

Batamote Mountains Wilderness Proposal



PRODUCED BY:



**ARIZONA
WILDERNESS
COALITION**

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The Arizona Wilderness Coalition is an organization of groups and individuals working to protect and restore wilderness and other wildlands and waters in Arizona.

For more information about the Arizona Wilderness Coalition please visit our website www.azwild.org or contact us through the information provided above

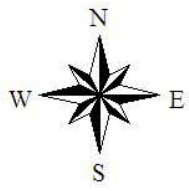
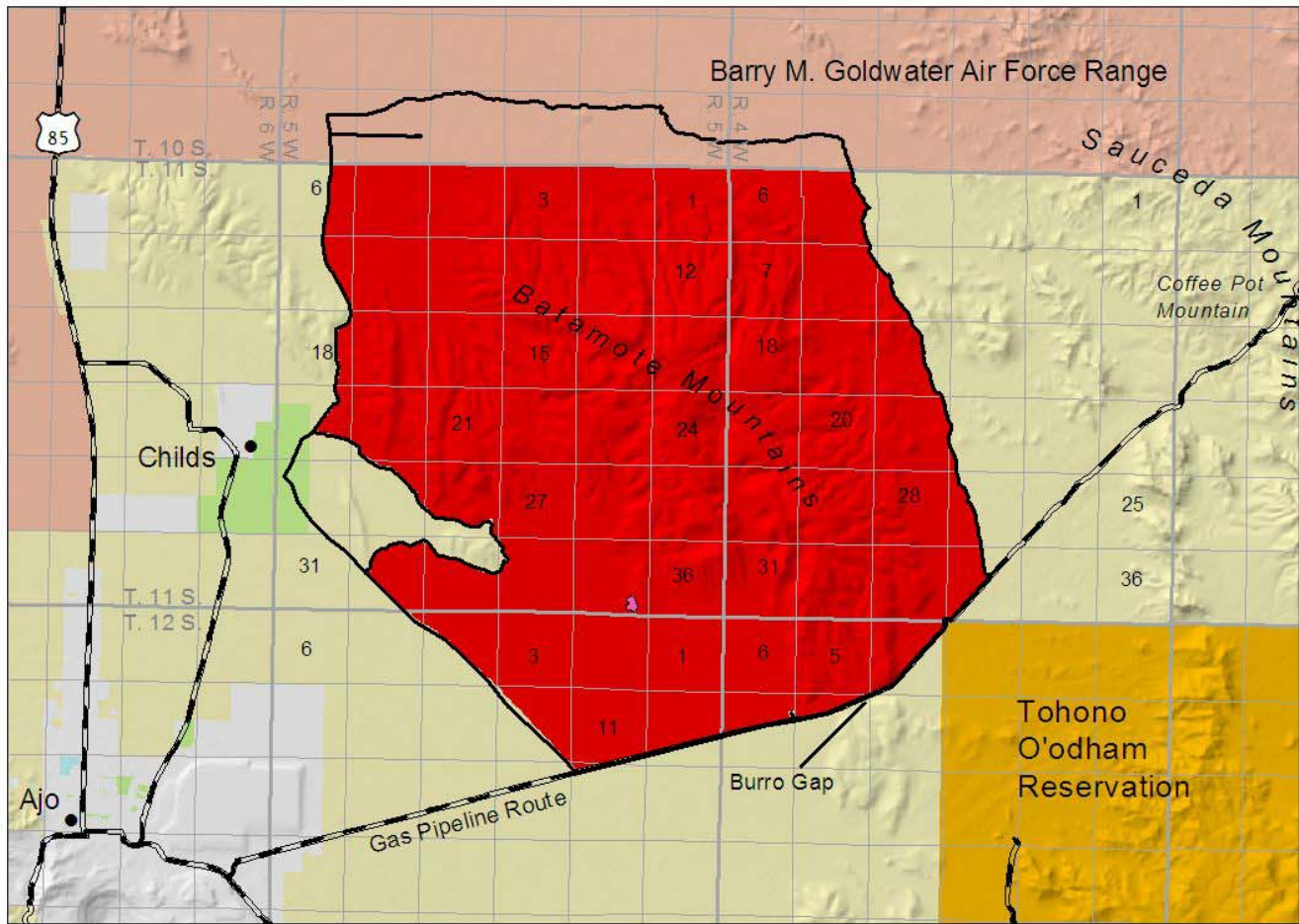
Batamote Mountains



Unit Description:

The Batamote Mountains are located about 2 miles west of Childs and 6 miles northeast of Ajo in Pima County. The unit encompasses most of the Batamote Mountains and ranges in elevation from the desert floor at 1,400 feet to a high point of 3,200 feet. The unit contains representative plant species from the Arizona Uplands and Lower Colorado River Valley biotic subdivisions and is part of, “one of the top 200 ecoregions worldwide that deserves special conservation attention” (Olson and Dinerstine 1998, as referenced in Marshall, R.M. et al. 2000). Vegetation is primarily palo verde-saguaro, with dense cholla stands; although the vegetation is sparse it contrasts with the dark black basaltic rock to create a colorful and scenic area (USDI 1979). It also provides excellent opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation in the many canyons and the convoluted topography characterized by this unit.

Batamote Mountains Proposed Wilderness



Wilderness Characteristics

Size: 34,477 acres

Naturalness:

The Batamote Mountains proposed wilderness unit “generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man’s work



View from Batamote Mountains looking south over creosote flats in the Southern portion of the unit towards Montezuma’s Head in Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument

substantially unnoticeable” as outlined in The Wilderness Act of 1964. A comparison of the original inventories conducted in the late 1970s by the BLM and then by the Arizona Wilderness Coalition before 1987 show that this area had significant wilderness character and still retains that character in a proposal that is 15,000 acres less than the original proposal. This new proposal is the result of citizen inventories that found high use levels and numerous livestock and wildlife improvements on route 25 as indicated on included maps. The past proposal would have closed this route. There are approximately 16.5 miles of recommended route closures and one mile of routes found to be reclaimed, many

of which are user created or expired mining claim access routes that are no longer needed. The inventoried routes were traveled in the citizen's inventory and significant



View from the Batamote Mtns. looking over the creosote flats inside the unit to the now closed New Cornelia Mine near Ajo, Arizona

impacts and uses were documented in the route analysis included in this report. The citizen's inventory recommends 46.3 miles of open routes associated with the inventory area.

The photographic documentation included within this report shows the natural condition from various vantage points within and outside the proposed unit. Some of the routes are being reclaimed by vegetation, which increases the naturalness of the area. See photos BT-2-7; BT-1-16; BT-1-63; BT-1-15. There is one area of significant impact that was inventoried and has been included in the final proposal as shown on the map on page two of this report. This area appears to be an old livestock loading area that has not been used for a number of years and will eventually return to natural condition with or without any human intervention.

Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude or Primitive and Unconfined Recreation:

The Batamote Mountains proposed wilderness unit possesses both opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. The opportunities for both exist within all or most of the unit. The BLM's Wilderness Inventory and Study Procedures Handbook H-6310-1.22 section (b)(1) gives direction on the assessment of solitude in inventory units. In this section five features for evaluating solitude are given.

- a. Size and configuration: The unit meets the 5,000-acre size criteria, and it is not long and narrow and does not have irregular extensions or cherrystems.
- b. Topographic screening: There are many canyons, ridges, basins, and mountainsides and tops where the topography provides outstanding isolation and solitude from other visitors.
- c. Vegetative screening: In the bajadas just below the rugged mountains the vegetative screening is exceptional with a diversity of vegetation ranging from stands of mesquite, palo verde, Elephant and Ironwood trees to dense cholla stands. Inside and along washes in the flat areas vegetative screening increases.
- d. Ability of user to find a secluded spot: seclusion in the many washes and canyons is not difficult. There are also basins, ridgelines, and even mountain-tops that provide outstanding opportunities for solitude. These mountains are characterized by "rugged and colorful cliffs and buttes" and steep-walled volcanic canyons (Arizona Wilderness Coalition 1987).
- e. Presence of outside sights and sounds: The Barry M. Goldwater Air Force Range creates noise impacts and the presence of the New Cornelia Mine acts as a visual impact on the study area. The Endangered American Wilderness Act of 1978 addressed the issue of "purity" and how congress did not intend for wilderness designation to be completely isolated from the "sights and sounds" of man (H. R. 95-540). In the House Report (No. 95-540) referring to the Sandia Mountain Wilderness in New Mexico as quoted in the BLM handbook H-6310-1 states:

“The “Sights and sounds” of nearby Albuquerque, formerly considered a bar to wilderness designation by the Forest Service, should, on the contrary, heighten the public’s awareness and appreciation of the area’s outstanding wilderness values.”

This standard applies in the case of the Batamote Mountains with the existence of the New Cornelia Mine. The mine was originally thought to have adverse impacts on the study area. However, when looked at in light of this House Report, the mine could heighten the public’s awareness of the values of Wilderness. See photo on page 4. Because of the varied geology of the Batamote Mountains, the mine can only be seen from a few areas within the unit. Since the BLM completed their Wilderness Review in 1980 the mine has been closed and there are no noise or air pollution impacts (AWC 1987). The Wilderness Act of 1964 was created “In order to ensure that an increasing population, accompanied by an expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition” P.L. 88-577; 16 U.S.C. § 1131 section 2 (a). Designation of the Batamote Mountains as wilderness would help offset the damage caused by the New Cornelia Mine and help fulfill the intent of the Wilderness Act as interpreted and tested by Congress.

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation:

The Batamote Mountains allow a variety of primitive and unconfined recreational activities. They offer various levels of hiking, from flat walking in the bajadas, to rock scrambling on the nearby peaks and ridges. Backpacking, hunting, horseback riding, photography, bird watching, and sightseeing for botanical, zoological, and especially geological features are all possible primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities within the Batamote Mountains. The opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are outstanding in this area simply because the unit is bounded on three sides

by de facto wilderness. Wildflower viewing anywhere in this unit during wet Springs leaves the visitor feeling amazed and lucky to have seen the desert in such beauty.

Supplemental Values:

Various supplemental values as described in section 2(c) of The Wilderness Act exist in the Batamote Mountains. One of the most significant supplemental values is the core area of unroaded habitat the Batamote Mountains provides for wildlife. This mountain range abuts the Barry M. Goldwater Air Force Range, which has large expanses of natural areas. In two separate studies conducted by The Nature Conservancy protecting the Saucedo-Sand Tank Mountains complex was recommended. The first study was completed in 2000 titled, *An Ecological Analysis of Conservation Priorities in the Sonoran Desert Ecoregion*. This comprehensive look at the Sonoran Desert recommended a conservation site of 636,196 acres that included the Batamote Mountains proposed wilderness. The second report was completed in 2001 titled, *Conservation Elements of and a Biodiversity Management Framework for the Barry M. Goldwater Range, Arizona*. This 2001 report recommended a 224,135-acre Special Natural Area that was recommended only inside the BMGR directly north of the Batamote Mountains. This second report was specific and only applied to the BMGR, but it can easily be concluded that the Batamote Mountains are ecologically valuable and should be recognized and protected as such.

Special Status Species Within the Batamote Mountains

Special status species exist in the Batamote Mountains and must be considered in the decision to further study the unit for wilderness designation. The Arizona Wilderness Coalition believes that wilderness preservation is not only important for human needs, but for the conservation of species as well. The following section represents detailed information about the supplemental wilderness values of Special Status species in the proposed Batamote Mountains Wilderness unit. All species described here are at risk and would be more adequately protected with Wilderness designation.

Sonoran Desert tortoise *Gopherus agassizii*



The Sonoran Desert tortoise is considered a species of concern for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Arizona Game and fish Department (HDMS 2003). This species is also a keystone species in the Sonoran Desert. The status in Arizona is considered by some to be more stable than that of the Mohave Desert tortoise but the situation warrants more research and protection due to the fact that Arizona is the second largest growing state in the nation. The Mohave Desert tortoise is listed as endangered and became so due to the same threats the Sonoran Desert tortoise is facing. Sonoran Desert tortoises live on steep, rocky hillsides in palo verde and saguaro cactus communities. The Batamote Mountains provide suitable habitat for this species. The Sonoran Desert tortoise does not repopulate easily. No more than 1 hatchling (out for 4-8 per clutch) from every 15 to 20 nests will reach sexual maturity and sexual maturity may take 12 to 20 years. These factors lead to a low population turnover. With a lifespan between 80 and 100 years, if the tortoise is given a chance to survive past its first few years it can repopulate more successfully. Wilderness protection and maintaining low route densities, by protecting habitat and forage, would allow for the survival of desert tortoises past these first critical years. Other threats, such as urban development and mining, have also led to the destruction of habitat. Because habitat loss is the largest threat to this species, Wilderness designation is its best chance at surviving past the effects of urban development. Steps to take toward protection past wilderness designation include public education, habitat restoration, regulated ORV use with seasonal closures.

Ajo Mountain Copper Leaf

Acalypha pringlei



Although this species is not federally listed, the AZGF manages for its survival and protection.

desert bighorn sheep *Ovis canadensis mexicana*

The desert bighorn sheep is a charismatic animal that has become well adapted to the harsh desert conditions over the millenniums. The desert bighorn sheep is a heavily managed species in the Sonoran Desert and the historical carrying capacity of its habitat in the many desert mountain ranges is not well known. The desert bighorn sheep represents three different types of focal species status: Flagship, Habitat Quality Indicator, and Wilderness Quality Indicator (Parsons 2003). Its status as a Flagship species is justified in that permits for hunting this species are typically auctioned off at \$125,000 and more by an annual Desert Bighorn Sheep Society fundraiser (Tobin 2004). Hunters and wildlife-viewers find hunting or viewing Bighorn sheep a privilege that is far too uncommon. The desert bighorn sheep can be used to promote conservation and habitat protection and those people who enjoy Bighorn presence in an area will most likely respect, enjoy, and want to protect this majestic species' survival needs.

The desert bighorn sheep is a Habitat Quality Indicator because it requires a very specific habitat of steep slopes >55%, and free of visual obstructions or dense vegetation (Krausman et al. 1999). Many estimates have been made on appropriate population numbers and habitat size requirements. The Batamote Mountains unit represents a large core area of habitat and the rugged volcanic mountains of this range present perfect habitat for desert bighorn to be protected

from predators, hunters, and wildlife viewers. Parsons (2003) recommends 48 square miles with 890 acres of suitable lambing habitat for viable sub-populations, which is represented in the 34,477 acres of the Batamote Mountains unit. Parsons (2003) and Krausman and Leopold (1986) both recommend not overlooking the value of habitat patches of 4 square miles or more near larger habitat areas. These smaller habitat areas can provide valuable migration and dispersal corridors, and serve as seasonal or part time habitats for individual Bighorns (Parsons 2003). The Batamote Mountains unit without a doubt could possibly hold populations of desert bighorn. The existence and persistence of desert bighorn sheep in the Batamote Mountains unit will best be continued by protecting the unit as wilderness and closing the routes recommended by the Arizona Wilderness Coalition to protect the bighorn sheep from potential disturbance from motorized recreational activities.

Lastly, desert bighorn sheep are considered Wilderness Quality Indicator species because they inhabit the most beautiful, rugged, and inaccessible terrain that is normally representative of wilderness. Bighorn sheep populations are normally more robust in areas where there is more wilderness and more roadless land than any other land allocation, such as the southwestern deserts of Arizona's Cabeza Prieta NWR, Organ Pipe Cactus NM, Barry M. Goldwater Range. Hopefully they will soon be protected in the Batamote Mountains, with potential inclusion of the unit into the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Potential Conflicting Resource Issues:

Grazing Operations

All grazing operations will continue under this proposal. With congressional designation as wilderness there would be restrictions on the use of motorized equipment to maintain or access facilities located within the proposed boundary. No wilderness type restrictions would be present under a decision to protect the wilderness characteristics in the BLM Resource Management Plan.

Minerals

All minerals information was acquired from the BLM's Land and Mineral Records LR2000 website (<http://www.blm.gov/lr2000/>) by querying for individual township and range

sections within the proposed Batamote Mountains unit. Some of the sections queried occur only partially within the Batamote Mountains unit. The individual claim locations are only broken down into quarter sections, so some claims that were counted may occur outside the proposed



Example of ORV Damage in Batamote Mountains

boundary and some may occur inside. This minerals information is only intended to give an idea of the potential resource conflicts with current mining claims.

The Batamote

Mountains unit contains zero active mineral claims of approximately 92 historically staked. There is no mention of potential minerals in past BLM or Citizen proposal documentation. It is easily assumed that even if prices for

minerals allowed the New Cornelia Mine to reopen and the Batamote Mountains were designated wilderness, it would have absolutely no effect on mining operations.

Off Road Vehicles

Off Road Vehicles (ORVs) are used with care and responsibly by most people. Most ORV users enjoy the ease of accessing public lands on ORVs. Wilderness designation for our last remaining roadless areas on public lands is not in conflict with the responsible ORV users, as areas like the Batamote Mountains already exist without ORV trails. There is one route (#20) in the Batamote Mountains that was created illegally and is probably used by many responsible users now, which this proposal recommends closing.

Many of the existing wildcat routes have been created by irresponsible Off Road Vehicle users. Destruction of vegetative, geological, and archeological objects of the Batamote Mountains occurs mostly around highly impacted Off Road Vehicle routes (see photos: BT-1-23; BT-1-36; BT-1-56; DSC-239). The occurrence of alcoholic beverage containers, discharged ammunition, and torn up vegetation from Off Road Vehicle use occurs in the same areas, which leads to the



conclusion that all of these uses are occurring together. Such actions are not appropriate anywhere. Irresponsible Off Road Vehicle use is the number one impact to resources in this area.

Historical Review, The Arizona BLM Wilderness Inventory (1978-82)

The BLM's initial wilderness inventories were completed under the requirements of section 603 of the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976. The BLM started an initial inventory of all public lands under their management in Arizona and sorted out all lands that "clearly and obviously" lacked wilderness characteristics. Through this process the Batamote Mountains (unit # 2-175) were chosen as an Initial Inventory area.

In the Initial Inventory process, which was started in 1978, the BLM reported in their *Wilderness Review, Arizona Initial Inventory of Public Lands Administered by Bureau of Land Management Decision Report September 1979*, that the Batamote Mountain unit is "primarily palo verde-saguaro, with dense cholla stands" and "although sparse, the vegetation contrasts with the rock to create a colorful, scenic area" (USDI 1979). The public comments from the Initial Inventory expressed "sentiment" about the unit and the only concern was that the pipeline road would be closed (USDI 1979). This statement shows that this unit did not get a fair analysis as nowhere in BLM's reports does it mention that an approved and improved Right Of Way could not be included in a wilderness proposal. In reaction to the wilderness values the unit potentially possessed and the encouraging comments, a small part of the unit was dropped but the rest would be Intensively Inventoried (USDI 1979).

This stage in the process sounded promising for the Batamote Mountains unit but when the BLM completed their Intensive Inventory in 1980 they did not reference the sentimental feelings the public had about the unit, but rather used their value judgment to assess the degree of opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. In the Intensive Inventory

process started in 1978 the BLM reported in their *Wilderness Review, Arizona Intensive Inventory of Public Lands Administered by Bureau of Land Management Decision Report November 1980*, “We proposed this unit be dropped from further consideration because, although some good opportunities for solitude exist within the Batamote Mountains, they are not considered outstanding” (USDI 1980).

All but three comments that were received regarding the BLM’s proposed decision to drop the entire unit from further wilderness consideration disagreed with the BLM’s proposal. All of the comments that disagreed with the BLM’s decision emphasized that the unit held wilderness characteristics that accentuated the unit’s naturalness, solitude, and opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Of those comments that agreed with the BLM’s decision, the Phelps-Dodge Corporation was one that provided the BLM with a detailed report with maps and photos emphasizing the 22 human imprints in the unit. The BLM stated in their final Inventory report that, “the accumulation of these, the report indicated, limits the opportunities for solitude an primitive recreation” (USDI 1980).

Because of the numerous comments supporting wilderness study of the Batamote Mountains, the BLM completed a final field check. In this field check the BLM found that “the opportunities for solitude are good, but they cannot be said to be outstanding” (USDI 1980). They found that the 25,000-acre area was,

Adversely affected by the accumulation of two roads, 10 vehicle ways, 3 range improvements, and 2 mineral exploration areas. The effect of these imprints, though many are singularly insignificant, is to limit one’s opportunity for unconfined primitive recreation. The opportunities for solitude are good, but they cannot be said to be outstanding. Therefore, the Batamote Mountains are dropped from further consideration (USDI 1980).

The Arizona Wilderness Coalition has reviewed the historical material for the Batamote Mountains wilderness inventories and finds that the BLM’s reasons for dropping this unit are flawed and lack consistency with the BLM’s own Handbook guidelines. In the decision to drop the Batamote Mountains from further study it can be argued as a political decision in which the many comments in favor of wilderness suitability study were ignored in presence of the Phelps-Dodge Corporation. The following information is part of the “New Information” criterion as

explained in the BLM H-6310-1 handbook section .06 (E)(b). Following is a detailed explanation of why past inventories are flawed.

- 1.) In the BLM's inventory there was never any documentation of Supplemental Values that is necessary where these values exist, as explained in section 2 (c) of The Wilderness Act of 1964, " may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value." Furthermore, the BLM Handbook H-6310-1 in section .2 (C) Other Resource Values and Uses, explains that the BLM must document how WSA designation would affect resource values other than recreation. The handbook further references how legislative history of The House Report (HR 94-1163) from the Interior and Insular Affairs Committee on FLMPA explains that other resource values such as watershed and water yield, wildlife habitat preservation, preserving natural plant communities and similar natural values should be considered as to how they augment the multiple use management of adjacent or nearby lands (USDI 2001). No descriptions of the Supplemental Values of geologic, educational, or scientific were included in the BLM Intensive Inventory decision.

- 2.) The BLM's decision to drop the Batamote Mountains from further study referred to cumulative and confining impacts of the unnatural areas and scattered imprints that limited the opportunities for both solitude and unconfined recreation (USDI November 1980). After the BLM conducted their final field check of this area they found that 25,000 acres in the eastern portion of the unit were unaffected by the New Cornelia Mine but affected by other imprints such as travel ways, range improvements, and other mining explorations. However, they did not consider the Supplemental Values as required by The Wilderness Act of 1964, as referenced in 1.) Above. The decision to drop the unit was limited in reasoning and based upon political issues with the Phelps-Dodge Corporation rather than the supplemental wilderness values that were never addressed.

- 3.) The reasoning that of the 25,000 acres that were unaffected by the New Cornelia Mine, too many of those acres were affected by the imprints of man in the form of roads and

grazing improvements, is untrue. 25,000 acres is five times the minimum size requirement of a wilderness area and the opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation cannot possibly be so impacted by these small imprints as to affect the entire 25,000 acres. The topography of the unit and recent citizens inventories suggests that the imprints listed in the BLM's reasoning are minimal and hidden by the rugged mountains and vegetative screening.

- 4.) Not only did the BLM evaluate the natural character of the unit based on impacts limited to only portions of the unit, but it gave no explanation as to how these impacts would affect the ability of a visitor to experience unconfined and primitive recreation. The BLM refers to "primitive and unconfined recreation" as "Non-motorized, non-mechanized (except as provide by law), and undeveloped types of recreational activities. Bicycles are considered mechanical transport" and because of this definition, the BLM must "consider those activities that provide dispersed, undeveloped recreation which do not require facilities or motorized equipment" (USDI 2001 [H-6310-1, Glossary]; USDI 2001 [H-6310-1, Section .13(B)(3)(c)(2)(a), page 15). In no way do roads, mining exploration, and grazing improvements affect the visitor's ability to participate in primitive and unconfined types of recreation, such as hiking, running, wildlife viewing, or hunting in either the suggested boundary reduction of 25,00 acres or on the entire proposed 45, 602-acre unit.

- 5.) The BLM H-6310-1 handbook explains the direction given by The Wilderness Act in reference to "...outstanding opportunities for solitude or primitive and unconfined type of recreation." The word "or" in this sentence means that a proposed wilderness does not have to possess outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive recreation; it only has to possess one or the other (USDI 2001 [H-6310-1, Section .22(A)(1)(b), page 21]). This clarification further supports that the Batamote Mountains do qualify as having wilderness characteristics because, within the 58,000 proposed acres at the time of the Intensive Inventory, they possessed opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, even if the unnatural areas within the inventory unit could have affected the ability of visitors to find solitude.

6.) Furthermore, 25,000 acres scattered with unnatural terrain in the east of the crest of the chain of the rugged volcanic Batamote Mountains, which are bordered on three sides by de facto wilderness, could in no way prevent a visitor from finding outstanding opportunities for solitude or outstanding opportunities for primitive or unconfined recreation. The BLM's handbook gives direction on evaluating solitude by explaining that consideration should be given to factors which "influence a person's opportunity to avoid the sights, sounds, and evidence of other people within the inventory unit, and not opportunities for solitude in comparison to human habitation" (USDI 2001 [H-6310-1, Section .13(B)(3)(c)(1)(a), page 14]). The BLM states that "[t]he fact that non-wilderness activities or uses can be seen or heard from areas within the inventory area shall not be considered when analyzing an area's manageability as a WSA" (USDI 2001 [H-6310-1, Section .2(B)(4), page 24]). The agency instructs its staff to:

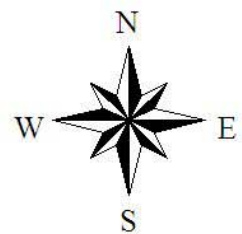
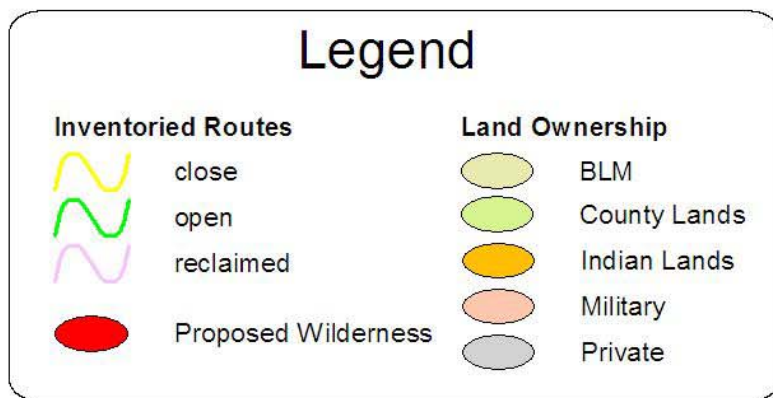
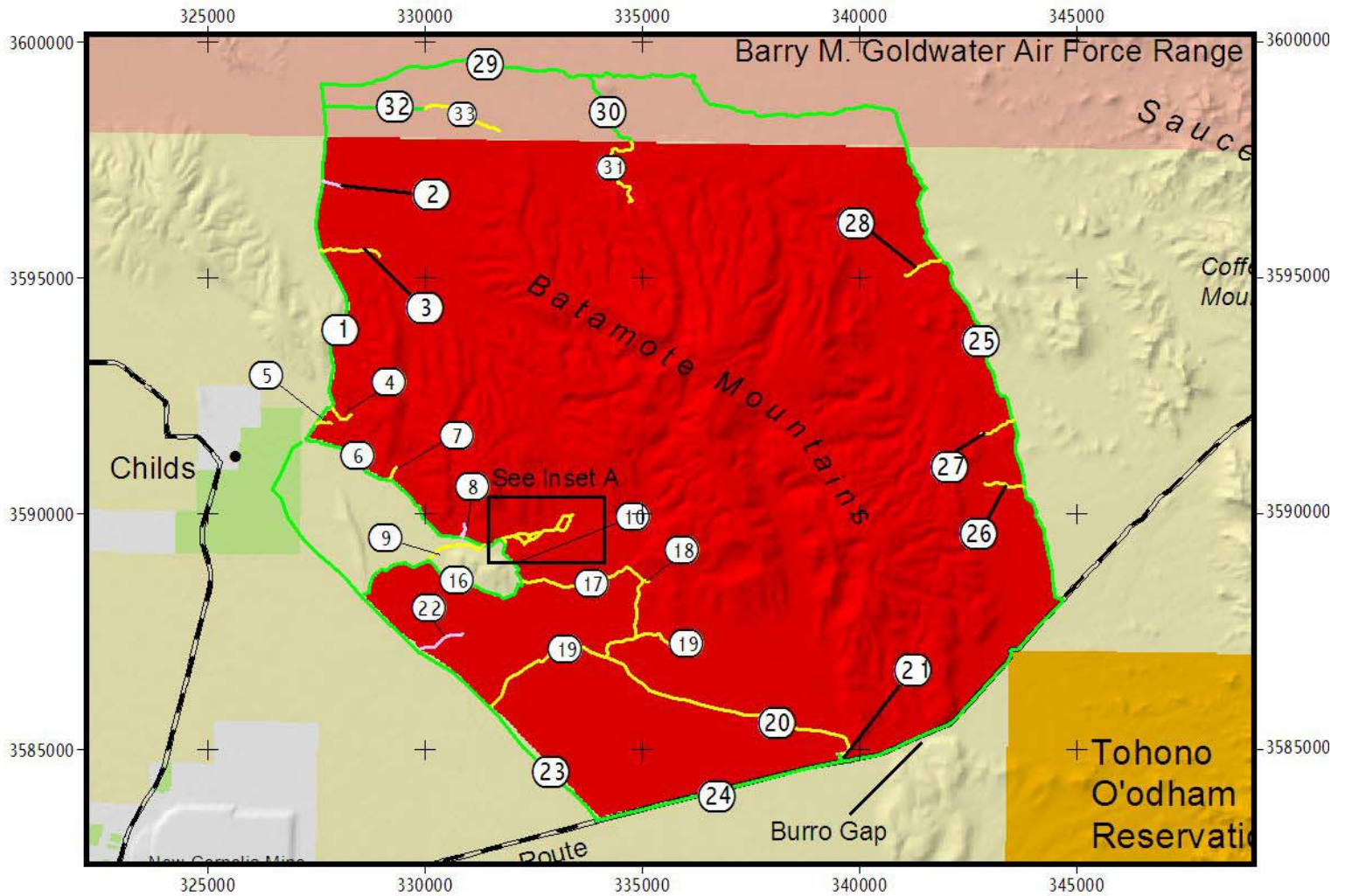
- a. "Avoid using lack of terrain variation or vegetation, or size as disqualifying conditions for outstanding opportunities for solitude" (USDI 2001 [H-6310-1, Section .13(B)(3)(c)(2)]).
- b. "Do not assume that simply because an area or portion of an area is flat and/or unvegetated, it automatically lacks an outstanding opportunity for solitude" (USDI 2001 [H-6310-1, Section 13(B)(3)(c)(1)(b), page 14]).
- c. "Similarly, do not conclude that simply because an area is relatively small, it does not have an outstanding opportunity for solitude. Consideration must be given to the interrelationship between size, screening, configuration, and other factors that influence solitude" (USDI 2001 [H-6310-1, Section .13(B)(3)(c)(1)(b), page 14]), and
- d. "Factors or elements influencing solitude including size, natural screening, and the ability of the user to find a secluded spot" (USDI 2001 [H-6310-1, Section .13(B)(3)(c)(1)(c)], page 15).

The historical review of the initial and intensive inventory processes for the Batamote Mountains clearly shows that the BLM must reconsider protecting the wilderness characteristics of this unit. This review provides a piece of the, “New Information” criterion as explained in the BLM H-6310-1 handbook section .06 (E)(b). The BLM must consider many aspects of new information, including but not limited to: changes in mining operations, Threatened and Endangered species, Supplemental Values, and changing recreational uses. In conclusion, the BLM must reconsider wilderness for the Batamote Mountains to evaluate the flaws that occurred in past inventories, as well as for the purposes of protecting valuable wildlands.

Conclusion

The Batamote Mountains meet all the requirements for protection under the Wilderness Act of 1964 and should be protected by the BLM in the Resource Management Plan (RMP) at least until the next RMP revision. The documentation provided here supplies the required “new and supplemental information” to make this proposal a valid recommendation in the planning process. The results of non-designation have already been seen in this area with the proliferation of new wildcat routes created by uncontrolled Off Road Vehicle users. With the encroaching development and growing population the wilderness characteristics and supplemental values of the Batamote Mountains will continue to be degraded. The best management decision for this isolated mountain range is wilderness protection.

Inventoried Routes



Inventoried Routes

Inset A

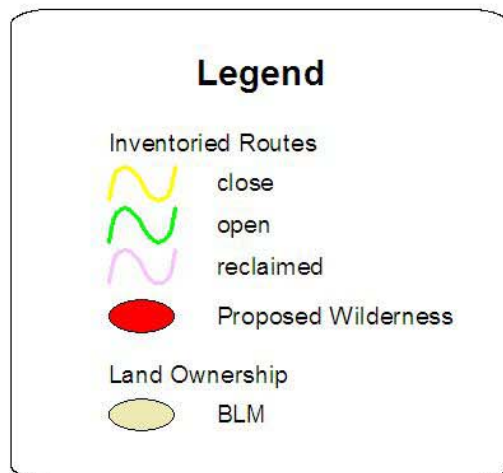
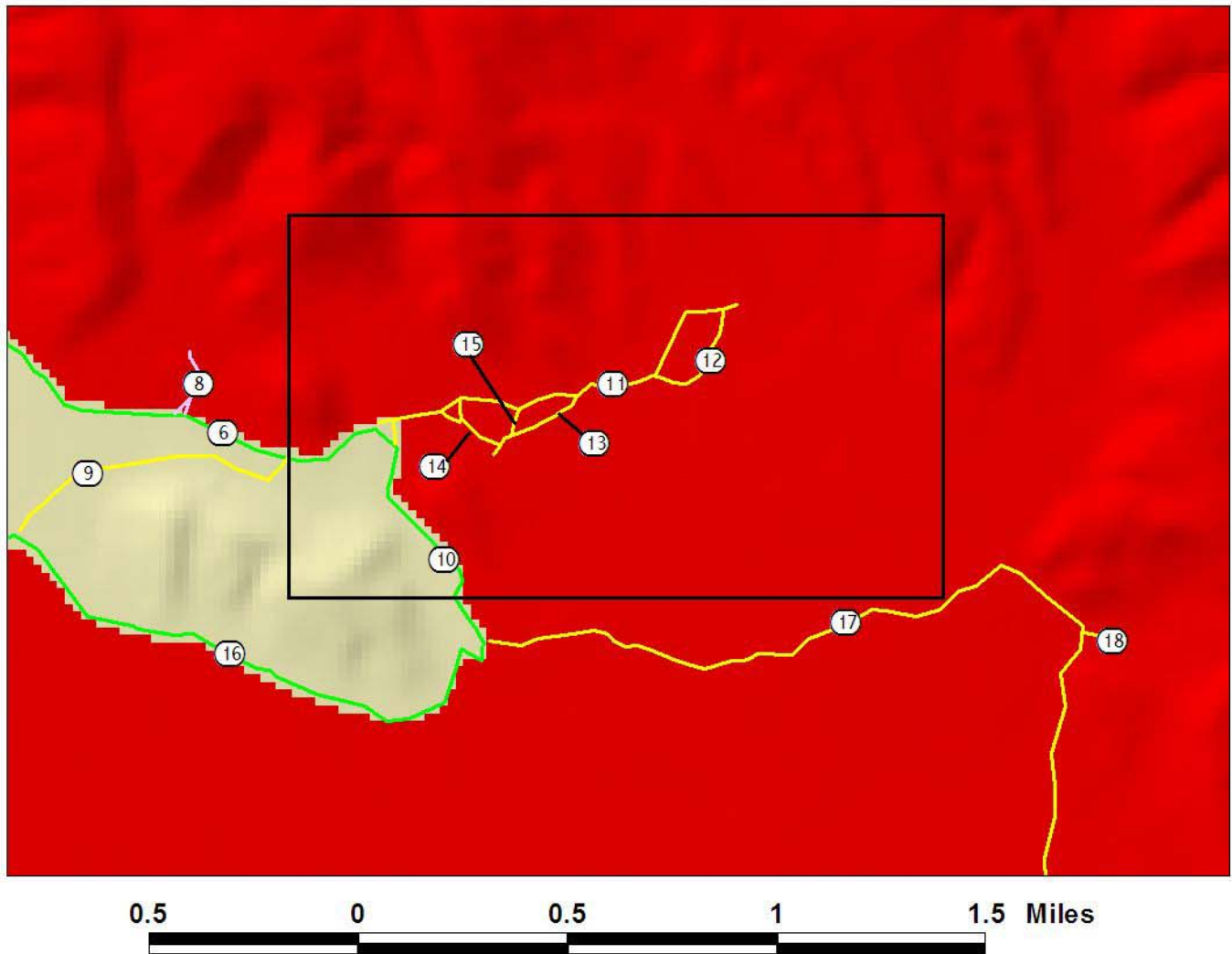
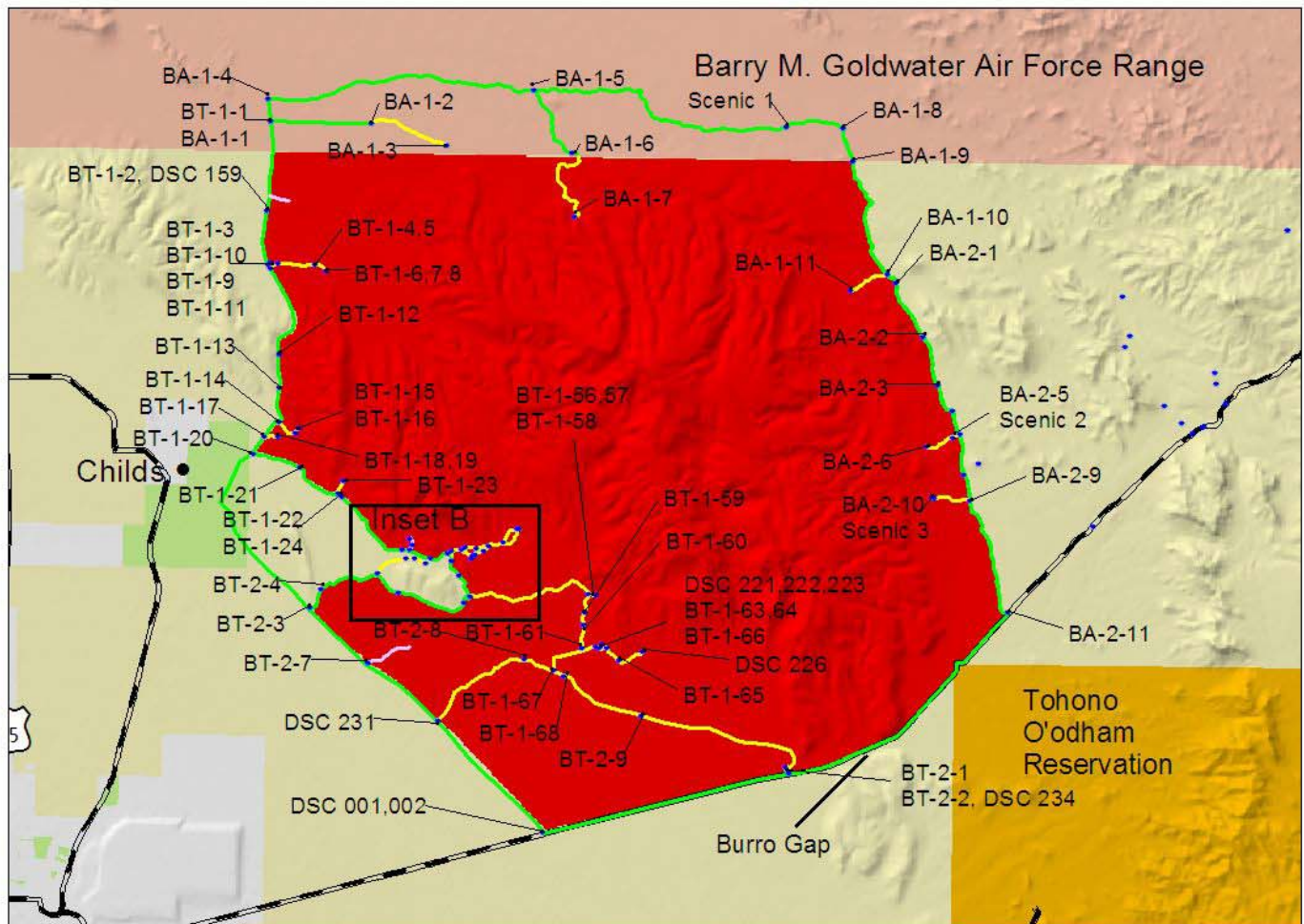
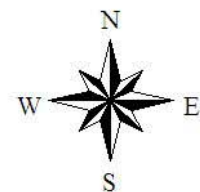


Photo Points for Route Analysis



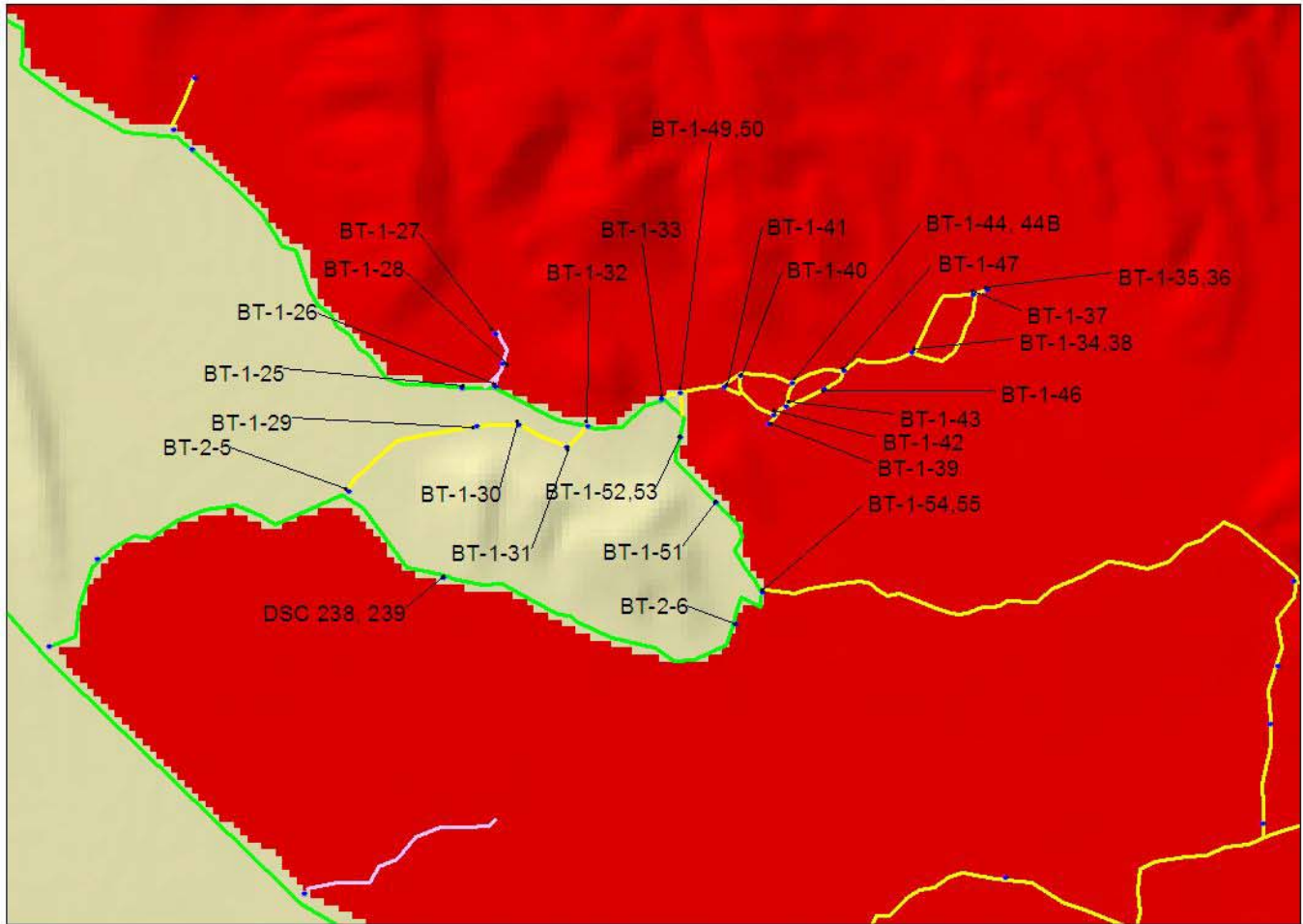
Legend

• Photo Points	● Proposed Wilderness
Inventoried Routes	Land Ownership
close	BLM
open	County Lands
reclaimed	Indian Lands
Major Roads	Military
	Private



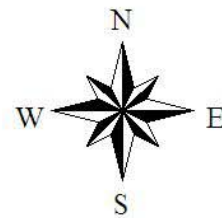
Inset B

Photo Points



Legend

- Photo Points
- Proposed Wilderness
- Land Ownership**
- BLM
- Inventoried Routes**
- ~ close
- ~ open
- ~ reclaimed



**Route Analysis for the Batamote Mountains
Proposed Wilderness**

Route #: 1

Photos: BT-1-1; BT-1-2; BT-1-10; BT-1-11; BT-1-13; BT-1-14

Length: 4 miles

Construction Type: Bladed on BMG and the flats of the BLM lands, but no evidence of construction inside the small canyon it passes through. Not maintained

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: a few

Vehicle Type: HC 4WD

Erosion: N/A

Vegetation Present: bare soil between 25-50% of surface

Other Impacts: some UDI trash, but not much

Proposed Action: Open

Notes: It is difficult to say why this route was originally created. A good question for the study phase is who is using it and could it be closed to protect wilderness characteristics? The wilderness character on the northern $\frac{3}{4}$ of this route is extraordinary and outweighs any other values. There is a shooting range outside of the unit and potentially encroaching on BLM lands on the southern terminus of this road. Do they have a permit? The range shoots a little too close to this road, is this safe?



BT-1-1 Begin route 1 on Barry M. Goldwater Range. Direction: S



BT-1-2 Average conditions on route 1 Braided
Direction: N



BT-1-10 Junction routes 1 and 3
Direction: S



BT-1-11 average conditions on route 1
Direction: S



BT-1-13 Average conditions on route 1. Shooting range on upper right hand side. Direction: S



BT-1-14 Junction routes 1 and 4
Direction: NE

Route #: 2

Photos: none

Length: .24 miles

Construction Type: N/A

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: N/A

Vehicle Type: N/A

Erosion: N/A

Vegetation Present: N/A

Other Impacts: N/A

Proposed Action: Reclaimed/close

Notes: The inventory did not find this route. It is assumed that it is reclaimed and should be removed from the maps.

Route #: 3

Photos: BT-1-4 thru BT-1-10

Length: .74 miles

Construction Type: None

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: 0

Vehicle Type: HC 2WD

Erosion: N/A

Vegetation Present: bare soil between 25-50% of surface

Other Impacts: some UDI trash

Proposed Action: close

Notes: This route is user created. It is a perfect example of how one track can turn into a major road, which this has not yet, but will soon. Some how this route, which looks like it has been used less than 10-20 times has become more obvious than the main road and people are taking it and then realizing it is a dead end. It must be closed, it travels over desert pavement and ends at a decent sized wash with some cliffs.



BT-1-4 Average conditions on route 3
Direction: SW



BT-1-5 average conditions on route 3
Direction: SE



BT-1-7 end route 3 round about
Direction: E



BT-1-8 one time cross-country travel on route 3
Direction: S



BT-1-9 no evidence of construction on route 3
Direction: E

Route #: 4

Photos: BT-1-14; BT-1-15; BT-1-16

Length: .33 miles

Construction Type: May have had a bulldozer on the end originally

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: 0

Vehicle Type: 4WD

Erosion: N/A

Vegetation Present: bare soil between 25-50% of surface

Other Impacts:

Proposed Action: close

Notes: This route looks like an old mining prospect. It has not been used for this purpose in a number of years and is on its way to reclaiming. Should be closed as it serves no purpose for recreation or anything else.



BT-1-14 Junction routes 1 and 4
Direction: NE



BT-1-15 average conditions on route 4
Direction: SW



BT-1-16 end route 4
Direction: N

Route #: 5

Photos: BT-1-17; BT-1-18; BT-1-19

Length: .17 miles

Construction Type: None

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: 0

Vehicle Type: HC 2WD

Erosion: N/A

Vegetation Present: bare soil between 25-50% of surface

Other Impacts: N/A

Proposed Action: close

Notes: This route is user created. People are creating more damage by probing. It has a shooting pedestal at its beginning which is on BLM land and the target is too. Is this activity approved? It shoots across and existing route.



BT-1-17 Begin route 5
Direction: NE



BT-1-18 average conditions on route 5
Direction: SW



BT-1-19 End route 5
Direction: SE

Route #: 6

Photos: BT-1-20; BT-1-21; BT-1-24; BT-1-25

Length: 2.91 miles

Construction Type: Bladed at one time but defiantly no maintained

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: 3

Vehicle Type: HC 4WD

Erosion: Exceeding 12 inches of soil lose in places

Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface

Other Impacts: some camping trash and 4 user created routes

Proposed Action: Open

Notes: This route was probably constructed for grazing and/or mining activities in the area. It provides access to the area for camping and great access to other trails for ORV users. It is used the most in the area for access. Closure would have many conflicts.



BT-1-20 Junction routes 1 and 6
Direction: E



BT-1-21 one time cross-country travel off of route 6
Direction: N



BT-1-24 braided route 6
Direction: NE

Route #: 7

Photos: BT-1-22; BT-1-23; BT-1-23A

Length: .15 miles

Construction Type: None

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: 0

Vehicle Type: 2WD

Erosion:

Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface

Other Impacts: Lots of cross-country travel tracks in area

Proposed Action: Close

Notes: User created. No purpose should be closed to prevent more probing and impacting of naturalness.



BT-1-22 Junction routes 6 and 7
Direction: NE



BT-1-23 end route 7
Direction: NE



BT-1-23A numerous tracks at Junction with routes 6 and 7. Direction: N

Route #: 8

Photos: BT-1-26; BT-1-27; BT-1-28

Length: .18 miles

Construction Type: None

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: 1 very old unused

Vehicle Type: N/A

Erosion: Stable

Vegetation Present: bare soil is between 25-50% of surface

Other Impacts:

Proposed Action: Reclaimed/Close

Notes: No purpose. Is receiving no use should be closed and removed form maps.



BT-1-26 Junction with routes 6 and 8
Direction: N



BT-1-27 end route 8 no use evident
Direction: N



BT-1-28 average conditions on route 8
Direction: N

Route #: 9

Photos: BT-1-29 thru BT-1-32

Length: .75 miles

Construction Type: None

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: 0

Vehicle Type: ORV

Erosion:

Vegetation Present: bare soil is between 25-50% of surface

Other Impacts: Vegetation damage on sides of wash

Proposed Action: Close

Notes: This route was user created by ORVs and should be closed a perfectly good loop exists already.



BT-1-29 average conditions on route 9
Direction: W



BT-1-32 Junction routes 9 and 6
Direction: E



BT-1-30 Average on route 9 not constructed
Direction: E



BT-1-31 Leaving wash route 9
Direction: NE

Route #: 10
Photos: BT-1-33; BT-1-50 thru BT-1-55
Length: .66 miles
Construction Type: Some evidence at northern side
FLPMA Road Definition: NO
Campsites: 3
Vehicle Type: HC 4WD
Erosion: over 24inches of soil loss
Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface
Other Impacts:
Proposed Action: Open

Notes: This route was probably constructed for grazing and/or mining activities in the area. It provides access to the area that looks like levees where built in the past. There is also an alluvial rock layer at this level and could be the cause of the levee looking formations. Very confusing on both sides of route. This route provides an excellent loop for motorized users and does not conflict too much with wilderness characteristics in the area.



BT-1-33 Junction routes 6 and 10
Direction: E



BT-1-52 average conditions on route 10
Direction: S



BT-1-50 Junction routes 11 and 10
Direction: S



BT-1-53 Average on route 10. Bulldozer evidence on top of big dams. Direction: N



BT-1-51 average conditions on Route 10
Direction: E



BT-1-54 Junction routes 10 and 16
Direction: N



BT-1-55 weird geology? Built by bulldozer?
Direction: S

Route #: 11,12,13,14,15

Photos: BT-1-34 thru BT-1-49

Length: 1 miles

Construction Type: None

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: 1 very old one

Vehicle Type: HC 4WD

Erosion: Exceeding 24 inches of soil lose in places

Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface

Other Impacts: some camping trash and numerous user created routes

Proposed Action: Close

Notes: These routes are all user created and have erosion problems. The soil in this area is very sensitive. Ocotillos are falling over because of compacted soil that has washed away. The main route 11 has been used for illegal saguaro cutting. Closure of these routes will help preserve the soil in this area. I recommend study of all the routes and the geology and soils in this area. It is very interesting.



BT-1-34 Average conditions on route 11
Direction: W



BT-1-35 end route 11
Direction: NE



BT-1-36 saguaro cutting at end of 11



BT-1-37 Junction routes 11 and 12
Direction: SW



BT-1-40 Junction routes 14 and 11 (see map)
Direction: E



BT-1-38 Junction routes 11 and 12 west side
Direction: S



BT-1-41 Junction routes 11 and 14
Direction: S



BT-1-39 End route 13
Direction: S



BT-1-42 Junction routes 13 and 14
Direction: W



BT-1-43 Junction routes 13 and 15
Direction: NE



BT-1-46 average on route 13
Direction: NE



BT-1-44 Junction routes 15 and 11
Direction: SW



BT-1-47 Junction routes 11 and 13
Direction: S



BT-1-44B Desert pavement hanging on route 15



BT-1-49 Average conditions on route 11
Direction: NE

Route #: 16

Photos: BT-2-3; BT-2-4; BT-2-5; BT-2-6; and DSC 238; DSC 239 (BT-1-54,55 as seen above)

Length: 2.36 miles

Construction Type: None

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: 0

Vehicle Type: HC 4WD

Erosion: Exceeding 24 inches of soil loss in places

Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface

Other Impacts: Very braided photos DSC 238 and 239

Proposed Action: Open

Notes: This route has severe braiding on it and should be maintained to prevent more braiding. Closure would provide the cheapest and best form of resource protection, but it is heavily used by ORVs. Should be evaluated further in the study phase.



BT-2-5 Junction routes 16 and 9
Direction: N



BT-2-6 Is this a range improvement?
Direction: S



BT-2-3 Junction routes 23 and 16
Direction: SE



BT-2-4 Fence on route 16
Direction: SW



DSC 238 severe braiding on route 16
Direction: W



DSC 239 severe braiding and washed out routes on 16 Direction: W

Route #: 17 and 18(very short spur route)

Photos: (BT-1-54,55 as seen above) BT-1-56 thru BT-1-61

Length: 2.28 miles

Construction Type: None

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: 1

Vehicle Type: HC 4WD

Erosion: Exceeding 24 inches of soil loss in places

Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface

Other Impacts: numerous braided sections

Proposed Action: Close

Notes: This route was used more intensively for management of range facilities at one time, but now it is being used by ORVs that are not staying on the route causing a spider web of one time use routes. The soil in this area is sensitive and has erosion problems. Closure would protect the wilderness characteristics, which out weigh the motorized recreational value of this area.



BT-1-56 campsite on route 17
Direction: W



BT-1-57 Junction route 17 and spur route
Direction: NE



BT-1-58 End spur route
Direction: E



BT-1-59 Reclaimed route off of route 17
Direction: NW



BT-1-60 worst erosion on route 17
Direction: E



BT-1-61 Junction routes 17 and 19
Direction: S

Route #: 19

Photos: BT-1-62 thru BT-1-67 and DSC 221,222, 226, 231

Length: 3 miles

Construction Type: Sections may have been bladed long ago

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: 1 very old

Vehicle Type: HC 4WD

Erosion: Exceeding 36 inches of soil loss in places

Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface

Other Impacts: numerous braided sections, and an old spot used for loading cattle that has fence posts, but no wire. This spot has numerous tracks around it. Vegetation is slowly recovering from heavy abuse. Less than 10 acres in size and could be reclaimed with hand labor

Proposed Action: Close

Notes: This route was potentially used more intensively for management of range facilities and mining prospecting at one time, but now it is being used by ORVs that are not staying on the route causing a spider web of one time cross country use routes. The soil in this area is sensitive and has erosion problems. Closure would protect the wilderness characteristics, which out weigh the motorized recreational value of this area.



BT-1-62 Worst erosion and braided on route 19
Direction: NE



BT-1-63 reclaimed route off of route 19
Direction: N



DSC 222 Mine as seen from butte looking SW



BT-1-64 old ranching structure in disrepair on route 19
Direction: W



BT-1-65 worst erosion and braided route 19
Direction: NW



DSC 221 Impacts on route 19 as seen from nearby butte. Area is marked on map



BT-1-66 worst erosion 24-36 inches on route 19
Direction: SE



BT-1-67 Junction routes 19 and 20
Direction: NE



DSC 231 Junction routes 19 and 23



DSC 226 end route 19
Direction: NW

Route #: 20

Photos: BT-2-8 thru BT-2-10; DSC 250 thru 252

Length: 3.39 miles

Construction Type: ORV user created

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: 0

Vehicle Type: ORV

Erosion: stable

Vegetation Present: bare soil 25-50% of surface

Other Impacts: none

Proposed Action: Close

Notes: This route was recently created by ORV users and has not even had enough time to see any impacts from erosion. It should be closed not just to protect wilderness resources, but to send a message to its creators that this kind of uncontrolled off road travel will not be tolerated. **This route should be closed immediately before it gets anymore use and begins to spider web.**



BT-2-8 Junction on route 19 route ends 50 yds
Direction: N



BT-2-8A Junction routes 20 and 21
Direction: N



BT-2-9 Average conditions on route 20
Direction: W



BT-2-10 average conditions on route 20

Route #: 21
Photos: BT-2-1; BT-2-2 and DSC 234
Length: .11 miles
Construction Type: None
FLPMA Road Definition: NO
Campsites: 1 very big
Vehicle Type: 2WD
Erosion: N/A
Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface
Other Impacts: Small Ramada and fireplace
Proposed Action: open
Notes: A very nice campsite obviously maintained by someone. It is called "Burro Camp". It has a homemade sign asking people to keep it clean. It will be cherry stemmed.



BT-2-1 begin route 21
Direction: W



BT-2-2 "Burro Camp" end route 21
Direction: SW



BT-2-7 reclaimed route #22
Direction: N



DSC 234 "Burro Camp end route 21

Route #: 22
Photos: BT-2-7
Length: .5 miles
Construction Type: N/A
FLPMA Road Definition: NO
Campsites: N/A
Vehicle Type: N/A
Erosion: Stable
Vegetation Present: bare soil is between 25-50% of surface with grasses
Other Impacts
Proposed Action: Reclaimed/Close
Notes: This route has reclaimed and should be closed as well as taken off the maps.

Route #: 23
Photos: BT-2-3; BT-2-7; DSC 231, 001, 002
Length: 6.24 miles
Construction Type: Bladed
FLPMA Road Definition: NO
Campsites: some
Vehicle Type: HC 2WD
Erosion: Exceeding 36 inches of soil loss in places
Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface
Other Impacts: numerous braided sections
Proposed Action: Open
Notes: This route forms the Southwest boundary for the Batamote Mountains Proposed Wilderness Unit.



BT-2-3 Junction routes 23 and 16
Direction: SE



DSC 001 End Route 23 OHV sign pushed over



DSC 002 OHV sign up



DSC 231 average conditions on route 23
Direction: N

Route #: 24

Photos: N/A

Length: 6.46 miles

Construction Type: surfaced and raised in places, bladed regularly.

FLPMA Road Definition: YES

Campsites: Many

Vehicle Type: 2WD

Erosion: N/A

Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface

Other Impacts: Some trash along roadway

Proposed Action: Open, as this is an official ROW for the gas line that it follows

Notes: This route forms the southern boundary for the Batamote Mtns. unit. The mileage shown above is only for its length along the boundary of the unit. This is excellent route for access to the Batamote Mtns by passenger car.

Route #: 25

Photos: BA-1-8; BA-1-9; BA-2-2; BA-2-3; BA-2-11

Length: 6.6 miles

Construction Type: May have been bladed or mechanically constructed in the past

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: Many, but few recently used

Vehicle Type: HC 2WD

Erosion: N/A

Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface

Other Impacts: There are at least 3 user created routes off of this route, although some have not seen consistent use without monitoring and enforcement these wildcat routes will continue to impact the outstanding wilderness characteristics of the area.

Proposed Action: Open

Notes: The route accesses to one AZ Game and Fish Wildlife Waters, numerous campsites and some livestock operations facilities. Leaving this route open achieves a balance between motorized access while still protecting wilderness resources. The pictures show that most people do not drive through on this route, as there is limited evidence of use on the Barry M. Goldwater Range. The evidence of use increases on the southern portion of the route. Possible closure should be considered at the Boundary with the BMGR.



BA-1-8 Begin route 25, low evidence of use.
Direction: S



BA-1-9 Barry M. Goldwater Air Force Range boundary on route 25. Direction: S



BA-2-2 Average conditions on route 25 south of BMGR. Direction: SE



BA-2-3 Wildcat route going west, fades in 50 feet
Direction: W



BA-2-11 Junction with route 25 and 24
Direction: W

Route #: 26

Photos: BA-2-9; BA-2-10

Length: .5 miles

Construction Type: no evidence

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: NA

Vehicle Type: HC 2WD

Erosion: N/A

Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface

Other Impacts:

Proposed Action: Close to public use and complete minimum requirements study for administrative access to Wildlife Water

Notes: The route accesses AZ Game and Fish Wildlife Water #576



BA-2-9 Junction of routes 26 and 25

Direction: NW



BA-2-5 Junction of routes 25 and 27

Direction: SW



BA-2-10 Wildlife Water at the end of route 26

Direction: W

Route #: 27

Photos: BA-2-5; BA-2-6

Length: .45 miles

Construction Type: no evidence

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: 1 old

Vehicle Type: HC 2WD

Erosion: N/A

Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface

Other Impacts: Saguaro cutting

Proposed Action: Close

Notes: The route has evidence of being used extensively in the past, but no recent evidence of use exists.



Saguaro cutting on route 27



BA-2-6 End route 27, no evidence of recent use
Direction: W

Route #: 28

Photos: BA-1-10; BA-1-11

Length: .5 miles

Construction Type: no evidence

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: N/A

Vehicle Type: HC 2WD

Erosion: negligible

Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface

Other Impacts: Non-functional grazing infrastructure, should be used or removed

Proposed Action: Close

Notes: This route should undergo a minimum requirements study to determine what access is necessary and structures are necessary for the management of the grazing allotment.



BA-1-10 Begin route 28
Direction: SW



BA-1-11 End route 28 inventory mentions 4" PVC pipe on hill. Grazing structure? Direction: SW

Route #: 29

Photos: BA-1-4; BA-1-5

Length: 7.3 miles

Construction Type: bladed

FLPMA Road Definition: Does not apply on BMGR

Campsites: N/A

Vehicle Type: HC 2WD

Erosion: N/A

Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface

Other Impacts: N/A

Proposed Action: Open

Notes: This route exists entirely on the Barry m. Goldwater Air force Range. It should be evaluated for purpose in need as it exists in the proposed Sand Tank-Sauceda Mountains Special Natural Area as proposed by the Nature Conservancy in 2001.



BA-1-4 Junction of routes 29 and 1, two cattle tanks here, are they used on the BMGR?
Direction: E



BA-1-5 Junction with routes 29 and 30
Direction: E

Route #: 30 and 31

Photos: BA-1-5 (as shown in route 29 analysis)
BA-1-6; BA-1-7

Length: 1 and 1.1 miles

Construction Type: May have been bladed at one time

FLPMA Road Definition: Does not apply for route 30 on BMGR. No for route 31

Campsites: N/A

Vehicle Type: HC 2WD

Erosion: N/A

Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface

Other Impacts: N/A

Proposed Action: BMGR should evaluate route 30 and BLM should close route 31 to public use

Notes: The route begins on the BMGR and extends onto BLM to access the wildlife water at the end of route 31. Administrative access to the wildlife water should be evaluated through a minimum requirements process with designation as wilderness



BA-1-6 End route 31 and begin route 30 going north. Direction: NW



BA-1-7 End route 31 at wildlife water
Direction: S

Route #: 32 and 33

Photos: BA-1-1; BA-1-2; BA-1-3

Length: 1.2 and 1 miles

Construction Type: no evidence

FLPMA Road Definition: NO

Campsites: N/A

Vehicle Type: HC 2WD

Erosion: negligible

Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface

Other Impacts: Non-functional grazing infrastructure, should be used or removed

Proposed Action: Close

Notes: This route should undergo a minimum requirements study to determine what access is necessary and structures are necessary for the management of the grazing allotment.



BA-1-1 Begin route 32 clearly bladed and maintained. Direction: E



BA-1-2 Route 32 ends and 33 begins with status change to 4x4 no maintenance or consistent use.
Direction: E



BA-1-3 Route 33 ends no evidence of use or reason
Direction: E

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