicle use on approved routes only, except in designated motorized vehicle play areas (Multiple Use Class I).	X	X	
2.	Evaluate the potential effectiveness of restoration and rehabilitation of disturbed areas.	X		Rehabilitation of selected areas where soil has been compacted and vegetation destroyed by vehicle use needs to be applied on a trial basis to develop best method.
3.	Consider reintroduction of bighorn sheep.	X	X	Bighorn historically occupied habitat south of Jawbone Canyon. Evaluate condition of habitat and feasibility of establishing new herd. Bighorn may have been California subspecies (Ovis canadensis californiana).
4.	Install a locked gate on the fire roads in Kelso Valley consistent with necessary access to private lands.	X		
5.	Conduct aerial patrols.	X		
6.	Develop AMP and monitor impacts of grazing on wildlife.	X	X	Control grazing, change practices.
7.	Stabilize/rehabilitate/salvage cultural resource sites.	X		Pertains to both known sites and those identified in the future.
8.	Establish cooperative agreement with private landowner.		X	Protection of wildlife water source and riparian habitat on private land.
9.	Surveillance			
10.	Restrict camping and/or parking.		X	
11.	Protection of water sources.		X	Includes protection of associated riparian habitat.
12.	Protect, stabilize, and/or enhance fish & wildlife resources.		X	

III. BACKGROUND AND RESOURCE SUMMARY:

A. Background: The Jawbone/Butterbredt ACEC and the Sierra/Mojave/Tehachapi Ecotone WHMA, hereafter referred to as the management area, contains approximately 153,000 acres of public land. There is a considerable amount of private land within the managment area boundary. The Rudnick Estate Trust is the principal landowner. Refer to Table 1 for land ownership data.

The management area is located in eastern Kern County, California, and is bounded by Highway 14, Highway 178 (Walker Pass/Freeman Canyon), the western limit of the CDCA and the Township line immediately south of Jawbone Canyon in the vicinity of Cross Mountain.

A majority of this area is within the Monache/Walker Pass Cooperative Land and Wildlife Management Area, established by Public Land Order No. 2594, dated January 26, 1962. The Public Land Order states that public lands will be retained in public ownership for balanced multiple uses. The withdrawal for this management area will be reviewed by the BLM in 1982.

There are numerous springs in the management area, many of which are on private land owned by the Rudnick Estate Trust. Many are on public land or adjacent to public land on National Forest land in the Scodie Mountains. There is one 40-acre Public Water Reserve near Freeman Canyon (SE¼SE¼ Sec. 35, T. 26S, R. 37E, MDM.).

This area is easily accessible by motor vehicle on a variety of existing roads and trails. The present condition is one of over-accessibility, and the primary management prescription is to designate vehicle routes to reduce environmental degradation caused by extensive vehicle use.

TABLE 1

LAND OWNERSHIP DATA

OWNER	*APPROXIMATE ACREAGE*
United States (Public Land)	*153,000*
Rudnick Estate Trust	*48,000*
Other	*10,000*
TOTAL	*211,000*

The area generally conforms to the boundary of the Rudnick Common Allotment. According to the CDCA Plan, the allotment is rated in fair conditions. This is attributed to past grazing intensity and recreational vehicle use of the land.

Three major rights-of-way exist, two for the aqueducts owned by the City of Los Angeles, and one for high voltage electrical transmission lines owned by the Southern California Edison Company.

B. Resource Summary: This management area was intensively inventoried for selected natural and cultural resource values from 1974 to 1976 during the Unit Resource Analysis for the El Paso Planning Unit (Bureau of Land Management, 1976). Other selective inventories were conducted during 1978 and 1979 as part of the comprehensive California Desert Plan project. Resources data are filed in the California Desert District Office in Riverside, California and at the Ridgecrest Resource Area Office in Ridgecrest, California.

The management area contains some of the more productive wildlife habitat in the California Desert. This is due to habitat diversity, available surface water, and continuity with the Sierra Nevada and Tehachapi Mountains. Coniferous forest habitats occur in the higher elevations in the western portions of the unit, whereas creosote bush scrub is dominant in the lower desert portion. Elevations range from 2,500 feet near the mouth of Jawbone Canyon to 6,000 feet at several locations along the western boundary.

At the time of the land classification establishing the Monache/Walker Pass Cooperative Land and Wildlife Management Area in 1962, the area was considered by the Department of Fish and Game to be one of the best quail

and chukar hunting areas in California, and hunting was one of the predominant uses along with sightseeing, picnicking, photography and rock-hounding. In the late 1960's, off-road vehicle recreation became popular and is widespread today with concentrated use occurring from Jawbone Canyon north to Dove Spring Canyon. Recreational hunting has declined over the years and is considered to be due to a reduction in upland game populations caused by the impact of widespread vehicle use and a "displacement" of recreational hunters by off-road vehicle users (Department of Fish and Game, 1966-1972; Badaracco, 1976; Chapman, personal communication).

Habitat in the area supports approximately 343 species of animals, two species of amphibians, 46 species of reptiles, 89 species of mammals and 206 species of birds (Bureau of Land Management, 1976). Of these species, several have special significance. Moderately dense populations of the Mohave ground squirrel (Spermophilus mohavensis), State-listed as rare, exist primarily in the flats and alluvial fans. Extensive field studies of the Mohave ground squirrel by the Bureau of Land Management in 1980, identified the creosote-bursage vegetative association as ranking moderate in capability of supporting populations of this species (Aardahl and Roush, 1980).

The Tehachapi slender salamander (Batrachoseps stebbins) and the California bighorn sheep (Ovis canadensis californiana), also listed as rare by the State, potentially exist in limited habitat; riparian systems, and the Chuckwalla and Cross Mountain areas, respectfully.

The desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizi), a Bureau of Land Management sensitive species, occurs in isolated populations in the lower elevation flats and alluvial fans. Tortoises have been observed in Jawbone Canyon and Red Rock Canyon areas and along portions of the Los Angeles Aqueduct as far north as the Robber Roost area (Aardahl, personal observation).

Other species of special significance are the golden eagle (Aquila chrysaetos) and yellow-eared pocket mouse (Perognathus xanthonotus). Golden eagles are often sighted in the ACEC, especially near the Sierra Nevada, where updrafts aid in soaring. Ideal nesting habitat occurs in the Sierra Nevada on the many granite outcrops and ridges. Robbers Roost, a special management area for nesting raptors, is an isolated granitic outcrop which offers ideal nesting and roosting habitat for raptors. Prairie falcons (Falco mexicanus) and long-eared owls (Asio otus) have been observed nesting here (Siperick, 1977).

Game species are hunted extensively in the management area. California quail (Lophortyx californicus), Gambel quail (Lophortyx gambelii), mountain quail (Oreortyx pictus), chukar (Alectoris chukar), and morning dove (Zenaidura macroura) are common birds and are hunted extensively in the vicinity of water in the canyons. Game mammals hunted extensively are the blacktail jackrabbit (Lepus californicus) and desert cottontail (Sylvilagus auduboni).. A few mule deer (Odocoileus hemionus) are bagged each year in the Scodie Mountain area in the upper portion of Cow Haven, Sage, Horse and Bird Spring Canyons.

Two off-road vehicle play areas (open areas) have been designated in Jawbone Canyon and Dove Spring Canyon. Considerable off-road vehicle use has occurred between these areas.

Sensitive and significant Native American heritage and religious sites were identified in portions of the ACEC during preparation of the CDCA Plan. These sites were historically used by the Kawaiisu for traditional religious and secular purposes. Kawaiisu people in Bakersfield, Kernville, and Tehachapi have expressed concern and interest in preserving and protecting these traditional and religious sites.

In addition to Native American values, the management area contains several identified areas of very high archaeological and historical values. These archaeological resources have high potential scientific interest, aesthetic and interpretive value, and many have Native American traditional concerns. Many of these sites may be eligible for placement on the National Register of Historic Places. The integrity and sanctity of several of these sites is threatened by vandalism and encroaching off-road vehicle activity which may result in advertent damange.

IV. USE PHILOSPHY:

Several multiple uses of the natural resources in this management area are consistent with the management objectives provided they do not occur in excessive amounts or degree. The existing uses are compatible but must be limited or reduced in portions of the area to reverse degradation of cultural resource values and wildlife habitat, especially near water sources, riparian zones and raptor roosting/nesting areas.

A. Casual Vehicle Use/Camping: The present degree of casual off-road vehicle use and camping in portions of the area are serious adverse factors. The area between Jawbone Canyon and Dove Spring Canyon is essentially a de facto vehicle play area because of the numerous roads and trails. Horse and Sage Canyons, located ten miles north of the Dove Spring vehicle play area, are receiving increased off-road vehicle and other uses (group camping, motorcycle hill climbing, cross country vehicle travel, shooting, etc.) similar to what occurs in Jawbone and Dove Spring Canyons, but to a lesser degree. Water sources (springs, streams and wells) have become popular camping locations. Numerous livestock and wildlife water facilities have been vandalized to a degree that they no longer function. Riparian, Joshua tree, and coniferous forest habitat supports numerous resident and migratory birds, including significant numbers of raptors, primarily golden eagles and prairie falcons. Unregulated use of off-road vehicles, camping, and indiscriminate shooting in these areas can severely down-grade habitat quality and limit wildlife productivity.

B. Special Recreation Use (BLM Permitted Activities): Certain recreational uses on public lands are administered by the BLM through a permit system (Special Recreation Use Permit). Such permits are required for:

1. Commercial uses.
2. Competitive uses.
3. Off-road vehicle events involving 50 or more vehicles.
4. Special area uses where the authorized Officer determines the criteria of various public land laws (e.g., Sikes Act, Federal Land Policy and Management Act, Taylor Grazing Act, National Trails Act) require their issuance.

Special recreation uses which are authorized by BLM permit will be

compatible with multiple-use class guidelines in the CDCA Plan and management objectives for both the ACEC and wildlife habitat management area. The following special recreation uses are considered compatible with the overall management objectives for the management area, pending the outcome of environmental assessments for proposed uses:

1. Certain commercial uses of short duration involving limited numbers of participants and vehicles. Motorized vehicles will be restricted to designated routes of travel. An example is motion picture filming.
2. Education uses involving limited numbers of participants and vehicles. Motorized vehicles will be restricted to designated routes of travel.
3. Group tours, including rockhounding, camping, and bird watching activities involving limited numbers of participants. Motorized vehicles will be resticted to designated routes of travel.
4. Certain competitive events involving non-motorized vehicle transportation, such as equestrian rides and cross-country running.
5. Certain motorized, competitive off-road vehicle events involving limited numbers of participants only in the Multiple-Use Class I ares in Dove Spring and Jawbone Canyons. Such events must be compatible with casual recreation uses in these areas and will not involve the use of private land without the prior consent of the landowner. Such events, if permitted, will not be of a type which will result in vehicle play on adjacent Multiple-Use Class L lands.

Competitive off-road vehicle events, such as "enduro", "European Scramble", "hare scrambles", and "hare and hound" will not be allowed in the management area on Multiple Use Class L lands in order to comply with the requirements for organized competitive events on Class L lands as identified on Pg. 84 of the CDCA Plan. Two requirements are particularly important in supporting the decision to not allow such events on these Multiple Use Class L lands; No. 8 - length (mileage) of the event passing through Class L will be a key factor in determining use; and No. 10 - all alternative routes have been considered. The requirements imply that Class L lands may be considered for competitive off-road vehicle events when they are used to "link" two less-restrictive Multiple Use Classes and are not used as the basis for or provide a significant percentage of the total length of the event.

Key factors to be considered in the Environmental Assessment process for proposed special recreation uses (in addition to the ACEC and WHMA status) include:

1. *The two designated vehicle free-play areas in Jawbone and Dove Spring Canyons are limited in size and are ofter intensively used on a casual basis.*
2. *The Rudnick Common Allotment is leased for livestock grazing on a year-round basis.*
3. *There is considerable private land in the management area, much of which is in a "checkerboard" pattern owned by the Rudnick Estate Trust.*
4. *Much of the management area in the vicinity of water sources and canyons is popular for upland game hunting from September through January.*

Special rules for the use of off-road vehicles on public land, especially those controlling noise output and muffler design, will be enforced in the management area.

The authorized officer may require that Special Recreation Use Permit be issued for events involving fewer than 50 vehicles because of the ACEC status and Sikes Act implementation of the wildlife habitat management plan component of this document.

C. *Livestock Grazing: Cattle grazing in and immediately adjacent to springs and riparian habitat can have an adverse effect by removing cover required by most wildlife species, resulting in increased predation and possible avoidance of such areas by some species. Soil erosion and subsequent loss of vegetation can cause siltation and reduction of surface water quantity and quality. Defecation by cattle can cause serious water quality problems. Reduction in the diversity of vegetative height and crown cover is directly proportional to the reduction in animal species diversity, expecially affecting birds in riparian habitats (Anderson, B.W., and R.D. Ohmart, 1977).*

V. *PLANNED ACTIONS:*

A. *Identification of Approved Routes of Travel: All roads, trails and ways which are approved as routes of travel will be so designated with appropriate field signs indicated on a map which will be available to the public. Routes existing which are not approved will not necessarily be signed as closed. Rock barriers, signs, etc. may be placed across such routes where appropriate to discourage use.*

Interpretive signs with map boxes identifying the management area will be placed at each major vehicular access point along Highway 14 and Highway

178. Refer to Map No. 2 and Appendix B for approved routes of travel and design of entry signs and locations.

Public vehicular use will be for the primary purpose of providing basic access for public use and enjoyment of the natural resources on public land. The approved routes of travel will discourage vehicle play except for the two Open Areas, Jawbone Canyon and Dove Spring Canyon.

In 1977, a seasonal closure for all unauthorized use was implemented to provide solitude for nesting raptors at Robbers Roost. (Federal Register Volume 42, No. 154, Page 40488). The seasonal closure is in effect from February 1 to July 1 of every year. Refer to Appendix F for the Robbers Roost seasonal closure area.

B. Restoration of Disturbed Areas: Extensive vehicle play outside designated vehicle play areas in Jawbone and Dove Spring Canyons has resulted in erosion on hillsides in canyons, especially in portions of upper Jawbone, Bird Spring, Horse and Sage Canyons. Many trails and dirt roads have been made which are not necessary for general travel and access. These areas will remain void of vegetation for years due to compaction and erosion of topsoil.

Test areas will be established in Horse Canyon for evaluating the effectiveness of several methods of restoring eroded slopes and excess roads and trails caused by vehicle use. Water bars, sandbagging, plowing or ripping and burlap netting may be utilized in the test areas. The more effective method(s) will be utilized to restore landscape scars. Areas adjacent to vehicle play areas which have received heavy vehicle use and which are not approved as routes of travel during the designation process will be ripped with a tractor/plow combination.

The area immediately north of the Jawbone Canyon Open Area, and especially north of Blue Point, will require extensive ripping to prepare the soil for natural revegetation.

Control of vehicle use through route designations will also effectively protect Native American religious and heritage sites. Maintainence of signs and physical barriers associated with the Jawbone Management Agreement boundary is necessary for maintaining the integrity of these sites.

C. *Evaluation of Proposed Bighorn Sheep Reintroduction: Bighorn sheep habitat occurs in the vicinity of Cross Mountain and Chuckwalla Mountain on the southern edge of the management area. The Unit Resource Analysis for the El Paso Planning Unit identified an area in the vicinity of Chuckwalla Mountain which contained several suspected bighorn sheep beds. Bighorn sheep, if present, may be the California subspecies (Ovis canadensis californiana), classified as rare by the Department of Fish and Game. This area is in a checkerboard land ownership pattern, thus making the feasibility of transplanting or reintroducing bighorn into the area very uncertain.*

Additional field study, utilizing time-lapse surveillance cameras at suspected bighorn use areas, will be conducted. Additional habitat protection and development measures may be implemented by the BLM and Department of Fish and Game if bighorn are present. Such measures could include land acquisition, additional vehicle use restrictions, water development, and evaluation of the impact of grazing.

D. *Install a Locked Gate on the Fire Roads in Kelso Valley Consistent with Necessary Access to Private Lands: "Fire roads" in Kelso Valley pro-*

vide regular access to private land and portions of the Sequoia National Forest. Installation of locked gates is not considered appropriate. Elimination of trespass off-road vehicle use will be more appropriately controlled through increased field presence, effective signing and Kern County Sheriff patrol and response to trespass notification.

E. *Conduct Aerial Patrols: Aerial patrols, in addition to regular Ranger field presence, will be made to monitor compliance with approved vehicle route designations and the amount of visitor use. The scheduled visitor use monitoring flights for the Resource Area will also function as the ACEC aerial patrols. In addition, the Department of Fish and Game periodically conducts aerial hunter counts on the opening day for upland game. The Patrol Lieutenant in Ridgecrest for the Department of Fish and Game will be contacted regarding aerial patrols over the management area.*

F. *Allotment Management Plan (AMP): The AMP for the Rudnick Common and Walker Pass Allotments will compliment this activity plan. These plans will be developed under contract during FY-82 and will compliment and conform to resource management standards established in the CDCA Plan.*

Livestock exclosures will be established in each vegetative community, including riparian habitat, to serve as controlled situations whereby the effects of grazing on wildlife habitat components can be documented. The specific locations will be established in the Allotment Management Plan. However, the riparian habitat exclosure will be located along the stream in Sage Canyon adjacent to the dirt road in the Canyon. The exclosure will be established along a 0.25 mile stretch of stream on public land (Appendix C). At the present time, there are no exclosures to aid in determining the effect of grazing on the habitat.

Because of this, the baseline conditions or site potential of the various habitats are not known. The productivity of perennial grasses (Oryzopsis hymenoides, Sitanion histrix, and Stipa speciosa) have been significantly reduced by over grazing as evidenced by their recovery in the Highway 14 right-of-way which has been fenced for approximately ten years. Monitoring will be addressed in Section VI - Monitoring.

G. Stabilize/Salvage/Rehabilitate Cultural Resources: The BLM will identify and record all cultural resource sites (both Native American traditional sites and archaeological and historical sites) within the ACEC on an opportunistic basis through project-specific environmental assessments and through cooperation with Native American and professional and amateur groups.

1. Stabilization: Cultural sites will be protected when possible in conjunction with vehicle route designations. Sensitive cultural sites will be protected from the direct and indirect negative impacts which may occur from vehicle routes, if this access is determined to be endangering the site. Route closures will include signs, fencing, and rock or metal barriers.

   Other stabilization measures may include water run-off diversions and covering affected portions of sites with sterile soil or sand when erosion is threatening a site.

2. Salvage (Mitigation): If it is determined that avoidance of damage to a site cannot be achieved, a mitigation program will be designed and implemented to salvage cultural resource values. All data recovery programs will be designed in conjuntion with the appropriate Native American groups and the State Historic Preservation Office.

4. *Rehabilitation: Cultural sites which have been effectively stabilized will be rehabilitated if necessary and interpreted if appropriate. Rehabilitation measures may include restoration from the effects of vandalism or erosion. Interpretation will include appropriate signing and interpretive displays, programs, or brochures.*

All plans will be designed in conjunction with,or reviewed,by the appropriate individuals and agencies as specified in the Memorandum of Agreement among the Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, the California State Historic Preservation Office, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding the California Desert Plan Implementation and Monitoring Programs, and the Memorandum of Agreement between the State of California Native American Heritage Commission and the BLM.

H. *Establish Cooperative Agreement with Private Landowner: The existing agreement with the Rudnick Estate Trust for control and management of vehicle use in the Jawbone and Butterbredt Canyons and Kelso Valley areas will remain in effect. The agreement may be modified during the final stages of the vehicle route designation process. At the present time the agreement allows the BLM to manage vehicle use on Rudnick Estate Trust land to the east of the management agreement boundary. This designation authority for public vehicle use on Rudnick land is extremely important in the successful management of the area. Without the agreement there would be extensive vehicle trespass on Rudnick land, and the Rudnick Estate Trust could exercise the option of closing their land to public vehicle use which would prevent public access to a considerable amount of public land.*

Other agreements will be required between the BLM and the Rudnick Estate Trust for modification of springs for the benefit of wildlife that exist on Public Land.

I. *Increase Surveillance: On-the-ground presence of BLM employees is proportionate to the annual budget. Surveillance of the ACEC has a relatively high priority for ranger time, but will be limited by man-power available.*

In Fiscal Year 1981 - 1982, one BLM Ranger will average visits two or three days each week. On holiday weekends (three day) Rangers will be present two days usually concentrating on vehicle use compliance in Jawbone Canyon. One day during the normal work-week (Monday to Friday) will be scheduled for patrol by one Ranger.

J. *Restrict Camping and/or Parking: A restricted overnight camping zone (Map No. 2), located generally in Horse, Sage and Cow Haven Canyon areas will be identified, and overnight camping will be confined to designated areas. Springs and water sources and other significant, isolated habitats will also be designated restricted on an area-wide basis. All other areas will be open for camping on an opportunistic basis.*

All water sources outside the restricted camping zone will be posted with signs stating "No Camping Within 600 Feet". Refer to Map. No. 2 for camping designations and camping restrictions around water sources.

K. *Protect, Stabilize, and/or Enhance Wildlife Resources: Planned management actions identified for implementation will satisfy protection, stabilization and/or enhancement prescriptions. Future evaluations of*

this management plan will identify additional measures needed to implement this plan.

1. Wildlife Habitat: Artifical water sources (gallinaceous guzzlers) have been constructed by the Department of Fish and Game. These projects were completed in the period from 1950 - 1960. Required maintenance on these guzzlers is the responsibility of the Department of Fish and Game. There are areas where additional guzzlers would increase carrying capacity for upland game. Future guzzlers will be installed in appropriate locations on a cooperative basis with Department of Fish and Game.

   The Department of Fish and Game has also developed many springs and seeps for use by wildlife. Some of these waters have also been "claimed" for livestock use; this has led to confusion and questions regarding the principal use of natural waters. In order to resolve this, BLM, Department of Fish and Game, and grazing permittees will meet to identify all natural waters and the current status of each in terms of ownership, principal use, maintenance, etc..

   Many natural water sources in the management area provide the limiting habitat factor, water, for wildlife, and, in some cases, for livestock.

   Selected springs and associated riparian habitat will be protected from livestock and trampling through fencing, piping water off-site to livestock watering troughs, etc.. Appendix I contains a discussion of water source improvements for wildlife.

Recommended vehicle routes and camping/parking restrictions will be developed to reduce human intrusion into essential wildlife habitat areas containing 1) Wildlife water sources and riparian habitat, and 2) Known raptor nesting sites. The seasonal closure at Robber's Roost for raptor protection will remain in effect. Public land along Kelso Creek supporting riparian habitat will be identified and managed for protection and enhancement of wildlife values. This habitat is extremely valuable for resident and migratory birds and the yellow-billed cuckoo (Coccyzus americanus) has been observed in the habitat (Axelson, personal communication). The yellow-billed cuckoo is listed as Rare by the Department of Fish and Game.

2. *Wildlife Investigations: Additional wildlife investigations are required to document the presence or absence of key wildlife species. This determination could result in the identification of additional habitat management requirements.*

   a. *Tehachapi Slender Salamander: Riparian and aquatic habitat in Sage and Boulder Canyons will be studied to document whether or not the Tehachapi slender salamander or a related species exist in these areas (Appendix E). If salamanders are found, one or two specimens will be taken and kept alive pending arrangements for identification. The following data will be recorded for areas inventoried:*

      - *Localities identified on topographic maps.*
      - *Time, date and air temperature at the site where salamanders were located.*
      - *Description of the habitat searched and color photographs, including plant species present, soil/substrate type and amount and conditions of water present.*

Appropriate seasons for investigations will be the spring, summer and fall.

3. California Bighorn Sheep: Refer to Item V.C. (evaluation of proposed bighorn sheep reintroduction). California Desert Plan wildlife data indicated bighorn sheep may be present in the southern portion of the managment area in the vicinity of Chuckwalla and Cross Mountain. BLM Wildlife Biologists observed beds and fecal pellets on an open, steep talus slope in the upper portion of Water Canyon in March, 1975.

Winter and summer field surveys in the Water Canyon, Chuckwalla, and Cross Mountain areas will be conducted to determine if bighorn sheep are present. Time-lapse movie cameras will be used to monitor areas (beds, water sources) which are suspected bighorn use areas.

VI. COORDINATION WITH OTHER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS:

A. Fire Management: Fire suppression in the ACEC will be modified from the standard "fire is bad" approach to one that accepts that fire, both natural and man-caused, is a beneficial vegetative management tool, provided it occurs at the appropriate time, in suitable topography, and in limited acreages.

The Allotment Management Plan (AMP) for the Rudnick Common Allotment will address controlled burning in various vegetative complexes for evaluation of fires as a beneficial vegatative management tool.

A limited fire suppression approach will be initiated in the management area. Natural and man-made features (terrain, vegetation, roads) will be used to limit the spread of fire. Exceptions to this approach will be utilized when fire threatens private property or human life, or when weather and fuel conditions could prevent control of advancing fire and result in excessive acreage burned. Sensitive fuel areas are located adjacent to the Sequioa National Forest (Scodie Mountains and west side of Kelso

Valley).

B. Allotment Management Plan: Refer to V. F. - Management Plan for the Rudnick Common Allotment.

C. Vehicle Route Identification/Designation: The process in the CDCA leading to the designation of approved routes of travel will be integrated with this plan. It is recognized that this special management area has vehicle management requirements beyond those identified for meeting the multiple use class guidelines.

D. Land Exchanges: A land exchange proposal will be developed between the BLM and the Rudnick Estate Trust to consolidate public lands and Rudnick Estate Trust lands which now exist in a "checker-board" pattern. Heavy off-road vehicle use in the management area occurs on both public and Rudnick Estate Trust lands. After recent BLM planning efforts, vehicle play areas have been designated on public lands in both Jawbone and Dove Spring Canyons, and designated vehicle routes provide vehicular access for the public. Both these management designations for vehicle use involve Rudnick Estate Trust lands.

This conflict can be resolved with a land exchange which will exclude Rudnick Estate Trust lands from vehicle play areas (Multiple-Use Class I) and from as many designated vehicle routes as is practicable.

Up to the present, a temporary solution to the vehicle trespass on Rudnick Estate Trust land has been the Vehicle Management Agreement between the Rudnick Estate Trust and the BLM. Under this agreement, a boundary (refer to ACEC map) was established which closed BLM administered land to vehicle use on the west side and allowed BLM to manage vehicle use on the private land on the east side. This agreement is not considered a viable long-term solution to the conflicts.

A land exchange may also enhance public use of the area for activities other than vehicle use, such as hunting, rockhounding, camping, etc.

VII. MONITORING:

Wildlife and cultural resources will be monitored for changes in condition and trend caused by vehicle use, recreational activities, livestock grazing and wildlife habitat management. Each category of monitoring is described in detail as follows:

A. Vehicle Use: The boundaries of two vehicular play areas, Jawbone and Dove Spring Canyons, will be monitored for change through photographic points, both aerial and on the ground. There is potential for unauthorized vehicle use beyond the boundaries of the vehicle play areas after vehicle routes are approved, which would degrade the overall quality of the management area. Analysis of photographic record will provide information on the effectiveness of the signs identifying the boundary of the two areas (i.e., public compliance with the vehicle use restrictions) and will identify the need for better boundary definition if proliferation of the vehicular play areas extends beyond the intensive use class boundary. Ranger patrols in the management area will aid in evaluation of public compliance with the approved vehicle designations.

Inspection of vehicle signs and barriers associated with the Jawbone Management Agreement boundary will be necessary for scheduling maintenance and assessing vehicle use outside the authorized use areas.

B. Grazing: Vegetative condition will be monitored through the application of transects, utilization plots and direct count of livestock using the allotment. Paired study plots, each a minimum of one-hectare (2.47 acres) with one excluding livestock, will be established in each major representative vegetative association, including riparian habitat. The fenced plots will serve as controlled situations where specific vegetation studies can be applied to document differences in the vegetative component of the habitat due to livestock grazing. Location of the study plots will be specified in the Allotment Management Plan

because the allotment may be broken into a system of pastures to facilitate control of livestock for rest-rotation grazing. The pastures will not be identified until the Allotment Management Plan is prepared. Study plots will be placed within each vegetative association within each pasture.

Approximately 0.6 mile of riparian, aquatic and adjacent upland habitats in Sage Canyon will be excluded from livestock grazing through fencing. Elimination of livestock will privide protection of these valuable wildlife habitats from the impacts associated with cattle grazing - loss of plant species cover and diversity, siltation of the stream from accelerated soil erosion, reduction of water quality and water depth). Permanent photo-points will be established to document visual changes in the habitats protected from grazing, and evaluations of water quality, soil stability and species composition will be made every three years. Refer to Appendix C for the location of the exclosure.

A riparian habitat livestock exclosure on public land along Sage Canyon Creek will be established to determine the effects of livestock grazing on willow-riparian/aquatic habitat. No livestock exclosures exist, which makes this a priority monitoring location. Refer to V. G. (AMP). Monitoring of the riparian habitat will include analysis of species composition,species age class and crown density, and standing surface water. Photo points will be established to document the visual changes in the riparian zone after the elimination of cattle grazing. A grazed 0.25 mile stretch of riparian habitat adjacent to the exclosure will be selected for comparative study. The riparian habitat studies will be

conducted every three years.

C. Wildlife:

1. Black-tailed jackrabbit: Black-tailed jackrabbits are suspected of consuming considerable amounts of perennial and annual vegetation during periods of high density populations, as experiened in 1979 and 1980. Fenced study plots of one-hectare in areas which exclude rabbits and livestock will be established in close proximity to the grazing study plots in order to account for vegetation utilized by rabbits only. During rabbit population peaks, forage allocated for livestock may need to be reduced. This will keep forage utilization within the limits established for proper use. Since rabbits will not be restricted by fenced pastures in the allotment, rabbit exclosures will be placed in representative vegetative associations over the allotment in general rather than in each pasture.

Currie and Goodwin (1966) found that black-tailed jackrabbits in low desert rangeland in Utah consumed enough forage to be a significant competitor with domestic sheep. During the winter and spring months, one animal unit month (AUM) equivalent of forage was consumed by an average of 40 jackrabbits. In their study area the jackrabbit density averaged 2.5 per acre of habitat. Within a large allotment, 75,000 acres for example, jackrabbits could consume approximately 4,700 AUM equivalent of forage.

Jackrabbit densities in the ACEC need to be estimated for habitat from 0-25 percent slopes in the canyon bottoms, alluvial fans and flats.

Jackrabbit densities fluctuate significantly depending on climatic and other factors. Densities in the grazed portions of the ACEC may be estimated annually during the spring using a spotlighting technique from a vehicle operated on dirt roads in the area. A driver and two observers with spotlights are required to sample either side of the roads utilized in the process. The goal of this monitoring will be to identify AUM equivalents utilized by jackrabbits during periods of maximum population densities and to determine if there is significant competition for forage between livestock and jackrabbits. If significant competition exists the BLM will determine if temporary reductions in livestock use are justified.

2. *Mohave Ground Squirrel: The Mohave ground squirrel (State-listed as Rare) occurs in moderate densities in the valley and alluvial fan portions of the management area. Monitoring the condition of this species population in the area would be extremely time consuming and difficult. Population levels of this species, as with most small rodents, may fluctuate in direct proportion to food sources, composed primarily of annual vegetation. In the western Mojave Desert, annual vegetation is directly dependent on rainfall and temperature. It appears that perennial shrub cover (creosote bush, bursage, etc.) is a necessary habitat component for shelter from solar radiation and is a favored location for burrowing. Maintenance or improvement of vegetation, both perennial and annual, through development and implementation of the Allotment Management Plan, will likely stabilize or improve habitat conditions for the Mohave ground squirrel.*

Relative population density of the Mohave ground squirrel will be monitored in one grazed and one ungrazed study plot established in the lowlands of the management area in creosote-bursage habitat.

Trapping studies will be conducted every five years. Refer to Appendix D for study plot design and evaluation techniques. Data collected on the ground squirrel populations (both Mohave and antelope ground squirrel) will possibly reveal fluctuations attributed to climatic factors (e.g., rainfall). The ratio of population densities of one species to the other may reveal a preference for grazed or ungrazed habitat.

D. *Native American Values: Areas of concern, previously identified by Native Americans during the Desert Plan inventory, have been, or will be protected through vehicle closures. Because of the sensitive nature of these traditional sites, their locations will not be disclosed to the general public. These sites will be monitored by the BLM quarterly to determine the effectiveness of the protective closures. Documentation of the sites' condition will be made through photographs and a written description.*

VIII. REPORTING:

Annual status reports on the ACEC will be submitted by the Area Manager to the District Manager and will contain information on resource conditions and trend, an overview of land use intensity for grazing and recreation and an ACEC Plan implementation report.

IX. IMPLEMENTATION:

Implementation responsibility for the management plan will be with the Area Manager of the Ridgecrest Resource Area. Task assignments for plan implementation are presented in Appendix A - Schedule of Planned Actions.

The actions specific to the Wildlife Habitat Management Plan will be imple-

mented cooperatively with the Department of Fish and Game under authority of the Sikes Act.

X. REFERENCES:

Aardahl, J., 1981. Personal observation. Wildlife Biologist, Bureau of Land Management, Ridgecrest, California.

Aardahl, J. and P. Roush, 1980. Field Studies of the Mohave Ground Squirrel. Bureau of Land Management, California Desert District. Unpublished data.

Anderson, B.W., and R.D. Omart, 1977. Vegetation Structure and Bird Use in the Lower Colorado River Valley. In: Importance, Preservation and Management of Riparian Habitat: A symposium. USDA Forest Service, General Technical Report RM-43, Ft. Collins, Co., pp 23-24.

Avelson, Keith, 1982. Personal communication. Conseration Chairman, Santa Monica Bay Audubon Society. Los Angeles, California.

Badaracco, R., 1976. ORV's; Often Rough on Visitors. National Parks and Recreation Magazine. September, 1976, pp 32-75.

Bureau of Land Management, 1976. Unit Resource Analysis - El Paso Planning Unit (Wildlife Section). Bakersfield District, Ridgecrest Resource Area. Unpublished.

Chapman, T., 1981. Personal communication. Note: Mr. Chapman, a 30 plus year resident of Ridgecrest, California, hunted upland game extensively in both the Jawbone and Dove Spring Canyon areas prior to the coming of off-road vehicle activity.

Currie, P., and D. Goodwin, 1966. Consumption of Forage by Black-tailed Jackrabbits on Salt-desert Ranges in Utah. Journal of Wildlife Management, Vol. 30, No. 2, pp. 304-311.

Department of Fish and Game, 1966-1972. Annual Reports on the National Cooperative Land and Wildlife Management Areas. (Joint Report by the Department of Fish and Game and the Bureau of Land Management.) Contained in official files at the Bakersfield District, Bureau of Land Management, Bakersfield, California.

Recht, M., 1977. The Biology of the Mohave Ground Squirrel, Spermophilus mohavensis; Home Range, Daily Activity, Foraging and Weight Gain and Thermoregulatory Behavior. Ph.D. Thesis, University of California, Los Angeles. Xerox University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan, pp 117.

Seperek, J., 1977. Raptor Inventory of Portions of the California Desert. Bureau of Land Management contracted study. Riverside, California.

XI. APPENDICES:

A. SCHEDULE OF PLANNED ACTIONS

B. ENTRY STATION SIGN (DESIGN)

C. RIPARIAN HABITAT STUDY EXCLOSURE

D. MOHAVE GROUND SQUIRREL STUDY PLOT

E. TEHACHAPI SLENDER SALAMANDER INVENTORY AREAS.

F. ROBBERS ROOST BIRDS OF PREY PROTECTION AREA

G. WATER SOURCES FOR WILDLIFE.

H. PUBLIC COMMENTS...BLM RESPONSES

SCEDULE OF PLANNED ACTIONS

PLANNED ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	SCHEDULE	COST
1. Designation of Approved Vehicle Routes			
a. Survey and Design	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	FY 82	1 WM
b. Signing	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	FY 81-82-83	1 WM
c. Map Preparation	California Desert Districe Office	FY 81-82	1 WM
d. Review of Coop. Agreement with Rudnick Estate	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	FY 81	
2. Evaluation of effectiveness of rehabilitation and restoration practices in disturbed areas			
a. Site selections, project layout	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	FY 82	0.5 WM
b. Rehabilitation practices	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office and California Desert District Office	FY 82	1 WM
3. Bighorn sheep survey in the Chuckwalla and Cross Mountain areas	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	FY 84	0.5 WM
4. Tehachapi slender salamander investigation in Sage and Boulder Canyons	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	FY 84	1 WM
5. Designation of camping areas in sensitive areas			
a. Survey	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	FY 82	n/c-incl. w/item 1.c
b. Signing	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	FY 82-83	0.5 WM
c. Map Preparation	California Desert District Office	FY 82-82	n/c-incl. w/item 1.c.
6. Protection/modification of springs	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	FY 82-84	2-3 WM
7. Patrol/Surveillance			
a. Ranger field presence	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	2 days per week. Visitor use count will be used if funded.	N/C
b. Aerial patrol/monitoring	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office		N/C

SCHEDULE OF PLANNED ACTIONS (Cont.)

PLANNED ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	SCHEDULE	COST (WM + $)
8. Monitoring and Reporting			
a. Monitoring	Ridgecrest Reosurce Area Office		
1) Est. photographic points at bdry. of Jawbone & Dove Springs Open Areas. Photograph baseline condition.	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	FY 83, FY 86, FY 88	0.5 WM each year
2) Est. location of vegetative study plots for grazing/wildlife relationships.	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	Specified in Rudnick Allotment Mgt. Plan	0.5 WM
3) Construct vegetative study plots.	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office and California Desert District Office	Specified in Rudnick Allotment Mgt. Plan	$6000 materials + 2 WM (10 1-ha. fenced plots)
4) Conduct vegetative studies.	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	Specified in Rudnick Allotment Mgt. Plan	Approx. 1 WM each year.
5) Establish location of Mohave ground squirrel study plots.	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	FY 83	0.25 WM
6) Construct Mohave ground squirrel study plots.	Ridgecrest resource Area Office and California Desert District Office	FY 84	0.5 WM
7) Conduct Mohave ground squirrel studies.	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	FY 85; FY 90, FY 95	1 WM each year
8) Monitor cultural sites for effectiveness of protective measures	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	On-going; monitor quarterly	1 each year
b. Reporting	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	Each FY	0,5 WM
9. Stabilize, rehabilitate/ salvage cultural resource sites	Ridgecrest Resource Area Office	As needed	As needed

No threatened or endangered plants or animals will be affected by implementation of this plan. The State-listed rare Mohave ground squirrel populations will be enhanced by habitat protection. There is potential for temporary disturbance of nesting migratory birds and resident wildlife in the vicinity of riparian habitat and water sources during construction of protective fences and study plots.

D. Mitigation:

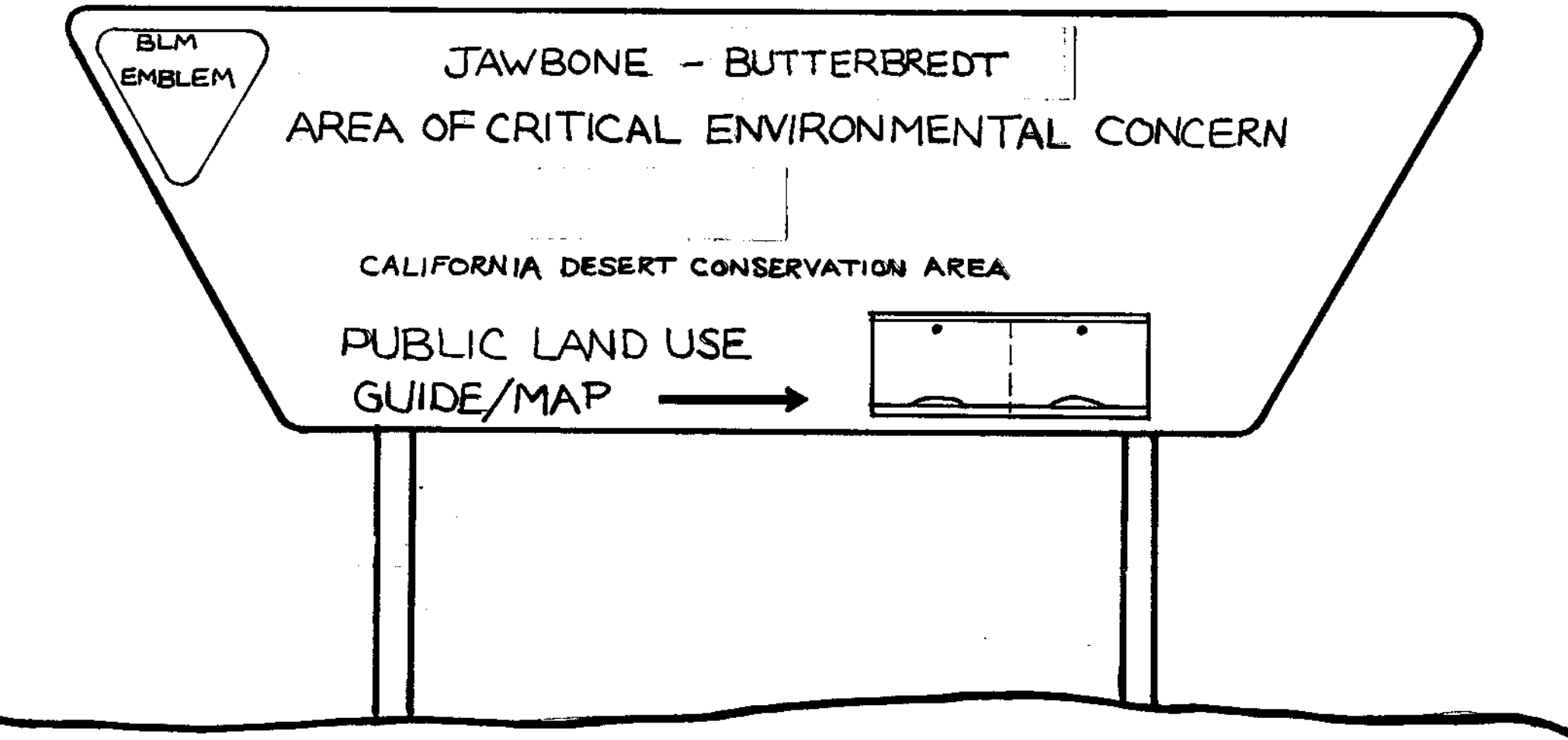
1. Fence construction in the vicinity of riparian habitat and manipulation of water sources for the benefit of wildlife will take place during the period from fall to late winter.
2. Prior to fence construction, an Archaeologist will make a site inspection of each project to determine if special measures are needed to protect archaeological sites.

E. Public Interest: A total of 100 individuals and representatives of 15 organizations received notices or copies of the draft management plan and environmental assessment for review and comment. These people were selected from existing CDCA Plan mailing lists on the basis that they would have pertinent information, background, and interest in the specific management actions for the ACEC. Comments received were analyzed and appropriate changes have been made in the Plan. Refer to Appendix H for comments and BLM responses.

E. Summary: The environmental consequences of the proposed action have been analyzed and there will be no significant adverse impacts to the natural or human environment, and therefore, an environmental impact statement is not required.

APPENDIX B

ENTRY STATION SIGN

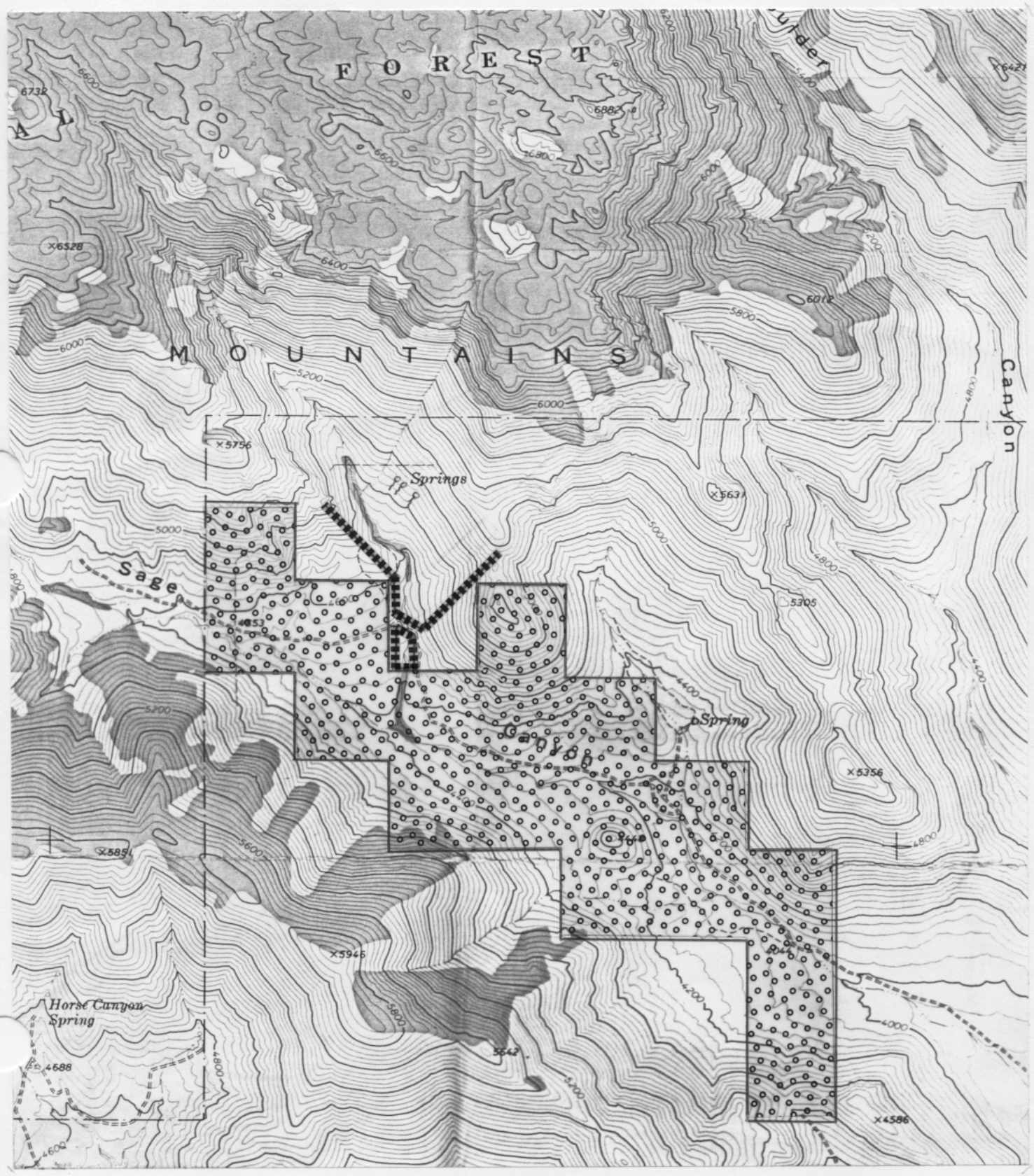


APPENDIX C

RIPARIAN HABITAT STUDY EXCLOSURE

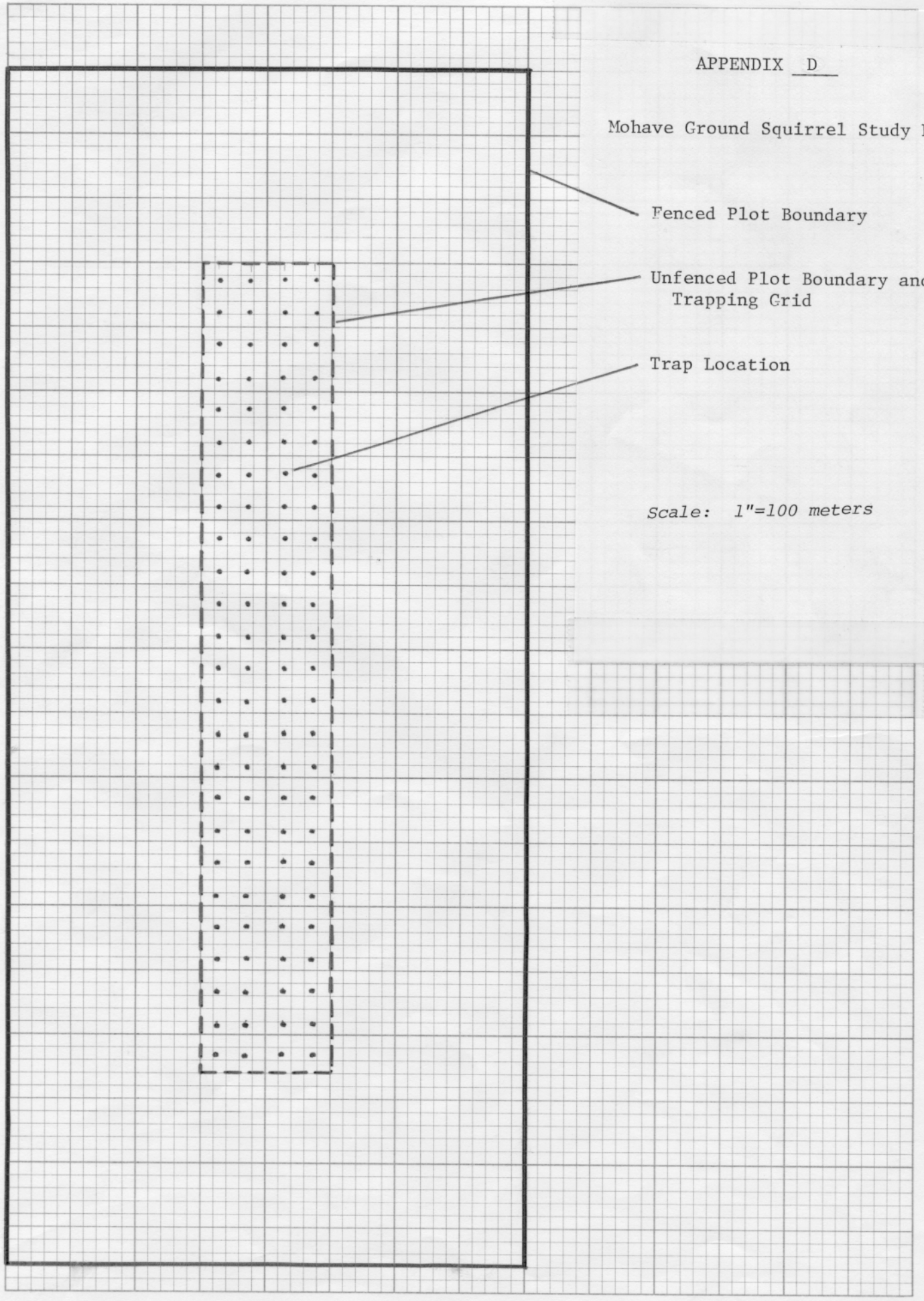
Livestock Control Fence

Private Land (Rudnick Estate Trust)



APPENDIX D

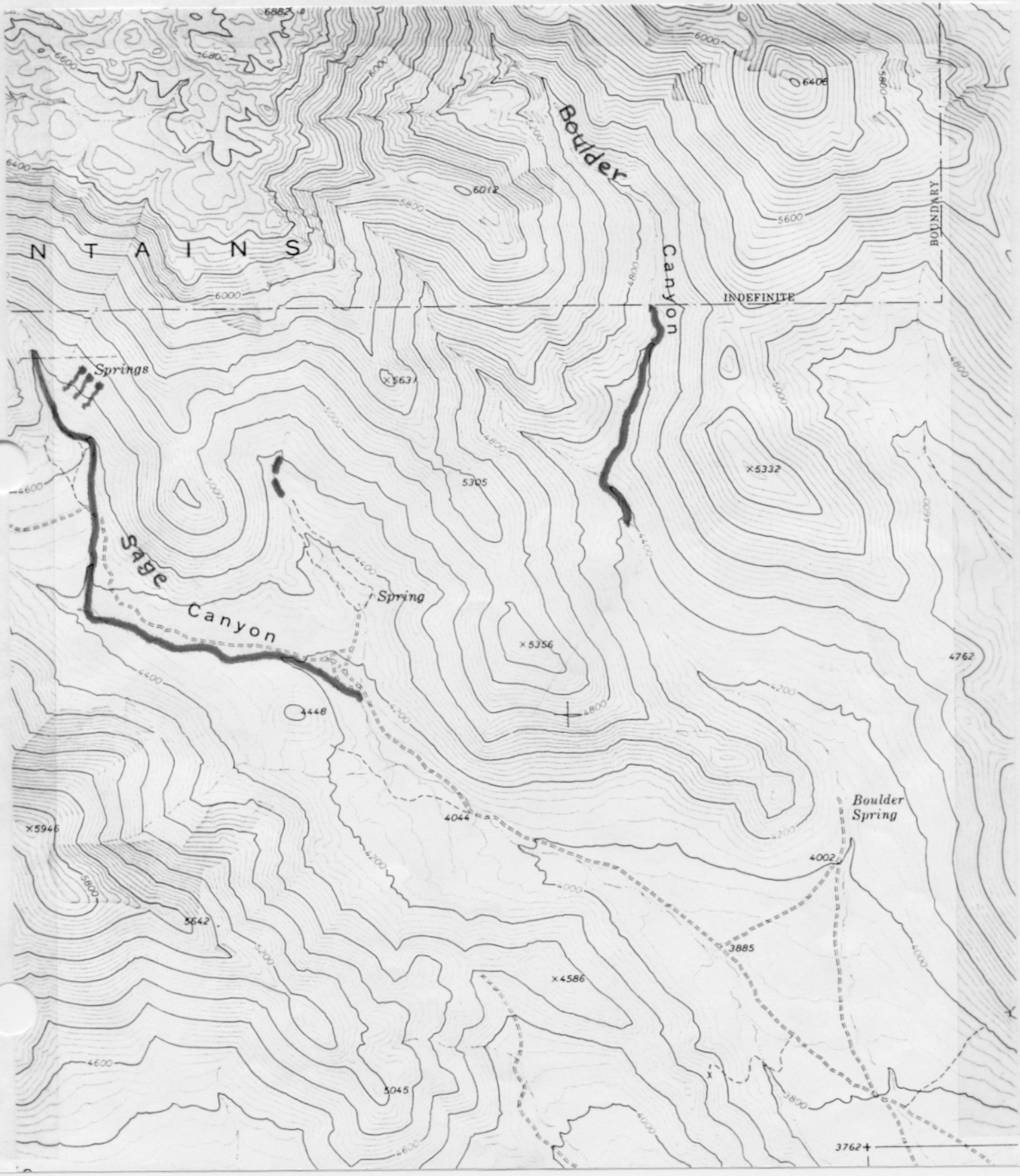
Mohave Ground Squirrel Study Plot



APPENDIX E

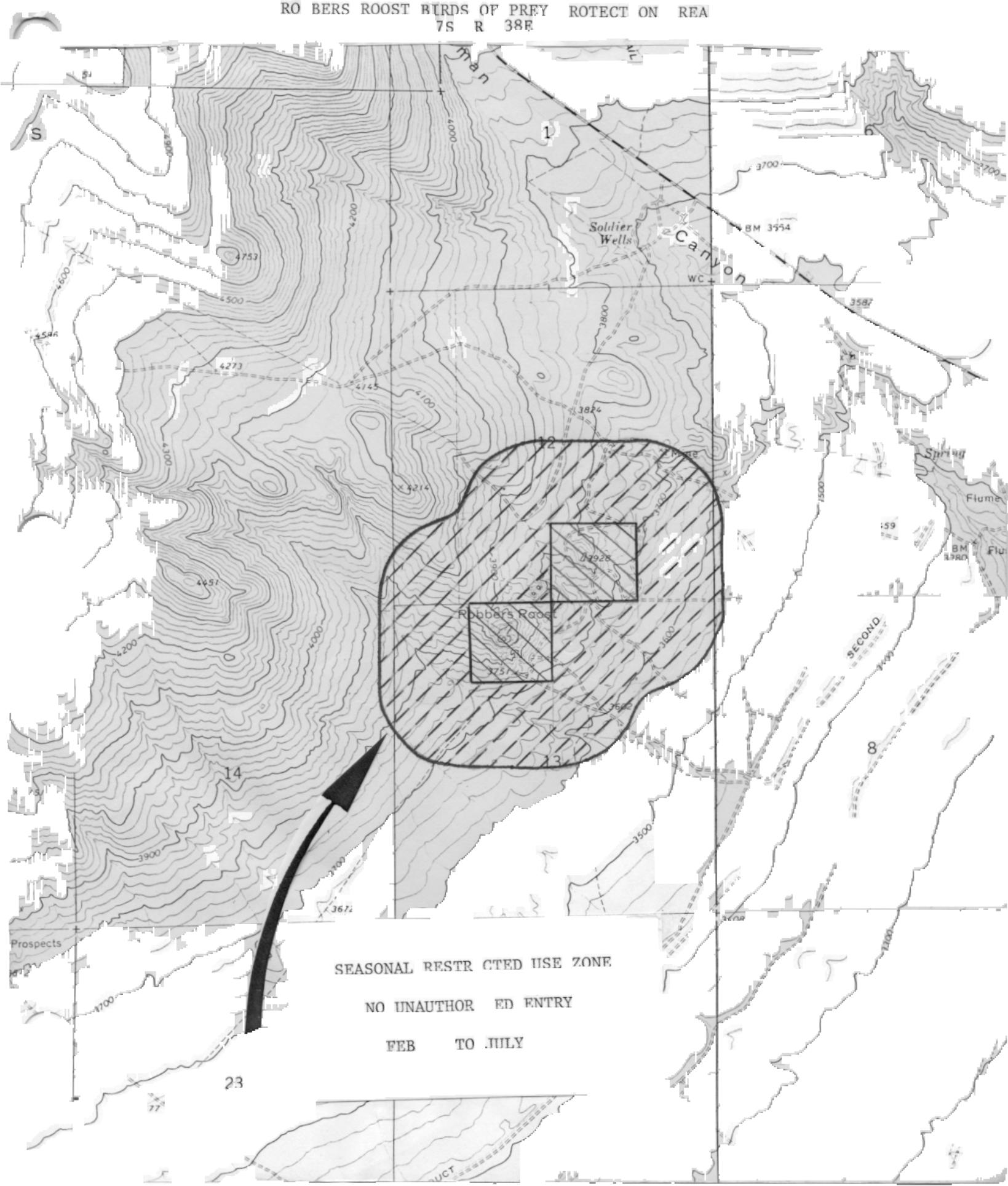
TEHACHAPI SLENDER SALAMANDER INVENTORY AREAS

T. 27S, R. 37E, T. 27S, R. 36E Sage Canyon
Boulder Canyon



APPENDIX F

RO BERS ROOST BIRDS OF PREY ROTECT ON REA
7S R 38E



APPENDIX G

WATER SOURCES FOR WILDLIFE

WATER SOURCE	SITUATION - PROTECTION NEEDED, ETC.
Cow Haven Spring	This small-volume spring is located 0.2 miles inside the Sequoia National Forest. It has been developed to supply water via buried pipeline to a trough 0.5 miles down the canyon on public land. This spring needs to be protected from livestock trampling and siltation through fencing. A spring box and wildlife drinker will be installed. A livestock water trough needs to be installed below the spring, outside the fence. Authorization is needed from Sequoia National Forest.
Boulder Spring	This spring is located in a willow thicket in the bottom of Boulder Canyon. A spring box, pipeline and trough have been installed by the Onyx Ranch. The spring source is possibly on private land owned by the Rudnick Estate Trust. To assure long-term protection of the willow thicket, a fence should be constructed to exclude livestock. Existing surface water in a small pool in the willow thicket needs to be maintained. Permission to construct the fence and maintain a pool of water under willows is reqired from the Onyx Ranch, Weldon, California. Also see cultural resource management needs and planned actions.
Unnamed Spring (Sage Canyon, T27S, R. 37E, unsurveyed)	This spring is located on the north side of Sage Canyon in a dense thicket of thornbush (Lycium sp.) and a saltgrass meadow (Disthichlis spicata var. stricta). A spring box, pipeline is evident. A fence to exclude livestock should be built around the meadow. Water should be provided to

maintain the meadow. Road closure needed.

Horse Canyon Spring

This spring is located in Upper Horse Canyon, 0.25 miles within the Sequoia National Forest. A spring box, pipeline and trough have been constructed. This system has been maintained by the BLM. A lid or bird escape ladder should be installed on the trough and holding tank. This spring source should be monitored and surface water maintained for wildlife in addition to what is available at the livestock trough. Authorization is needed from Sequoia National Forest.

Colt Spring

This spring is located 0.25 miles east of Horse Canyon Spring within the Sequoia National Forest. Two earth ponds retain considerable water at the spring source. A pipeline and trough provde livestock water. This system has been maintained by the BLM and Onyx Ranch. The ponds need to be fenced to exclude livestock. The earth dam and pond need maintenance every two years to assure adequate surface water and depth. The spring source may require periodic clearing of vegetation. Algae and silt buildup in about half of the upper pond should be removed during maintenance. These ponds are inhabited by western toads (Bufo boreas). Authorization is required by the Sequoia National Forest

Bird Spring	*This major spring is located in Bird Spring Canyon. A spring box, pipeline, trough and large earth tank have been installed by the Onyx Ranch. The spring and surrounding land is owned by the Rudnick Estate Trust. The area receives heavy camping and shooting use. The area should be protected by prohibiting camping and fencing the spring source and riparian habitat from livestock and vehicle use. Permission is required from the Onyx Ranch.*
Butterbredt Spring	*This spring is located in Butterbredt Canyon on land owned by the Rudnick Estate Trust. The spring fills an earth pond. Nearby is a grove of cottonwood trees. A cooperative agreement for protecting the spring and surrounding habitat is being developed by the Rudnick Estate Trust, National Audubon Society (Santa Monica Bay Chapter) and the BLM. Christmas bird counts have been conducted for sixteen years at Butterbredt Spring by the National Audubon Society. The area receives considerable impact from recreational activities, mainly motorcycling, camping and shooting.*
Unnamed Spring (T. 30S, R.37E, Section 8 NE¼)	*This spring is sometimes referred to as Nudist Spring. It is located on public land. The Onyx Ranch has installed a spring box and constructed an earthen pond. The area needs protection by prohibiting camping and woodcutting, and surface water needs to be maintained at the source for wildlife. Road closure necessary.*

Alphie Spring	*This spring is located in Alphie Canyon, approximately 3.6 miles north of Jawbone Canyon Road, on land owned by the Rudnick Estate Trust. There are two springs, one on the hillside west of the canyon bottom and one in the wash about 200 yards farther up the canyon. The latter spring supports a 100-yard stretch of willow habitat. An old wildlife drinker inside a livestock exclosure remains near the site but is not functional. A spring box, short pipeline and trough should be built to provide wildlife and livestock water, and the willow habitat should be protected by fencing to exclude vehicles and livestock.*
Sage Canyon Creek	*A perennial stream and three nearby springs in Upper Sage Canyon will be fenced to exclude livestock. This action will eliminate impacts to wildlife habitat caused by grazing (i.e.,removal of plant cover, soil erosion, water pollution and siltation). These water sources will be inspected every three years for condition and accessibilty by wildlife. Water developments for wildlife may be required to maintain reliable surface water. Periodic, site-specific removal of willow may be required to maintain wildlife access and surface water. Refer to Appendix C for exclosure location.*

APPENDIX H

PUBLIC COMMENT

ON THE DRAFT PLAN

AND

BLM RESPONSES

SEPTEMBER

1982

BLM Responses

Responses correspond to assigned page number and letter (a,b,c,...). Refer to letters received which are attached after the BLM Responses.

Page	Letter	BLM Response
1	a	The ephemeral component of the available forage for the allotment must be assessed each spring to determine if, when, and how many AUM's can be allocated to utilize ephemeral forage. This system was established in the CDCA Plan (1980). The base stocking rate for cattle is based only on perennial forage. The potential conflict for forage between cattle and jackrabbits during jackrabbit population peaks will be studied further to determine the frequency of population peaks and perhaps diet overlap.
	b	Almost all known, suitable springs have been developed for livestock or wildlife use. Water distribution will be addressed in the allotment management plan. The objective in fencing springs is to protect water sources, riparian habitat and wildlife cover from trampling, compaction and pollution caused by cattle. These exclosures can be built around existing springs which can continue to supply water to water troughs for livestock use. This is a standard technique in reducing wildlife/ livestock conflicts.
2		Vehicle use and fire management programs will be closely coordinated with the Sequoia National Forest.
3	a	The 1962 designation has not changed.
	b	Agree.
	c	We can mention the introduction, but to our knowledge the animals were placed on private land.
	d	We are scheduling spring development and fence construction around riparian habitat during the fall to late winter to avoid disruption of wildlife seeking water and nesting birds. Habitat work in the fall will probably begin in the mid-morning hours. Wildlife access to water sources and riparian habitat will be maintained and enhanced.
4		No response.
5-6		This proposal would require a CDCA Plan Amendment because the boundary of the Dove Spring Canyon "open area" would need to be modified.

7 a As stated, the grazing reductions will be phased over a five-year period, for both the Rudnick and Walker Pass Common Allotments. At the end of the fifth year, authorized AUM's for the Rudnick Allotment will be 6896, assuming the range continues to be in fair condition.

8 b Budget reductions have curtailed the aerial patrol (recreation use surveys). We have no alternatives for replacing this patrol/compliance technique but will have to rely on BLM Ranger and Resource Specialist presence on site.

c All springs and water sources are not identified on the map contained in the ACEC/WHMA plan. BLM maintains records (location, ownership, beneficial use, condition, etc.) on known springs and other water sources for management purposes. As stated in the plan, springs and other water sources are considered the limiting factor for wildlife. Refer to p. 19(J) and p 20(K.I.) for additional statements on managing water sources and associated habitats. We see no need to reveal the location of all water sources in this plan, but rather only the ones where an action to benefit wildlife is planned.

d We believe there is no need to include rights-of-way grants on the map with the plan. The plan does not alter or change the conditions of these existing grants.

e The Mohave ground squirrel study results have not been published. The data is stored in this office and is available for inspection, if desired.

Bob Hansen of Fresno State will be contacted about a possible new species of salamander in the Scodie Mountains.

f Road/trail designations were planned to avoid, to the extent practicable, all known raptor nesting and roosting areas. Raptor information for the area exists and was used in the plan development. Locations of raptor use areas, other than Robbers Roost, is purposely not presented as an additional protection measure.

In the mid 1970's BLM recieved reports that raptors had been observed shot at Robbers Roost. In recent years BLM has regularly patrolled Robbers Roost during the seasonal closure and has not found any problem with public compliance with the closure. We do not have evidence an increase in protective measures are necessary.

g Agree. Hunting still occurs, but there has been a significant decline in wildlife populations and hunters because of the displacement effect by ORV's.

9 h Agree. The types of uses occurring, in general, are compatible with the ACEC use philosophy. However these uses are occurring excessively and must be controlled to reduce/eliminate conflicts with BLM management objectives.

i Camping areas have already been addressed in the plan. Refer to the map for designations and restrictions near water.

9 j No response.

k This may be required for specific types of uses and can be addressed on a case by case basis and through field patrol.

i Thank you for your support. We will note Audubon's offer to assist in signing and monitoring and contact you when the program begins.

m Yes, based on Ranger field patrol results.

n No comment. Please note the initial efforts will be test plots to determine the most effective methods.

o Disagree. BLM manages habitat and the CDFG manages wildlife populations. Land ownership pattern and proximity of the Jawbone Canyon vehicle play area make the feasibility of bighorn reintroduction uncertain. However, bighorn sheep investigation will proceed. BLM policy is to fully consult with, and work cooperatively with, the CDFG regarding wildlife management plans.

10 p Springs and riparian habitat will be managed and protected through the management plan, which you have commented on. We concur with your statement concerning the value of springs and riparian habitat for wildlife.

q The existing agreement is between the Rudnick Estate Trust and the BLM. Under the agreement, which was originally signed in 1976 and amended in 1979 BLM has management responsibility for vehicle use on Rudnick Estate Trust land on the east side of the boundary (see ACEC map) while Public Land on the west side is closed to vehicle use except by permit. BLM wants to continue with the existing agreement because the only option would be for the Rudnick Estate Trust to prohibit vehicle use on their land, thus preventing public access to public land.

r Parking is limited to within 100 feet of designated roads. Camping is on an opportunistic basis except within 600 feet of water sources, and only in designated areas in Horse, Sage, and Cow Haven Canyons. Refer to the ACEC map and plan.

s Sites have already been identified. Field signing remains to be done.

t Vegetation monitoring plot design will be finalized in the Allotment management plan. If funds are sufficient multiple study plots will be constructed.

u Disagree. It is generally accepted that bird species diversity and abundance increase with improved riparian habitat quality. We assume that the exclosures will exclude cattle and enhance habitat quality and thus wildlife. Bird surveys are expensive and can sometimes be inconclusive in revealing increased bird use because of variables such as weather. The BLM has one Wildlife Biologist for the Ridgecrest Resource Area which encompasses 2.1 million acres of public land. We would welcome volunteers who would be willing to conduct such studies under BLM guidance.

10 v "During jackrabbit population peaks, perennial and annual forage allocated for livestock may need to be reduced." The BLM will determine if there is significant competition for forage between livestock and jackrabbits during jackrabbit population peaks, and then determine if temporary reductions in livestock use are justified.

11 No comment.

12 a,b,c, Since a 45 day comment period (June 15 - July 30) was allowed, no extension of time was provided. However, in accordance with discussions which occurred between members of the Resource Area and the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee during their tour of the ACEC July 10, 1982, resource area specialists identified sensitive areas where vehicle use was causing conflicts, or would result in future conflicts. These areas consisted of: known archeological and Native American sites and sensitive areas; raptor nesting locations; critical wildlife habitat areas; both existing upland game guzzlers developed by the California Department of Fish and Game and those proposed by the agency; surface waters for wildlife and livestock use; areas where erosion problems were occurring; and areas in the vicinity of the Pacific Crest Trail. These locations were then compared with the map AMA provided during the route inventory process and additional motorcycle routes were identified which did not result in conflicts with the above areas and were compatible with the protection of these resources. These additional motorcycle trails provide for a series of scenic loops over a variety of terrain.

d The goal of an ACEC plan is to identify and protect the significant natural and cultural resources in an area while providing for other uses which are compatible with the protection and enhancement of those resources. Therefore, visitor use days is not an overriding factor on management of the area but needs to be structured to be compatible with the resources. Since visitor use is primarily associated with the Jawbone and Dove Springs open areas, visitor use days will be considered in Recreation Management Plans developed for these areas.

e An ACEC designation may supercede the Multiple-Use Class guidelines. ACEC management actions may be more stringent than the Multiple-Use Class guidelines when necessary for controlling land uses which would not be compatible with the use philosophy and, or management objectives for the ACEC.

13 No response.

14 a Closure, or elimination of designated vehicle free-play areas in Jawbone and Dove Spring Canyons would have to be achieved through amending the CDCA Plan, and is beyond the scope of this ACEC plan.

b BLM Desert Rangers will implement the ACEC vehicle use guidelines through public contact and education or enforcement actions if necessary. Vehicle users found violating the guidelines could be given either a verbal or written warning or, if repeated violations occurred, a Notice to Appear before a U.S. Magistrate where fines or other appropriate legal actions could be taken.

14 c We will retain flexibility by leaving the statement intact. We may not place physical bariers in some locations for public safety reasons, budget/manpower limitations, etc.

d Agree.

15 e There are no plans to reduce the jackrabbit population other than what will occur through hunting under State hunting regulations.

16 a Public land on Kelso Creek supporting riparian habitat will be identified and managed, to the extent possible, for wildlife values.

b A number of motorcycle trails have been designated which we believe are compatible with the management objectives for the ACEC.

18 Public lands on Kelso Creek supporting riparian habitat will be identified and protected, to the extent possible, for wildlife values.

19 Refer to No. 18, above.

20 Refer to No. 18.

21 Only Jawbone and Dove Springs were open under ICMP and the remainder was limited use. The decision to manage the ACEC for wildlife and archaeological values was made in the CDCA Plan.

22 No specific response.

23 a There was no need to address sensitive plants such as the Mojave Fishhook Cactus (Sclerocactus polyancistrus) and there were no specific management actions identified in the CDCA Plan which were necessary for managing these species.

b The "open areas" are and will continue to be signed; they will not be fenced.

c Regulations exist for controlling speed and noise of vehicles used on public lands, and will be enforced.

d This will be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the nature of the event.

e Through an effective signing program, maps and through BLM Rangers on patrol.

f We will investigate to determine if OHV funds can be used for restoration work.

g At the present time aerial patrols will not be scheduled because of budget limitations.

h Livestock exclosures are permitted.

i No response.

j The public, in order to gain access to the public land in the southern portion of the ACEC, especially, have to cross private lands owned by the Rudnick Estate Trust.

k We are planning an exclosure only on Sage Canyon Creek and not on intermittent streams because they are generally not attractive to livestock in relation to perennial riparian areas.

24 l No agency - sponsored reductions in the jackrabbit populations are planned.

m The CDFG regulates the take of resident wildlife. The State Hunting Regulations provide for taking certain species under certain conditions, including some species which may be referred to as "varmits".

25 n Native species, but if artificial seeding is done the seeds will not be from the ACEC area.

26 a This will be done.

b No response.

27 No response. Use-level and management philosophy established in CDCA Plan.

28 No response.

30 No response. See No. 27, above.

31 a We will continue to monitor the situation and determine if a significant forage conflict exists during jackrabbit population peaks.

b The AMP will determine where additional water sources for livestock are needed. We recognize the need to secure permission from private landowners for protection of riparian habitat on private land.

c The BLM will not proceed with vehicle route designations without close coordination with the Rudnick Estate Trust.

XII. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA):

A. Introduction:

1. Proposed Action: The action being analyzed is the implementation of the management actions or prescriptions for the Jawbone/ Butterbredt ACEC and the Sierra/Mohave/Tehachapi Ecotone Wildlife Habitat Management Area, hereafter referred to as the management area. The planned actions are identified in Section V (Planned Actions) and VI (Monitoring) of the Management Plan.

   The California Desert Conservation Area Plan and Environmental Impact Statement previously established this management area as well as the planned actions. Thus, this EA is limited to analyzing the implementation of the established actions, primarily in terms of surface disturbing actions potentially affecting existing valuable resources such as archaeological sites, existing facilities for livestock management, and endangered species. Also, under review will be conflict with prior existing rights under the land laws and mining law.

2. Alternatives: There are no alternatives to be analyzed since this action is dictated by the CDCA Plan and EIS.

B. Affected Environment:

A description of the affected environment is contained in Section III of this management plan, and the Unit Resource Analysis for the El Paso Planning Unit.

C. Environmental Consequences:

This management plan will provide for increased protection of highly significant wildlife, archaeological, and Native American values.

F. Signatures:

Prepared by:

Jeffrey B Aardahl — Jeffrey B. Aardahl — 9-24-82 — Date

Reviewed by:

Mark E Lawrence — Mark E. Lawrence, Area Manager — 9-27-82 — Date

William H. Collins — William Collins, Environmental Coordinator — 9/24/82 — Date

Gerald E Hillier — Gerald E. Hillier, District Manager — 9/29/82 — Date