88073145

mt

PRELIMINARY
WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS

for the

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA STUDY AREAS

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

United States
Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

California

SEP 30 1986

QH
76.5
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P73
1982

Bakersfield District

United States Department of the Interior

IN REPLY REFER TO
1792 (C-010)

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

800 Truxtun Avenue, Room 302
Bakersfield, California 93301
Phone: (805) 861-4191

Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. weekdays

Dear Reviewer:

Enclosed for your review and comment is the draft environmental impact statement prepared on the preliminary Wilderness recommendations for the Caliente, Folsom, and Hollister Resource Areas of the Bakersfield District, California.

The statement was prepared pursuant to Section 102 (2) (c) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. It is based on information from the Bureau of Land Management and other sources, including Federal, State, and local agencies, and interested private organizations and citizens.

Comments on the environmental statement should be received by this office no later than July 22, 1982, in order to be included in the Final Statement. Comments received after the established 60-day review period will be considered in the subsequent decision process. Your comments should be returned to: Garold W. Lamb, Acting District Manager, Bakersfield District, 800 Truxtun Avenue, Room 302, Bakersfield, California 93301.

Sincerely,

Garold W. Lamb
Acting District Manager

Enclosure

#19835981

ID: 88073145

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Department of the Interior

Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Preliminary Wilderness Recommendations

for the

Central California Area

¹¹¹
Bakersfield District ,

California

Prepared by

U.S.

¹¹
Bureau of Land Management

Department of the Interior

BLM Library
Denver Federal Center
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Denver, CO 80225

Ed Hunter
State Director, California State Office

COVER SHEET

(X) Draft

() Final Environmental Statement

U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Bakersfield District, California

1) Type of Action:

() Administrative

(X) Legislative

- 2) The EIS area is located in central California, and encompasses 93,100 acres of public land. An additional 1,949 acres of Forest Service land are included within the EIS area as a result of the joint wilderness study program between the BLM and the U.S. Forest Service. The Bureau of Land Management proposes to recommend 16,630 acres suitable and 78,419 acres nonsuitable for wilderness designation.

The proposed action recommends wilderness designation, for Congressional action, on portions of the following Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs): Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous and Owens Peak.

Areas recommended as nonsuitable include: Merced River, Panoche Hills North, Panoche Hills South, Ventana Wilderness Contiguous, Caliente Mountain, Sheep Ridge, Milk Ranch/Case Mountain, Piute-Cypress, and portions of Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous and Owens Peak.

3) Summary of Environmental Impacts:

The designation of a WSA as a wilderness area will establish protection of wilderness resources as that area's dominant objective. This will generally result in reduced soil erosion, increased game and hunting success, and a greater opportunity for solitude and primitive recreation. Sensitive plants and wildlife, cultural resources, and Native American values will receive added protection. Grazing operations and mineral entry and mining in existence at the time of designation will continue. Vegetative manipulations, introduction of exotic plants and animals, and developed recreation activities will generally be precluded.

An area not designated as wilderness will allow a broader utilization of resources. Intensive uses prohibited in a wilderness area will be allowed. However, wilderness qualities may be impaired to a degree that future designation will be precluded.

4) Alternatives Considered:

- i) Proposed Action
- ii) All Wilderness
- iii) Partial Wilderness
- iv) No Wilderness
- v) No Action

5) Final date for comments: July 22, 1982

- 6) Further information may be obtained from: Jerry Magee, EIS Team Leader, Bakersfield District, 800 Truxtun Avenue, Room 302, Bakersfield, California 93301.

Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement will be requested from the following agencies as well as the many individuals and interest groups who have requested to be placed on the Bakersfield District Wilderness Mailing List:

FEDERAL

Environmental Protection Agency

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Mines
Bureau of Reclamation
Geological Survey
Fish and Wildlife Service
Natural Resource Library
National Park Service

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Environmental Quality Affairs
Forest Service
Soil Conservation Service
Animal Health Service
U.S. Department of Defense
Army Corps of Engineers

U.S. Senators (California)

U.S. House (California)

CALIFORNIA - STATE AGENCIES

Office of the Governor

State Senators (affected districts)

State Assembly (affected districts)

Office of Planning and Research

State Historic Preservation Office

State Lands Commission

Caltrans

Resources Agency

Department of Water Resources
Air Resources Board
Division of Mines and Geology
Division of Oil and Gas
Department of Forestry

Native American Heritage Commission
Department of Fish and Game
Department of Parks and Recreation
Energy Resources and Conservation and
Development Commission

COUNTY GOVERNMENTS - BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AND PLANNING DEPARTMENTS

Fresno
Kern
Monterey
San Luis Obispo

Tulare
Mariposa
San Benito

SUMMARY

SUMMARY

This EIS examines five alternatives:

1. Proposed Action	-- Suitable: 16,630 acres; Nonsuitable: 78,419 acres
2. All Wilderness	-- Suitable: 95,049 acres; Nonsuitable: 0 acres
3. Partial Wilderness	-- Suitable: 34,007 acres; Nonsuitable: 61,042 acres
4. No Wilderness	-- Suitable: 0 acres; Nonsuitable: 95,049 acres
5. No Action	-- Suitable: 0 acres; Nonsuitable: 95,049 acres

Dealing with six issues:

1. Wilderness
2. Recreation
3. Livestock Grazing
4. Fire Management
5. Land Tenure Adjustment
6. Mineral Exploration/Development

Concerning Ten Wilderness Study Areas:

1. Merced River (CA-040-203)	12,835 acres
2. Panoche Hills North (CA-040-301A)	6,677 acres
3. Panoche Hills South (CA-040-301B)	11,267 acres
4. Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous (CA-040-303)	5,838 acres
5. Ventana Wilderness Contiguous (CA-040-308)	680 acres
6. Caliente Mountain (CA-010-042)	19,018 acres
7. Sheep Ridge (CA-010-022)	4,905 acres

8. Milk Ranch/Case Mountain (CA-010-023)	5,742 acres *
9. Owens Peak (CA-010-026)	22,560 acres
10. Piute-Cypress (CA-010-046 and USFS A5213)	<u>5,527 acres</u> **
Total Acreage	95,049 acres

* Acreage shown is 640 acres less than the total WSA acreage. The southernmost parcel of this WSA (Sec. 25, T.18S., R.29E., MDM) is undergoing study in the Sequoia National Forest Plan as part of the USFS/BLM Joint Wilderness Study effort.

** The Cypress RARE II area (1,949 acres) has been included as part of the USFS/BLM Joint Wilderness Study effort.

Alternatives and Impacts

Proposed Action	All Wilderness	Partial Wilderness	No Wilderness	No Action
Suitable Pinnacles Wilder- ness Contiguous (within watershed of Pinnacles National Monument) Owens Peak (eastern portion) Total: 16,630 acres	Suitable Merced River Panoche Hills North Panoche Hills South Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous Ventana Wilderness Contiguous Caliente Mountain Sheep Ridge Milk Ranch/Case Mountain Owens Peak Piute-Cypress Total: 95,049 acres	Suitable Panoche Hills South (SW portion) Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous (within watershed of Pinnacles National Monument) Owens Peak (except northern portion) Total: 34,007 acres	Suitable None Nonsuitable Merced River Panoche Hills North Panoche Hills South Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous Ventana Wilder- ness Conti- guous Caliente Moun- tain Sheep Ridge Milk Ranch/ Case Moun- tain Owens Peak Piute-Cypress Total: 95,049 acres	Suitable None Nonsuitable Merced River Panoche Hills North Panoche Hills South Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous Ventana Wilder- ness Conti- guous Caliente Moun- tain Sheep Ridge Milk Ranch/ Case Moun- tain Owens Peak Piute-Cypress Total: 95,049 acres
Nonsuitable Merced River Panoche Hills North Panoche Hills South Pinnacles Wilderness Con- tiguous (except watershed of Pinnacles National Monument) Ventana Wilderness Con- tiguous Caliente Mountain Sheep Ridge Milk Ranch/Case Mountain Owens Peak (except eastern portion) Piute-Cypress Total: 78,419 acres	Nonsuitable None	Nonsuitable Merced River Panoche Hills North Panoche Hills South (except SW portion) Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous (except watershed of Pin- nacles National Monument) Ventana Wilderness Contiguous Caliente Mountain Sheep Ridge Milk Ranch/Case Mountain Owens Peak (northern portion) Piute-Cypress Total: 61,042 acres		
Its Impacts	Its Impacts	Its Impacts	Its Impacts	Its Impacts
Wilderness - Effective Wilderness Manageability Recreation - Closed to vehicle access on 16,630 acres - Facilities developed (Cherry Falls) Livestock Grazing - Loss of 40 AUMs (Pinnacles)	Wilderness - Manageability extremely diffi- cult Recreation - Closed to vehicle access - Facilities pre- cluded (Cherry Falls)	Wilderness - Some manageability problems Recreation - Closed to vehicle access on 34,007 acres - Facilities developed (Cherry Falls) Livestock Grazing - Same as Alternative I	Wilderness - Potential loss of wilderness values Recreation - No Impact Livestock Gra- zing - No change	Wilderness - Potential loss of wilderness values Recreation - No impact Livestock Gra- zing - No change

Its Impacts

Fire Management

- Techniques limited on 16,630 acres

Land Tenure Adjustment

- None proposed

Mineral Exploration/Development

- Limited after December 31, 1983, on 16,630 acres

Its Impacts

Livestock Grazing

- Vehicle use constrained
- Project development limited

Fire Management

- Techniques limited

Land Tenure Adjustment

- Acquisition of 1,680 acres

Mineral Exploration/Development

- Limited after December 31, 1983

Its Impacts

Fire Management

- Techniques limited on 34,007 acres

Land Tenure Adjustment

- None proposed

Mineral Exploration/Development

- Limited after December 31, 1983, on 34,007 acres

Its Impacts

Fire Management

- No impact

Land Tenure

Adjustment

- None proposed

Mineral Exploration/Development

- No impact

Its Impacts

Fire Management

- No impact

Land Tenure

Adjustment

- None proposed

Mineral Exploration/Development

- No impact

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

LOCATION

The Bureau of Land Management proposes a Wilderness Management Program affecting 93,100 acres of public land and 1,949 acres of Forest Service-administered lands in the Central California Study Area. Public lands in the study area are administered by the Caliente, Folsom, and Hollister Resource Area Offices, Bakersfield District, of the BLM, while the Sequoia National Forest administers the Forest Service portion of the joint wilderness study area. Map 1-1 shows the relative locations of the areas under study.

PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of this action is to determine whether or not each of the ten wilderness study areas (WSAs) within the study area should be designated as suitable for inclusion within the National Wilderness Preservation System. This evolves from a need expressed by Congress in the Wilderness Act of 1964 to inventory all roadless areas under public ownership possessing wilderness qualities to "secure for the American people...the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness."

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

A. Wilderness:

Although there is some support to manage individual WSAs or portions thereof as wilderness, there is considerable opposition to any of these WSAs being managed totally as wilderness. Primary opposition is to the anticipated restrictions to resource uses, i.e., all forms of mineral exploration and development, development and maintenance of range and/or wildlife projects in WSA's, that may result. Management of WSAs is complicated where the study areas are located adjacent to the Forest Service's potential or designated wilderness areas.

B. Recreation:

Recreational utilization of public land is causing conflicts with other resources, i.e., cultural resource protection, mineral exploration/development, water quality control, and wildlife water needs. The level of use of public lands is placing increasing demands for visitor services and facilities.

C. Livestock Grazing:

There are concerns about impacts from grazing. Livestock grazing may damage habitat essential to rare, threatened or endangered animals and sensitive plant species. Livestock grazing has depleted shrub cover for upland game. Competition for forbs and grasses exists between deer and livestock in the spring and during low production years.

At the same time, there is a demand for increased forage production from the livestock industry. Ranchers have also requested greater flexibility to adjust for variations in forage on the annual ranges.

E. Fire Management:

There is a demand for the increased use of fire as a management tool of resources on public land. This includes prescribed burning for range improvement, hazard reduction, and wildlife habitat improvement. Some individuals fear that the use of fire may be severely restricted or eliminated from WSAs. As fire suppression activities can sometimes result in other resource damage, these activities may increase outside WSAs in order to protect existing values if WSAs have a let-burn requirement.

G. Land Tenure Adjustment:

There is a demand for adjustments in land ownership to meet public needs, support multiple use resource management goals and promote management efficiency.

H. Mineral Exploration/Development:

Public demand for saleable, leasable, and locatable minerals is high, and mineral development frequently results in conflicts with other resource uses.

REGIONAL LOCATION MAP

Bakersfield District

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
BAKERSFIELD DISTRICT

RESOURCE AREAS

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS EIS
map no. 1-1

CHAPTER 2

ALTERNATIVES

CHAPTER II
ALTERNATIVES

WILDERNESS STUDY PROCESS

The BLM identified wilderness study areas (WSAs) in the Central California Study Area during the California Statewide Wilderness Inventory. The inventory process and the WSAs are described in Wilderness: Final Intensive Inventory, Public Lands Administered by BLM California Outside the California Desert Conservation Area (1979). Each WSA was evaluated as part of the overall planning for the area. The following ten WSAs were identified:

Merced River (CA-040-203).....	12,835 acres
Panoche Hills North (CA-040-301A).....	6,677 acres
Panoche Hills South (CA-040-301B).....	11,267 acres
Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous (CA-040-303).....	5,838 acres
Ventana Wilderness Contiguous (CA-040-308).....	680 acres
Caliente Mountain (CA-010-042).....	19,018 acres
Sheep Ridge (CA-010-022).....	4,905 acres
Milk Ranch/Case Mountain (CA-010-023).....	5,742 acres
Owens Peak (CA-010-026).....	22,560 acres
Piute-Cypress (CA-010-046 and USFS A5213).....	5,527 acres
Total.....	95,049 acres

The next step in the process was to develop alternative options for managing the WSAs. Each alternative has different objectives. For example, Alternative II (All Wilderness) places primary priority on preservation and secondary emphasis on other uses, whereas the objectives for Alternative IV (No Wilderness) place primary emphasis on other multiple uses and development. Each alternative consists of a different mix of suitability recommendations.

The wilderness planning criteria and the quality standards outlined in the Bureau Wilderness Study Policy, published in the Federal Register on February 3, 1982, were used for determining suitability. Table 3-1 in Chapter 3 summarizes the results of applying the criteria to each WSA. The quality standards are primarily met through the planning and EIS process. The significance column of the Chapter 4 Impacts Table addresses specific quality standards where significant.

To date, the process for recommending an area as suitable has occurred in three phases. Phase 1 determined issues that should be addressed. Issues were identified both internally and through input from interested citizens, who responded to the Federal Register notices, representing a broad spectrum of resource interest. Wilderness suitability was one of the issues identified for resolution through the planning process. Phase 2 consisted of an analysis of the management situation in the areas under study by interdisciplinary teams in each Resource Area, utilizing all relevant resource information and other data as well as all public input to date. In phase 3, the interdisciplinary teams formulated management alternatives for each WSA, assessed the impacts of each alternative, and developed a proposed action from the alternatives.

Following public review of the draft EIS, which includes a public hearing, the public comments will be utilized to develop a preliminary final EIS. The preliminary FEIS will undergo administrative review before being finalized by the Secretary of Interior.

Both FLPMA and the Wilderness Act establish a process by which the Bureau of Land Management sends its recommendations to the Secretary of the Interior, who sends his recommendations to the President, who then sends his recommendations to Congress for final action. Only Congress can designate an area as wilderness.

One requirement that must be met before the Secretary of the Interior can send his recommendations to the President involves mineral surveys of areas recommended as "suitable" for wilderness designation. FLPMA requires that "prior to any recommendations for the designation of an area as wilderness, the Secretary shall cause mineral surveys to be conducted by the Geological Survey and the Bureau of Mines to determine the mineral values, if any, that may be present in such areas."

A report will be prepared for each wilderness study area. The report will include a summary of recommendations, the EIS, the results of the USGS/BM/BLM mineral surveys, transcripts of public hearings, and comments received. The report, as required by the Wilderness Act of 1964, will be transmitted first to the Secretary of the Interior and then to the President. These requirements will be met as soon as possible after publication of the final EIS, and must in any case be met by no later than October 21, 1991. Within two years of the receipt of the report from the Secretary, the President must advise Congress of his recommendations with respect to designation as wilderness of each WSA, together with a map of the area and a definition of its boundaries. Until Congress decides whether or not each WSA will be managed as a wilderness area, each WSA will be managed in accordance with the Bureau's Interim Management Policy and Guidelines for Lands Under Wilderness Review (December 12, 1979).

ALTERNATIVES - GENERAL

Certain measures are held in common for all of the alternatives. These measures include protection required for endangered species and cultural resources under the Endangered Species Act, the Antiquities Act, and other pertinent federal legislation.

Protection of soils, watershed, visual resources, air quality, and other natural resources is guided by BLM policy and regulations which are derived from the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA).

The No Wilderness and No Action alternatives are essentially identical, since the management prescriptions chosen for each WSA in the absence of wilderness designation followed the current management under existing Management Framework Plans and other pertinent guidance.

DESCRIPTION OF ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1 -- Proposed Action

Objectives

The objectives for the suitable portions of the Owens Peak and Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous WSAs are:

- To provide a high quality wilderness experience.
- To optimize the manageability of the wilderness resource.
- To allow for livestock grazing and wildlife improvement projects while maintaining wilderness values in Owens Peak.
- To protect the unique ecotone formed by the interfacing of four ecological communities in Owens Peak.
- To provide for consistent management with adjacent National Monument wilderness in Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous.

The objective for the Merced River, Panoche Hills North and South, Ventana Wilderness Contiguous, Caliente Mountain, Sheep Ridge, Milk Ranch/Case Mountain, Piute-Cypress, and the nonsuitable portions of Owens Peak and Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous WSAs is to manage for utilization of all resources, including those not compatible with wilderness designation.

Description of Alternative

Alternative I recommends that 16,630 areas be designated suitable and 78,419 acres be recommended nonsuitable for wilderness designation (see map 2-1).

The Merced River cannot be effectively managed as wilderness due to the high probability for mineral development on the large number of claims in an area with high mineral potential. In addition, recreational vehicle encroachment from the adjacent ORV use area, the need for construction and maintenance of grazing and wildlife improvements (including two small reservoirs), the maintenance of fuel breaks, and the implementation of the prescribed burning plan would adversely affect manageability and other wilderness values. Additional management prescriptions for the area, as proposed in the Sierra Management Framework Plan (MFP), include whitewater recreation management and the designation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) to protect cultural sites and Rare, Threatened, and Endangered/sensitive species habitat.

Management of the Panoche Hills North and South WSAs under this alternative would permit continued seasonal vehicular access for recreation and allow for scientific excavation of paleontological resources. Though most wilderness values would be retained by continuation of the seasonal off-road vehicle (ORV) closure, it would be difficult to manage these areas for a high quality wilderness experience due to probable continuation of ORV trespass. Management of these WSAs is outlined in the Fresno/San Benito Management Framework Plan of 1978 and further defined in the Panoche Hills Management Plan of 1981. These plans allow for installation of wildlife and range improvements, control of grazing to leave a minimum of 700 pounds of mulch per acre, protection of endangered species habitat, minimization of mining impacts, prohibition of vehicle use except for four-wheeled vehicles

on designated routes during quail and chukar hunting season, and maintenance of scenic values.

The portion of the Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous WSA within the watershed of Pinnacles National Monument is recommended as suitable for wilderness designation (2,200 acres). Administration would be by the Pinnacles National Monument Superintendent under the wilderness management policy of the National Park Service through legislative transfer upon designation as wilderness. Though livestock grazing is not allowed under NPS policy, the area is not highly suitable for grazing. Vehicle routes that would be closed do not have legal public access. This alternative would provide a high quality wilderness experience and enhance manageability of the adjacent National Monument wilderness area by using easily identified topographic boundaries.

The remainder of the Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous WSA would be managed as outlined in the Fresno/San Benito Management Framework Plan. This management provides for continued livestock grazing, prescribed burning for brushland management in conjunction with private landowners and the National Monument Superintendent, and maintenance of visual resources within the viewshed of the monument.

The Ventana Wilderness Contiguous WSA is recommended as unsuitable for wilderness designation. Effective management as wilderness would be very difficult due to the area's small size and irregular boundaries which do not follow natural contours or features. As a small, narrow extension from the adjacent Forest Service boundary, the area does not enhance the manageability of the contiguous wilderness area. The WSA would be managed in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service to avoid degradation of wilderness values on the adjacent Ventana Wilderness Area. Prescribed burns may be conducted in the area. The area would be checked periodically for unauthorized uses. General management is outlined in the Monterey Management Framework Plan.

In Owens Peak, all of the area north of Chimney Creek is recommended as unsuitable for wilderness designation. This will allow for the use of the existing gravel pit and meet the demand for vehicular access for pinyon nut and Christmas tree harvesting. The western boundary adjustments (see map), are to allow for practical management as wilderness. These adjustments include eliminating the private land in Sections 12, 13, of T.25S., R.36E., MDM, Section 7, T.25S., R.37E., MDM, Section 36, T.24S., R.37E., MDM, and portions of the irregular boundary.

The southern boundary adjustments also improve manageability. The area is now receiving use by ORVs along the canyons and has a high potential for ORV use along Highway 178. The boundary is relocated to points where, because of the topography, vehicular access can be controlled and the wilderness values maintained.

The Caliente Mtn. WSA is recommended as unsuitable for wilderness. There is a heavy demand for vehicular access for hunting and rockhounding. Portions of the WSA have potential for mineral development and further exploration for minerals. Several oil and gas leases have valid existing rights. If boundary adjustments are made for the mineral potential, non-

federal inholdings in Section 16 and 19, T.11N., R.27W., SBM, and enhancement of manageability, the integrity of the WSA as a wilderness area would be lost.

The Piute-Cypress WSA is recommended as unsuitable for wilderness due to the degradation of the wilderness values by mining and ORVs, the need for the construction of fuel breaks in the WSA for the protection of the local community (Bodfish), the high mineral potential of the area, and the difficulty of manageability. The number of access points and the degree of community development adjacent to the boundary would make it very difficult to manage for maintenance of its wilderness values. The important Piute Cypress Grove found in a portion of the WSA is already adequately protected by its status as a Natural Area (BLM) and a Botanical Area (USFS).

The Sheep Ridge and Milk Ranch/Case Mtn. WSAs are recommended as unsuitable for wilderness. Both do not have sufficient size or possess outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation except when considered with the adjoining National Park lands. The park lands have not been designated as wilderness areas. In addition, both areas do not significantly contribute diversity to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Sheep Ridge has moderate potential for minerals. Cherry Falls, along its eastern boundary, is intensively used by recreational visitors and will need facility development to prevent further resource damage. Aside from Cherry Falls, present management is adequately protecting the resource.

Portions of the Case Mtn. and Milk Ranch blocks have high potential for producing valuable forest products. Parts are unmanageable due to small size and irregular boundaries. The North Fork block will be difficult to manage for its wilderness values due to its small size and ease of access.

Alternative II -- All Wilderness

Objectives

The objectives for Merced River, Panoche Hills North and South, Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous, Ventana Wilderness Contiguous, Caliente Mountain, Sheep Ridge, Milk Ranch/Case Mountain, Owens Peak, and Piute-Cypress WSAs are to:

- Maximize wilderness acreage administered by BLM in the EIS area by recommending all wilderness study areas as suitable for designation as wilderness.
- Allow for livestock grazing and wildlife improvement projects while maintaining wilderness values.
- Protect the unique ecotone formed by the interfacing of four ecological communities in Owens Peak.
- Improve consistency of management with the adjacent wilderness and proposed wilderness on National Park and Forest Service Land.
- Give long-term protection to paleontological resources.

Description of Alternative

Alternative II recommends that all WSAs be designated as wilderness, a total of 95,049 acres Federal land and 1,680 acres acquired land (see Map 2-2).

The following acquisitions are proposed in the Caliente Mountain WSA:

- 1) The 440 acres of state land at Caliente Mountain.
- 2) The 40-acre parcel in Post Canyon.

In the Owens Peak WSA acquire:

- 1) The 120-acre parcel at Lamont Peak.
- 2) The 360-acre parcel north of Morris Peak.
- 3) The 720-acre parcel on Spanish Needles Creek

Vehicle use would be allowed for maintenance of range and wildlife improvement projects when no other means are practical, and construction of such projects when wilderness values are benefitted.

In Sheep Ridge, special Congressional approval for maintenance of the fuel break in Sec. 27, T.15S., R.28E., MDM, would be required to be consistent with California Department of Forestry (CDF) plans.

Under BLM wilderness management policy, excavation of paleontological resources is not normally permitted, but may be allowed on a case by case basis with State Director approval.

Alternative III -- Partial Wilderness

Objectives

Portions of Panoche Hills South, Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous, Sheep Ridge and Owens Peak WSAs share the following primary objectives:

- To provide a wilderness experience.
- To provide for management of the wilderness resource.
- To allow for livestock grazing and wildlife improvement projects while maintaining wilderness values (except in Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous under National Monument administration).
- To protect the unique ecotone formed by the interfacing of four ecological communities in Owens Peak.
- To provide for consistent management with adjacent National Monument wilderness in Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous.
- To give long-term protection to paleontological resources.

The objective for the Merced River, Panoche Hills North, Ventana Wilderness Contiguous, Caliente Mountain, Milk Ranch/Case Mountain, Piute-Cypress and the unsuitable portions of Panoche Hills South, Pinnacles Wilderness

Contiguous, Sheep Ridge and Owens Peak WSAs is to manage for utilization of all resources, including those not compatible with wilderness designation.

Description of Alternative

Alternative III recommends that 34,007 acres be designated suitable and 61,042 acres be designated unsuitable for wilderness.

The most remote portion of Panoche Hills South would be designated suitable (5,600 acres). Though management of this portion as wilderness would be easier than for the entire WSA, manageability would still be somewhat difficult due to ORV trespass. Vehicle use would be allowed for maintenance of range and wildlife projects when no other means are practical and construction of such projects when wilderness values would be benefitted.

Management of the Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous would be the same as under alternative I with 2,200 acres suitable and 3,638 acres unsuitable.

In Owens Peak, all of the area north of Chimney Creek is recommended as unsuitable for wilderness designation. This will allow for the use of the existing gravel pit and meet the demand for vehicular access for pinyon nut and Christmas tree harvesting. More intensive management methods will be required to attempt to control the ORV use that has historically occurred at the many access points on the southern edge of the unit. Management along the western edge would also be difficult due to the irregular boundary and the inclusion of the non-public land.

In Sheep Ridge, the area around Cherry Falls and the CDF fire break is recommended as unsuitable for wilderness designation. This allows for the development of a walk-in campground at Cherry Falls to meet local recreation demand and prevent further resource damage. It eliminates from wilderness the fire break that CDF uses chemicals and motorized equipment to maintain.

The Merced River, Panoche Hills North, Ventana Wilderness Contiguous, Caliente Mountain, Milk Ranch/Case Mountain, Piute-Cypress, and portions of Panoche Hills South, Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous, Sheep Ridge, and Owens Peak WSAs are recommended as unsuitable for wilderness designation. See Alternative I for the rationale for this recommendation.

Alternative IV -- No Wilderness

Objectives

Merced River, Panoche Hills North and South, Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous, Ventana Wilderness Contiguous, Caliente Mountain, Sheep Ridge, Milk Ranch/Case Mountain, Owens Peak and Piute-Cypress WSAs will be managed for utilization of all resources, including those not compatible with wilderness designation.

Description of Alternative

All WSAs, a total of 95,049 acres, will be recommended as unsuitable for wilderness designation.

Management of Merced River, Panoche Hills North and South, Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous, and Ventana Wilderness Contiguous would be as outlined in the Sierra, Fresno/San Benito, and Monterey Management Framework Plans and further defined in the description of Alternative I for nonsuitable areas. Caliente Mountain, Sheep Ridge, Milk Ranch/Case Mountain, Owens Peak and Piute-Cypress are presently managed on a case by case basis for multi-resource utilization to meet public demand while encouraging environmental protection. More refined land use plans are currently being developed for these five WSAs.

Alternative V -- No Action

Objectives - Same as Alternative IV

Description of Alternative

This alternative recommends that 95,049 acres be designated nonsuitable for wilderness and managed under current management practices.

Management of the Merced River, Panoche Hills North and South, Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous, Ventana Wilderness Contiguous, Caliente Mountain, Sheep Ridge, Milk Ranch/Case Mountain, Owens Peak, and Piute-Cypress WSAs would be the same as described in Alternative IV.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT REJECTED

Greater acreages of suitable recommendations were considered for analysis. However, planning did not result in any realistic recommendations over 34,007 acres. Though the range of suitable acreage between 34,007 acres (Alternative III) and 95,049 acres (Alternative II) is large, no "artificial" alternatives were contrived.

LEGEND

- Public Lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management.
- Wilderness Study Area. (Dashed line denotes road.)
- Area recommended as Suitable for preservation as wilderness.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with an existing wilderness managed by another agency.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with a proposed wilderness by another agency.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with a proposed wilderness by the Bureau of Land Management in the California Desert Plan.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with a further planning roadless area identified by U.S.F.S. in BARE II.

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS ALTERNATIVE I PROPOSED ACTION

- LEGEND**
- Public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management.
 - Wilderness Study Area. (Dashed line denotes road.)
 - Area recommended as Suitable for Preservation as wilderness
 - Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with an existing wilderness managed by another agency.
 - Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with proposed wilderness by another agency.
 - Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with a proposed wilderness by the Bureau of Land Management in the California Desert Plan
 - Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with a further planning roadless area identified by the U.S.F.S. in RARE II

**CENTRAL CALIFORNIA
WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS
ALTERNATIVE I
PROPOSED ACTION**

LEGEND

- Public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management.
- Wilderness Study Area. (Dashed line denotes road.)
- Area recommended as Suitable for preservation as wilderness.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with an existing wilderness managed by another agency.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with a proposed wilderness by another agency.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with a proposed wilderness by the Bureau of Land Management in the California Desert Plan.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with a further planning roadless area identified by U.S.F.S. in RARE II.

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS ALTERNATIVE II ALL WILDERNESS

LEGEND

- Public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management.
- Wilderness Study Area. (Dashed line denotes road.)
- Area recommended as Suitable for Preservation as Wilderness
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with an existing wilderness managed by another agency.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with proposed wilderness by another agency.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with a proposed wilderness by the Bureau of Land Management in the California Desert Plan
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with a further planning roadless area identified by the U.S.F.S. in RARE II

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS ALTERNATIVE II ALL WILDERNESS

MAP 2-2

0 1 2 3 4 5
MILES

LEGEND

- Public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management.
- Wilderness Study Area. (Dashed line denotes road.)
- Area recommended as suitable for preservation as wilderness.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with an existing wilderness managed by another agency.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with a proposed wilderness by another agency.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with a proposed wilderness by the Bureau of Land Management in the California Desert Plan.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with a further planning roadless area identified by U.S.F.S. in RARE II.

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS ALTERNATIVE III PARTIAL WILDERNESS

LEGEND

- Public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management.
- Wilderness Study Area. (Dashed line denotes road.)
- Area recommended as Suitable for Preservation as Wilderness
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with an existing wilderness managed by another agency.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with proposed wilderness by another agency.
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with a proposed wilderness by the Bureau of Land Management in the California Desert Plan
- Boundary of Wilderness Study Area with a further planning roadless area identified by the U.S.F.S. in RARE II

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS ALTERNATIVE III PARTIAL WILDERNESS

Implications of Wilderness Designation

Section 603(a) of FLPMA directs the BLM to review roadless areas for wilderness qualities. Congress reserved the right to designate wilderness areas. Following this designation, BLM will administer wilderness areas utilizing the same provisions of the Wilderness Act of 1964 which apply to National Forest wilderness areas as incorporated in the Bureau Wilderness Management Policy, September, 1981. Table 2-1 identifies the relationship between wilderness management under the Act and: (1) earlier legislation and (2) certain of the resources present within the WSAs.

Table 2-1
Implications of Wilderness Designation

Multiple-Use-Sustained-Yield Act of 1960	Wilderness Act states that there is no basic conflict. However, motorized vehicles and equipment, landing of aircraft, roads, structures, installations, and commercial enterprises are prohibited.
Mining Law of 1872	Amended to allow mineral entry and development in wilderness areas only until midnight, December, 31, 1983, after which only patented claims and claims with valid existing rights may continue operations. All title to land surface reserved to the United States. No use of surface that is not reasonably required for mining or prospecting except as otherwise expressly provided in Wilderness Act.
Access	Right of access to mining claims, state-owned and privately-owned land is preserved, and roads can be maintained.
Land Exchange	Public land outside wilderness can be exchanged for inholdings. However, Wilderness designated lands cannot be exchanged. They may be transferred to other Federal agencies as long as they remain Wilderness.
Grazing	Grazing existing prior to designation may continue under the Wilderness Act. Certain uses, such as use of motorized vehicles to support grazing, are permissible (House Report 96-617). No new grazing uses permitted without act of Congress after designation. However, allotment management plans may be developed for existing grazing leases.
Wildlife and Vegetation	Exotic species cannot be introduced. Most vegetation eradication measures prohibited unless case-by-case assessment indicates minor impacts on wilderness values.

Wilderness Management Plans	Will be developed and will specify visitor management methods needed to mitigate human impacts on wilderness values. Will specify systems to monitor use and detect adverse impacts.
Emergency Situations	Wilderness qualities may be adversely affected in situations involving human health and safety. Law enforcement agencies may use motor vehicles in emergencies. Normal patrol would be barred, however.
Wildfires and Insect Epidemics	May be attacked with any tool available if threatening human life or property within the wilderness or life, resources, or property outside of the wilderness. Tools and methods will be selected to cause minimum degradation. Pre- and post-suppression methods permitted, but should benefit wilderness or the protection of public health and safety.

WILDERNESS IMPACT SUMMARY

<u>Element</u>	<u>Alternative I</u>	<u>Alternative II</u>	<u>Alternative III</u>	<u>Alternative IV</u>	<u>Alternative V</u>
Wilderness Designation					
a. Suitable	16,630 acres	95,049 acres	34,007 acres	0 acres	0 acres
b. Nonsuitable	78,419 acres	0 acres	61,042 acres	95,049 acres	95,049 acres
c. Total WSA	95,049 acres	95,049 acres	95,049 acres	95,049 acres	95,049 acres
Recreation					
a. ORV use	Not permitted on 16,630 acres.	Not permitted	Not permitted on 34,007 acres	No impact	No impact
b. Hunting/Sight-seeing/Rock-hounding	Increased walking distances resulting from vehicle route closures on 16,630 acres.	Increased walking distances resulting from vehicle route closures.	Increased walking distances resulting from vehicle route closures on 34,007 acres.	No impact	No impact
c. Camping/water-related activities	Facilities development permitted.	Facilities development precluded.	Same as Alternative I.	Same as Alternative I.	Same as Alternative I.
d. Pinyon nut harvesting	No change.	Restricted by lack of vehicular access.	No change.	No change.	No change.
Livestock Grazing	Loss of 40 AUMs in Pinnacles WSA due to NPS regulations. Vehicles permitted for maintenance of improvements when no other means are practical. Some project development constrained.	Vehicles permitted for maintenance of improvements when no other means are practical. Some project development constraint.	Same as Alternative I.	No change.	No change.

<u>Element</u>	<u>Alternative I</u>	<u>Alternative II</u>	<u>Alternative III</u>	<u>Alternative IV</u>	<u>Alternative V</u>
Cultural	Protection through ACEC designation in the Merced River WSA.	Protection through wilderness designation.	Same as Alternative I.	Same as Alternative I.	Same as Alternative I.
RTE/Sensitive Species	Protection through ACEC designation in the Merced River WSA and through Natural Area/Botanical Area status in Piute-Cypress WSA.	Protection through wilderness designation.	Same as Alternative I.	Same as Alternative I.	Same as Alternative I.
Adjacent Agricultural Lands	Malathion spraying along eastern edge of Panoche Hills South permitted.	Time required for Director approval may reduce effectiveness of application.	Same as Alternative I.	Same as Alternative I.	Same as Alternative I.
Forestry					
a. Pest Control	Methods of control limited in suitable areas.	Methods of control limited.	Methods of control limited in suitable areas.	No impact.	No impact.
b. Christmas tree harvest	No impact.	Precluded.	No impact.	No impact.	No impact.
c. Forest Products Harvest	No impact.	Precluded.	No impact.	No impact.	No impact.
Community Expansion	No impact.	Precluded.	No impact.	No impact.	No impact.

<u>Element</u>	<u>Alternative I</u>	<u>Alternative II</u>	<u>Alternative III</u>	<u>Alternative IV</u>	<u>Alternative V</u>
Fire					
a. Pre-suppression/ suppression	Limited to cases benefitting wilderness values or public health and safety in designated wilderness areas.	Same as Alternative I.	Same as Alternative I.	No impact.	No impact.
b. Prescribed Burns.	Limited to cases benefitting wilderness values. Motorized equipment prohibited in designated wilderness areas.	Same as Alternative I.	Same as Alternative I.	No impact.	No impact.
Land Tenure Adjustment	None proposed.	Acquisition of 1,680 acres.	None proposed.	None proposed.	None proposed.
Minerals	No new claims or leases after December 31, 1983, on 16,630 acres.	No new claims or leases after December 31, 1983.	No new claims or leases after December 31, 1983, on 34,007 acres.	No impact.	No impact.
Paleontological	Scientific excavation permitted.	Scientific excavation not encouraged in designated wilderness areas.	Scientific excavation not encouraged in designated wilderness areas.	No impact.	No impact.
Wildlife	Vehicle use for construction and maintenance of improvements when no other means are practical.	Same as Alternative I.	Same as Alternative I.	No impact.	No impact.

CHAPTER 3

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

CHAPTER III

AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

DATA BASE

Data was collected through field research, review of current research documents prepared by other public agencies, public meetings and workshops, information request letters, and personal contacts with known experts.

The wilderness qualities were identified by field examinations using the methods described in the BLM Wilderness Inventory Handbook, September 27, 1978, public meetings, and analysis of public comments on the California Statewide Non-Desert Wilderness Inventory.

The study of the Folsom and Hollister Resource Area WSAs utilized existing data from the Sierra, Fresno-San Benito, and Monterey planning efforts. Data for the Caliente Resource Area studies was taken from the South Sierra Foothills planning area inventories, the Temblor-Caliente and Kaweah Management Framework Plans, and other available sources.

GENERAL

Population Centers:

Two major West Coast population centers are within a day's drive (5 hours) of the wilderness study areas in this EIS. They are the San Francisco Bay Area and the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area, with a combined overall population of approximately 14 million people (1980 census figures). In a more localized context, 19 Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs - see Glossary for a definition) fall within a day's drive of at least one or more of the WSAs. A list of these population centers and their corresponding populations follows. The Wilderness Planning Criteria matrix indicates the number of these SMSAs that are within a day's drive of each WSA.

Population Centers (SMSAs) Within a Day's Drive (5 hours) of the WSAs in this EIS

<u>SMSA</u>	<u>Population</u>
Anaheim - Santa Ana - Garden Grove	1,925,840
Bakersfield	401,540
Chico	143,851
Fresno	507,005
Los Angeles - Long Beach	7,444,521
Modesto	265,671
Oxnard - Simi Valley - Ventura	529,425
Riverside - San Bernardino - Ontario	1,538,066
Sacramento	1,010,989
Salinas - Seaside - Monterey	283,086
San Francisco - Oakland	3,225,981
San Jose	1,290,487

<u>SMSA</u>	<u>Population</u>
Santa Barbara - Santa Maria - Lompoc	297,722
Santa Cruz	186,873
Santa Rosa	292,275
Stockton	347,312
Vallejo - Fairfield - Napa	325,640
Visalia - Tulare - Porterville	245,738
Yuba City	101,979

Geographic Distribution

Fourteen existing wilderness areas are located within 100 miles of the EIS WSAs, totalling 1,641,522 acres. A large number of administratively endorsed wilderness study areas and other study areas also fall within the 100-mile radius. As an example, 21 administratively endorsed wilderness study areas totalling 1,119,841 acres are within 100 miles of the Merced River WSA, while 98 other study areas totalling 2,393,385 acres fall within the 100-mile radius from the Sheep Ridge WSA. The following list represents the existing wilderness areas located within 100 miles of the WSAs in the EIS area. The Wilderness Planning Criteria matrix indicates the number of existing wilderness areas and the total acreage within the 100-mile radius of each WSA.

Designated Wilderness Areas Within 100 Miles of the WSAs

<u>Name</u>	<u>Administrating Agency</u>	<u>Size</u>
Desolation	USFS	63,475
Domeland	USFS	62,686
Emigrant	USFS	106,091
Golden Trout	USFS	303,287
Hoover	USFS	48,597
John Muir	USFS	499,675
Kaiser	USFS	22,700
Minarets	USFS	107,380
Mokelumne	USFS	49,461
Pinnacles	NPS	12,952
San Gabriel	USFS	36,118
San Rafael	USFS	149,040
Santa Lucia	USFS	18,666
Ventana	USFS	161,394

Landform/Ecosystem Diversity

Seven landform/ecosystems are represented in the EIS WSAs, as determined through classification utilizing the Bailey-Kuchler Ecosystems of the United States classification system. The seven landform/ecosystems are listed below. The Wilderness Planning Criteria matrix indicates the number of

existing wilderness areas with representatives of each WSA's landform/
ecosystem and the total acreage represented in the National Wilderness
Preservation System.

Landform - Ecosystem

California Grassland Province - Juniper-Pinyon Woodland
California Grassland Province - California Steppe
Sierran Forest Province - Mixed Conifer
Sierran Forest Province - Juniper-Pinyon Woodland
Sierran Forest Province - California Oakwoods
Sierran Forest Province - Chaparral
California Chaparral Province - Chaparral

Table 3-1

WILDERNESS PLANNING CRITERIA MATRIX

				MERCED RIVER	PANOCHÉ HILLS NORTH	PANOCHÉ HILLS SOUTH	PINNACLES WILDERNESS CONTIGUOUS	VENTANA WILDERNESS CONTIGUOUS
WILDERNESS VALUES	WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS		SIZE	12,835 acres	6,677 acres	11,267 acres	5,838 acres	680 acres
	NATURALNESS	SOLUTION/ RECREATION	Firebreaks & ways. Abandoned railroad parallels the Merced River. Other abandoned projects include a diversion dam, a powerhouse foundation, and old mining developments.	Some ORV tracks, exploratory mining pits, & range and wildlife developments.	Some ORV tracks and range and wildlife improvements.	Firebreaks along some ridgelines, parcels on the north and east burned in 1978, some vehicle ways in the area, several miles of fence line.	Little-used vehicle routes intrude across the north boundary (approx. 4 mile total).	
			Outstanding. Numerous canyons, rugged mtns. Water-related primitive recreation along the Merced River. Some foot trails.	Outstanding opportunities due to topographic screening. Outside influences: adjacent intensive agricultural modification, Interstate 5, V.O.R. station, microwave towers.	Same as: Panoche Hills North.	Dense brush & rugged topography provide outstanding opportunities only in conjunction with Pinnacles National Monument wilderness.	The management area has outstanding opportunities for solitude only in conjunction with the Ventana Wilderness Area. Outside influences include an adjacent aircraft landing strip, a power line, and residences.	
	SPECIAL FEATURES		RTE/Sensitive Species: Limestone salamander & shaggy hair lupine. 25 known archeological sites. Historical mining developments and the Yosemite RR grade.	RTE/Sensitive: San Joaquin kit fox, blunt-nosed leopard lizard, giant kangaroo rat, San Joaquin antelope squirrel, San Joaquin dune beetle. Significant paleontology resources.	Same as Panoche Hills North.	Candidate endangered species, <i>Eriogonum portonii</i> , found in one parcel; may occur throughout the area. Appeared after the Highway 25 fire in 1978.	None specific to the MA.	
	MULTIPLE RESOURCE BENEFITS		Protection of RTE/Sensitive species & cultural values.	Best long term protection for sensitive species and paleontological resources. Watershed, soil, and visual resources may be enhanced in the long run.	Same as Panoche Hills North.	No significant benefits.	No significant benefits.	
	NATURAL SYSTEMS		Sierran Forest Province: chaparral represented by 4 existing wilderness areas (119,825 acres) & 4 administratively endorsed wilderness study areas (28,272 acres).	California Grassland Province - California steppe ecosystem not represented in the National Wilderness Preservation System.	Same as Panoche Hills North.	California Chaparral Province - Chaparral represented by 5 existing wilderness areas (183,546 acres) and 10 admin. endorsed study areas (148,940 acres).	Sierran Forest Province - Chaparral represented by four wilderness areas (119,825 acres) and four areas admin. endorsed for wilderness (28,272).	
	DIVERSITY OPPORTUNITIES REAR POP. CENTERS		Within one days drive of 17 SMSAs.	Within one days drive of five SMSAs; low demand due to availability of other wilderness areas.	Same as Panoche Hills North.	Within one days drive of seven SMSAs.	Within one days drive of six SMSAs.	
	GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION		(Yosemite National Park 30 minutes from the area). Within 100 miles of: 7 wilderness areas (897,379 acres), 21 areas administratively endorsed for wilderness (1,119,841 acres) & 69 other WSAs (1,257,829 acres)	Within 100 miles of: 3 wilderness areas (197,046 acres), 2 areas administratively endorsed for wilderness (8,082 acres), and 18 other WSAs (196,559 acres).	Same as Panoche Hills North.	Within 100 miles of: 3 wilderness areas (194,745 acres), 1 area administratively endorsed for wilderness (2,750 acres), 13 other WSAs (109,925 acres).	The WSA is within 100 miles of: 2 wilderness areas (174,346 acres), 1 administratively endorsed unit (2,750 acres), 9 WSAs (80,638 acres).	
	MANAGE-ABILITY		Effective management difficult. Large numbers of claims and high mineral potential; vehicle encroachment from adjacent ORV area.	Effective management very difficult due to lack of natural barriers to vehicle use.	Same as Panoche Hills North.	Some difficulty in effective management due to small size and irregular shapes of 5 parcels. Grazing and hunting inconsistent with adjacent NPS wilderness.	Effective management difficult due to small size & protruding character from adjacent wilderness. Would not enhance adjacent wilderness manageability.	

Table 3-1 (con't)

WILDERNESS PLANNING CRITERIA MATRIX

			CALIENTE MOUNTAIN	SHEEP RIDGE	MILK RANCH/ CASE MOUNTAIN	OWENS PEAK	PIUTE-CYPRESS
WILDERNESS VALUES	WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS		19,018 acres	4,905 acres	5,742 acres	22,560 acres	BLM 3,578 acres USFS 1,949 acres TOTAL 5,527 acres
	SIZE	NATURALNESS	Naturalness impaired by OAG development and vehicle routes. Views of adjacent oil fields could impair wilderness experience, but ample opportunities for solitude exist.	Generally natural; a few primitive vehicle routes & firebreaks; undeveloped recreation area.	Generally natural; few primitive vehicle routes and a road in Milk Ranch block. Logging road on the boundary of the Case Mountain block.	Generally natural; a few primitive vehicle routes. Pacific Crest Trail crosses WSA.	Vehicle routes, ORV & mining activity in unit; extensive development adjacent to unit.
		SOLITUDE/RECREATION	Outstanding due to size.	Hampered by small size; opportunities exist only in conjunction with adjacent Sequoia National Park proposed wilderness.	Hampered by small size; opportunities exist only when viewed in conjunction with adjacent Sequoia National Park proposed wilderness.	Outstanding due to size, variable terrain and vegetation.	Outstanding. Dense vegetation, rugged topography. However, outside influences from adjacent community.
	SPECIAL FEATURES		No special features.	No special features.	Contains winter range for Mineral King Deer Herd; Sequoia Redwood Grove.	Contains Monache Deer Herd winter range.	Contains largest Piute Cypress Grove in existence.
	MULTIPLE RESOURCE BENEFITS		No significant benefits	No significant benefits.	Designation would help protect Mineral King Deer Herd in the Case Mountain block.	Designation would help protect Monache Deer Herd.	No significant benefits.
	DIVERSITY	NATURAL SYSTEMS	No representation of the California Grassland Province - Juniper-Pinyon Woodland or the California Grassland Province - California Steppe in the National Wilderness Preservation System.	Sierran Forest Province - California Oakwoods represented by 1 wilderness area (58,963 acres) and 1 area admin. endorsed for wilderness (5,800 acres).	Sierran Forest Prov. - Mixed Conifer forest rep.: 12 wilderness - (587,661 ac); 19 admin. endorsed (523,412 ac). SFP - chaparral rep.: 4 wilderness (119,825 ac); 4 admin. endorsed (28,272 ac).	Sierran Forest Province - Juniper-Pinyon Woodland not represented in NWPS. Area has four major biomes in one ecotone.	Sierran Forest Province - Juniper-Pinyon woodland not currently represented in NWPS.
		OPPORTUNITIES FOR POP. CENTERS	Within one days drive of eight SMSAs. Moderate demand for primitive recreation.	Within one days drive of seven SMSAs; demand low due to small area & proximity of other wilderness areas.	Within one days drive of 7 SMSAs; low demand due to small area and proximity of other wilderness areas.	Within one days drive of seven SMSAs. Moderate demand for primitive recreation.	Within one days drive of seven SMSAs; low demand due to small area and proximity of other wilderness areas.
		GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION	Within 100 miles of: 2 wilderness areas (169,439 acres), 3 admin. endorsed units (105,750 acres), 36 other WSAs (891,231 acres).	Within 100 miles of: 5 wilderness areas (995,728 acres), 17 admin. endorsed units (1,632,451 acres), 98 other WSAs (2,393,385 acres).	Within 100 miles of: 5 wilderness areas (995,728 acres), 17 admin. endorsed units (1,632 acres), 98 other WSAs (2,393,385 acres)	Within 100 miles of: 2 wilderness areas (365,973 acres), 11 admin. endorsed units (2,824,611 acres), 78 other WSAs (2,001,061 acres).	Within 100 miles of: 4 wilderness areas (551,131 acres), 9 admin. endorsed (971,561 acres), 79 other WSAs (2,091,799 acres).
	MANAGE-ABILITY		Effective management difficult due to pre-FLPMA oil and gas leases with valid existing rights.	Management difficult due to intensive recreation at Cherry Falls, a COF fuel break, small size and narrow, linear character.	Some difficulty due to small size and irregular shape of the three parcels.	Except for the northern and southern portions, areas is protected by natural barriers; the large size & diversity permit dispersal of users. Poor ability to control vehicular access.	Poor ability to protect wilderness values due to number of access points and nearness to extensive development.

MERCED RIVER (CA-040-203)

Other Resource Values

Topography	WSA consists of steep mountainous terrain traversed by the Merced and NF Merced Rivers.
Vegetation	The primary vegetation is Chamise Chaparral interspersed with manzanita, oak and some conifers.
Minerals	High mineral potential for jade, placer gold, and lode gold. Significant production of all 3 commodities. A total of 151 placer and lode claims in the area.
Grazing	Four authorized grazing leases covering approximately 90% of WSA and allocating 500 AUMs.
Cultural	Twenty-five known archeological sites. Several historic mining developments and the Yosemite RR grade.
RTE/Sensitive Species	Limestone salamander and the shaggy hair lupine.
Recreation	ORV use, both motorcycle and 4WD. Whitewater rafting along the Merced River. Hiking and fishing along the Merced and NF Merced with a minimal amount of overnight camping.
Fire	Area under contract with CDF for pre-suppression and suppression.

Wilderness Manageability

Management of the area to provide a quality wilderness experience will be difficult to achieve. Valid existing rights in association with minerals would make it difficult if not impossible to manage the area consistent with preservation of the wilderness character. Suction dredging along the Merced and NF Merced on claims with valid existing rights would be a constant noise intrusion into the area. In addition, the use of vehicles for maintenance of range and wildlife improvements when no other means are practical would affect wilderness values.

PANOCHÉ HILLS NORTH (CA-040-301A)

Other Resource Values

Topography	Located just west of the San Joaquin Valley. Steep, rugged terrain.
Recreation	Light to moderate hunting use during upland game hunting season. Also some birdwatching and sightseeing. Demand for ORV use but area is closed to vehicles except for four-wheeled vehicle use on designated routes from the start of quail hunting season until April 15.
Vegetation	Mediterranean annual grasses and shrubs of the California Steppe ecosystem.
Grazing	Four leases for sheep grazing. Trend generally stable.
Wildlife	Considerable investment has been made in wildlife habitat improvements, including two developed springs, ten silt catchments and six guzzlers. Planned projects include four additional silt catchments and two more guzzlers.
Minerals	Contains or very likely contains diatomite, gypsite, marl, phosphate rock and uranium. Most of the area is under oil and gas lease. Except for occasional prospecting, there is no present mineral-related use.
Paleontological	Vertebrate fossils are probably the most important found on Public land in California.

Wilderness Manageability

Management of the area for providing a high quality wilderness experience would be very difficult. The area received heavy off-road vehicle use in the late 60's, but it has been closed to motorcycle use since 1970. There is considerable demand for reopening the area to off-road motorcycle use and some trespass continues due to ease of access into the area.

PANOCHÉ HILLS SOUTH (CA-040-301B)

Other Resource Values

Topography	Located just west of the San Joaquin Valley. Steep, rugged terrain.
Recreation	Light to moderate hunting use during upland game hunting season. Also some birdwatching and sightseeing. Demand for ORV use, but area is closed to vehicles except for four-wheeled vehicle use on designated routes from the start of quail hunting season until April 15.
Vegetation	Mediterranean annual grasses and shrubs of the California Steppe ecosystem.
Agricultural	Malathion spraying is conducted on the eastern edge (about ½ mile) in conjunction with spraying on adjacent agricultural lands to control the beet leaf hopper.
Grazing	Two leases for sheep and one for cattle. Trend was declining slightly, but implementation of the Panoche Hills Management Plan is expected to eliminate this decline.
Wildlife	Considerable investment has been made in wildlife habitat improvements including nine developed springs and two guzzlers.
Minerals	Contains or very likely contains diatomite, gypsite, marl, phosphate rock and uranium. Most of the area is under oil and gas lease. Except for occasional prospecting, there is no present mineral-related use.
Paleontological	Vertebrate fossils are probably the most important found on Public land in California.

Wilderness Manageability

Management of the area for providing a high quality wilderness experience would be very difficult. The area received heavy off-road vehicle use in the late 60's, but it has been closed to motorcycle use since 1970. There is considerable demand for reopening the area to off-road motorcycle use and some trespass continues due to ease of access into the area.

PINNACLES WILDERNESS CONTIGUOUS (CA-040-303)

Other Resource Values

Topography	Steep slopes with poorly developed, shallow, rocky soils.
Recreation	Vehicle routes are utilized by private hunting clubs in association with adjacent private property owners. Public access is available only through Pinnacles National Monument in which firearms are prohibited.
Vegetation	California chaparral and oak savannah.
Grazing	Four grazing leases. Trend generally stable.
Fire	Program is described in the San Benito County Fire Management Plan. Burns have been conducted on parts of the WSA approximately every ten years for range improvement. Some areas have not burned in over 30 years. Past procedures have included fire line construction, mechanized chaining and use of helitorch and drip torches.
Minerals	Potential for copper, molybdenum, gold, silver, uranium, limestone, diatomaceous earth and oil and gas. Although these commodities may be present, there is no indication they exist in commercial quantities.

Wilderness Manageability

Management would be difficult due to the small size and irregular shapes of the five parcels. Grazing and hunting would be inconsistent with adjacent NPS wilderness management. Manageability could be enhanced by a cooperative agreement with the Pinnacles National Monument.

VENTANA WILDERNESS CONTIGUOUS (CA-040-308)

Other Resource Values

Topography	Steep rugged terrain. Southwest to northeast trending ridge extends through the area.
Recreation	There is no legal public access on the north, east, and west sides of the WSA. Access through the Ventana Wilderness on the south is very difficult due to dense brush and rugged terrain. One fourth mile of vehicle route receives minimal use from the adjacent private hunting club.
Vegetation	California chaparral ecotype.
Minerals	No known mineral occurrences within the WSA. Minimal potential for mercury and associated minerals.

Wilderness Manageability

Effective management would be difficult due to the small size and protruding character from the adjacent wilderness. In joint consultation with the Forest Service, it was determined that wilderness designation would not enhance management of the adjacent Ventana Wilderness. The area's irregular boundaries are not easily identifiable on the ground, since they do not follow natural contours or features.

CALIENTE MOUNTAIN (CA-010-042)

Other Resource Values

Topography	Rugged, precipitous range with Caliente Mountain being the highest peak (5,106') along the ridgeline.
Vegetation	Varies from dense chaparral and juniper along ridgelines to scattered shrubs and annual grasses in canyon floors.
Grazing	Contains three grazing allotments. Amount of grazing use dependent upon rainfall and resultant vegetation.
Recreation	Light use by hunters and hikers due to lack of legal access. Heavy demand for physical access for hunters and rock hounders.
Cultural Resources	Low potential for cultural values. None are on <u>National Register</u> .
Fire	Contract with CDF for total suppression.
RTE/Sensitive Species	Feeding range of California Condor and American Peregrine Falcon.
Wildlife	Deer and upland game.
Minerals	Low to moderate potential for phosphate and oil and gas. Zero to low potential for locatable minerals. All public land has been or is currently under oil and gas lease. Twelve pre-FLPMA oil and gas leases.

Wilderness Manageability

Effective management would be very difficult due to pre-FLPMA oil and gas leases with valid existing rights and non-federal inholdings. There is a strong demand for the development of legal access to the area. If it is developed to the WSA boundary, manageability would be made more difficult in relation to ORV control.

SHEEP RIDGE (CA-010-022)

Other Resource Values

Topography	WSA is a 6.5 mile long rugged, steep ridge trending southeast-northwest. Width varies from one mile to two miles. Overlooks Sequoia National Park and the North Fork Road.
Recreation	Intensive use by campers/day users at undeveloped recreational area at Cherry Falls. Rest of area receives very little use.
Grazing	WSA is part of two grazing allotments. Amount of grazing use dependent upon rainfall and resultant vegetation.
Vegetation	Cover type on south facing slopes consists of dense chaparral while remaining areas consist of scattered oaks and grasses.
Cultural Resources	No significant cultural values have been found. None are on <u>Federal Register</u> .
Minerals	Moderate potential for tungsten which is a strategic mineral.
Fire	Contract with CDF for total suppression of fire.
RTE/Sensitive Species	Within feeding range of southern bald eagle.

Wilderness Manageability

Effective management would be difficult due to historic intensive recreation use at Cherry Falls, which is causing resource damage, and a CDF fuel break at the north end which is maintained by chemicals and motorized equipment. Its small size and narrow, linear ridgeline character make solitude and dispersal of recreational users difficult.

MILK RANCH/CASE MOUNTAIN (CA-010-023)

Other Resource Values

Topography	WSA consists of varied topography from rocky, rounded steep slopes to low, rounded hills to steep sided, forested slopes cut by gorges.
Vegetation	Varies from conifer forest to dense chaparral to buckeye and oaks scattered over annual grasses. Small Redwood Groves exist.
Grazing	WSA is part of five grazing allotments. Amount of grazing use dependent upon rainfall and resultant vegetation.
Recreation	Due to lack of legal access, area is used by only a few hunters each year.
Cultural Resources	Low to medium sensitivity for cultural resources. None are on <u>National Register</u> .
Fire	Contract with CDF for total suppression with prescribed burns being conducted.
RTE/Sensitive Species	Within feeding range of California Condor.
Wildlife	Winter range for Mineral King Deer Herd.
Forestry	SYU-15 recommends parcels for Intensive Timber Management. Logging on adjacent private land.
Minerals	Low to moderately low mineral potential.

Wilderness Manageability

Due to lack of natural barriers and ease of access, the North Fork Block would be extremely difficult to manage as wilderness. Manageability of the Milk Ranch and Case Mountain Blocks is aided by the adjoining boundaries with the proposed National Park wilderness, natural barriers, and limited access. However, the small size and irregular boundaries of the parcels would make effective management difficult. No significant increase in public use of the area is anticipated. Therefore, additional visitor protection services should not be needed.

OWENS PEAK (CA-010-026)

Other Resource Values

Topography	WSA consists of rocky, steep slopes along the west face of the Sierra Nevada Crest and rolling terrain interspersed by meadows at lower elevation levels.
Vegetation	A unique ecotone formed by the convergence of Great Basin, Mojave Desert, California Annual, and Yellow Pine Forest vegetation communities is found.
Grazing	Two grazing allotments. This is an ephemeral/perennial range. The perennials are in poor condition. Amount of grazing use dependent on rainfall and resultant vegetation.
Recreation	Pacific Crest Trail, some mountaineering, hunting, ORV use, pinyon nut harvesting and rock bounding.
Cultural Resources	Cultural resource sensitivity is moderate to very high.
RTE/Sensitive species	Potential for <u>Phacelia novemmillensis</u> .
Fire	Full suppression by BLM crews.
Wildlife	Deer and upland game.
Minerals	Portions of WSA have low to moderate potential for tungsten, low for gold and zinc. Low to moderate interest in mining claim location.
Forestry	Christmas tree harvest.

Wilderness Manageability

Due to the rugged terrain, the central core of the WSA is self-protecting. It is protected by a California Desert District WSA on its eastern flank, which has been recommended as suitable for wilderness. The vehicle routes north of Chimney Creek are used annually for access to the gravel pit and Pinyon Nut and Christmas tree harvesting. Approximately 1,200 acres of private inholdings would need to be purchased to eliminate conflicting land use within the WSA. Control of ORVs along the southern boundary would be extremely difficult due to the continuous access opportunity from the highway.

Other Resource Values

Topography	WSA consists of rocky, steep mountain slopes.
Recreation	Evidence of ORV use. High interest in botanical values in Piute Cypress Grove.
Grazing	No authorized use known.
Vegetation	Pinyon-Juniper on upland slopes, dense chaparral on the south and west aspects. Digger Pine, dense brush, scattered oaks and Piute Cypress can also be found.
Cultural Resources	None found. None are on <u>National Register</u> .
Minerals	High potential for gold in Section 21. Moderate to high potential for mineral development in western sector.
Fire	Ridges of WSA may be needed for constructing of fire lines to protect community of Bodfish. Area under contract with CDF for total fire suppression.
RTE/Sensitive Species	Contains best grove of Piute Cypress in the world. The Piute Cypress are protected by Natural Area status and Botanical Area status on the Public and Forest Service lands, respectively. Other RTE/Sensitive species include Coville's Navarretia, Piute jewel flower, Kern River Larkspur, Pringle's yampah, and <u>Dudleva nova</u> .
Special Needs	Recent community expansion up to the boundary of the WSA indicates probable future demand for additional community development and recreation.

Wilderness Manageability

Management of the area for providing a quality wilderness experience would be extremely difficult. Enforcement of the prohibition of ORVs within the WSA would be extremely difficult due to the proximity of adjoining communities (at shared boundary) and the number of entry access points. Similarly, control of other activities (e.g. woodcutting) would prove very difficult.

CHAPTER 4

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

CHAPTER IV

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

INTRODUCTION

Any WSA found to be suitable for wilderness and so designated by Congress will result in management within a discrete range of actions defined by the Bureau's Wilderness Management Policy (1981) and a subsequent Wilderness Management Plan. Once suitability recommendations are acted upon, management will follow with the dominant objective being protection of the area's wilderness resources.

Therefore, recommending a WSA or portion thereof as suitable should be interpreted to mean that BLM feels the wilderness values can be best protected, utilized, and managed as a wilderness area. The "Implications of Wilderness Designation" portion of Chapter 2 indicates that an agency's discretion in managing a parcel of land will be somewhat limited under wilderness designation. Generally, vegetative manipulations, introduction of exotic plants and animals and certain recreational activities (e.g., trail bike riding) and services (e.g., flush toilets) are precluded. Pre-suppression and post-suppression fire control techniques may be utilized if recommended in a fire management plan (FMP). The recommendation will be made utilizing Congressional directives to consider public safety and the protection of an area's wilderness qualities.

A WSA, or portion thereof, is recommended as unsuitable for designation when it has been determined that the area in question is best suited for management and use other than wilderness to allow for broader utilization of resources. These areas permit the use of management techniques that are prohibited in wilderness areas. Implicit to a unsuitability recommendation is that the wilderness qualities of an area presently may be impaired to a degree that would preclude reconsideration of wilderness suitability in the next land use planning effort. Whereas other resource decisions may be modified as MFP amendments, this may not be possible for wilderness and may result in a lost opportunity for exclusive wilderness use.

The impact analysis will concentrate on those resources described in Chapter 3 which will be subject to the most significant impacts. Resources which will not be affected will not be addressed. Additionally, where impacts on resources were found to be similar to those described for earlier alternatives, the preceding analysis has been referenced. In some cases, limitations on impact analysis occurred due to a lack of data or where comparisons with previous studies were not appropriate. In such instances, knowledge of the area and professional judgment were used to identify potential impacts.

ALTERNATIVE I: PROPOSED ACTION

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Merced River (Nonsuitable: 12,835 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Wilderness values will not be protected under the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS).	Probable degradation of wilderness values due to ORV use, mining and grazing development.
	Recreation	ORV	ORV use would be permitted.	Degradation of solitude and naturalness.
		Whitewater	No impact to present whitewater use.	
	Rangeland	Livestock Grazing	Development of two small reservoirs and vehicle use for existing facility maintenance would be permitted.	Would degrade solitude and naturalness.
	Fire	Pre-suppression	Fuelbreaks will be maintained.	Degradation of naturalness.
		Prescribed Burning	Not limited to cases benefitting wilderness values. Use of motorized equipment permitted.	Degradation of naturalness.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	Open for mineral entry and development.	Probable degradation of wilderness values.
	Wildlife	Improvements	Vehicle use for construction and maintenance. Would be permitted when no other means are practical.	Would degrade naturalness and solitude.
	Cultural	General	Designation of Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).	Cultural resources would be protected.
	RTE/Sensitive Species	General	Designation of ACEC.	Limestone salamander and shaggy-hair lupine habitats would be protected.

ALTERNATIVE I: PROPOSED ACTION (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Panoche Hills N. (Nonsuitable: 6,677 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Wilderness values will not be protected under the NWPS.	Potential degradation of wilderness values due to mining. Most wilderness values protected by vehicle closure.
	Recreation	All	Designated vehicle routes open to four-wheeled vehicle use during upland game season.	Minor seasonal impact on solitude.
	Rangeland	Livestock Grazing	Vehicle use for maintenance of grazing operations would be permitted.	Degradation of solitude.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	Open for mineral entry and development	Possible degradation of wilderness values.
	Paleontological	General	Scientific collection permissible. Minor site damage from casual collecting.	Continued research by U.C. Berkeley and Fresno State University. Some loss of wilderness values.
	Wildlife	Improvements	Vehicle use for construction and maintenance would be permitted when no other means are practical.	Slight degradation of solitude.
Panoche Hills S. (Nonsuitable: 11,267 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Wilderness values will not be protected under the NWPS.	Potential degradation of wilderness values due to mining. Most wilderness values protected by vehicle closure.
	Recreation	All	Designated vehicle routes open to four-wheeled vehicle use during upland game season.	Minor seasonal impact on solitude.

ALTERNATIVE I: PROPOSED ACTION (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous (Suitable: 2,200 acres)	Rangeland	Livestock Grazing	Vehicle use for maintenance of grazing operations would be permitted.	Degradation of solitude.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	Open for mineral entry and development.	Possible degradation of wilderness values.
	Paleontologi- cal	General	Scientific collection permissible. Minor site damage from casual collecting.	Continued research by U.C. Berkely and Fresno State Uni- versity. Some loss of wilderness values.
	Wildlife	Improvements	Vehicle use for construction and maintenance would be permitted when no other means are practical.	Slight degradation of solitude.
	Adjacent Agricultural Lands	Pest Control	Malathion spraying of eastern edge.	Slight degradation of naturalness.
	Wilderness	Manageability	Administration by National Park Service (N.P.S.)	Enhanced manageability
	Recreation	Hunting	Precluded by N.P.S. regulations	Area used only by a few private hunting clubs.
	Rangeland	Livestock Grazing	Loss of about 40 AUMs due to N.P.S. regulations	Only 10 AUMs under lease; use of remainder may not be economically feasible due to fencing costs.
	Fire	Prescribed Burning	Limited to cases benefitting wilderness values. Use of mechanical equipment would be restricted.	Consistent with adjacent National Monument policy.

ALTERNATIVE I: PROPOSED ACTION (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous (Nonsuitable: 3,638 acres)		Suppression	Use of mechanized equipment constrained.	Possible increased costs.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	No new claims or mineral leases after December 31, 1983, in designated wilderness areas.	Though minerals may be present, there is no indication they exist in commercial quantities.
	Wilderness	Manageability	Wilderness values will not be protected under the NWPS.	Potential degradation of wilderness values due to fireline construction and mineral extraction.
	Recreation	Hunting	Vehicle use by private hunting clubs would continue.	Slight degradation of solitude.
	Rangeland	Livestock Grazing	300 AUMs retained.	No degradation of wilderness values.
	Fire	All	Use of motorized equipment permitted.	Degradation of naturalness.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	Open for mineral entry and development.	Possible degradation of wilderness values.
Ventana Wilder- ness Contiguous (Nonsuitable: 680 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Wilderness values will not be protected by the NWPS.	Potential degradation of wilderness values due to fireline construction.
	Recreation	Hunting	Vehicle use by private hunting clubs would continue.	Slight degradation of solitude along 1/4 mile vehicle route.
	Fire	All	Use of motorized equipment permitted.	Degradation of naturalness.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	Open for mineral entry and development.	Very low mineral potential.

ALTERNATIVE I: PROPOSED ACTION (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Caliente Mountain (Nonsuitable: 19,018 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Wilderness values will not be protected by the NWPS.	Probable degradation of wilderness values due to mineral development and vehicle use.
	Recreation	All	Possibly improve access.	Possible degradation of naturalness and solitude.
	Rangeland	Livestock Grazing	Would allow for rangeland improvements to increase livestock numbers.	Degradation of naturalness.
	Fire	Prescribed Burning	Not limited to cases benefitting wilderness values. Use of motorized equipment permitted.	Degradation of naturalness.
Sheep Ridge (Nonsuitable: 4,905 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Wilderness values will not be protected by NWPS.	Possible degradation of wilderness values due to fuelbreak maintenance and vehicle use.
	Recreation	Camping and water-related activity	Develop a walk-in campground at Cherry Falls.	Degradation of wilderness values.
	Rangeland	Livestock Grazing	Allow installation of water developments.	Degradation of naturalness.
	Fire	Prescribed Burning	Not limited to cases benefitting wilderness values. Use of motorized equipment permitted.	Degradation of naturalness.
		Pre-suppression	Fuelbreak maintenance permitted.	Degradation of naturalness. Consistent with California Department of Forestry (CDF) plans.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	Open to mineral entry and development.	Degradation of wilderness values where mineral development occurs.

ALTERNATIVE I: PROPOSED ACTION (cont't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Milk Ranch/ Case Mountain (Nonsuitable: 5,742 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Wilderness values will not be protected under the NWPS.	Probable degradation of wilderness values by vehicle use and forest products harvesting.
	Recreation	All	Vehicle access to Case Mountain would be developed.	Some degradation of solitude.
	Fire	Prescribed Burning	Same as Sheep Ridge	Same as Sheep Ridge
	Minerals	Mineral Development	Same as Sheep Ridge	Same as Sheep Ridge
	Wildlife	Deer Herd Management	Vehicle access for hunting	Some degradation of solitude; consistent with California Department of Fish and Game management objectives.
	Forestry	Pest Control	Would allow for removal of infected trees.	Degradation of naturalness.
		Timber harvest on adjacent private lands	Would allow continued access to property owners for timber harvest.	Degradation of wilderness values.
Owens Peak (Suitable: 14,430 acres)	Wilderness	Forest Product Harvest	Would permit harvest.	Degradation of wilderness values.
		Manageability	Area protected by natural barriers. Large size and diversity would disperse users.	Wilderness values would be maintained.

ALTERNATIVE I: PROPOSED ACTION (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Owens Peak (Nonsuitable: 8,130 acres)	Recreation	ORV	Seven miles of vehicle routes closed.	Some loss of recreation opportunity.
		Pacific Crest Trail (PCT)	Trail will be completed; water sources will be developed.	Consistent with implementation of the National Trail System Act of 1968. Minor degradation of wilderness values.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	No new claims or leases after December 31, 1983, in designated wilderness areas. Prospecting limited to non-vehicular, non-surface-disturbing activities.	Area has low to moderate mineral potential.
	Forestry	Pest Control	Methods of control would be limited.	Potential further spread of disease would degrade visual resources and create a fire hazard.
	Wilderness	Manageability	Wilderness values will not be protected under the NWPS.	Probable degradation of wilderness values due to ORV use and mining.
	Recreation	ORV	ORV use would be permitted.	Degradation of naturalness and solitude.
		Pinyon Nut Harvest	Permit vehicular access north of Chimney Creek	Some degradation of naturalness.
		Rockhounding	Permit vehicular access in South and Southwest section.	Some degradation of wilderness values.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	Open to mineral entry and development.	Degradation of wilderness values where mineral developments occur.

ALTERNATIVE I: PROPOSED ACTION (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Piute-Cypress (Nonsuitable: 5,527 acres)	Forestry	Pest Control	Methods of control not limited by wilderness policy.	Some degradation of naturalness.
		Christmas Tree Harvest	Allow harvest north of Chimney Creek.	Degradation of wilderness values.
	Wilderness	Manageability	Wilderness values will not be protected under the NWPS.	Probable degradation of wilderness values due to ORV use and mining.
	Recreation	ORV	ORV use not limited by wilderness policy.	Degradation of wilderness values.
	Fire	Pre-suppression	Fuelbreaks may be constructed	Possible degradation of naturalness.
		Prescribed Burning	Not limited to cases benefitting wilderness values. Use of motorized equipment permitted.	Possible degradation of naturalness.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	Open to mineral entry and development except for Piute-Cypress Natural Area.	Degradation of wilderness values where mineral development occurs.
	Lands	Community Expansion	Not limited by wilderness policy.	Probable degradation of wilderness values.
	RTE	General	Not protected by wilderness designation.	The Piute-Cypress Groves are protected by Natural Area status on the Public Lands and Botanical Area Status on the Forest Service lands.

ALTERNATIVE II: ALL WILDERNESS

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Merced River (Suitable: 12,835 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Effective management difficult due to potential encroachment from adjacent ORV use area and large number of existing mining claims with high potential for increased mining activity.	Uncontrollable degradation of wilderness values.
	Recreation	ORV	ORV use prohibited.	Some loss of ORV recreation opportunity.
		Whitewater	No impact on whitewater use.	
	Rangeland	Livestock Grazing	Reservoir construction prohibited Occasional use of motorized vehicles for existing facility maintenance.	Maximum stocking rates not realized. Some degradation of solitude when vehicles used.
	Fire	Pre-suppression/suppression	Techniques limited to cases benefitting wilderness values or public health and safety.	Potential degradation of naturalness and increased cost of fire management activities.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	No new claims or leases after December 31, 1983, in designated wilderness areas.	Some loss of new mineral development.
	Wildlife	Improvements	Vehicle use for construction and maintenance would be permitted when no other means are practical.	Slight degradation of naturalness and solitude.

ALTERNATIVE II: ALL WILDERNESS (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Panoche Hills North (Suitable: 6,677)	Cultural	General	Wilderness protection precludes need for ACEC designation.	Cultural resources would be protected.
	RTE/Sensitive Species	General	Wilderness protection precludes need for ACEC designation.	RTE/Sensitive Species would be protected.
	Wilderness	Manageability	Effective management very difficult due to lack of natural barriers to vehicle use.	Some continued degradation of naturalness and solitude.
	Recreation	Vehicle Access/ Hunting	Six miles of vehicle routes closed.	Would require extensive fencing; some decline in hunting use.
		ORV	Long-term closure to ORV use.	Area has been closed to motorcycle use since 1970.
	Rangeland	Livestock Grazing	Vehicle use for maintenance of grazing operations would be permitted when no other means are practical.	Slight degradation of solitude.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	No new claims or leases after December 31, 1983, in designated wilderness areas.	Slight potential for minerals based on past activity.
	Paleontological	General	Scientific excavation not encouraged. Long-term protection of sites.	Reduced scientific study.

ALTERNATIVE II: ALL WILDERNESS (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Panoche Hills South (Suitable: 11,267 acres)	Wildlife	Improvements	Vehicle use for construction and maintenance would be permitted when no other means are practical.	Slight degradation of naturalness and solitude.
	Wilderness	Manageability	Effective management very difficult due to lack of natural barriers to vehicle use.	Some continued degradation of naturalness and solitude.
	Recreation	Vehicle Access/ Hunting	Nine miles of vehicle routes closed.	Would require extensive fencing. Some decline in hunting use.
		ORV	Long-term closure to ORV use.	Area has been closed to motor-cycle use since 1970.
	Rangeland	Livestock Grazing	Vehicle use for maintenance of grazing operations would be permitted when no other means are practical.	Slight degradation of solitude.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	No new claims or leases after December 31, 1983, in designated wilderness areas.	Slight potential for minerals based on past activity.
	Paleontological	General	Scientific excavation not encouraged. Long-term protection of sites.	Reduced scientific study.
	Wildlife	Improvements	Vehicle use for construction and maintenance would be permitted when no other means are practical.	Slight degradation of naturalness and solitude.

ALTERNATIVE II: ALL WILDERNESS (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous (Suitable: 5,838 acres)	Adjacent Agricultural Lands	Pest Control	Director approval required for Malathion spraying of eastern edge to control beet leaf hopper.	May reduce effectiveness of application and may increase costs to farmers.
	Wilderness	Manageability	Some difficulty in effective management due to small size, irregular shape of the five parcels.	Consistent with NPS wilderness except for grazing and hunting.
	Recreation	Hunting	Access more difficult due to closure of ten miles of vehicle routes.	Currently accessible to only a few private gun clubs.
	Rangeland	Livestock Grazing	About 340 AUMs retained.	Only 93 AUMs are under lease; other use may not be economically feasible due to fencing costs.
	Fire	Same as Alternative I under suitable		
	Minerals	Same as Alternative I under suitable		
	Wilderness	Manageability	Effective management difficult due to small size and protruding character from adjacent wilderness.	Does not enhance adjacent wilderness manageability.
Ventana Wilderness Contiguous (Suitable: 680 acres)	Recreation	Hunting	1/4 mile vehicle route closed.	Very minor impact on adjacent private hunting club.
	Fire	Prescribed Burning	Techniques limited to cases benefitting wilderness values. Use of mechanized equipment constrained.	Possible increased costs.

ALTERNATIVE II: ALL WILDERNESS (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Caliente Mountain (Suitable: 19,018 acres)	Minerals	Suppression	Use of mechanized equipment constrained.	Possible increased costs.
		Mineral Development	No new claims or mineral leases after December 31, 1983, in designated wilderness areas.	Virtually no impact due to low mineral potential.
	Wilderness	Manageability	Effective management difficult due to pre-FLPMA oil and gas leases with valid existing rights.	Uncontrollable degradation of naturalness.
	Recreation	All	Would preclude vehicular access.	Would not meet local demand for development of access.
	Rangeland	Livestock Grazing	Vehicle use for construction and maintenance of water developments would be permitted when no other means are practical.	Slight degradation of naturalness and solitude. Reduced degradation of watershed and wildlife habitat by livestock grazing.
	Fire	Prescribed Burns	Limited to cases benefitting wilderness values. Use of motorized equipment prohibited.	Would not realize maximum stocking rate of livestock.
	Land Tenure Adjustment	Acquisition	Acquire 440 acres of State land in Section 16, T.11N., R.27W., SEM at a total estimated cost of \$66,000. Purchase 40 acre parcel in Sec. 19, T.11N., R.27W., SEM at a total cost of \$6,000.	Would result in enhanced manageability.

ALTERNATIVE II: ALL WILDERNESS (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Sheep Ridge (Suitable: 4,905 acres)	Minerals	Mineral Development	No new claims or leases after December 31, 1983, in designated wilderness areas.	Twelve oil and gas leases have valid existing rights. Moderate potential for oil and gas development. Low to moderate potential for phosphates.
	Wilderness	Manageability	Effective management would be difficult due to historic intensive recreation use at Cherry Falls causing damage to the resource, a CDF fuelbreak in a right-of-way at the north end, and the area's small size and narrow, linear, ridgelike character.	Some degradation of natural values. Development of surrounding lands appears unlikely.
	Recreation	Camping and water-related activities	Precludes facility development necessary to control resource damage.	Degradation of resource values.
	Rangeland	Livestock Grazing	Improvements to increase live- stock numbers would be prohibited	Maximum stocking rates would not be realized.
	Fire	Prescribed Burning	Limited to cases benefitting wilderness values. Use of motorized equipment prohibited.	Would not realize maximum stocking rate of livestock.
		Pre-suppres- sion	Fuelbreak under existing right- of-way would be maintained.	Consistent with CDF plans. Some degradation of naturalness.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	No new claims or leases after December 31, 1983, in designated wilderness areas.	Moderate potential for tungsten which is a strategic mineral.

ALTERNATIVE II: ALL WILDERNESS (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Milk Ranch/ Case Mountain (Suitable: 5,742 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Some difficulty in effective management due to the small size and irregular shape of the three parcels.	Possible degradation of wilderness values.
	Recreation	All	Vehicle access to the wilderness boundary would be developed.	Recreation opportunities would be enhanced.
	Fire	Prescribed Burning	Limited to cases benefitting wilderness values. Use of motorized equipment prohibited.	Benefit to Giant Sequoia, watershed, and wildlife habitat. Potential increased costs.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	No new claims or leases after December 31, 1983, in designated wilderness areas.	Low mineral potential.
	Wildlife	Deer Herd Management	Vehicle access to boundary for hunting.	Consistent with California Department of Fish and Game plans.
	Forestry	Pest Control	Constrains methods of control of the Ips beetles.	Disease may spread and kill a large number of trees.
		Timber harvest on adjacent private lands	Would allow continued access on boundary road to property owners for timber harvest.	Outside influence on solitude.
		Forest Product Harvest	Precluded	Loss of local socio/economic value.

ALTERNATIVE II: ALL WILDERNESS (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Owens Peak (Suitable: 22,560 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Effective management impractical due to inability to control access in southern and northern sections.	Probable degradation of wilderness values.
	Recreation	ORV	Closed to ORV use.	Some loss of recreation opportunity.
		Pacific Crest Trail	Same as Alternative I	
		Pinyon Nut Harvesting	Reduced use due to lack of vehicle access.	Increased use and impacts on adjacent areas.
		Rockhounding	Reduced use due to lack of vehicle access.	Some loss of recreation opportunity.
	Land Tenure Adjustment	Acquisition	Acquire 120 acre parcel in Sec. 36, T.24S., R.36E., MDM, at a total cost of \$12,000; 720 acres in Sec. 12 and 13, T.25S., R.36E., MDM and Sec. 7, T.25S., R.37E., MDM, at a cost of \$200,000; and 360 acres in Sec. 32 and 33, T.25S., R.37E., MDM, at a cost of \$36,000.	Enhanced manageability.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	No new claims or leases after December 31, 1983, in designated wilderness areas. Prospecting limited to non-vehicular, non-surface disturbing activities.	Area has low to moderate mineral potential.

ALTERNATIVE II: ALL WILDERNESS (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Piute-Cypress (Suitable: 5,527 acres)	Forestry	Pest Control	Constrained methods of control of black stain root disease.	Potential further spread of disease would degrade visual resources and create a fire hazard.
		Christmas Tree Harvest	Precluded	Some loss of local socio/economic value.
	Wilderness	Manageability	Effective management difficult due to lack of natural barriers to vehicle use and proximity of extensive development.	Probable degradation of wilderness values.
	Recreation	ORV	Closed to ORV use.	Some loss of recreation opportunities.
	Fire	Pre-suppression	Limited to cases benefitting wilderness values or public health and safety. Use of motorized equipment prohibited.	Potential degradation of naturalness, increased cost of fire management activities.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	No new claims or leases after December 31, 1983, in designated wilderness areas.	High potential for some minerals.
	Lands	Community Expansion	Precluded	Adverse effect upon local community.

ALTERNATIVE III: PARTIAL WILDERNESS

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Merced River (Nonsuitable: 12,835 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Panoche Hills North (Nonsuitable: 6,677 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Panoche Hills South (Suitable: 5,600 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Effective management difficult due to lack of natural barriers to vehicle use.	Some continued degradation of naturalness and solitude.
	Recreation	Vehicle Access/ Hunting	Three miles of vehicle route closed.	Would require some additional fencing. Slight decline in hunting use.
		ORV	Long-term closure to ORV use.	Area has been closed to motor-cycle use since 1970.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	No new claims or mineral leases after December 31, 1983, in designated wilderness area.	Slight potential for minerals based on past activity.
	Paleontological	General	Scientific excavation not encouraged. Long-term protection of sites.	Reduced scientific study.
	Wildlife	Improvements	Vehicle use for construction and maintenance when no other means are practical.	Slight degradation of naturalness and solitude.
Panoche Hills South (Nonsuitable: 5,667 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Wilderness values will not be protected under NWFS.	Potential degradation of wilderness values due to mining. Most wilderness values protected by vehicle closure.

ALTERNATIVE III: PARTIAL WILDERNESS (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous (Suitable: 2,200 acres) Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous (Nonsuitable: 3,638 acres) Ventana Wilderness Contiguous (Nonsuitable: 680 acres)	Recreation	All	Six miles designated vehicle routes open to four-wheeled vehicle use during upland game season.	Minor seasonal impact on solitude.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	Open for mineral entry and development.	Possible degradation of wilderness values.
	Paleontological	General	Scientific collection permissible, minor site damage from casual collecting.	Continued research by U.C. Berkely and Fresno State University. Some loss of wilderness values.
	Wildlife	Improvements	Vehicle use for maintenance would be permitted.	Slight degradation of solitude.
	Same as Alternative I			
	Same as Alternative I			
	Same as Alternative I			

ALTERNATIVE III: PARTIAL WILDERNESS (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Caliente Mountain (Nonsuitable: 19,018 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Sheep Ridge (Suitable: 4,705 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Effective management would be difficult due to its small size and narrow, linear character.	Development of surrounding private land unlikely.
	Rangeland	Livestock Grazing	Improvements to increase live-stock number would be prohibited.	Maximum stocking rates would not be realized.
	Fire	Prescribed Burns	Limited to cases benefitting wilderness values. Use of motorized equipment prohibited.	Would not realize maximum stocking rate of livestock.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	No new claims or leases after December 31, 1983, in designated wilderness areas.	Moderate potential for tungsten which is a strategic mineral.
Sheep Ridge (Nonsuitable: 200 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Wilderness values would not be protected by NWPS.	Degradation of wilderness values due to recreational facility development, and fuelbreak maintenance.
	Recreation	Camping and water-related activities	Facilities would be developed at Cherry Falls to help control resource damage.	Some degradation of naturalness.
	Fire	Pre-supres-sion	Fuelbreak would be maintained.	Consistent with CDF plans;some degradation of naturalness.

ALTERNATIVE III: PARTIAL WILDERNESS (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Milk Ranch/ Case Mountain (Nonsuitable: 5,742 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Owens Peak (Suitable: 21,502 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Effective management is impracticable. Terrain does not lend itself to enforcement of vehicular closure.	Probable degradation of wilderness values due to ORV use and mining.
	Recreation	ORV	Closure of ORV south of Chimney Creek.	Some loss of recreational opportunity.
		PCT	Trail would be completed. Water sources would be developed.	Consistent with the National Trail System Act of 1968. Minor degradation of wilderness values.
		Rockhounding	No vehicular access in south and southwest section.	Loss of recreation opportunity.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	No new claims or mineral leases after December 31, 1983, in designated wilderness areas. Prospecting limited to non-vehicular non-surface disturbing activities.	Area has low to moderate mineral potential.
	Forestry	Pest Control	Constrained methods of control on Black Stain Root Disease.	Potential further spread of disease would degrade visual resources and cause a fire hazard.

ALTERNATIVE III: PARTIAL WILDERNESS (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Owens Peak (Nonsuitable: 1,058 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Wilderness values would not be protected by NWPS.	Potential degradation of wilderness values due to vehicular access.
	Recreation	ORV	ORV use would be permitted north of Chimney Creek.	Slight degradation of naturalness and solitude.
		Pinyon Nut Harvest	Permit vehicular access north of Chimney Creek.	Slight degradation of naturalness and solitude.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	Open to mineral entry and development.	Degradation of wilderness values where mineral development occurs.
	Forestry	Pest Control	Methods of control not limited by wilderness policy.	Some degradation of naturalness.
Piute-Cypress (Nonsuitable: 5,527 acres)		Christmas Tree Harvest	Allow harvest north of Chimney Creek.	Degradation of wilderness values.
	Same as Alternative I			

ALTERNATIVE IV: NO WILDERNESS

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Merced River (Nonsuitable: 12,835 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Panoche Hills North (Nonsuitable: 6,677 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Panoche Hills South (Nonsuitable: 11,267 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous (Nonsuitable: 5,838 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Wilderness values will not be protected under NWPS.	Potential degradation of wilderness values due to fireline construction and mineral extraction.
	Recreation	Hunting	Vehicle use by private hunting clubs would continue.	Slight degradation of solitude.
	Rangeland	Livestock Grazing	About 340 AUMs retained.	Only 93 AUMs are under leases; other use may not be economically feasible due to fencing costs.
	Fire	All	Use of motorized equipment permitted.	Degradation of naturalness.
	Minerals	Mineral Development	Open for mineral entry and development.	Possible degradation of wilderness values, although no indication that minerals exist in commercial quantities.

ALTERNATIVE IV: NO WILDERNESS (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Ventana Wilderness Contiguous (Nonsuitable: 680 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Caliente Mountain (Nonsuitable: 19,018 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Sheep Ridge (Nonsuitable: 4,905 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Milk Ranch/ Case Mountain (Nonsuitable: 5,742 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Owens Peak (Nonsuitable: 22,560 acres)	Wilderness	Manageability	Wilderness values will not be protected under NWPS.	Probable degradation of wilderness values due to ORV use, mining, pinyon pine nut gathering and Christmas tree harvest. Degradation of naturalness and solitude.
	Recreation	ORV	ORV use would be permitted.	Degradation of naturalness and solitude.
		Pinyon Nut Harvest	Vehicle access permitted.	Some degradation of naturalness and solitude.
		Rockhounding	Vehicle access permitted.	Some degradation of naturalness and solitude.

ALTERNATIVE IV: NO WILDERNESS (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Piute-Cypress (Nonsuitable: 5,527 acres)	Minerals	Mineral Development	Open to mineral entry and development.	Degradation of wilderness values where mineral development occurs.
	Forestry	Pest Control	Methods of control not limited by wilderness policy.	Some degradation of naturalness.
		Christmas Tree Harvest	Permitted	Some degradation of naturalness.
	Same as Alternative I			

ALTERNATIVE V: NO ACTION

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Merced River (Nonsuitable: 12,835 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Panoche Hills North (Nonsuitable: 6,677 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Panoche Hills South (Nonsuitable: 11,267 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Pinnacles Wilderness Contiguous (Nonsuitable: 5,838 acres)	Same as Alternative IV			
Ventana Wilderness Contiguous (Nonsuitable: 680 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Caliente Mountain (Nonsuitable: 19,018 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Sheep Ridge (Nonsuitable: 4,905 acres)	Same as Alternative I			

ALTERNATIVE V: NO ACTION (con't)

WSA	Resource	Activity	Impact	Significance
Milk Ranch/ Case Mountain (Nonsuitable: 5,742 acres)	Same as Alternative I			
Owens Peak (Nonsuitable: 22,560 acres)	Same as Alternative IV			
Piute-Cypress (Nonsuitable: 5,527 acres)	Same as Alternative I			

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List of Preparers

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Education</u>	<u>Professional Experience</u>
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Gerda Stine	Secretary (Typist)		11 years

GLOSSARY

GLOSSARY

ANIMAL UNIT MONTH (AUM): The amount of forage required to sustain the equivalent of one cow or five sheep for one month.

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN (ACEC): Areas within the public lands where special management attention is required (when such areas are developed or used or where no development is required) to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards.

CONTIGUOUS: Lands or legal subdivisions having a common boundary; lands having only a common corner are not contiguous.

ECOTONE: A transition area between two adjacent ecological communities usually exhibiting competition between organisms common to both.

FLPMA: The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-579, 90 Stat. 2743, 43 USC 1701).

IMPACT: The effect, influence, alteration, or imprint of an activity.

IMPAIR: To diminish in value or excellence.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING OPERATIONS: Those operations under permit where the primary purpose is the grazing of livestock for the production of food and fiber. Includes pack and saddle stock used in conjunction with such operations.

MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK PLAN (MFP): The Bureau's basic planning decision document prior to the adoption of a new planning process in 1979, in which the decision document is a Resource Management Plan (RMP).

MFP AMENDMENT: An amendment to a Management Framework Plan is initiated by the need to consider monitoring and evaluation findings, new data, new or revised policy, a change in circumstances, or an applicant's proposed action which may result in a significant change in a portion of the approved plan.

MINERAL ENTRY: The right to enter the Public Lands (under the administration of the BLM) to search for minerals and to claim or lease such minerals under the mining and mineral leasing laws and regulations.

MOTORIZED EQUIPMENT: Any machine activated by nonliving power source except small battery-powered, handcarried devices such as flashlights, shavers, Geiger counters, and cameras. Also "Mechanized Equipment".

MOTOR VEHICLE: Any vehicle which is self-propelled or any vehicle which is propelled by electric power obtained from batteries.

MULTIPLE RESOURCE VALUES AND USES: The present and potential uses of the various resources administered through multiple use management on the public lands and any public values associated with such uses.

MULTIPLE USE: "...the management of the public lands and their various resource values so that they are utilized in the combination that will best meet the present and future needs of the American people; making the most judicious use of the land for some or all of these resources or related services over areas large enough to provide sufficient latitude for periodic adjustments in use to conform to changing needs and conditions; the use of some lands for less than all of the resources; a combination of balanced and diverse resource uses that take into account the long-term needs of future generations for renewable and nonrenewable resources, including, but not limited to, recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, wildlife and fish, and natural scenic, scientific and historical values; and harmonious and coordinated management of the various resources without permanent impairment of the productivity of the land and the quality of the environment with consideration being given to the relative values of the resources and not necessarily to the combination of uses that will give the greatest economic return or the greatest unit output." (From section 103, FLPMA).

NATURALNESS: Refers to an area which "generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable." (From section 2(c), Wilderness Act).

OFF-ROAD VEHICLE (ORV): Any motorized vehicle designed for or capable of cross-country travel on or immediately over land, water, sand, snow, ice, marsh, swampland, or other terrain.

OUTSTANDING: 1. Standing out among others of its kind; conspicuous; prominent; 2. superior to others of its kind; distinguished; excellent.

PLANNING AREA: The area for which resource management plans are prepared and maintained. In most instances, it is the same as the resource area, which is a geographic portion of a BLM district, under supervision of an area manager.

PLANNING CRITERIA: The factors used to guide development of the resource management plan, or revision, to ensure that it is tailored to the issues previously identified and to ensure that unnecessary data collection and analyses are avoided. Planning criteria are developed to guide the collection and use of inventory data and information, the analysis of the management situation, the design and formulation of alternatives, the estimation of the effects of alternatives, the evaluation of alternatives, and the selection of the preferred alternative.

POPULATION CENTER: A Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) which has a population of 100,000 or greater. An SMSA is a county which contains at least one city of 50,000 inhabitants or more plus as many adjacent counties as are metropolitan in character and are socially integrated with that central city or cities.

PRE-FLPMA: Before October 21, 1976, the date of approval of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

PRELIMINARY WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATION: Refers to a wilderness recommendation at any stage prior to the time when the Secretary of the Interior reports his recommendation to the President. Until the Secretary acts, the recommendation is "preliminary" because it is subject to change during administrative review.

PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED RECREATION: Nonmotorized and nondeveloped types of outdoor recreational activities.

PUBLIC LANDS: For the purpose of the wilderness review program, any lands and interest in lands owned by the United States within the several States and administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the Bureau of Land Management, without regard to how the United States acquired ownership, except:

1. Lands where the United States owns the minerals but the surface is not Federally owned.
2. Lands being held for the benefit of Indians, Aleuts, and Eskimos.
3. Lands tentatively approved for State selection in Alaska.
4. Lands on the Outer Continental Shelf.
5. Oregon and California grant (O & C) lands that are managed for commercial timber production.

RANGELAND IMPROVEMENTS: Any structural or nonstructural improvements which directly affect or support the use of the forage resource by domestic livestock, such as fences, line cabins, water lines, and stock tanks.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN (RMP): The basic decision document of BLM's resource management planning process, used to establish allocation and coordination among uses for the various resources within a Resource Area. An RMP is a "land-use plan" prescribed by Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act. RMP regulations appear at 43 CFR 1601. (Refer to definition of Management Framework Plan).

SMSA: Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area - See definition under "Population Center."

SOLITUDE: 1. The state of being alone or remote from habitations; isolation. 2. A lonely, unfrequented, or secluded place.

STOCKING RATE: The degree to which a grazing unit is stocked with livestock, usually expressed in AUMs. The stocking rate may be more or less than the carrying capacity of the grazing unit.

SUBSTANTIALLY UNNOTICEABLE: Refers to something that either is so insignificant as to be only a very minor feature of the overall area or is not distinctly recognizable by the average visitor as being manmade or man-caused because of age, weathering or biological change. An example of the first would be a few minor dams or abandoned mine buildings that are widely scattered over a large area, so that they are an inconspicuous part of the scene. Serious intrusions of this kind, or many of them, may preclude inclusion of the land in a wilderness study area. An example of the second would be an old juniper control project that has grown up to a natural appearance, the old fallen trees largely decomposed.

SUITABILITY: As used in the Wilderness Act and in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, refers to a recommendation by the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture that certain Federal lands satisfy the definition of wilderness in the Wilderness Act and have been found appropriate for designation as wilderness on the basis of an analysis of the existing and potential uses of the land.

WATERSHED: The area drained by a principal river or stream system.

WILDERNESS: The definition contained in section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 891).

WILDERNESS AREA: An area formally designated by Act of Congress as part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS: The definition contained in section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964. (78 Stat. 891)

WILDERNESS INVENTORY: An evaluation of the public lands in the form of a written description and map showing those lands that meet the wilderness criteria as established under section 603(a) of FLPMA and section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act, which will be referred to as Wilderness Study Areas (WSA).

WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT: The management of human use and influence on lands which have been designated by Act of Congress as wilderness areas.

WILDERNESS PROGRAM: Term used to describe all wilderness activities of the Bureau of Land Management including identification, management, and administrative functions.

WILDERNESS RECOMMENDATIONS: A recommendation by the Bureau of Land Management, the Secretary of the Interior, or the President, with respect to an area's suitability or unsuitability for preservation as wilderness.

WILDERNESS REPORTING: The process of preparing the reports containing wilderness recommendations on wilderness study areas and transmitting those reports to the Secretary of the Interior, the President, and Congress.

WILDERNESS REVIEW: The term used to cover the entire wilderness inventory, study, and reporting phases of the wilderness program of the Bureau of Land Management.

WILDERNESS STUDY: The process which specifies how each wilderness study area must be studied through the BLM resource management planning system, analyzing all resources, values and uses within the WSA to determine whether the area will be recommended as suitable or unsuitable for wilderness designation.

WILDERNESS STUDY AREA (WSA): A roadless area or island that has been inventoried and found to have wilderness characteristics as described in section 603 of FLPMA and section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 891).

WILDLIFE IMPROVEMENTS: Any structural or nonstructural improvements which directly affect or support the use of water, food, or shelter by wildlife, such as guzzlers, water lines, or fences.

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