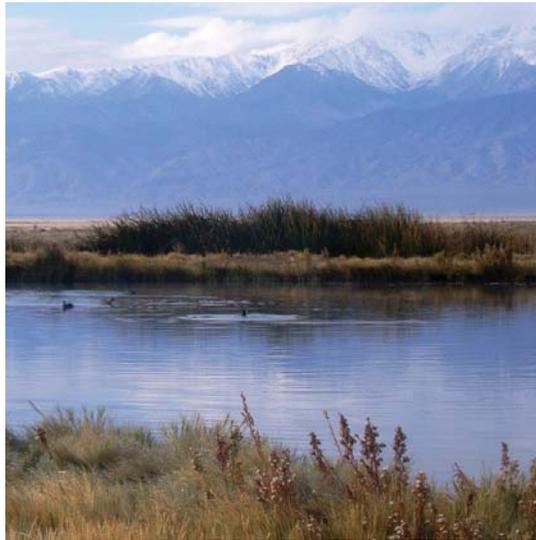


# Visual Resource Inventory



April 2011



Visual Resource Inventory  
BLM Battle Mountain, Nevada District Office

Prepared for the  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Battle Mountain District Office  
Battle Mountain, Nevada

April, 2011

Prepared by  
Otak, Inc.

The BLM's multiple-use mission is to sustain the health and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such activities as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing, mineral development, and energy production, and by conserving natural, historical, cultural, and other resources on public lands.

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## Acronyms Used in this Report

ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
BMDO	Battle Mountain District Office
BOR	Bureau of Reclamation
DEM	Digital Elevation Model
DRGS	Digital Raster Graphics
FS	U.S. Forest Service
GIS	Geographic Information System
GPS	Global Positioning System
HMA	Herd Management Area
IOP	Inventory Observation Point
ISA	Instant Study Area
MLFO	Mt. Lewis Field Office
NAIP	National Agriculture Imagery Program
NPS	National Park Service
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
OHV	Off-Highway Vehicle
RMP	Resource Management Plan
SLRU	Sensitivity Level Rating Unit
SMA	Special Management Area
SQRU	Scenic Quality Rating Unit
SRMA	Special Recreation Management Area
TFO	Tonopah Field Office
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
VRM	Visual Resource Management
VRI	Visual Resource Inventory
WMA	Wildlife Management Area
WSA	Wilderness Study Area

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# I. Introduction

## District Office Overview

The Bureau of Land Management's Battle Mountain District Office (BMDO) consists of two Field Offices – Mount Lewis and Tonopah. The BMDO is part of the Great Basin physiographic area, which in turn is part of the greater Basin and Range Province. Major uses and resources in the BMDO include mining, livestock grazing, wild horses and burros, cultural resources, and minerals.

The District Office planning area includes a total of 10.5 million acres of public lands in Esmeralda, Nye, Lander, and Eureka counties. The Mount Lewis Field Office (MLFO) manages the northern 4.4 million acres of public lands, while the Tonopah Field Office (TFO) manages land totaling over six million acres to the south.

Popular recreation on BLM land includes wildlife and wild horse viewing, hunting, camping, off-highway vehicle (OHV) use, horseback riding, hiking, biking, rock hounding, stargazing, and visiting petroglyph sites and ghost towns. The BMDO has a rich variety of early mining, settlement, and pre-settlement cultural resources accessible primarily from scenic routes. Visitors can also enjoy the many mountain

ranges and desert valleys from highways in the BMDO.

### **Highways**

Travelers on Nevada State Route (NV) 305 heading south from Battle Mountain towards Austin will take in views of the Fish Creek Mountains, Shoshone and Toiyabe Ranges while passing through the Reese River Valley. West of Eureka, NV 278 travelers heading north towards Interstate 80 (I-80) pass through the vast Diamond Valley, while taking in impressive views of the Diamond Range and Roberts Mountain. Those following U.S. Highway (US) 50, (Loneliest Highway in America) west of Eureka will pass through vast open basins, in between forested mountain ranges and the town of Austin.

Further south, most highway travelers will view scenery from US 6 and US 95 which run generally east-west and northwest-southeast, respectively, through the TFO. East of Tonopah, travelers on US 6 can view the Grant, Pancake, Reveille, Hot Creek, Kawich, and Monitor Ranges. West of Tonopah, travelers on US 6/95 can view the Silver Peak and Monte Cristo Ranges, the Volcanic and Candelaria Hills. Travelers on US 95 between Beatty and Tonopah have views of the Bare Mountains, Bullfrog



Fish Creek Mountains

Hills, Slate Ridge and the Gold Mountains, the Silver Peak and Montezuma Ranges, Goldfield Hills, and Tonopah Summit. Major state highways in the TFO include NV 375 (the Extraterrestrial Highway) which leaves US 6 in the eastern portion of the TFO and runs southeast through Railroad Valley; NV 376 which leaves Tonopah and runs north through Ralston and Big Smoky Valleys toward US 50 and Austin; and NV 266, 267, and 374 which run west from US 95 toward Death Valley National Park.

### **Scenic Drives**

Scenic drives in the BMDO include heavily visited paved highways and rugged backcountry routes requiring four-wheel drive vehicles. Beyond developed towns, a middle-ground of local paved roads is lacking. NV 375 (the Extraterrestrial Highway) is a designated Nevada State Scenic Byway. As mentioned above, many spectacular views are offered from the existing U.S. Highway and State Route network traversing the BMDO.

Other, more rugged scenic routes include the 24-mile Lunar Crater Back Country Byway that passes through a volcanic field of cinder cones and lava flows that culminates in Lunar Crater National Natural Landmark; and the road through Kiln Canyon and Tybo in the Hot Creek Range, featuring views of historic charcoal kilns. While technically not a road, the Goldfield Bike Trails system provides a scenic route through the historic Goldfield mining district south of Tonopah.

### **Cultural Resources**

Throughout the BMDO, the remains of historic features associated with mining, ranching, and transportation still exist. The Pony Express National Historic Trail traverses the northern portion of the BMDO and is a popular draw to the region. The Tonopah–Manhattan Stage Coach Route follows a portion of NV 376 as it runs north up Ralston Valley from Tonopah toward Manhattan. East of Austin, the Cape Horn Overland Stage Station site is also easily accessed by travelers along US 50.

Railroads were seminal in the development of mining communities in the BMDO. Early lines included the Eureka and Palisade Railroad, Las Vegas and



Crescent Dunes

Tonopah Railroad, Bullfrog Goldfield Railroad, and the Tonopah & Tidewater Railroad. These railroads were developed primarily to serve the various Mining Districts. Numerous old railroad grades crisscross the valleys, foothills, and passes of the region.

Many historic mining towns are accessible to visitors of the BMDO. Good examples are Galena, Rhyolite, Manhattan, Belmont, and Gold Point. Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park, located in the Toiyabe National Forest at the edge of Ione Valley, was established in 1957 to protect North America's most abundant concentrations of ichthyosaur fossils. The park also contains the historic gold-mining town of Berlin.

### **Recreation Areas**

The BMDO contains several Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs) in the TFO including the Clayton Valley Sand Dunes, Crescent Sand Dunes, Lunar Crater, Railroad Valley Wildlife Area, Rhyolite, and Tybo-McIntyre. The BMDO also has developed recreation areas including Mill Creek Campground, Shoshone OHV Trail System, and the Hickison and Petroglyph Recreation Area. These areas provide a breadth of recreation opportunities for visitors to the region as well as residents of the area. Interpretive facilities at Lunar Crater, Rhyolite, and Black Rock Lava Field provide additional opportunities for understanding the natural and cultural history of the region. Close to Battle Mountain, visitors can easily access the popular Copper Basin mountain bike trails.



Black Rock Lava Field, Easy Chair Crater

### **Federal and State Lands**

The BMDO boundary contains the Toquima Range, Shoshone Mountains, Monitor Range, Hot Creek Range, Quinn Canyon, and Grant Range portions of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. The southern portion borders Nellis Air Force Base, the Department of Energy Nevada Test Site, and Death Valley National Park in California.

### **Wildlife Areas**

The Railroad Valley Wildlife Management Area, located in Railroad Valley, is comprised of four accessible areas: Chimney Springs, Locke's Pond, Big Well Ponds, and Blue Eagle Pond are host to migratory and nesting waterfowl, non-game birds mammals, and fish.

### **Wild Horse and Burro Herd Management Areas (HMAs)**

The BMDO encompasses 28 HMAs for wild horses and/or burros on 3.5 million acres, and is home to one of the largest populations of these animals in the west. HMAs are an important visual resource that attracts tourists, locals, and recreationists.

### **Wilderness**

Several Wilderness areas are located in the adjoining Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. These include: Arc Dome, Alta Toquima, Table Mountain, Quinn Canyon, and Grant Range Wilderness areas. The Boundary Peak Wilderness is located in the Inyo National Forest on the western edge of the BMDO. The BLM does not manage any Wilderness areas within the BMDO.

Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) in the MLFO include Augusta Mountain, Desatoya Mountains, Simpson Park, Roberts Mountain, Antelope Range, and Park Range. In the TFO, the WSAs include: Silver Peak Range, Pigeon Spring, Queer Mountain, and Grapevine Mountain, all along the western edge of the TFO; Kawich, South Reveille, Rawhide Mountain, Palisade Mesa and The Wall, Fandango, Morey Peak, Blue Eagle, and Riordan's Well, all located in the eastern portion of the TFO.

### **Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)**

There are currently no ACECs within the BMDO.

### **Population Centers**

Notable cities and towns situated within the BMDO boundary include Battle Mountain and Tonopah (the most populous); Austin, Eureka, Beatty, and Goldfield. Smaller towns in the BMDO include Silver Peak, Round Mountain, Carvers, Kingston, and Crescent Valley.

### **Natural History**

The topography within the BMDO is varied, with valley floor elevations ranging from 3,100 feet south of Beatty to 7,000 feet in the Monitor Valley. Mountain peak elevations over 9,000 feet are common. These include peaks in the Diamond Range, Fish Creek Range, Antelope Range, Simpson Park Range, Desatoya Mountains, Roberts Mountain, Mount Callaghan, Lone Mountain, Blue Eagle Mountain, and peaks in the Kawich Range. Many other, higher peaks are located within the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. The broad valleys of the

Basin and Range landscape broadly align north-south and can extend for more than 50 miles along this axis. With typical widths of 8 to 10 miles, these valleys afford panoramic vistas of the adjacent mountain ranges. Smith Creek Valley, Diamond Valley, Railroad Valley, Reveille Valley, Ralston Valley, Big Smoky Valley, Ione Valley, and Lida Valley are notable examples of large valleys surrounded by mountain ranges. West of Eureka, the Kobeh Valley stretches over 20 miles wide along US 50.

River systems in the BMDO include the Amargosa River, which flows south from the Beatty area toward Lake Mead east of Las Vegas; the Reese River, flowing to the north towards Battle Mountain near I-80; and the Humboldt River, which touches the very northern edge of the BMDO. Also important to users in the District are the streams that originate in the higher elevations of the major mountain ranges within the District.

Vegetation communities found in the BMDO are typical for the Basin and Range country, including Salt Desert Shrub, Black Greasewood, Hot Desert, Low Sagebrush, Black Sagebrush, Big Sagebrush, Pinyon-Juniper Woodlands, High Mountain Alpine, Annuals, and Riparian. Upper-elevation transition zones include grasses and sagebrush with juniper and pinyon pine situated on mountain slopes. Mountain Mahogany and isolated stands of Aspen can be found in higher elevations. Riparian vegetation, especially cottonwood, is common along perennial streams and wetlands.

The BMDO is home to a wide variety of animal species. Mammals include jackrabbits, badgers, desert bighorn sheep, bobcats, coyote, ground squirrels,

pronghorn antelope, wild horses and burros, and in upper elevations, mountain lions, elk, and mule deer. Golden eagles, vultures, and several species of hawks are common in addition to sage-grouse, road-runners, owls, doves, quail, canyon wrens, cactus wrens and many sensitive species of bats. Reptiles include several species of lizards, rattlesnakes, king snakes, and the desert tortoise which is listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act. Tarantulas can be found in abundance in the TFO, along with many types of grasshoppers, moths, and butterflies.

## Visual Resource Inventory Overview

The BLM has basic stewardship responsibilities to identify and protect visual values on all public lands. In order to accomplish this, the BLM is directed to prepare and maintain an inventory of visual values on a continuing basis. This document provides complete visual resource inventory information.

The Visual Resource Inventory (VRI) is a process to determine visual (scenic) values within the District Office at a specific point in time. Visual Resource Inventories are conducted according to the guidelines in BLM Manual Handbook H-8410-1 – Visual Resource Inventory.

There are three primary components to a visual resource inventory.

- Scenic Quality Evaluation
- Sensitivity Level Analysis
- Delineation of Distance Zones

Based on these three components, BLM-administered lands are placed into one of four Visual Resource Inventory Classes which represent the relative value



Big Smoky Valley

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of the visual resources. Classes I and II are the most valued, Class III represents a moderate value, and Class IV represents the least value.

Class I is generally assigned to special areas such as national wilderness and other congressionally and administratively designated areas where decisions have been made to preserve a natural landscape. Without the special area designation, it is not possible for lands to rate as Class I through the inventory process.

## Visual Resource Inventory Classes

Visual resource inventory classes are assigned through the inventory process. They are informational in nature and provide the basis for considering visual values in the Resource Management Plan (RMP) process. They do not establish management direction and should not be used as a basis for constraining or encouraging surface-disturbing activities. They are considered the baseline data for existing conditions.

## Visual Resource Management Classes and Objectives

Visual resource management classes are assigned for all BLM-administered lands through the RMP process. The assignment of visual management classes is ultimately based on the management decisions made in RMPs, which must take into consideration the value of visual resources. During the RMP process, inventory class boundaries can be adjusted as necessary to reflect resource allocation decisions made in RMPs.

For example, a landscape may be rated as Class III during the inventory process, but may be

designated as Class IV through the RMP process to provide for development activities which require major modification of the existing character of the landscape.

The following Visual Resource Management Objectives have been established for each class in the BLM Manual Handbook H-8410-1 – Visual Resource Inventory:

- **Class I**—The objective of this class is to preserve the existing character of the landscape. This class provides for natural ecological changes; however, it does not preclude very limited management activity. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be very low and must not attract attention.
- **Class II**—The objective of this class is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the dominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.
- **Class III**— The objective of this class is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the dominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.



Simpson Park Mountains

- **Class IV**—The objective of this class is to provide for management activities which require major modification of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high. These management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer attention. However, every attempt should be made to minimize the impact of these activities through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repeating the basic elements.

## Inventory Lands

BLM-administered lands often occur in areas with mixed land-ownership patterns. The BMDO administers areas with mixed ownership that may include state, private, Forest Service (FS), Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), National Park Service (NPS), and Tribal lands among others. This inventory does not include lands that the BLM does not have a jurisdictional role in and these areas are labeled as NR or “Not Rated” on the inventory maps.

Split-estate lands that have private surface ownership and federal subsurface minerals management are included in the inventory because the BLM may administer the mineral rights. In cases where this occurs, the acreage for the sub-surface land is broken out separately when data is available to calculate the acreage. For the BMDO, the split-estate acreage is only a small percentage and the data is not available to calculate the amount.

In addition, large areas of private surface and private minerals are not inventoried because the BLM does not have jurisdiction over these lands. However,

scattered parcels and in-holdings of private land are included in evaluations when they exist as a logical part of a contiguous Scenic Quality Rating Unit (SQRU) or Sensitivity Level Rating Unit (SLRU), as it helps in managing the landscape, but these areas are not calculated in the total areas since the BLM has no management authority to set objectives on them.

Designated Wilderness areas are automatically assigned to Class I and are not rated during the field inventory process, but are included in the VRI. However, Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) are under consideration for designation as wilderness areas and are rated because WSA status is temporary and may be changed with Congressional action. The BMDO has several WSAs, but does not have Wilderness areas.

While the inventory is done on a landscape basis, the inventory results and the subsequent Visual Resource Management Objectives established in the RMP apply only to BLM-administered lands.

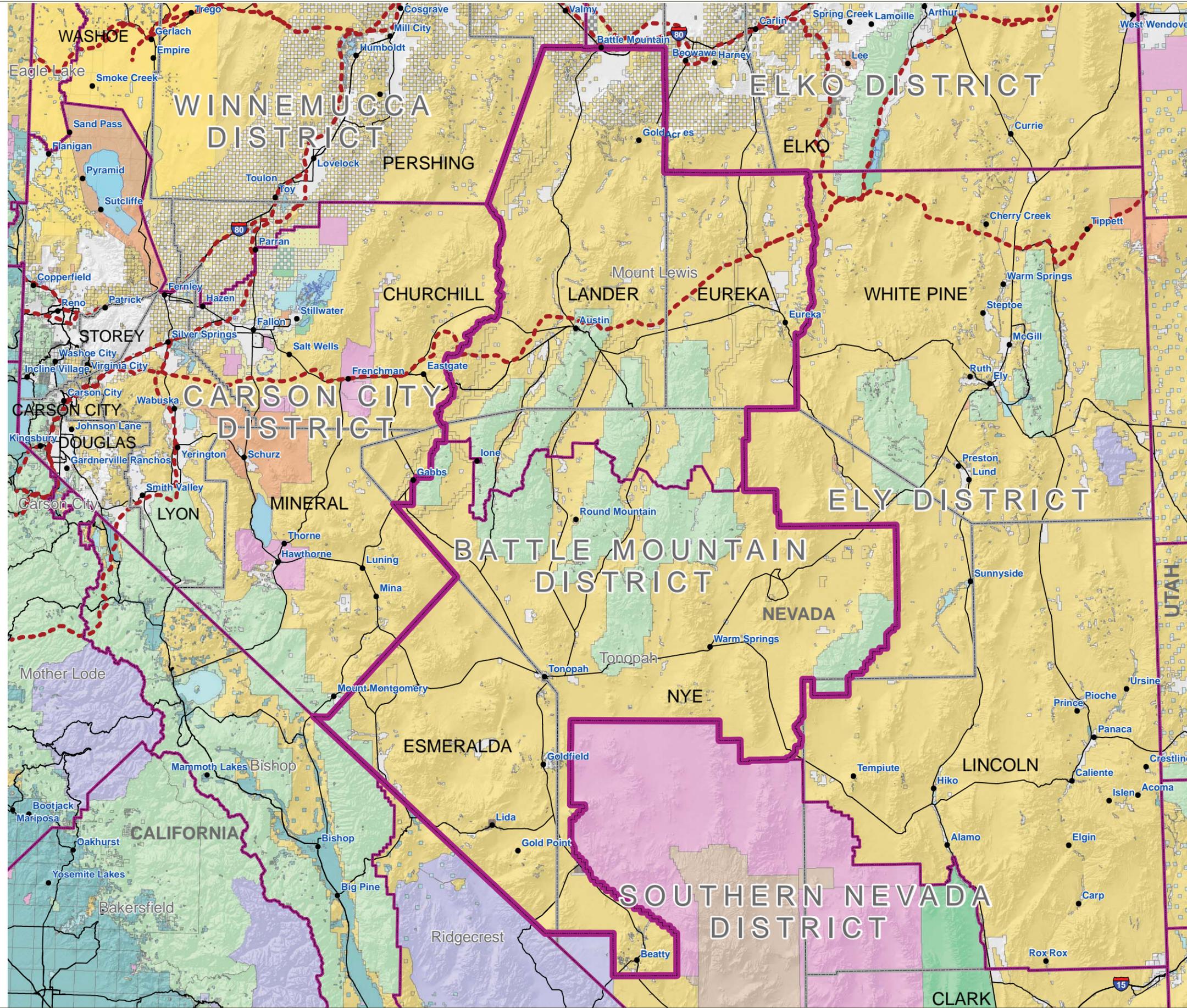
## Process Record

A process record is included in Appendix D of this report. This document provides an informal, chronological description of how decisions were made and why certain approaches were taken with the inventory. This log was initiated during field work and continued throughout the data processing and BMDO review process. It documents issues that were addressed and the resolutions that were made to continue with the process. It is meant to be used as a quick reference for understanding the background information used to create this document.

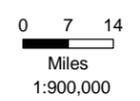


Clayton Valley Hills

Map 1-1. Field (District) Office Location



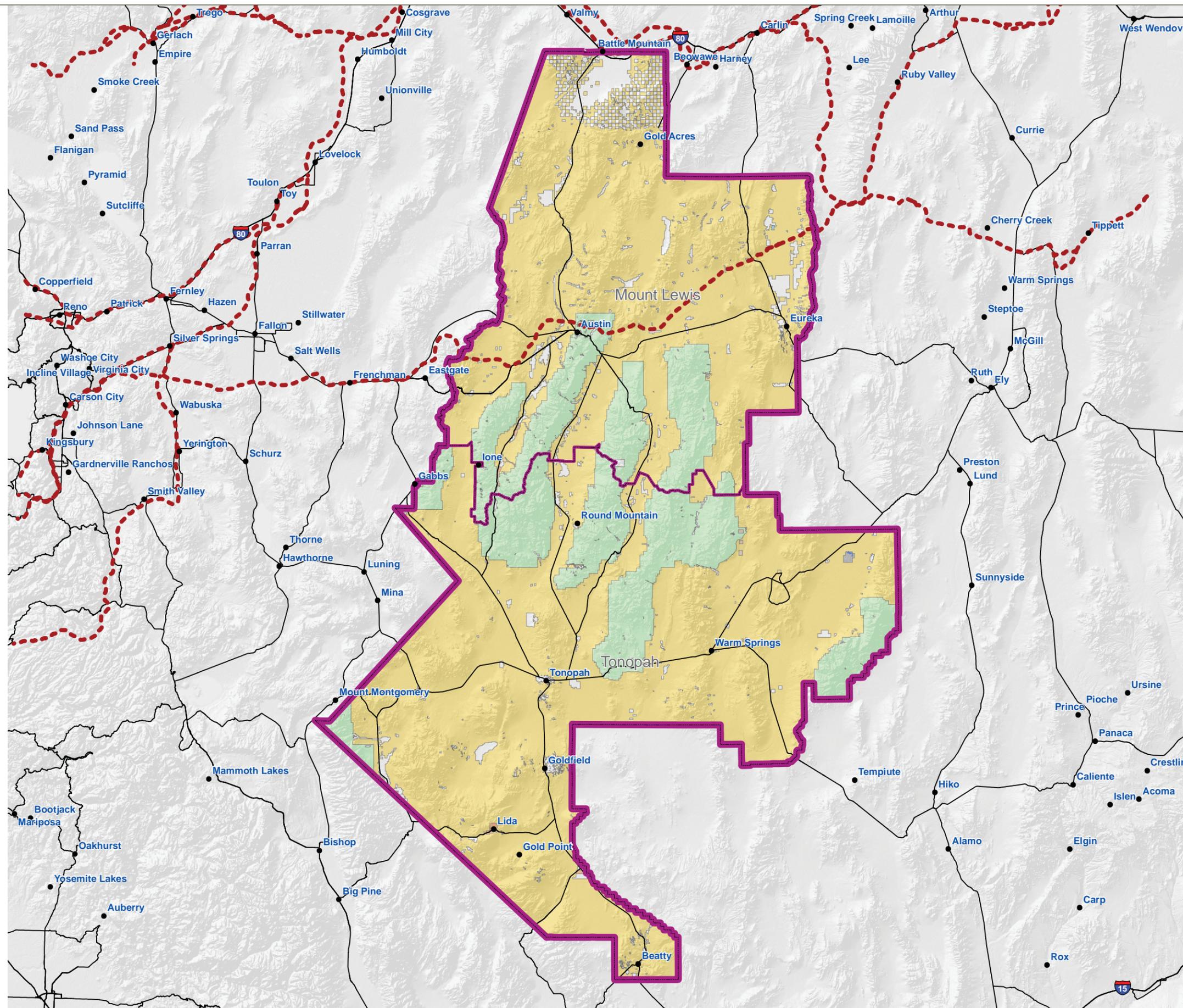
- District Office Boundary
- Field Office Boundary
- County Boundary
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management
- US Forest Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Park Service
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Military
- Other Federal
- State
- County/State/Regional
- Private
- Major Road
- Historic/Scenic Trail



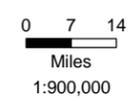
All data on this map is derived from BLM Battle Mountain DO and all its jurisdictions within their boundaries. This information was developed at multiple scales and accuracies. The map was created for display and assessment purposes only. No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management for use of the data for purposes not intended by BLM.

# Map 1-2. Surface Management Status

## Surface Management Status

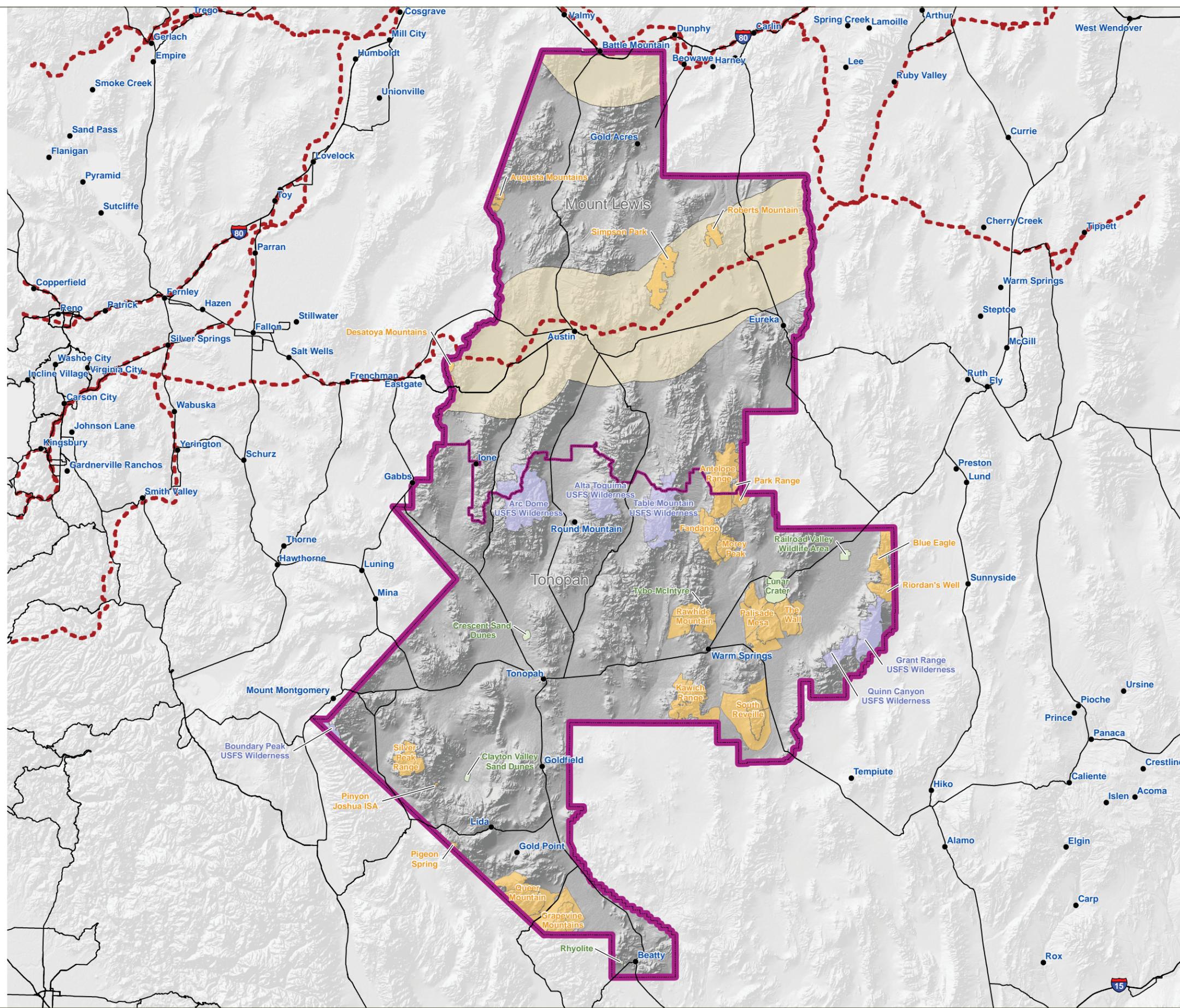


- District Office Boundary
- Field Office Boundary
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Bureau of Land Management
- US Forest Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Park Service
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Military
- Other Federal
- State
- County/State/Regional
- Private
- Major Road
- Historic/Scenic Trail

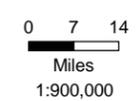


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# Map 1-3. Special Management Areas



-  District Office Boundary
-  Field Office Boundary
-  Wilderness Study Area
-  SRMA
-  Other Agency Special Management Area
-  National Historic Trail 15 Mile Offset
-  Major Road
-  Historic/Scenic Trail



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## 2. Scenic Quality Evaluation



Monitor Range

Scenic Quality Evaluation measures the visual appeal of a landscape. Public lands are rated as Class A (19 points or more), Class B (12 to 18 points), or Class C (11 points or less) based on the apparent scenic quality. Lands are reviewed and rated using seven key factors, and the total score determines the rating. BLM Handbook Manual H-8410-1 – Visual Resource Inventory, provides the following information about each of the seven factors:

- **Landform**—Topography becomes more interesting as it gets steeper or more massive, or more severely or universally sculptured. Outstanding landforms may be monumental, as the Grand Canyon, the Sawtooth Mountain Range in Idaho, the Wrangell Mountain Range in Alaska, or they may be exceedingly artistic and subtle as certain badlands, pinnacles, arches, and other extraordinary formations.
- **Vegetation**—Give primary consideration to the variety of patterns, forms, and textures created by plant life. Consider short-lived displays when they are known to be recurring or spectacular. Consider also smaller-scale vegetational features which add striking and intriguing detail elements to the landscape (e.g., gnarled or wind-beaten trees, and Joshua trees).
- **Water**—That ingredient which adds movement or serenity to a scene. The degree to which water dominates the scene is the primary consideration in selecting the rating score.
- **Color**—Consider the overall color(s) of the basic components of the landscape (e.g., soil, rock, vegetation, etc.) as they appear during seasons or periods of high use. Key factors to use when rating “color” are variety, contrast, and harmony.
- **Influence of Adjacent Scenery**—Degree to which scenery outside the scenery unit being rated enhances the overall impression of the scenery within the rating unit. The distance at which adjacent scenery will influence scenery within the rating unit will normally range from 0–5 miles, depending upon the characteristics of the topography, the vegetative cover, and other such factors. This factor is generally applied to units which would normally rate very low in score, but the influence of the adjacent unit would enhance the visual quality and raise the score.
- **Scarcity**—This factor provides an opportunity to give added importance to one or all of the scenic features that appear to be relatively unique or rare within one physiographic region. There may



Ralston Valley

also be cases where a separate evaluation of each of the key factors does not give a true picture of the overall scenic quality of an area. Often it is a number of not-so-spectacular elements in the proper combination that produces the most pleasing and memorable scenery—the scarcity factor can be used to recognize this type of area and give it the added emphasis it needs.

- **Cultural Modifications**—Cultural modifications in the landform/water, vegetation, and addition of structures should be considered and may detract from the scenery in the form of a negative intrusion or complement or improve the scenic quality of a unit.

Each of the seven factors is rated on a comparative basis against similar features within the Physiographic Province in which the inventory area is located. For example, scenery in the Colorado Plateau is compared to scenery in the Colorado Plateau, not the Wyoming Basin or Southern Rocky Mountains, which means features within the BMDO will be compared to a larger region that extends beyond the BMDO boundary. In some cases this means that a feature that may be unique to the BMDO can be common within the Physiographic Province and therefore not receive as high a rating as may be expected by the BMDO. The BMDO is located within the Great Basin physiographic area of the Basin and Range Physiographic Province.

In addition, the Scenic Quality Field Inventory sheet is used to help record the overall landscape character of a particular rating unit. The inventory sheet includes a general landscape character narrative, but also provides space for describing how the four

landscape character elements of form, line, color, and texture are present within landscape features such as landform/water, vegetation, and structures. These characteristics are briefly defined in Manual 8400 Visual Resource Management as follows:

- **Form**—The mass or shape of an object or objects which appear unified, such as a vegetative opening in a forest, a cliff formation, or a water tank.
- **Line**—The path, real or imagined, that the eye follows when perceiving abrupt differences in form, color, or texture. Within landscapes, lines may be found as ridges, skylines, structures, changes in vegetative types, or individual trees and branches.
- **Color**—The property of reflecting light of a particular intensity and wavelength (or mixture of wavelengths), to which the eye is sensitive. It is the major visual property of surfaces.
- **Texture**—The visual manifestations of the interplay of light and shadow created by the variations in the surface of an object or landscape.

These four character elements are an essential aspect of the inventory process and are also used to evaluate the landscape throughout activity planning. It is beneficial to break down the elements in order to better understand how they are applied to the inventory process.

Form is the mass of an object or combination of objects that appear unified. If viewed only two-dimensionally, it's called a shape. Forms that are bold, regular, solid, or vertical tend to be dominant in the landscape.

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Line is the path, real or imagined, that the eye follows in a landscape. Line is perceived in abrupt difference in form, color, or texture, or when objects are aligned in one-dimensional sequence. It is usually evident as the edge of shapes or masses in the landscape.

Color is what enables us to differentiate objects even though they have identical form, line, and texture. Light, warm, bright colors in a landscape will typically advance and dominate; dark, cool, dull colors tend to recede visually. Dark colors adjacent to light colors tend to attract the eye and become a visual focal point.

In addition, the changing of seasons will have an effect on color. As an example, deciduous vegetation will change colors and most will drop its leaves; grasses start out bright green and fade to a more olive or blue-green before changing to a straw-yellow color, which can greatly change the perception of a landscape.

Texture is the aggregation of small forms or color mixtures into a continuous surface pattern. Aggregated parts are such that they do not appear as discrete objects in the composition of the scene. Furthermore, texture dominance diminishes with increasing distance. Visual contrasts in texture arise when features of the landscape have dissimilar pattern grain density, direction, or irregularity. Seasonal variations will also affect texture, as discussed above.

All public lands have scenic value, but areas with the most variety and harmonious composition have the greatest scenic value. Evaluation of scenic quality is also done in relationship to the natural landscape, which does not mean that man-made features within a landscape necessarily detract from scenic value. Man-made features that complement the natural landscape may enhance the scenic value, and evaluations should avoid bias against man-made modifications to the natural landscape.

Maps 2-3 through 2-9 show the ratings of the seven factors for each unit. Map 2-10 shows the final scenic quality rating based on the combination of the seven factors.

### Delineating Scenic Quality Rating Units

The BMDO was divided into preliminary SQRUs based on like physiographic characteristics such as geology, vegetation, hydrology, texture, color, variety, and topography (Map 2-1).

Preliminary units were drawn prior to conducting field work using high-quality aerial photographs and terrain models available on Google Earth® and Google Maps.® Additional tools used for this process include the Surface Management Status topographic maps and a 25m Digital Elevation Model (DEM) provided by the BLM. These maps, aeriels, and data



Callaghan Creek Foothills

clearly show the topographic and visual features of the landscape which enabled the inventory team to divide the area into preliminary SQRUs. These units were then adjusted as necessary after consulting with BLM staff and verified in the field to provide an accurate boundary.

These maps were used in the field for navigational purposes, for ground-truthing the SQRU boundaries, and for recording notes and Inventory Observation Point (IOP) locations.

The size of SQRU varies, but cannot be less than 100 acres in order to maintain managerial significance. The BMDO was divided into a total of 124 SQRUs and the sizes of the SQRUs range from 790 acres to 592,673 acres.

## Scenic Quality Evaluation Process

Two teams conducted fieldwork: Team A inventoried the Mt. Lewis portion of the BMDO, and Team B inventoried the Tonopah portion. The inventory teams drove through each SQRU, stopping at IOPs at multiple locations within the unit to evaluate scenic quality from several viewpoints. An IOP is a critical viewpoint that is located along designated public travel routes or other observation points. IOPs are selected in the field based on providing representative views of the landscape character of a SQRU. Photographs and GPS coordinates are recorded at each IOP for further analysis, mapping, and report

documentation. A total of 415 stops were made throughout the BMDO (Map 2-2).

Some units did not have legal access through all areas which in some cases limited the extent to which the inventory team could cover the unit. However, thorough coverage of every unit was conducted to the extent practical.

All fieldwork personnel were trained in the BLM Visual Resource Inventory process. In addition, BLM personnel accompanied the inventory teams during five of the nine fieldwork days for the Mt. Lewis Team and nine of 11 days for the Tonopah Team, and participated in the rating efforts. The ratings were completed as a team, not by an individual person, and reflect the team's collective impression of a unit. The rating units were documented in the field using the standardized Scenic Quality Field Inventory Sheet.

Once the inventory was complete, the SQRUs were reviewed by the inventory team for final adjustment before the information was digitized into GIS. Appendix A provides the following information for each SQRU:

- Scenic Quality Field Inventory sheet describing the visual characteristics of the SQRU
- Locator map showing the location of each SQRU within the District Office and the IOPs within the SQRU
- Photos documenting the views at each IOP



Candelaria Hills