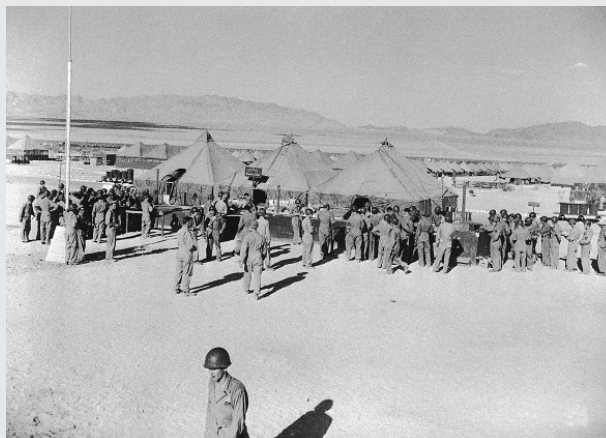


General Patton's Camp

The World War II-era Desert Training Center, formally known as the Desert Training Center/ California-Arizona Maneuver Area, is a remarkable and unique historic military landscape. Established in 1942 by General George Patton to prepare soldiers for the invasion of North Africa, it encompasses about 18,000 square miles of the Arizona and California desert. It was used by the Army to prepare more than one million soldiers in the rigors of desert warfare.

Due to its hasty construction, short duration, and the Army's desire to train men in spartan conditions, the Center contained few permanent structures and was quite ephemeral as compared to other military bases. Nevertheless, numerous remnants of this massive training facility exist today including divisional camps, maneuver areas, small camps marked with rock-lined walkways and unit symbols, tank tracks, airfields, bivouacs, supply depots, railroad sidings, hospitals, and combat ranges. This historic military landscape presents a complex and multifaceted resource that



Field PX at Camp Coxcomb, one of several divisional camps in the Desert Training Center, 1943. Photo courtesy National Archives and Records Administration, Washington DC.

challenges conventional approaches to management and interpretation of cultural resources.

Presently, the majority of the Center is managed by the California Desert District of the Bureau of Land Management. Several initiatives are underway to preserve and interpret this extensive landscape. The BLM and Statistical Research, Inc., are cooperating to study, document, preserve, and interpret historic resources associated with the complex, including a recently completed historic context study to evaluate resources and plan for their management. The BLM is actively pursuing other partnerships with institutions to conduct research and promote cultural tourism opportunities.



Example of rock-lined walkways remaining at the site of Camp Granite, Riverside County, California. Photo courtesy Statistical Research Inc.



Altar remaining at the site of Camp Iron Mountain, San Bernardino County, CA. Photo courtesy Statistical Research Inc.

Rolla Queen
District Archaeologist
California Desert District, BLM

Matt Bischoff
Historian
Statistical Research, Inc.
Tucson, Arizona