



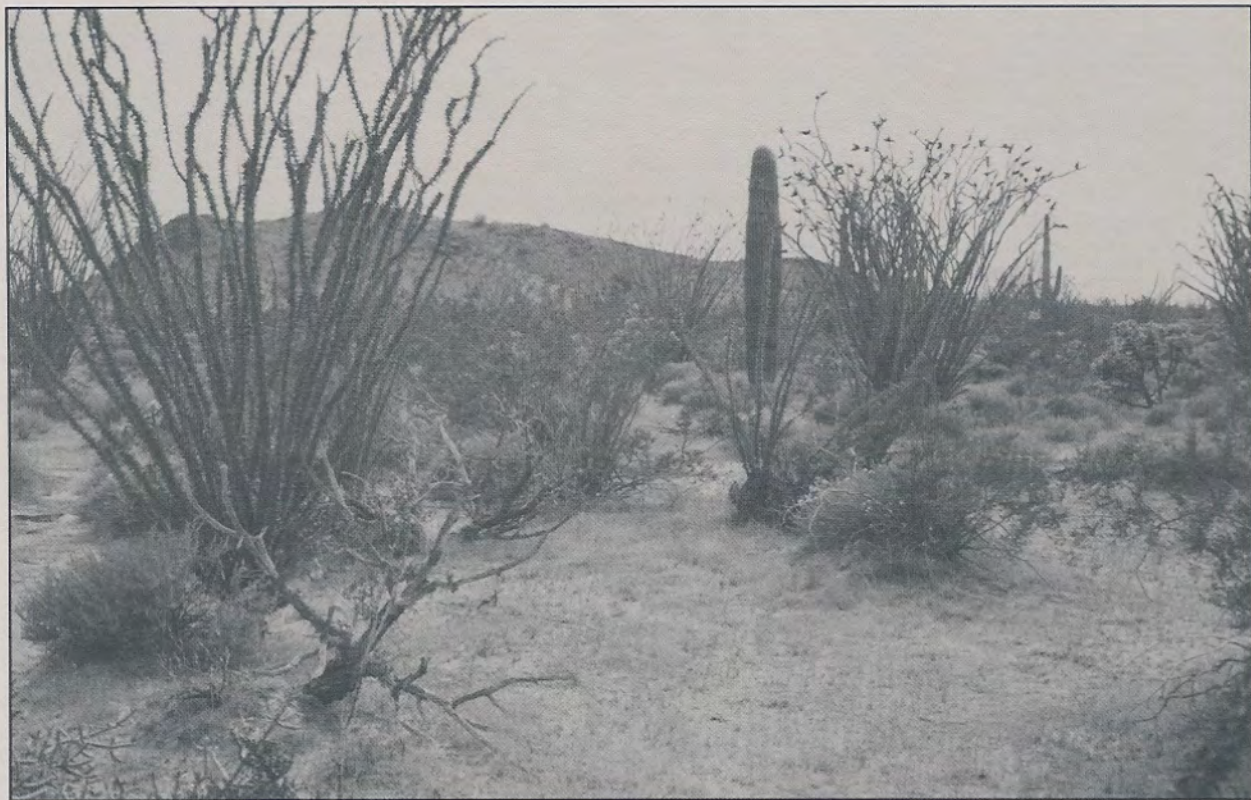
**U.S. Department of the Interior**  
Bureau of Land Management  
Arizona State Office

Havasu Resource Area

September 1994



# **East Cactus Plain Wilderness Management Plan, Environmental Assessment, and Decision Record**



The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for the balanced management of the public lands and resources and their various values so that they are considered in a combination that will best serve the needs of the American people. Management is based upon the principles of multiple use and sustained yield; a combination of uses that take into account the long term needs of future generations for renewable and nonrenewable resources. These resources include recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, fish and wildlife, wilderness and natural, scenic, scientific and cultural values.

**BLM/AZ/PL-94/010+4332**



# United States Department of the Interior

IN REPLY REFER TO:  
AZA 25498 (054)  
8560

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
YUMA DISTRICT OFFICE  
Havasu Resource Area  
3189 Sweetwater Avenue  
Lake Havasu City, Arizona 86403

Dear Reader:

The document accompanying this letter contains the Final East Cactus Plain Wilderness Management Plan, Environmental Assessment, and Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Record. The Plan will enable the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to improve its management of the planning area. The Environmental Assessment analyzes the impacts expected from implementing the Plan. Based on this analysis, the Finding of No Significant Impact determines that impacts are not expected to be significant. The Decision Record documents the Bureau of Land Management's final decision.

The Draft East Cactus Plain Wilderness Management Plan was released for public review and comment August 4, 1994. Comments on the draft plan were analyzed and resulted in minor modifications to the text of the plan and environmental assessment to clarify several points. A summary of the comments can be found in Appendix C.

The Environmental Assessment and Decision Record are subject to appeal in accordance with procedures contained in 43 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 4. Implementation of this plan will begin 30 days after the date of this letter.

A special thanks is due to all who participated in this planning process and contributed to the development of the final document.

Sincerely,

Levi D. Deike  
Area Manager

Enclosure

1 - Final East Cactus Plain Wilderness Management Plan, Environmental Assessment, and Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Record (43 pp.)

**East Cactus Plain  
Wilderness Management Plan,  
Environmental Assessment,  
and Decision Record**

U. S. Department of the Interior

Bureau of Land Management

Yuma District

Havasu Resource Area

La Paz County, Arizona

EA Number: EA-AZ-054-94-62

Recommended by: *Len D. Deike*  
Area Manager, Havasu Resource Area

9-19-94  
Date

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9/19/94  
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9-21-94  
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# PART I — Introduction

## Background

The Wilderness Act of 1964 laid the foundation for the National Wilderness Preservation System. On November 28, 1990 the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act, Public Law 101-628, designated 39 areas in Arizona as wilderness and added them to the system. The East Cactus Plain Wilderness is one of five wilderness areas located in the Havasu Resource Area of the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Yuma District.

## Plan Purpose

This plan will provide direction for managing the East Cactus Plain Wilderness over the next 10 years. Management direction will be guided by: the Wilderness Act of 1964; the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990; Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations, Subpart 8560 (43 CFR 8560); and BLM Manual 8560.

The planning area contains the entire East Cactus Plain Wilderness (14,630 acres) and the portion of the Central Arizona Project Aqueduct (CAP) right-of-way (approximately 240 feet wide and 4.6 miles long equalling 142 acres) that lies between the CAP security fence and the wilderness boundary (Map 1). This is an interdisciplinary plan that supersedes and amends the portions of the following plans that address this planning area:

- Havasu Resource Area Wildlife Operations and Maintenance Plan (1994)

- Yuma District Interim Guidance for Fire Suppression in Wilderness Areas (1992)
- Buckskin Mountain/Cactus Plain Habitat Management Plan (1977)

Any subsequent planning effort whose sphere of influence extends into this planning area shall address the provisions of this document.

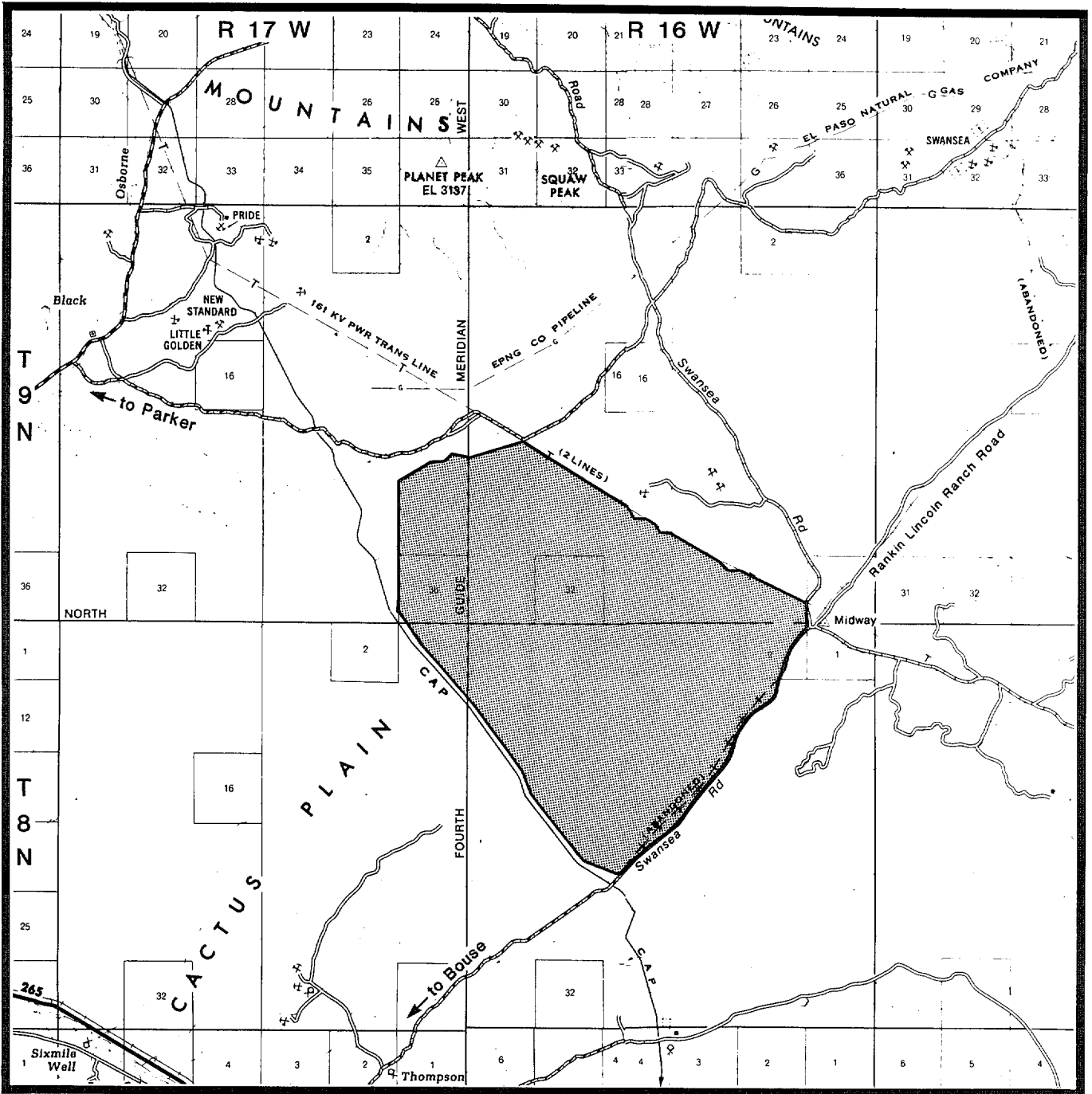
## Location/Access

The planning area is located approximately 10 miles north of Bouse and 20 miles east of Parker in La Paz County, Arizona (Map 1). From Arizona State Highway 72 at Bouse, drive northeast on Main Street to Rayder Road, then northwest on the paved Rayder Road which becomes a graded dirt road known as Swansea Road (County Road S31). Continue north on the left fork for 5.3 miles to the CAP. Just north of the CAP crossing is a public information board with a wilderness map and a sign which identifies the area to the north and west as the East Cactus Plain Wilderness.

The East Cactus Plain Wilderness lies west of Swansea Road for the next 5 miles, then south of the powerline maintenance road which extends west for 5 miles from Midway to a wash containing a portion of the Parker 400 Off-Road Race route. The wilderness lies south of the Parker 400 Off-Road Race route which extends west nearly 2 miles. An unmaintained vehicle route in poor condition parallels the Muse Allotment fence outside the wilderness. These routes provide legal and physical public access to the planning area.



# Map 1



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Bureau of Land Management  
Yuma District

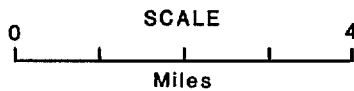
## EAST CACTUS PLAIN WILDERNESS AREA

Basemap © ADOT

-  WILDERNESS AREA
-  ABANDONED AZ-SWANSEA RAILROAD GRADE

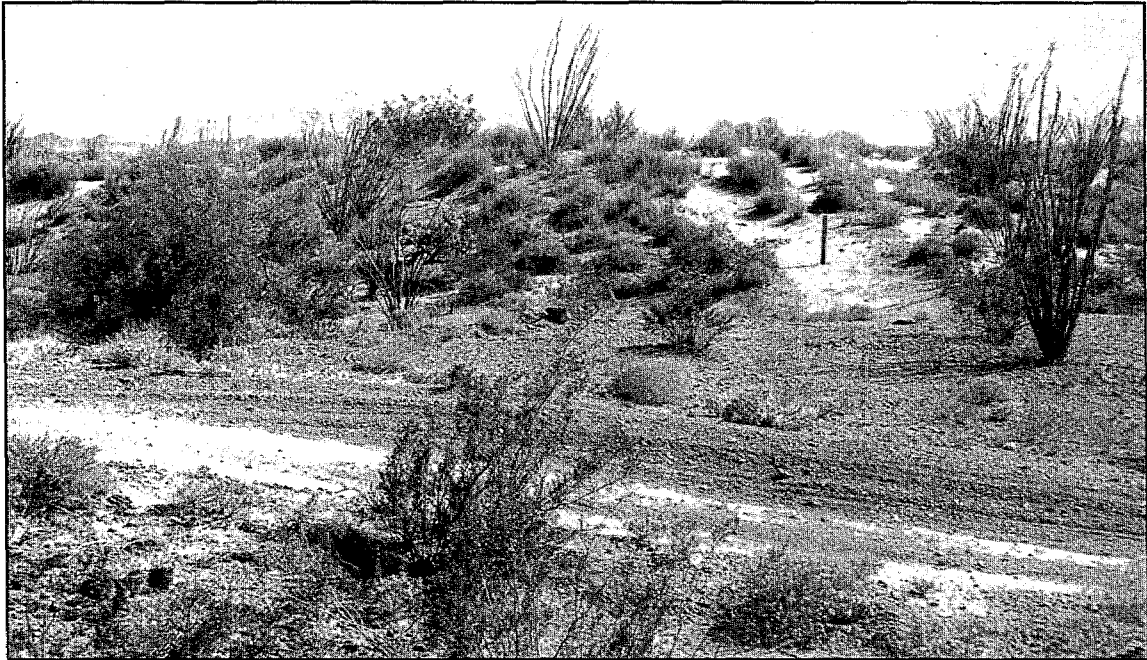


LOCATION MAP



1980





Wilderness boundary along the powerline maintenance road.

A substantially unnoticeable vehicle route lies within the CAP right-of-way and parallels the southwest boundary of the wilderness (Map 2). This route was last used in 1984 to remove a CAP barbed wire fence which was located along the right-of-way. The route is revegetated and does not provide physical access by vehicle.

## Wilderness Boundary

Starting at the northeast corner, the wilderness boundary follows a powerline west for approximately 4.8 miles. The boundary is setback 70 feet south of the southernmost powerline or 25 feet south from the center of the powerline maintenance road, whichever is located furthest south. Next, the boundary follows the wash south of the Parker 400 Off-Road Race route west for 1.9 miles to the Muse Allotment fenceline. The boundary follows the fenceline south for 2.4 miles to the CAP right-of-way.

The wilderness boundary follows the CAP canal right-of-way southeast for about 4.6 miles to Swansea Road. The right-of-way boundary on canal left (upper) is not monumented or otherwise identifiable on the ground. The BLM issued a right-of-way reservation (Serial No. A-22075) to the Bureau of Reclamation in 1986. Bureau of Reclamation maps of Granite Reef Aqueduct - Reach 1 (January 1, 1984) indicate the right-of-way is generally 400 feet from the canal centerline for most of this length but expands to 1200 feet from centerline at the Swansea Road bridge.

Continuing northeast, the wilderness boundary is setback 100 feet west of centerline of the Swansea Road for about 5 miles. At an intersection known as Midway, the boundary follows a section line north for 0.3 mile to where the section line crosses the Swansea Road and is again setback 100 feet west of centerline for an additional 0.1 mile to the powerline at the northeast corner.

## Ownership/Land Use

The BLM administers all land within and surrounding the wilderness. No State or private surface or subsurface inholdings exist within the planning area. Public land adjacent to the planning area on the east side of Swansea Road was used for military training during the World War II era and is contaminated with ordnance; it is therefore possible that some ordnance may be located across the road and within the planning area. There are no current adjacent military land withdrawals.

## Planning Area Description

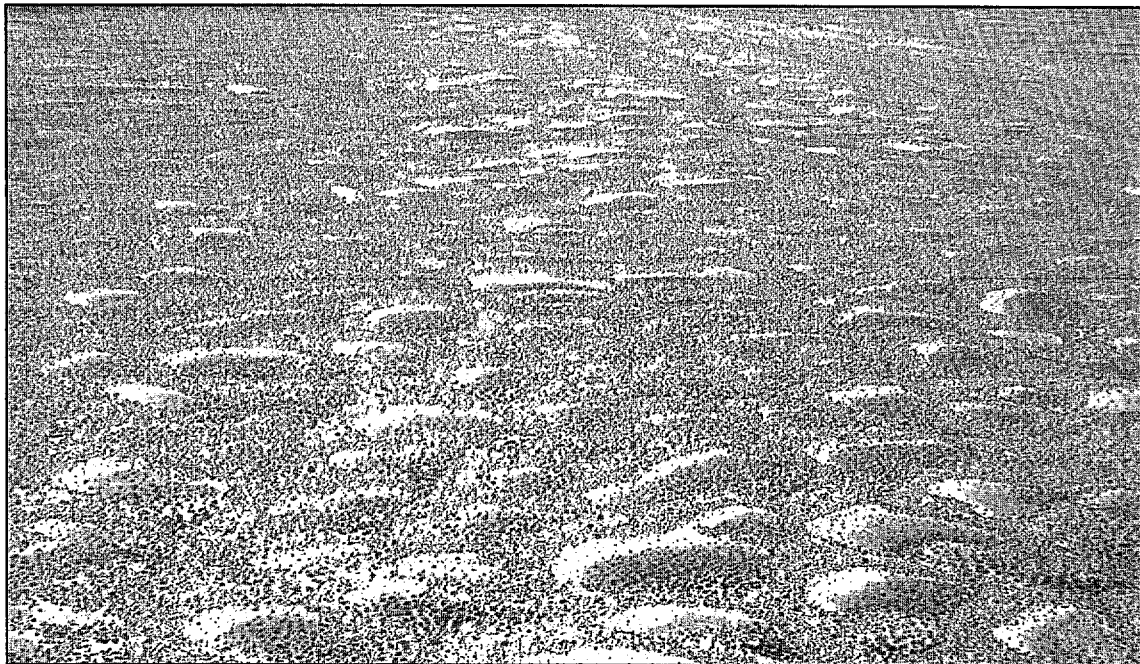
### Topography

The planning area contains an extensive area of rolling and partially vegetated sand dunes. The crescent-shaped (barchan) dunes form a series of ridges

and closed basins. The dune field extends across an outwash plain (bajada) which runs from a small set of hills at the powerline to the CAP. Elevations range from 1,250 to 1,600 feet. The occurrence of such an extensive stabilized dune field within the Sonoran Desert Scrub bajada environment is unique in Arizona and may be unique in North America. The closed basins formed by the crescent-shaped dunes provide a number of soil, vegetation, and wildlife habitat features around the slopes and in the basins.

### Climate/Air/Water

The area is characterized by the Tropical-Subtropical Desert-land climatic zone and is included within the Lower Colorado River Valley subdivision of the Sonoran Desert. Temperatures range from a low of near 30° F in the months of December and January to a high exceeding 120° F during July and August. Annual precipitation generally ranges from 2 to 7 inches per year.



Crescent-shaped barchan dunes.

The area is classified under the Clean Air Act as Class II. No site-specific air quality data exists for the East Cactus Plain Wilderness.

An initial water inventory of the East Cactus Plain Wilderness was completed in 1993. While the natural dune basins (barchan) create temporary entrapments for rain water, no springs or other permanent natural water sources were identified. The nonfunctional Powerline Well is located near Midway and registered with the State to the BLM.

## Soils

The predominant soil type associated with the dunes is the Superstition-Rositas complex. The soil is characterized by a variety of sand types that are deep and excessively drained. There are also small pockets of extremely cobbly sand on the floodplains. In the northwest corner, the Gunsight-Rillito complex is characterized by gravelly sandy loam. The outcrop hills at the north boundary are characterized by a combination of gravelly, sandy, and silty loams of the Chuckawalla-Havasu and Quilotosa-Laposa-Rock outcrop complexes.

## Vegetation

Vegetative communities have been inventoried on several occasions. As part of the range management program, inventory data consists of both ocular reconnaissance and soil and vegetative inventory (SVIM) information collected in 1980-81. In 1986-87, the BLM funded a rare plant survey of the Yuma District by members of the Arizona Nature Conservancy (Warren and Laurenzi, 1987). The Floristic Class of 1991 at Yavapai College in Prescott, Arizona authored the report, *Floristic Study of East Cactus Plain Wilderness*.



Big galleta grass-white bursage with desert sand verbena wildflowers.

The area contains vegetation of the Lower Colorado subdivision of the Sonoran Desert Scrub (Appendix A). The dominant vegetation community on the dunes is big galleta grass-mixed shrub dunescrub, which has been identified as a unique plant assemblage by the Arizona Natural Heritage Program (1987). The big galleta grass occurs with several co-dominant trees and shrubs such as white bursage, ocotillo, blue palo verde, foothill palo verde, ephedra, silver cholla, and diamond cholla (Brown, 1982). These species are normally associated with Arizona Upland and Lower Colorado plant communities, rather than dune communities. During the spring and early summer, several species of wildflowers occur.

Vegetation between the dunes consists primarily of creosote, white bursage, ratany, brittlebush, ironwood, and saguaro. Vegetation is widely spaced with areas of sand and cryptogamic (microbiotic) soil between the plants. The East Cactus Plain may provide suitable habitat for scaly sandplant, a Highly Safeguarded plant

species as defined by the Arizona Native Plant Law.

Mediterranean grass is a non-native species that occurs throughout the planning area. During wet years, this grass can be particularly dense along the dunes. In places, it can create a continuous covering of short, fine grass between larger native species.

## **Wildlife**

Wildlife species in the planning area are those commonly associated with the Sonoran Desert Scrub habitat type (Appendix A). Common wildlife species include mule deer, coyote, black-tailed jack rabbit, desert cottontail, Harris' antelope squirrel, Merriam's kangaroo rat, pocket mice, western whiptail, desert iguana, sidewinder rattlesnake, western diamondback rattlesnake, western patch-nose snake, turkey vulture, raven, red-tail hawk, phainopepla, verdin, black-throated sparrow, mourning dove, and Gambel's quail, as well as several invertebrate species such as scorpions and tarantulas.

The planning area contains suitable habitat for several special status species. A query of the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Heritage Data Management System did not indicate the presence of any Endangered, Threatened, or other special status species within the wilderness, but records did show that several special status species have been documented within 10 miles. The wilderness contains portions of BLM Category II and III desert tortoise habitats. The Sonoran population of the desert tortoise is listed as a Federal Candidate Category 2 species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, and is protected by the State of Arizona. The hills near the powerline provide suitable habitat for the chuckwalla, listed as a Federal Candidate

Category 2 species. The dunes provide suitable habitat for the Mojave fringe-toed lizard, an Arizona State Candidate species.

Although the wilderness provides historic habitat for pronghorn antelope, no antelope currently occupy this area. Further, it has not been determined whether the East Cactus Plain Wilderness is historic habitat for the Sonoran pronghorn antelope, which is listed as a Federal and Arizona State endangered species, or the Mexican pronghorn antelope, which is not listed.

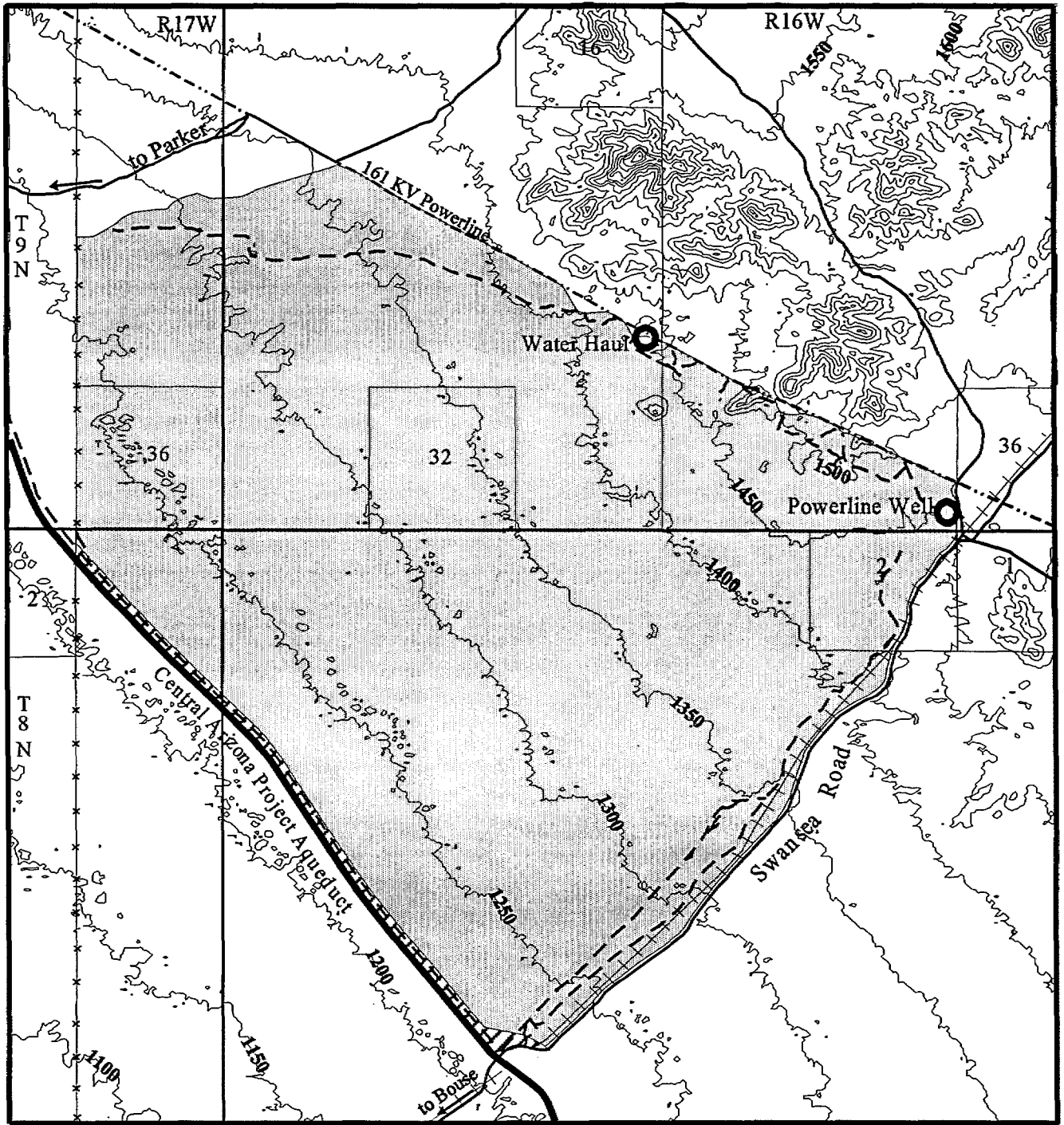
No wildlife water developments occur within the planning area. Arizona Game and Fish Department does not conduct aerial population surveys or telemetry flights within the planning area at less than 2,000 feet above ground level (AGL).

## **Wilderness Values**

The wilderness is natural in appearance, and the core of the area is pristine. Human imprints, some which would be rated as having a "strong" or "moderate" degree of contrast under the BLM's Visual Contrast Rating System, are present in the following locations primarily around the perimeter. These imprints include recreational off-highway vehicle tracks and a portion of a historic trail along the north and northeast wilderness boundaries; an abandoned railroad grade and 2 closed vehicle trails along the southeast boundary; and 2 abandoned range developments (Map 2). The Water Haul site along the northeast boundary includes a storage tank and corral. The abandoned Powerline Well range development includes two storage tanks, a concrete trough, corral, and well.

The wilderness offers outstanding opportunities for solitude. The well-developed dune system, with its unique

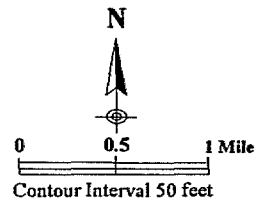
# MAP 2 - REHABILITATION / CULTURAL FEATURES



LEGEND	
	Wilderness Area
	C.A.P. Right-of-Way
	C.A.P. Aqueduct
	Roads
	Closed Vehicle Trails
	Abandoned AZ-Swansea Railroad Grade
	161 KV Powerline
	Muse Allotment Fenceline
	Range Development

## EAST CACTUS PLAIN WILDERNESS

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
YUMA DISTRICT OFFICE  
HAVASU RESOURCE AREA  
July 1994



vegetation, effectively screens out the sights, sounds, and presence of others, and provides secluded spots throughout the area. Visitation is dispersed throughout the area due to the use of multiple access points from the perimeter roads. The stabilized dunes are a rare geologic feature covered by a unique plant assemblage. This combination of geological and ecological features provides an opportunity for scientific and educational study in a pristine setting.

## Recreation

Wilderness visitation is estimated at less than 200 visits annually. Primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities include hiking, sight-seeing, and nature study in an area with few trails. Aesthetic experiences are best in the early morning and late evening hours when the low light angles enhance the dune features. Visitation is not expected to increase over the life of this plan.

A vehicle pullout and visitor information board is located at the south end of the wilderness area adjacent to Swansea Road (Map 3). At Midway, a vehicle pullout and interpretive display will be completed by the end of FY 1994. These two sites provide information on the area's natural and cultural history, wilderness resources, rules and regulations, and land use ethics. Both sites also provide a map of the area.

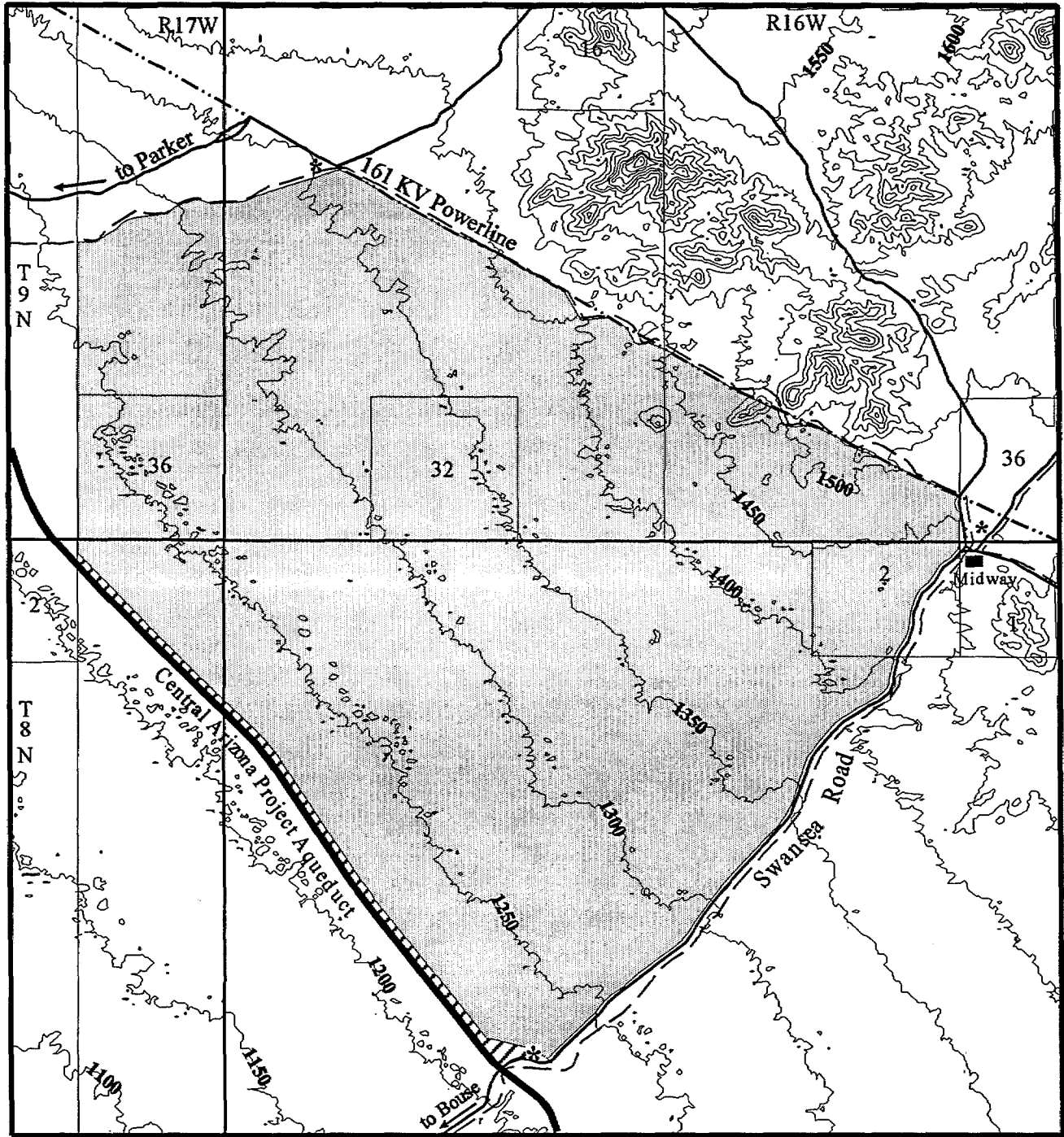
The Parker 400 Off-Road Race has occurred annually in late January since 1972. Approximately 7.8 miles of the race course and the Midway Pit area are adjacent to the wilderness, and an additional 5 miles of the course parallel the wilderness boundary on the east side of the Swansea Road. Approximately 1,500-2,000 people are in the Midway area during the 3-day event to operate the pit and watch the race. A traffic counter was installed in 1993 near the CAP crossing to count northbound vehicles on Swansea



Visitor information board and site identification sign at CAP crossing.



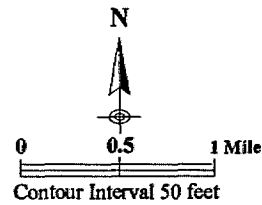
# MAP 3 - RECREATION FEATURES



LEGEND	
	Wilderness Area
	C.A.P. Right-of-Way
	C.A.P. Aqueduct
	Roads
	Parker 400 Race Course
	161 KV Powerline
	Midway Pit Area
	Identification Sign/ Visitors Information

## EAST CACTUS PLAIN WILDERNESS

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July 1994



LOCATION DIAGRAM



Road. Daily traffic counts in November, December, and January prior to the Parker 400 rarely exceeded 20 vehicles per day. During the race on January 20-22, 1994, only vehicles with pit passes were permitted north of the CAP (the general public was restricted to spectator areas south of the CAP). A total of 841 vehicle counts were recorded over those 3 days. A total of 566 vehicles were recorded on the primary race day, January 22, 1994. The daily traffic count dropped to 24 vehicles per day on January 23, 1994 and rarely exceeded 20 vehicles per day throughout February, March, and April.

The Parker 400 Off-Road Race has had the following impacts on the wilderness:

- unauthorized vehicle entry during course reconnaissance up to 2 weeks prior to the event
- unauthorized vehicle entry during the event
- congested parking along Swansea Road, occasionally parking within the wilderness
- litter left behind by participants
- low-level helicopter and fixed-wing overflights
- increased noise and dust

## **Livestock Grazing**

The planning area lies within the Muse allotment, a perennial allotment with the option for additional ephemeral use. Grazing of domestic cattle has not occurred since 1974. The allotment was not under permit at the time of wilderness designation; therefore, there is no legal authority to authorize grazing in the East Cactus Plain Wilderness. Although a new permit for the Muse allotment, excluding the wilderness, was issued in 1993, no grazing has occurred as of June 1994. The boundary between the allotment and

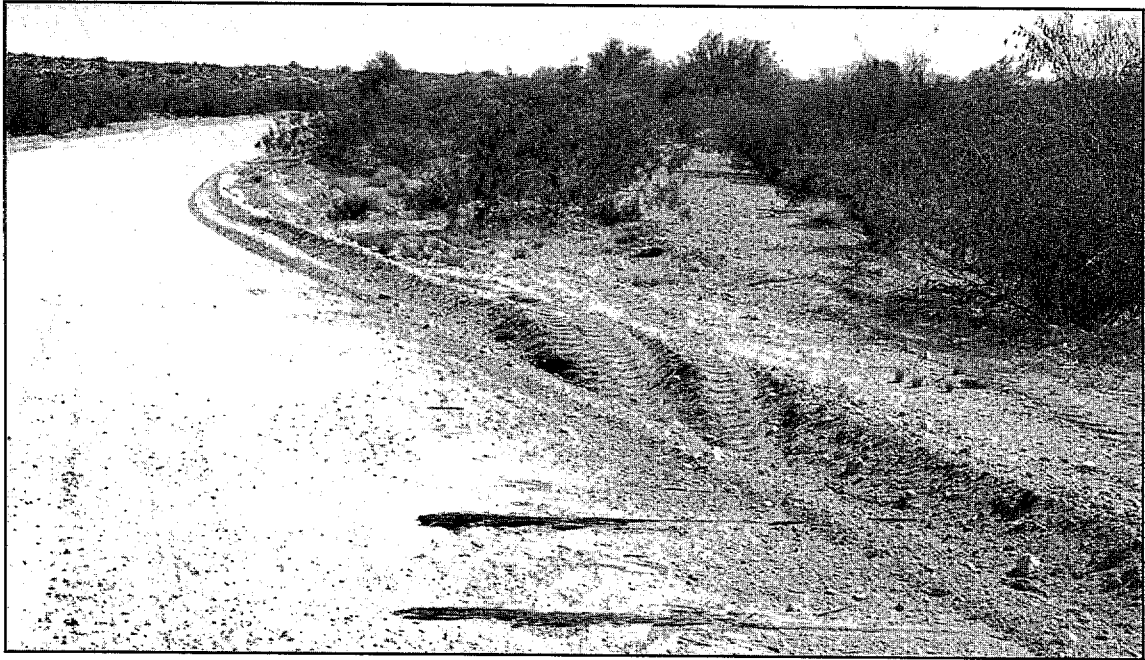
the wilderness is unfenced except for the 2.4 miles of common boundary along the fenceline on the west side of the planning area. Cattle could drift into the wilderness from the authorized portion of the allotment to the east and north.

## **Cultural Resources**

The extent and diversity of cultural resources in the planning area is unknown. No eligibility determinations or allocations of Use Categories (Appendix B) have been made for the known cultural properties. Only one systematic inventory has been conducted. The findings included trails, lithic scatters, fire-cracked rock, and isolated chipped stone artifacts. This was consistent with predicted results based on environmental and ethnographic information.

The planning area lies between two major east-west travel and trade corridors, Osborne Wash and Bouse Wash. It is unlikely that permanent habitation from any time period will be found in the planning area. Prehistoric resources will reflect resource utilization, hunting and gathering, or travel through the area. Site types could consist of lithic or sherd scatters, hearths or roasting pits, stone features, and trails. Temporary habitation sites would consist of cleared use areas or rock outlined shelters.

In the transition between the prehistoric and historic time period, this area was used by at least 2 Patayan groups, the Mohave, and less frequently, the Yavapai. The area was also used for hunting by the Chemehuevi, a sub-group of the Southern Paiute. These 3 Native American groups; the Chemehuevi Tribe, Colorado River Indian Tribe (CRIT), and Yavapai Prescott Indian Tribe, were contacted as part of this planning effort and asked to identify any issues or concerns they had in the



Arizona-Swansea Railroad grade crossing Swansea Road and entering wilderness.

planning area. No traditional or sacred use of the area has been identified.

Historic use of the area was limited and represents travel through the area, from the settlements along Bouse Wash to the mineral resources in the Buckskin Mountains and Bill Williams River. Travel systems include trails, roads and the remains of the Arizona-Swansea Railroad grade. Historic artifacts are associated with the construction or use of the routes and are scattered along these linear sites.

### **Minerals**

The East Cactus Plain Wilderness is withdrawn from mineral entry. There are no mining claims or mineral leases in the wilderness. No mineral material sales have occurred within the planning area.

### **Fire**

No recorded fires have occurred within the planning area since 1980 when record-keeping began. There is a slight

possibility of fires occurring and generally a low risk of fire damage to wilderness resources.

### **Law Enforcement and Emergency Services**

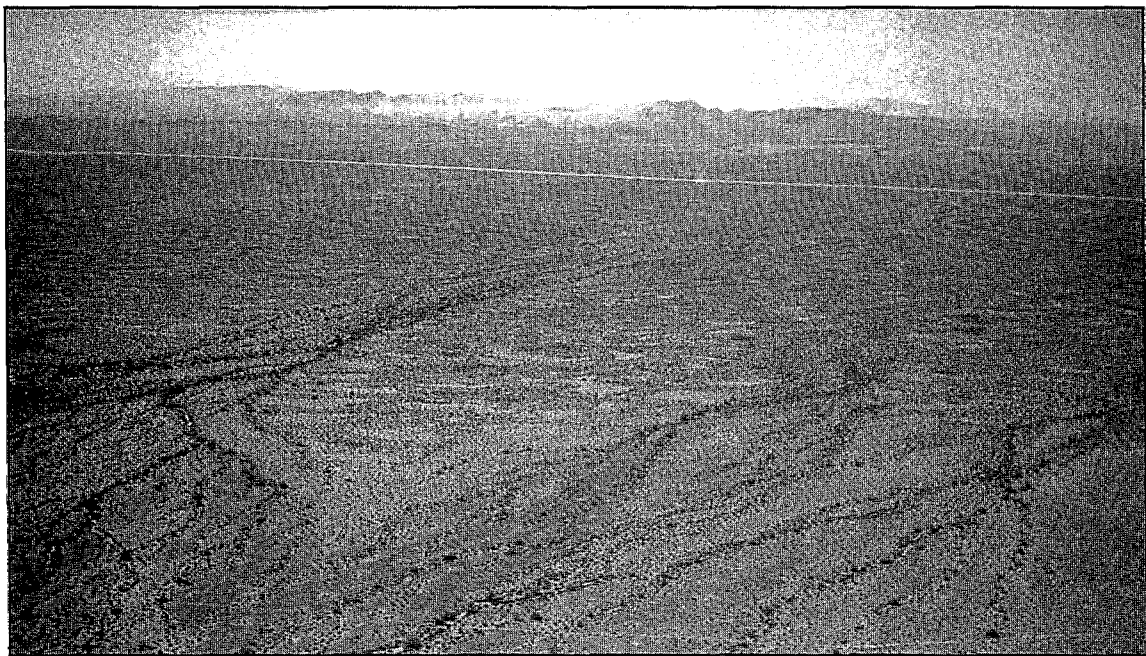
Approximately 15 motorized vehicle violations are estimated to have occurred in 1993 in the wilderness. The numbers of violations are decreasing because of improved boundary identification and patrols. Violations generally occur near the boundary and less than 150 feet inside the wilderness. No citations have been issued. Vehicles have been driven up the wash along the southeastern and eastern boundaries and into the wilderness.

There are no records of incidents requiring the use of emergency services. There may be a slight possibility of ordinance contamination that would require emergency actions for public safety if discovered.

# PART II — National Wilderness Management Goals

Four standard management goals have been established by the BLM for its designated wilderness areas. The goals are as follows:

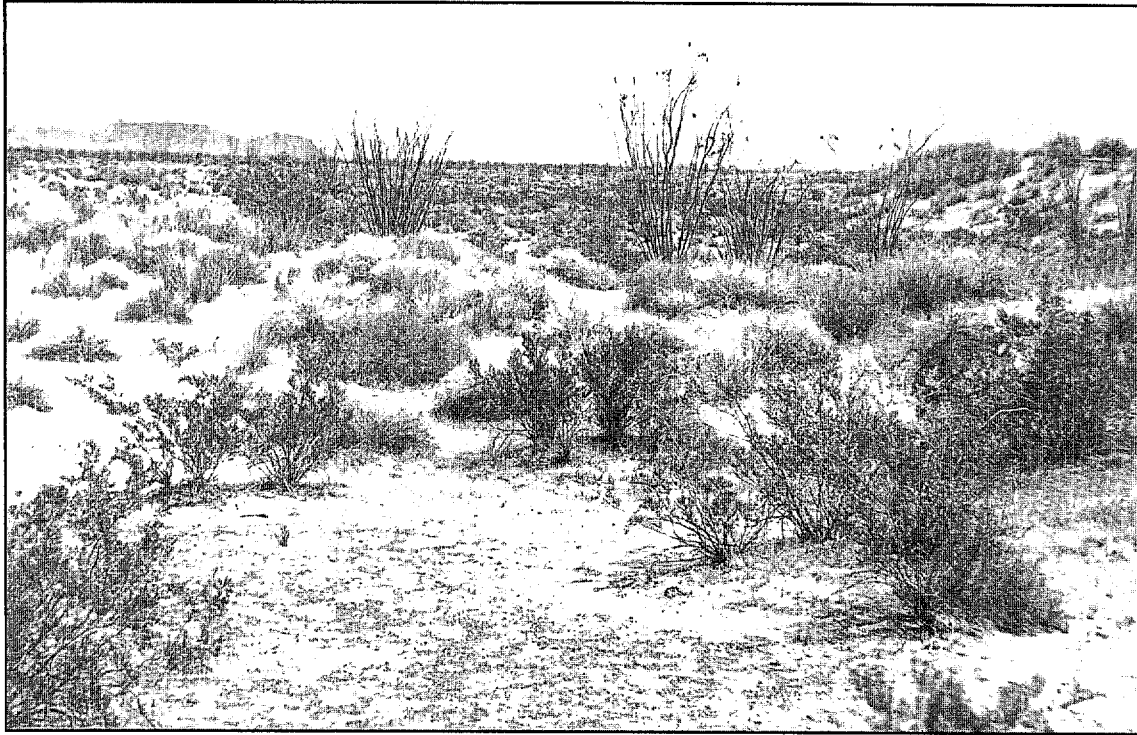
1. To provide for the long-term protection and preservation of the area's wilderness character under a principle of non-degradation. The area's natural condition, opportunities for solitude, opportunities for primitive and unconfined types of recreation, and any ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value present will be managed so that they will remain unimpaired.
2. To manage the wilderness area for the use and enjoyment of visitors in a manner that will leave the area unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as wilderness. The wilderness resource will be dominant in all management decisions where a choice must be made between preservation of wilderness and visitor use.
3. To manage the area using the minimum tool, equipment, or structure necessary to successfully, safely, and economically accomplish the objective. The chosen tool, equipment, or structure should be the one that least degrades wilderness values temporarily or permanently. Management will seek to preserve spontaneity of use and as much freedom from regulation as possible.
4. To manage nonconforming but accepted uses permitted by the Wilderness Act and subsequent laws



Desert bajada extending south to the dunes and the CAP in the distance.

in a manner that will prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the area's wilderness character. Nonconforming uses are the exception

rather than the rule; therefore, emphasis is placed on maintaining wilderness character.



Cryptogamic soils within a barchan dune basin.

## PART III — Issues

In the scoping process, wilderness management issues were identified by Havasu Resource Area and Yuma District staff. The resulting list of issues was mailed to 550 individuals, organizations, and the media who were asked to submit additional issues of concern to be addressed in the plan. Members of the public (Appendix C) further refined the issues. A BLM interdisciplinary team (Appendix D) compiled the final list of issues.

Identified issues are separated into three main categories: Activity Plan Issues, Issues Solved Through Policy, and Issues Beyond the Scope of This Plan. Activity Plan Issues will be resolved in the Objectives and Management Actions of the plan. Issues Solved Through Policy and Issues Beyond the Scope of This Plan will not be addressed further in the plan. Following is the final list of issues that resulted from the scoping process.

### Activity Plan Issues

1. **Long-Term Protection of Wilderness Values.** The Wilderness Act requires the long-term preservation of wilderness values. Decisions will be made to answer the following questions:
  - How will boundaries be managed to prevent illegal vehicle use?
  - What impacts, including dozer roads, historic roads, existing vehicle damage, and range developments, will be rehabilitated to improve naturalness?
  - How can public outreach and education best be implemented?
2. **Maintenance of Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude or Recreation.** Several actions in the area could reduce opportunities for solitude. Decisions will be made to answer the following questions:
  - To what extent are visitor facilities needed (trail heads, informational displays, trails, and parking lots)?
  - What actions are needed to maintain solitude?
3. **Parker 400 Off-Road Race.** Race-related activities (e.g. congested pit area, unauthorized spectators and parking, and vehicle trespass) immediately outside the wilderness have affected and could continue to affect the East Cactus Plain Wilderness. Decisions will be made to answer the following questions:
  - What actions are needed to prevent unauthorized vehicle entry into wilderness for the 2 weeks of race reconnaissance and during the 3-day event?
  - How will the Midway Pit be managed to eliminate vehicle trespass and litter?
  - How will low-altitude race-related aircraft overflights be managed?
4. **Vegetation Management.** The East Cactus Plain is recognized for its unique plant assemblages. Decisions will be made to address the following:
  - How will vegetation be managed to maintain the unique plant assemblages?
  - How will fire be managed to maintain natural values?

5. **Livestock Grazing.** Grazing is not authorized within the East Cactus Plain Wilderness portion of the Muse allotment. The wilderness is not fenced from the remainder of the allotment. Cattle can drift into the wilderness from the authorized portion of the allotment. Decisions will be made to address how livestock will be kept from entering the wilderness.

6. **Right-of-Way for the Central Arizona Project.** Congress defined the southwest boundary of the wilderness as the CAP canal right-of-way. A portion of the right-of-way lies between the CAP security fence and the wilderness. The plan will address how this non-wilderness portion will be managed.

7. **Cultural Resources.** Cultural resources are known to exist within the planning area. The plan will address the following questions:

- How will the historic Arizona-Swansea Railroad grade be managed to protect both cultural and other wilderness values?
- How will other cultural resources be allocated for scientific, conservation, management, sociocultural and public uses and be protected for those uses?
- How will Traditional Cultural Properties be identified so that the interests of the 3 tribes which historically used the planning area can be considered?

## Issues Solved Through Policy

1. **Law Enforcement and Emergency Services.** Wilderness management

policy and regulations (BLM Manual 8560.39 and 43 CFR 8560.3) provide for emergency law enforcement access in the event of fugitive pursuit or to address health and safety concerns during emergencies. Historically, there have been no law enforcement problems in the East Cactus Plain Wilderness that required mechanized or motorized access. In the unlikely event of a problem, existing policy guidance is adequate.

2. **Military Ordnance Contamination.** Due to previous military use of nearby areas, there is a possibility of ordnance contamination. In the unlikely event that unexploded ordnance is discovered, the Department of Defense will be contacted. The ordnance will be removed using the minimum tool required for the task in accordance with BLM Manual 8560.13.

3. **Threatened, Endangered, or Candidate Species.** All habitat of special status species, such as the desert tortoise, chuckwalla, and Mojave fringe-toed lizard, will be managed under existing policy in BLM Manual 8560 and 6840. Although no Federally listed species are known to occur in the planning area, any species listed in the future will be managed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended.

East Cactus Plain may be historic habitat for the Sonoran pronghorn antelope. The Sonoran Pronghorn Core Working Group will investigate, evaluate, and prioritize historical range and habitat for re-introduction sites for the Sonoran pronghorn antelope. If the East Cactus Plain

Wilderness is prioritized for the transplant of pronghorn antelope, the BLM will evaluate the plan in accordance with BLM Manuals 8560, 1745, and 6840.32.

4. **Widespread Exotic Vegetation.** Mediterranean grass is widely dispersed throughout the area. Removal of this exotic grass is not ecologically or economically feasible. Established exotic species, including Mediterranean grass, will be managed in accordance with BLM Manual 8560.
5. **Minerals Management.** The area was withdrawn from mineral entry by the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990. There are no mining claims or mineral leases in the wilderness. No sale of mineral materials is allowed within wilderness. Neither mineral exploration nor development can occur within the wilderness.
6. **Cultural Resources.** Cultural Resources having scientific value are allocated to scientific use (Appendix B). Proposals for study will be authorized on a case-by-case basis guided by existing policy in BLM Manual 8560.32 and subject to compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Inventory for identification of cultural properties will be done to comply with Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act.
7. **Hunting and Trapping.** Hunting and trapping are regulated by the State and allowed by the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990 when con-

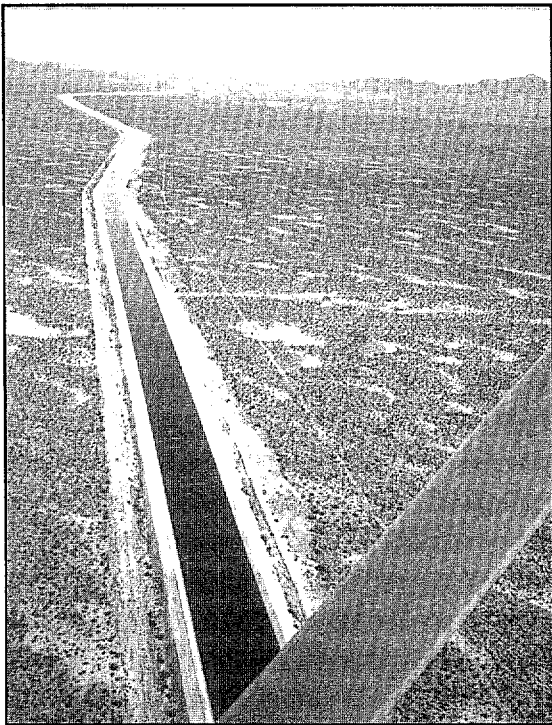
ducted by non-mechanized and non-motorized means.

8. **Legal and Physical Access.** The wilderness has legal and physical public access along the north, northeast, southeast, and west boundaries. No additional access is needed.
9. **Military Overflights.** Military flight restrictions are addressed in the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990. The Act states: "Nothing in this title shall preclude low level overflights of military aircraft, the designation of new units of special airspace, or the use or establishment of military flight training routes over wilderness areas designated by this title." The Havasu Resource Area will continue to cooperate with the military in seeking mutually beneficial opportunities to protect the integrity of wilderness airspace.
10. **Access for the Physically Challenged.** Recreation facilities would be constructed to meet the specifications of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990.

## Issues Beyond the Scope of This Plan

1. **Management of the Central Arizona Project.** Questions were raised about various aspects of managing the CAP within the security fence. The CAP is managed by the Central Arizona Water Conservation District. This plan will not address how the CAP is managed within the security fence.





CAP Aqueduct and vehicle route along the southwest wilderness boundary.

**2. Long-Term Visitor Area at Midway.**

One comment suggested developing a Long Term Visitor Area (LTVA) at Midway. Since a LTVA would be an inappropriate use of wilderness, a facility would have to be located outside of the planning area. Currently, there is insufficient camping demand to justify establishment of a LTVA in the Midway area. The planning area boundary was not expanded to include this issue, therefore, it is outside the scope of this plan.

**3. Noise and Dust from Parker 400 Off-Road Race.** Some public comments have expressed concern about the potential for short-term, temporary impacts to solitude and naturalness caused by the race. The race is a BLM-authorized use of public lands

outside the wilderness. Senate Report 101-359 in the Section-by-Section Analysis addressed the issue of outside sights and sounds as follows:

“Subsection (d) clarifies that the designation of wilderness areas does not imply the creation of ‘protective perimeters’ or buffer zones around any of the areas. The Committee is aware that this language may have particular significance for the proposed White Canyon wilderness area. The Committee understands that there is potential for the development of large-scale mining activities relatively close to the boundary of the proposed wilderness area. The boundary of the wilderness area was drawn so as to exclude this potential mining area from wilderness designation. The Committee recognizes that noise, dust, and other non-wilderness activities may impact the proposed wilderness area if significant mining operations on adjacent lands proceed. This subsection clarifies that such mining activities are not to be limited solely because they can be seen or heard within the White Canyon wilderness.” (p.15)

Congress clearly recognizes that outside activities could cause impacts to adjacent wilderness areas. Congress was aware of the proximity of the Parker 400 course to the wilderness boundary at the time of designation. This type of activity is not to be limited solely because noise and dust could impact the wilderness.

# PART IV — Wilderness Management Program

## Introduction

In this section, objectives are established to address activity plan issues. Management actions to meet national wilderness management goals and plan objectives are outlined. Target dates to accomplish the proposed actions are assigned. Monitoring will be conducted to gauge the effectiveness of outlined management actions and to determine if plan objectives are being met.

A rationale is included immediately below several items in this section to provide additional clarification.

## Objective 1

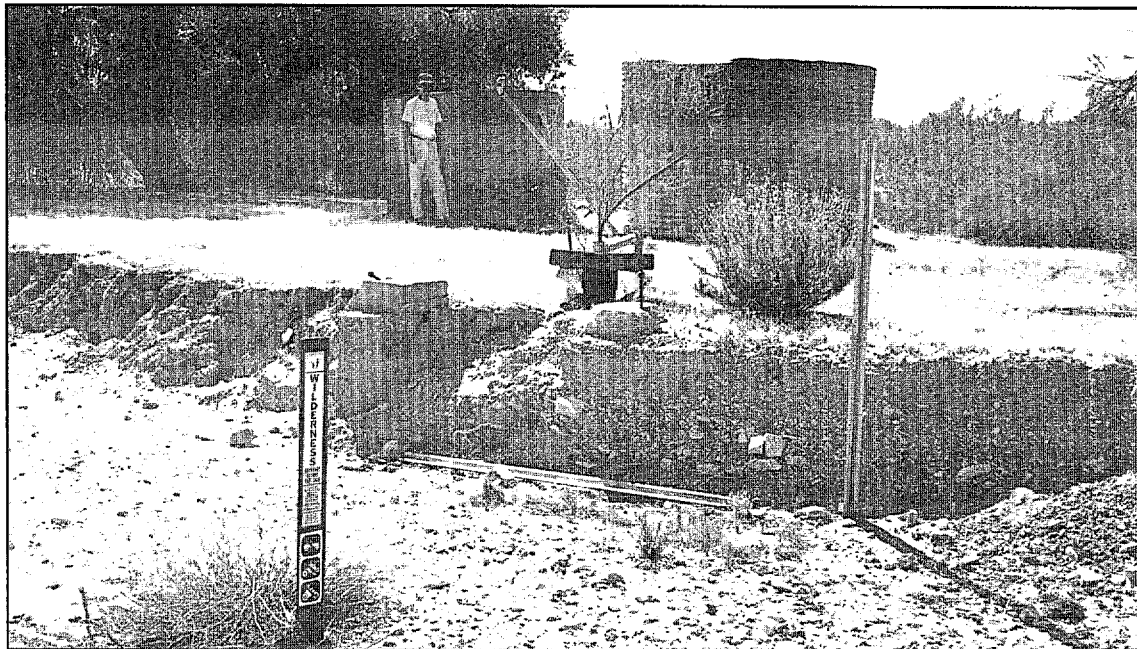
**Maintain or enhance the wilderness values of naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, and special features in the East Cactus Plain Wilderness by:**

- Reducing unauthorized vehicle use from approximately 15 violations annually to 0 by end of FY 1995.
- Reducing the degree of contrast of 12 miles of closed vehicle trails (Map 2) at key observation points from baseline ratings (established during first year of monitoring) to “weak” or “none” by end of FY 2005.
- Returning the Powerline Well range development and the Water Haul site shown on Map 2 to a natural appearance by end of FY 1996.
- Managing livestock in the Muse allotment to maintain the current ungrazed condition of the wilderness without the use of fencing.
- Providing public information facilities outside the wilderness at Midway and the CAP crossing. Information would emphasize opportunities for solitude and dispersed wilderness-dependent recreation.
- Including wilderness and other resource values, rules, and minimum impact recreational techniques in any interpretive information developed for the planning area.
- Managing the 142 acres of land between the wilderness boundary and the CAP security fence for non-motorized use by the public.
- Avoiding human impacts to cultural resources to protect their scientific, educational, and other values.
- Managing the Arizona-Swansea Railroad grade for public use as a cultural property potentially eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.
- Evaluating cultural resources as they are identified within the planning area, determining their National Register eligibility, and allocating them to the appropriate Use Category.
- Accommodating traditional or sacred use that may be identified in the future by the 3 tribes which historically used the planning area.

**Rationale:** Objective 1 above addresses Activity Plan Issues 1, 2, 5, 6, and 7 (in Part III of this document), and National Wilderness Management Goals 1, 2, and 3 (Part II). Implementing this objective will ensure long-term preservation of the area's wilderness and cultural values, and wildlife.

## Management Actions

1. Continue to sign the wilderness boundary using the following standards:
  - Sign the Swansea Road, powerline maintenance road, and northern wash at least every 0.2 mile or at specific sites of vehicle intrusion using standard wilderness boundary signs.
  - Sign the Muse allotment fenceline at least every 0.5 mile using standard wilderness boundary signs.
  - Sign each end of the CAP right-of-way at the intersection of the fenceline and the intersection of Swansea Road.
- Maintain existing site identification signs located at CAP crossing, Midway, and the north corner (Map 3).
2. Continue routine monthly patrols. If violations continue, law enforcement patrols will be increased. If increased law enforcement patrols do not eliminate off-highway vehicle violations, drift fences and/or post-and-cable vehicle barriers will be constructed as necessary.
3. By the end of FY 1996, use hand tools to minimize the degree of contrast of 2 miles of vehicle routes visible from the wilderness boundary. In rare cases, a chemical weathering agent may be applied to disturbed desert pavement areas to reduce the visual contrast. Those vehicle routes not visible from the boundary (approximately



Powerline Well and water storage tanks.

10 miles) will be allowed to rehabilitate naturally during the life of the plan. Rehabilitation efforts will be repeated in subsequent fiscal years, if necessary.

**Rationale:** Reducing visibility of these vehicle routes will discourage future intrusions, allowing the remainder of the routes to rehabilitate naturally. Natural rehabilitation of these routes has already begun, and physical rehabilitation may be detrimental to that process.

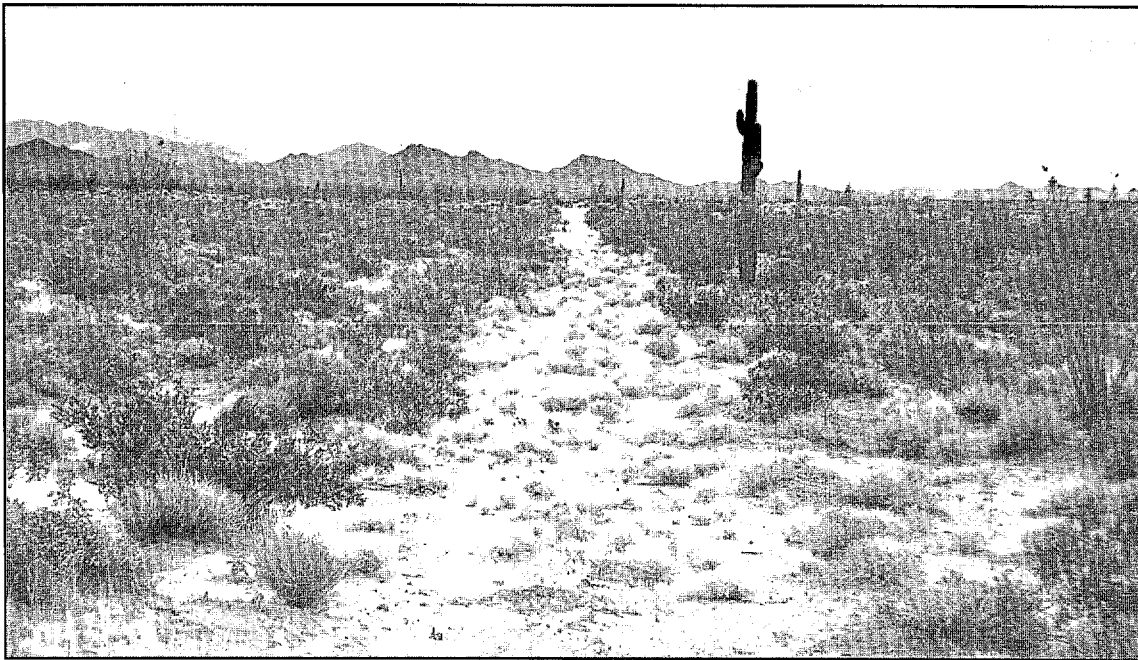
4. By the end of FY 1996, remove all water storage tanks, troughs, debris, and corrals at the Water Haul and Powerline Well sites. Abandoned range developments would be rehabilitated primarily using hand tools. Removal of a large concrete trough at Powerline Well may require the use of power tools and a motor vehicle approximately 200 feet up an active wash and within the wilderness. Officially abandon the Powerline well using State administrative procedures. Cut and plug the well casing at ground level to reduce visual impacts.
5. Livestock management practices on the Muse allotment must prevent livestock from entering the wilderness. New water developments, supplemental feedings, salt blocks, turn-out and gathering points, or other livestock facilities would only be authorized at a distance sufficient to keep livestock out of the wilderness. Any unauthorized use will be reported to the Havasu Resource Area Range Specialist. Immediate actions will be taken to eliminate unauthorized use.

**Rationale:** Since the area was not under grazing permit when the East Cactus Plain was designated as wilderness, there is no authority for livestock grazing within the wilderness. Livestock grazing outside the wilderness must be conducted so that livestock do not drift into the wilderness. The use of fencing will result in undesirable physical and visual impacts along the wilderness boundary, will require a tremendous capital outlay by the permittee, and will create a physical barrier to public access which may reinforce the public misconception of area closure. For these reasons fencing is considered an undesirable and last resort for livestock management.

6. Maintain and continue to improve the public information displays and parking areas located at the CAP crossing and Midway.
7. No recreational facilities, including trails, will be constructed within the wilderness.

**Rationale:** Recreational facilities, including trails, are not needed. Naturalness and primitive recreation opportunities would be diminished with construction of such facilities. Any signing or information needed to manage the area will be located outside the wilderness.

8. Emphasize low impact recreation and appropriate use of cultural sites and other natural resources in any public information developed for the planning area.
9. Officially close to motorized vehicle use by the public the 4.6 mile route



Naturally rehabilitating vehicle route along the CAP right-of-way.

between the CAP security fence and the wilderness boundary (Appendix E). By the end of FY 1995 and in cooperation with the CAP right-of-way holder, reach an agreement to minimize impacts from administrative vehicle use outside the security fence.

**Rationale:** This vehicle route closure will eliminate damage to soil and vegetation, protect the CAP facility from unauthorized activities, and prevent vehicle intrusion along the wilderness boundary. This action does not exclude legitimate motorized activities by the Bureau of Reclamation or the Central Arizona Water Conservation District anywhere within the CAP right-of-way.

10. By the end of FY 1995, record the Arizona-Swansea Railroad grade, determine its eligibility nomination to the National Register, allocate it to Public Use, and continue to interpret it through informational displays and public contacts.

11. Record, evaluate eligibility for nomination to the National Register, and allocate cultural properties to Use Categories as they are identified on field visits (Appendix B).

12. Continue notification and consultation with the 3 tribes regarding any new finding(s) as a result of field visits.

## Monitoring

1. Record unauthorized vehicle use detected during monthly wilderness patrols. Evaluate the effectiveness of current efforts to eliminate unauthorized vehicle use.
2. Establish photo points at key observation points. Annually photograph viewpoints to record the progress of rehabilitation of vehicle routes toward a natural appearance. Using the visual contrast rating system, evaluate contrast annually until a "weak" or "no contrast" rating is achieved.

3. Record evidence of unauthorized livestock presence within the wilderness during monthly wilderness patrols.
4. Track each cultural field visit as a project record. Review project records during the annual plan evaluation to determine whether sites are being identified and evaluated, whether traditional uses are being considered, and whether human impacts are being avoided.
5. Record changes in the amount of traffic on Swansea Road using the traffic counter located at the CAP crossing.
  - a. Barrier fencing will be installed along the course prior to scheduled course reconnaissance. Fencing will be maintained through duration of the event, then removed within 2 weeks following the race.
  - b. Swansea Road from the CAP crossing to the Midway Pit will be closed to parking during the race.
  - c. Permittee will ensure that all drivers and pit crews receive race-related maps prior to the race that locate the wilderness with respect to the course and indicate it is closed to vehicles.
  - d. Remove all litter associated with the event within 3 days following the race.
  - e. Race-related flights over wilderness by the race organizer, sponsors, participants, or media associated with any of these, and non-emergency volunteer flights, will be at least 2,000 feet AGL.

## Objective 2

**Eliminate race-related impacts of the annual Parker 400 Off-Road Race within the East Cactus Plain Wilderness in all subsequent events.**

**Rationale:** The Parker 400 Off-Road Race has been an authorized use of public lands. By eliminating race-related impacts to the wilderness (e.g., vehicle trespass, litter, and low-level overflights), the event is compatible with wilderness management. Objective 2 addresses Activity Plan Issues 1 and 3 (Part III), and National Wilderness Management Goals 1, 2, and 3 (Part II).

### Management Actions

1. Include the following stipulations in the Parker 400 Special Recreation Permit:
  - a. Midway pit area will be confined to the east side of Swansea Road. The permittee will fence the west side of the county road at the Midway pit using highly visible

**Rationale:** Confining the Midway pit to the east side of the county road will eliminate the possibility of vehicles wandering out of the pit area and into the wilderness. Closing the county road to parking will eliminate the possibility of parking and littering in the wilderness. Removing litter within 3 days will reduce dispersion by wind and animals. Restricting overflights protects wilderness values.

2. Patrol the wilderness boundaries daily on the 2 course reconnaissance weekends and randomly during the week. Establish a BLM presence at the Midway Pit during the race event.

**Rationale:** The 2 weekends prior to the race are authorized for course reconnaissance. Patrols during this period will

decrease the potential for impacts to the wilderness. Because the course is open to the public, random midweek patrols will further reduce violations. Establishing a BLM presence at the pit is necessary to ensure the race stipulations and wilderness regulations are met.

3. Continue temporary fencing of the washes between Midway Pit and the powerline along the northern wilderness boundary 2 weeks prior to the event.

**Rationale:** Fencing these sites will highlight the wilderness boundary to prevent unauthorized vehicle trespasses.

## Monitoring

1. Record vehicle trespass, litter, and overflights detected 2 weeks prior, during, and 2 weeks after the event. Evaluate the effectiveness of efforts to eliminate impacts to wilderness from the Parker 400 Off-Road Race.

## Objective 3

**Maintain or allow for natural succession of the vegetation, particularly the unique plant assemblage, within the East Cactus Plain Wilderness during the life of the plan.**

**Rationale:** Because there is no livestock grazing, no significant use by wildlife, and little or no potential to carry fire within the wilderness, this objective assumes that the unique plant community will be maintained if no other man-caused disturbances to natural succession occur. This is a general objective which cannot presently be quantified. Upon completion

of the baseline vegetation studies called for in Management Action 2 below, a specific objective will be written. Objective 3 addresses Activity Plan Issue 4 (Part III) and National Wilderness Management Goals 1 and 3 (Part II).

## Management Actions

1. Reported fires will be monitored by air with a minimum altitude of 1,000 feet AGL or by foot access. Fires that exceed or are expected to exceed a 5 chain (330-feet) per hour rate of spread will be suppressed. Use non-motorized hand tools or aircraft for suppression activities. Complete the rehabilitation of disturbances caused by fire suppression activities in accordance with BLM Manual 8560 before suppression forces are released. Burned areas would be allowed to revegetate naturally without seeding.

**Rationale:** No fires have been recorded in the area. Native plant communities within the planning area are not fire-adapted and do not readily carry fire. Mediterranean grass is a non-native species that has invaded the dunes and creates an unnatural condition that could allow fires to spread. Suppressing these fires will protect the unique plant assemblage. Adequate recruitment of native species will occur without seeding.

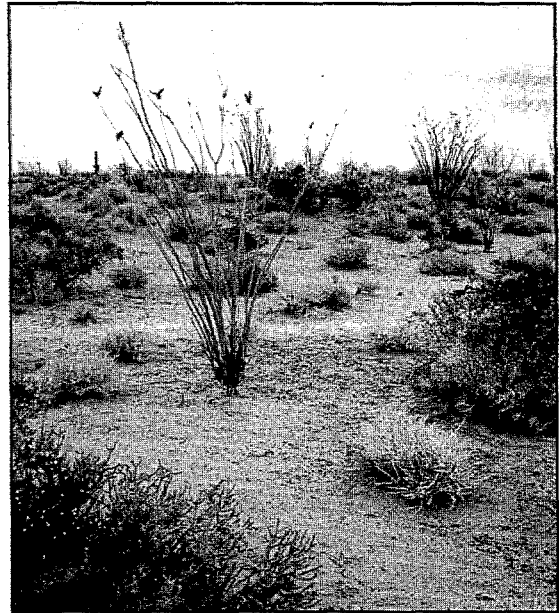
2. Complete a baseline vegetation study to determine the composition and ecology of the unique plant assemblage by the end of FY 1996. Following completion of the baseline vegetation study, evaluate the need to establish trend studies.



**Rationale:** Because the unique plant assemblage is one of the dominant characteristics of the wilderness, understanding its ecology is essential to preserving this wilderness value.

## **Monitoring**

1. Burned areas will be monitored annually for 5 years using the pace frequency trend method to determine the extent of native versus non-native recruitment. A study plot will be established within the burned area and adjacent to the burned area for comparison.

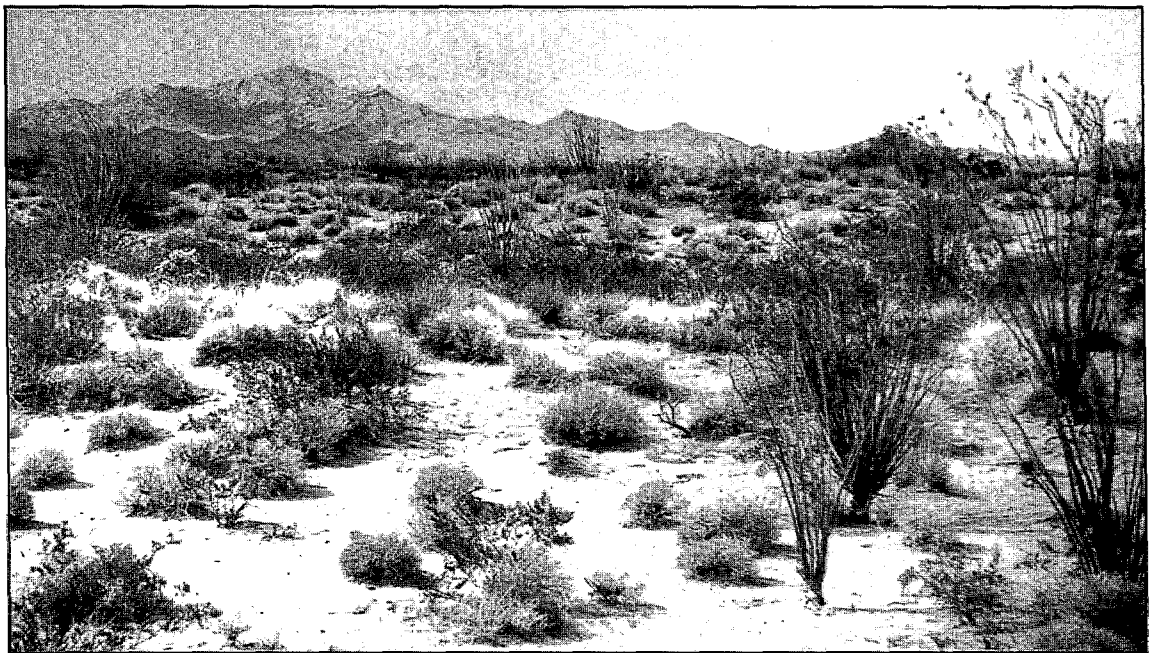


Sonoran desert vegetation

## PART V — Plan Evaluation

The Havasu Resource Area will annually evaluate the effectiveness of plan implementation. This evaluation will be completed prior to preparing BLM's annual budget cycle to accurately reflect the possibility of changing needs and priorities. Evaluation will include the following:

1. Document completed management actions. Identify management actions to be completed the following year.
2. Analyze monitoring data to determine if plan objectives and national goals are being met.
3. If needed, recommend and select new management actions.
4. Actions selected for implementation will become plan revisions or amendments. Plan amendments will be available for public review for 45 days before being implemented.



The view north across the East Cactus Plain Wilderness.

# PART VI — Implementation Schedule and Cost Estimates

**Table 1 — Annual Tasks**

Management Actions/Monitoring/Plan Evaluation	Workmonths (\$3400/Mo.)	Operations Dollars
Monthly Wilderness Patrols; maintain signs, information displays, parking areas	2	\$ 1,000
Parker 400 permitting, monitoring, and temporary fencing	1	\$ 1,000
Monitoring - new vehicle intrusions, photo points, rehabilitation projects, cultural sites, unauthorized livestock, Swansea Road traffic	2	\$ 200
Plan Evaluation	1	\$ 0

**Table 2 — One Time Tasks**

Management Action (In Priority Order)	Target Date	Work Months	Operations Dollars
1. Vehicle route closure in CAP right-of-way	1995	1	\$ 550
2. CAP vehicle route closure signs	1995	0.5	\$ 200
3. Determine eligibility of Arizona Swansea Railroad grade	1995	.2	\$ 0
4. Rehabilitate closed vehicle trails	1996	2	\$1,500
5. Rehabilitate range developments and abandon Powerline Well	1996	2	\$3,000
6. Conduct baseline composition study for unique plant assemblage	1996	1	\$ 500

# PART VII — Appendices

## Appendix A — Vegetation and Wildlife Species List

	Common Name	Scientific Name
Vegetation	big galleta	<i>Hilaria rigida</i>
	longleaf ephedra	<i>Ephedra trifurca</i>
	Death Valley Mormon tea	<i>Ephedra funerea</i>
	creosote	<i>Larrea tridentata</i>
	white bursage	<i>Ambrosia dumosa</i>
	brittlebush	<i>Encelia farinosa</i>
	blue palo verde	<i>Cercidium floridum</i>
	foothill palo verde	<i>Cercidium microphyllum</i>
	ocotillo	<i>Fouquieria splendens</i>
	saguaro	<i>Carnegia gigantea</i>
	ironwood	<i>Olneya tesota</i>
	silver cholla	<i>Opuntia echinocarpa</i>
	diamond cholla	<i>Opuntia ramosissima</i>
	Mediterranean grass	<i>Schismus barbatus</i>
	night-blooming cereus	<i>Cereus greggii</i> var. <i>greggii</i>
scaly sandplant	<i>Pholisima arenarium</i>	
Wildlife	Sonoran Desert tortoise	<i>Gopherus agassizii</i>
	chuckwalla	<i>Sauromalus obesus</i>
	Mohave fringe-toed lizard	<i>Uma scoparia</i>
	pronghorn antelope	<i>Antilocapra americana</i>
	mule deer	<i>Odocoileus hemionus</i>
	coyote	<i>Canis latrans</i>
	black-tailed jack rabbit	<i>Lepus californicus</i>
	desert cottontail	<i>Sylvilagus auduboni</i>
	Harris' antelope squirrel	<i>Ammospermaophilus harrisii</i>
	Merriam's kangaroo rat	<i>Diodomys merriami</i>
	pocket mice	<i>Perognathus</i> spp.
	western whiptail	<i>Cnemidophorus tigris</i>
	desert iguana	<i>Dipsosaurus dorsalis</i>
	sidewinder rattlesnake	<i>Crotalus cerastes</i>
	western diamondback rattlesnake	<i>Crotalus atrox</i>
western patchnose snake	<i>Salvadora hexalepis</i>	
turkey vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>	
raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>	
red-tail hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	

	<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>
Wildlife	phainopepla	<i>Phainopepla nitens</i>
	verdin	<i>Auriparus flaviceps</i>
	black-throated sparrow	<i>Amphispiza bilineata</i>
	mourning dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>
	Gambel's quail	<i>Callipepla gambelii</i>
	scorpion	<i>Order Scorpionida</i>
	tarantulas	<i>Aphonopelma spp.</i>

## Appendix B — BLM Manual 8111.21 - Allocation of Cultural Resource Use

Cultural Resource Use Categories. The purpose of evaluation is to classify cultural resources in terms of potential alternative use(s).

- A. **Scientific Use.** This category applies to any cultural property determined to be suitable for consideration as the subject of scientific or historical study utilizing currently available research techniques.
- B. **Conservation for Future Use.** This category is reserved for any unusual cultural resource which is not currently appropriate for consideration as the subject of scientific or historical study that would result in its physical alteration.
- C. **Management Use.** This category may be applied to any cultural property considered most useful for controlled experimental study that would result in its physical alteration. Experimental study may be aimed toward a better understanding of kinds and rates of natural or human-caused deterioration, effectiveness of protection measures, and similar lines of inquiry.
- D. **Sociocultural Use.** This category is to be applied to any cultural resource that is perceived by a specified social and/or cultural group as having attributes that contribute to maintaining the heritage or existence of that group.
- E. **Public Use.** This category may be applied to any cultural property found to be appropriate for consideration as an interpretive exhibit in place, a subject of supervised participation in scientific or historical study, or related educational and recreational uses by members of the general public.
- F. **Discharged Use.** Assignment to the category means either that a cultural resource that was previously qualified for assignment to any of the categories defined above no longer possesses the qualifying characteristics for that use or for assignment to an alternative use; or that a cultural property's scientific use potential was so slight that it was exhausted at the time the property was recorded, and no alternative use is deemed appropriate.

## Appendix C — Public Involvement

Opportunities for public involvement began in December of 1991 with the bulk mailing of 550 questionnaires. The questionnaires requested both the identification of issues and concerns to be addressed in the East Cactus Plain Wilderness Management Plan and the identification of individuals interested in providing additional information. The local newspapers also printed the questionnaire. The public comment period closed February 7, 1992. Thirty responses were received.

A group representing various organizations assisted in monitoring the planning process, assessing issues, making recommendations, and reviewing the Draft Wilderness Management Plan. Meetings began in March 1992. The time, effort, and patience contributed by the public is greatly appreciated. Members of the public that participated include:

Robert Wall	La Paz County, Director of Planning and Zoning
Dottie Randall	Parker Area Chamber of Commerce, Executive Director
Roy G. Jones	Arizona Wildlife Federation, Director, Mohave County
Bill Werner	Arizona Game and Fish Department, Region IV
Don Mattus	Arizona Game and Fish Department, Region IV

Three other individuals consulted to review the Draft Plan were:

Lu Ann Stapleton	Parker Area Chamber of Commerce, Executive Director
John Kennedy	Arizona Game and Fish Department, Region IV
John Hervert	Arizona Game and Fish Department, Region IV

The Draft East Cactus Plain Wilderness Management Plan and Environmental Assessment was distributed by mail to over 450 interested individuals, groups, and governmental organizations on August 4, 1994. A public meeting and open house was held in Parker, Arizona on August 11, 1994 to answer questions and seek public comments on the Draft Plan. Four individuals attended the meeting, three indicated support of the proposed action and one offered no comments.

At the conclusion of the 45-day public comment period, the Bureau of Land Management had received 7 written comments. Letters were received from three individuals, John Pamperin, Roy G. Jones, and Jim Notestine; one State agency, the Arizona Game and Fish Department; two Federal Agencies, the United States Geological Survey and the Bureau of Reclamation; and the Central Arizona Water Conservation District.

Comments received from the three individuals supported the proposed action and resulted in no changes to the draft plan. Mr. Jim Pamperin indicated support of the proposed action as written. Dr. Roy G. Jones, in general, indicated agreement with the proposed action and offered several comments concerning management of the Parker 400 Off-Road Race and the discontinuation of grazing on the entire Muse allotment which were beyond the scope of this plan. Dr. Jones' suggestion to construct an interpretive trail was considered; the plan calls for the maintenance and improvement of public informa-



tion and interpretive displays at two locations outside the wilderness boundary and explains why additional trails are not needed. Mr. Jim Notestine also supported the proposed action; he cautioned that care should be taken when using chemical weathering agents to ensure the safety of flora and fauna, stated that the BLM should place a greater burden on the Parker 400 race promoters for the costs of proper management of the event and that the event should be discontinued if violations continue, and finally noted that another negative impact of the race is that it limits wilderness user access from Swansea Road during the race.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department stated that the draft plan was well-structured and concise and that the Department had no specific concerns but did ask for clarification or expansion of certain sections. Minor modifications to the draft were made to clarify the nature of the motor vehicle violations and the term "race-related flights", to change "eliminate" to "decrease" when discussing the potential for impacts, and to review the capitalization of the common names on the species list in Appendix A.

The United States Geological Survey provided an additional copy of the Mineral Resource Survey Bulletin for the area.

The Central Arizona Water Conservation District (CAWCD) endorses the draft document but stated the same concerns as the Bureau of Reclamation involving their ability to access the CAP right-of-way. In response to these comments and subsequent consultation, the draft was modified to clarify that the vehicle route through the CAP right-of-way would be closed to motorized vehicle use by the public and would not exclude legitimate motorized activities by the Bureau of Reclamation or the CAWCD anywhere within the CAP right-of-way. The plan was also modified to clarify that the BLM would, in cooperation with the CAP right-of-way holder, reach an agreement to minimize impacts from administrative vehicle use outside the security fence.

# Appendix D — Plan Participants

## Bureau of Land Management

### Havasu Resource Area

Les Allert*	Outdoor Recreation Planner
Cindy Barnes*	Range Conservationist
Clif Bobinski*	Wilderness Specialist
Levi Deike	Area Manager
Mike Henderson	Supervisory Natural Resource Specialist
Sarah Hooper*	Wildlife Biologist
Aline LaForge*	Archaeologist
Kent Leinbach*	Wilderness Park Ranger
Debbie Rowland*	Realty Specialist
Dave Taylor	Geologist

### Yuma Resource Area

Boma Johnson	Archaeologist
Ron Morfin	Wilderness Specialist

### Yuma District

Don Applegate	Nonrenewable Resources Advisor
Barbara Bowles	Cartographic Technician
Dave Curtis	Environmental Coordinator
Loren DeRosear	Fire Control Officer
Lyn Levitt	Fire Management Officer
Brenda Smith	Renewable Resources Advisor

### Arizona State Office

Jeff Jarvis*	National Program Leader - Wilderness
Ken Mahoney*	Wilderness Specialist
Gary Stumpf	Archaeologist

\* Denotes member of BLM Interdisciplinary Planning Team.

# Appendix E — Record of Decision for Vehicle Route Designation

## Yuma District Vehicle Route Designation Record of Decision

1. AREA DESIGNATION: (~~Open~~) (~~Closed~~) (Limited) (~~Undesignated~~)
2. ROUTE NUMBERS: CP - 001 RMA Code - Number
3. RESOURCE AREA: (Havasu) (~~Yuma~~)
4. TOPOGRAPHIC BASE MAP(S): (7.5') (~~15'~~) Powerline Well - G&SRM  
T 8 N, R 16 W, Sec 7, 17, 18, 20, 21  
T 8 N, R 17 W, Sec 1, 2
5. DESIGNATION CRITERIA - 43 CFR 8342.1
  - (a) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize damage to soil, watershed, vegetation, air, or other resources of the public lands, and to prevent impairment of wilderness suitability.
  - (b) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize harassment of wildlife or significant disruption of wildlife habitat. Special attention shall be given to protect endangered or threatened species and their habitats.
  - (c) Areas and trails shall be located to minimize conflicts between off-road vehicle use and other existing or proposed recreational uses of the same or neighboring public lands, and to ensure the compatibility of such uses with existing conditions in populated areas, taking into account noise and other factors.
  - (d) Areas and trails shall not be located in officially designated wilderness areas or primitive areas. Areas and trails shall be located in natural areas only if the authorized officer determines that off-road vehicle use will not adversely affect their natural, esthetic, scenic, or other values for which such areas are established.
6. RECOMMENDATION - PROPOSED DESIGNATION: (~~OPEN~~) (~~LIMITED~~) (CLOSED)  
If LIMITED, explain: \_\_\_\_\_
7. BASED ON 8342.1 CRITERIA (CRITERION) (a) (~~b~~) (~~c~~) (~~d~~)
8. ROUTE SPECIFIC RATIONAL: This closure will eliminate damage to soil and vegetation, protect the CAP facility from unauthorized activities, and prevent vehicle intrusion along the wilderness boundary. This action does not exclude legitimate motorized activities by the Bureau of Reclamation or the Central Arizona Water Conservation District anywhere within the CAP right-of-way.
9. RECOMMENDED BY: Clifton Bobinski 9-20-94  
Date  
R. T. [Signature] 9-20-94  
Date
10. DECISION: APPROVED BY: Len D. Decker 9-20-94  
Area Manager Date

## Appendix F — References

**BROWN, D.E.** 1982. Desert Plants, Volume 4. The University of Arizona for the Boyce Thompson Southwestern Arboretum. Superior, AZ.

**U.S. CONGRESS.** 1964. Wilderness Act. Public Law 88-577.

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1973. Endangered Species Act, as amended.

1976. Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. Public Law 94-579.

1979. Archaeological Resources Protection Act. Public Law 96-95.

1990. Arizona Desert Wilderness Act. Public Law 101-628.

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR.** 1983. Bureau of Land Management. Manual 8560, Management of Designated Wilderness Areas. Washington, DC.

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**WARREN, P.L., LAURENZI, A.W.** 1987. Rare Plant Survey of the Yuma District. Final Report of P.O. No. AZ-950-PH6-0540. The Arizona Nature Conservancy. Tucson, AZ.

# Environmental Assessment

## Introduction

### Background

The East Cactus Plain Wilderness was designated by Congress in November 1990. A management plan was developed to provide guidance for the area in conformance with the Yuma District Resource Management Plan (1987) and the Yuma District Wilderness Impact Statement (1989). This environmental assessment analyzes the potential impacts of proposed actions and management alternatives that were considered for the plan.

Background information which describes the location, access, and general management situation is provided on pages 1 to 10 of the proposed East Cactus Plain Wilderness Management Plan.

### Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

The purpose of the actions proposed in the East Cactus Plains Wilderness Management Plan is to fulfill the intent of Congress to protect and preserve the area for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations as wilderness. A series of actions were proposed to accomplish objectives that address BLM's national wilderness goals and issues identified during development of the wilderness management plan.

### Relationship to Statutes, Regulations, or Other Plans

The proposed plan actions comply with mandates of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, the Wilderness Act of 1964, and the Arizona

Desert Wilderness Act of 1990, and are guided by wilderness management policy as outlined in BLM Manual 8560.

## Description of the Proposed Action and Alternative

### Proposed Action

The proposed action is the adoption and implementation of the East Cactus Plain Wilderness Management Plan. In general, the proposed action would provide for the protection and enhancement of wilderness values within a 10-year timeframe. Management actions to restore disturbances resulting from closed vehicle trails and 2 abandoned range developments are addressed. The proposal includes measures to protect existing natural resources and values. Under the proposed action, opportunities for solitude and primitive unconfined recreation would be maintained or enhanced. Scenic qualities and values of naturalness would be enhanced. Proposed management actions that could have environmental effects are listed below.

1. Wilderness signing, routine monthly patrols, additional law enforcement patrols, and drift fences and/or post-and-cable vehicle barriers would be used to deter motorized vehicle violations.
2. Using hand tools, 2 miles of closed vehicle trails where the degree of contrast is "strong" or "moderate" would be rehabilitated.

3. Vehicle routes not visible from the wilderness boundary (approximately 10 miles) would be allowed to rehabilitate naturally.
4. Abandoned range developments would be rehabilitated primarily using hand tools. Removal of a large concrete trough at Powerline Well may require the use of power tools and a motor vehicle approximately 200 feet up an active wash and within the wilderness.
5. Livestock developments and management practices on the Muse Allotment would only be authorized at a distance from the wilderness sufficient to keep livestock out of the wilderness.
6. Public information displays and parking areas would be maintained and improved at the CAP crossing and Midway.
7. No recreational facilities, including trails, would be constructed within the wilderness.
8. Officially close to motorized vehicle use by the public the 4.6 mile route between the CAP security fence and the wilderness boundary (Appendix E). In cooperation with the CAP right-of-way holder, reach an agreement to minimize impacts from administrative vehicle use outside the security fence.
9. The Arizona-Swansea Railroad Grade would be allocated to Public Use and interpreted through informational display and public contacts.
10. Havasu Resource Area would seek compliance with the Federal Aviation Administration advisory on wilderness airspace so that all civilian overflights are at least 2,000 feet above ground level (AGL).
11. All BLM flights, with the exception of fire monitoring flights, would be limited to 2,000 feet, or more, AGL. Fire monitoring flights would be at least 1,000 feet AGL.
12. A baseline vegetation study would be conducted to determine the composition and ecology of the unique plant assemblage.
13. Using techniques that result in the least impacts to wilderness resources, fires that exceed a 5 chain (330 feet) per hour rate of spread would be suppressed. Disturbances resulting from fire suppression activities would be rehabilitated in accordance with BLM Manual 8560.

### **No Action Alternative**

Under the no action alternative, management guidance would be provided by the Wilderness Act of 1964, the Arizona Desert Wilderness Act of 1990, and National BLM Wilderness Management Policy. No specific actions would be proposed for the rehabilitation of existing disturbances or the enhancement of wilderness values. Weathering processes would eventually restore the natural appearance of surface disturbances, although this may take several centuries. Current conditions and values would be maintained under this alternative.

### **Affected Environment**

A description of the affected environment can be found on pages 1 to 10 of the

proposed East Cactus Plain Wilderness Management Plan.

Following is information on the social and economic setting of the area. The economy of the community of Parker, with a population of about 3,000, is based primarily on retail trade and services generated from visitors to an 11-mile strip of the Colorado River. The economy of the community of Bouse, with a population of 590, is largely dependant on retail trade.

## **Environmental Consequences**

The following critical elements have been analyzed and would not be affected by either the Proposed Action or the No Action alternative:

1. Air Quality
2. Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
3. Cultural Resources
4. Prime or Unique Farmlands
5. Floodplains
- 6 Native American Religious Concerns
7. Threatened or Endangered Species
8. Solid or Hazardous Wastes
9. Water Quality
10. Wetlands or Riparian Zones
11. Wild and Scenic Rivers

### **Impacts of the Proposed Action**

Wilderness values would be maintained and enhanced within 10 years under provisions of the proposed action. Barriers and fencing to prevent motorized vehicle violations, signs, and educational displays would be located outside the wilderness. Promoting “Leave No Trace” and “Tread Lightly” land use ethics within

the planning area would assist in preventing new visitor use impacts to natural values and would protect cultural resources. The fencing, signs, and displays would reduce motorized vehicle trespass and thereby provide for the enhancement of wilderness values by allowing natural weathering processes to reclaim minor surface disturbances without interruption. The closure of a vehicle route to off-highway vehicle use by the public within the CAP right-of-way would decrease the potential for damage to soil and vegetation, would protect the CAP facility from unauthorized activities, and would prevent vehicle intrusion along the wilderness boundary.

Visual impacts from the signs and displays would be mitigated by using materials with a minimal background contrast. Minimal impacts to visual resources from the fences, signs, and displays would be offset by the long-term benefits of enhancing and maintaining wilderness values and opportunities for primitive recreation.

There would be short-term impacts to solitude from wilderness patrols and other monitoring activities that would be offset by the long-term benefits of enhancing and maintaining wilderness values and opportunities for primitive recreation.

Temporary adverse impacts to wilderness values from proposed rehabilitation efforts would be limited to the vicinity of existing disturbances for the duration of each project and would ultimately result in the long-term enhancement of natural values. Opportunities for unconfined primitive recreation would continue and improve as the rehabilitation of existing surface disturbances and abandoned range developments occurs.

Allowing for fire to play a natural role would provide for the protection of wilderness resources and would minimize



potential impacts from fire suppression activities. In the event that fire suppression activities are required, resulting disturbances would be kept to a minimum and then rehabilitated.

### **Impacts of the No Action Alternative**

Current conditions and opportunities would be maintained. With this alternative, existing laws, regulations, and policies would be followed without an integrated management strategy. There would be no temporary adverse impacts from rehabilitation efforts and construction projects. In the long term, there would be a lower quality of naturalness due to the continuing presence of existing human disturbances.

The lack of site displays promoting “Leave No Trace” and “Tread Lightly” would lessen the opportunity for providing visitor information that would assist in enhancing and maintaining existing natural values.

The lack of additional wilderness boundary signing and closure of a vehicle route within the CAP right-of-way would increase the potential for soil and vegetation damage, vandalism of the CAP, and trespass into the wilderness by motorized vehicles.

### **Cumulative Impacts**

Cumulative impacts were analyzed for wilderness values within the boundaries of the wilderness for a period of 10 years. The proposed action provides for the protection of wilderness values from potential cumulative impacts that would be likely if visitor use was left unrestricted and was not monitored. Implementing the proposed action would reduce the poten-

tial for cumulative impacts to wilderness values from repeated motorized vehicle trespass. Additionally, implementing the proposed action would not have significant adverse cumulative effects.

### **Mitigation**

Mitigation for the proposed action and the no action alternative is guided by National BLM Wilderness Management Policy and is, therefore, the same.

Mitigation measures specific to the East Cactus Plain Wilderness are as follows:

1. Administrative actions would be scheduled for periods when there is the least potential for impacts to wilderness visitors, such as during weekdays when visitor use is likely to be the lowest.
2. Only the minimum tool or action necessary to reasonably accomplish management objectives would be authorized for use.
3. Land use ethics, like “Leave No Trace” and “Tread Lightly”, would be actively promoted so that visitor use in the long term might occur with a minimum impact to wilderness values and resources with a minimum need for management restrictions.

### **Consultation and Coordination**

Information about consultation, coordination, and public involvement can be found in Appendix C and Appendix D of the proposed East Cactus Plain Wilderness Management Plan.

## Finding of No Significant Impact/Decision Record

East Cactus Plain Wilderness Management Plan

Environmental Assessment No. AZ-054-94-62  
Case File AZA 25498

**Decision:** It is my decision to approve the East Cactus Plain Wilderness Management Plan. The plan establishes management direction for the East Cactus Plain Wilderness for a 10-year period.

**Finding of No Significant Impact:** Based on the analysis of potential environmental impacts contained in the attached Environmental Assessment, I have determined that impacts are not expected to be significant, therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

**Rationale for Decision:** The plan provides for the continued maintenance of wilderness values and the rehabilitation of existing disturbances. The plan also provides management direction for the elimination of impacts from the Parker 400 Off-Road Race and the maintenance of natural succession of the vegetation. Routine monitoring and yearly evaluations provide for modifications to the plan if a change in conditions requires them.

During a 45-day public review period, seven comments were received for the draft East Cactus Plain Wilderness Management Plan. These letters resulted in minor modifications to the text of the plan and environmental assessment to clarify several points.

**Other Alternatives Considered:** The Proposed Action and the No Action Alternative were considered.

**Mitigation/Stipulations:** All mitigation measures are incorporated within the proposed action.

Recommended by:	<u>Levi D. Deike</u> Area Manager, Havasu Resource Area	<u>9-19-94</u> Date
Recommended by:	<u>Andrew Clayton</u> District Manager, Yuma District	<u>9/19/94</u> Date
Approved by:	<u>Gerrman [Signature]</u> State Director, Arizona	<u>9-21-94</u> Date

*Acting*

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Havasu Resource Area  
3189 Sweetwater Avenue  
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86406

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