Black Mountain Wilderness Proposal

PRODUCED BY:

ARIZONA WILDERNESS COALITION

October 2004

Copyright © 2004 by Arizona Wilderness Coalition
All rights reserved

No part of this thesis my be used, reproduced, stored, recorded, or transmitted in any form or manner whatsoever without written permission from the copyright holder or its agent(s), except in the case of use by any individual, educational institution, non-profit organization, or government agency for the purposes of conserving the land.

Requests for any other reason should contact:

Jason Williams
Arizona Wilderness Coalition
PO Box 2741
Prescott, AZ 86302
jwilliams@azwild.org

Or

Don Hoffman
Arizona Wilderness Coalition
PO Box 529
Alpine, AZ 85920
dhoffman@azwild.org

Many thanks go to Prescott College students Scott Koch and Cacia McClain for their efforts in field inventory, GIS work, sensitive species research, and document production and editing.

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

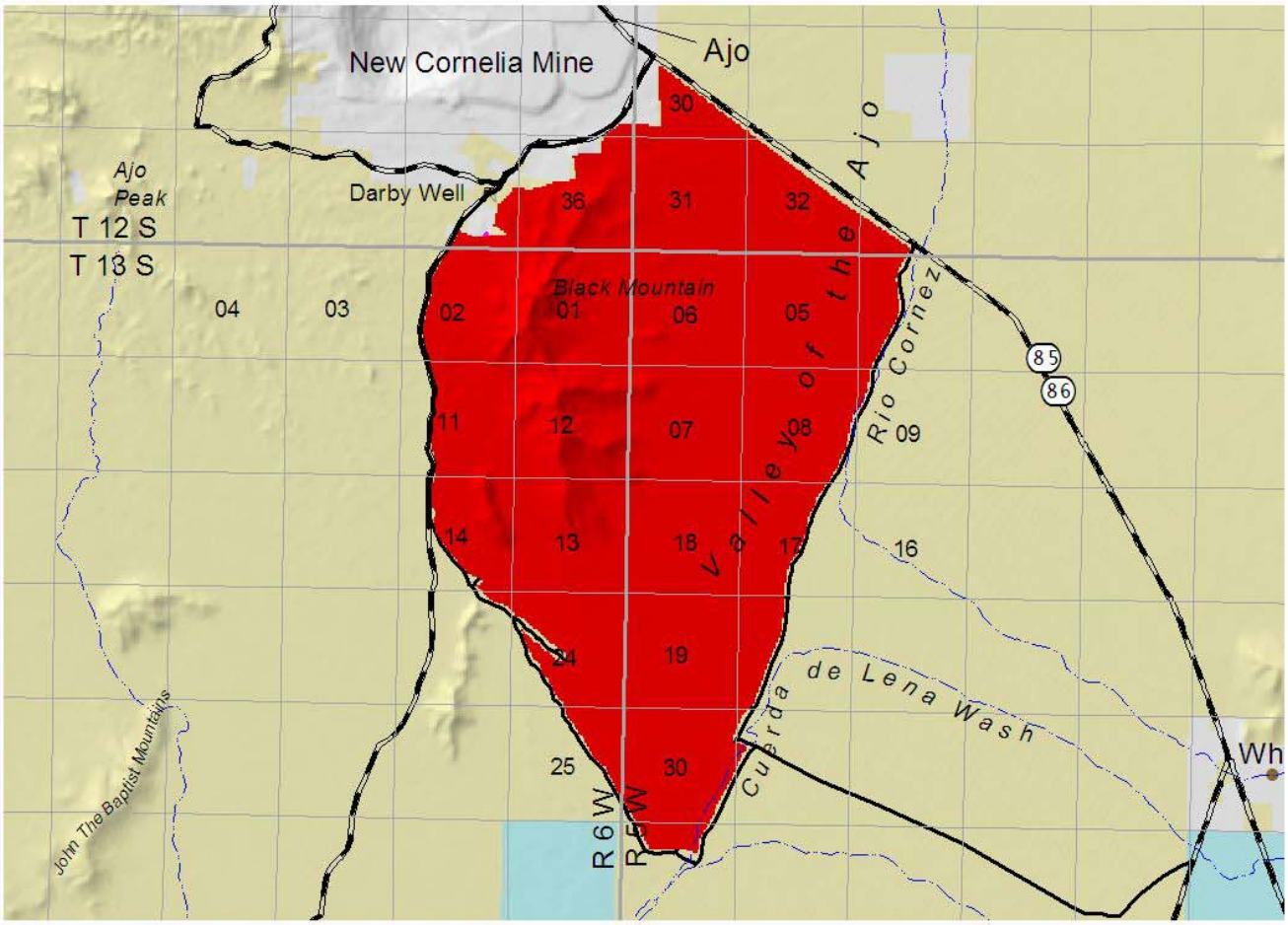
For more information please visit our website www.azwild.org or contact us through the information provided above

Black Mountain

Unit Description

The Black Mountain proposed wilderness is located just south of the town of Ajo and adjacent to the now closed New Cornelia Mine in Pima County. Black Mountain is made up of a Tertiary lava flow that rises about 1,200 feet above the Valley of the Ajo. The mountain's black appearance is due to its make up of basaltic rock. Black Mountain has Sonoran Desert Scrub vegetation interspersed with Organ Pipe cacti on the south facing slopes and extremely large ocotillos on the bajadas below the black slopes of the mountain. Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation are present throughout the unit and exceptional scenic views are possible by climbing Black Mountain fairly easily from its east side. The unit contains habitat for endangered Sonoran pronghorn and other sensitive species such as Sonoran green toad, Organ pipe shovel-nosed snake, Maricopa leaf-nosed snake, Organ pipe cactus, and Ajo mountain copper leaf.

Black Mountain Proposed Wilderness



0.9 0 0.9 1.8 2.7 3.6 Miles

Legend

Major Roads

Proposed Wilderness

Land Ownership

BLM

Private

State

N

W E

S

Black Mountain Proposed Wilderness

Wilderness Characteristics

Scenic and Naturalness on the West side of Black Mountain.

Size: 10,970 Acres

Naturalness

The Black Mountains proposed wilderness unit "generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable" as outlined in section 2c of The Wilderness Act of 1964. The photographic documentation included within this report shows the natural condition from various vantage points within and outside the proposed unit. The vegetation in the Black Mountain unit not only "generally appears natural", but also "retain[s] its primeval character and influence" (P.L. 88-577 § 2(c)).

In recent citizen's inventories conducted by the Arizona Wilderness Coalition in 2003 some of the recreational ORV imprints have been reclaimed to natural condition. See photos: BM-1-1; BM-1-15; BM-2-5. The routes/roads that at one time lead to the noticeable impacts are now substantially re-vegetated and unnoticeable. There were 4 routes totaling 1.75 miles that are substantially

BM-1-17 Route 5 overgrown no use evident
Direction: E

unnoticeable and returning to natural condition. The inventory also revealed numerous one time cross county travel routes that can eventually lead to new wildcat routes. The impacts from the one time cross country travel routes will disappear with time and normally require no restoration work as long as they are closed on the ground and not used further. The citizen's inventory documented 18 separate route segments totaling 28.17 miles of routes. This proposal recommends closing 9 routes with a total of 6.5 miles. See the individual route analysis for more information on specific routes.

Outstanding Opportunities for Solitude or Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The Black Mountain 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 ridges, basins, bajadas, and mountaintops 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 saguaro and palo verde to wide expanses of creosote and bursage. As in all Sonoran desert landscapes the washes have exceptional vegetative screening providing outstanding opportunities for solitude from other visitors.

d. Ability of user to find a secluded spot: seclusion in the many washes is not difficult as the vegetation is lush and dense. There are also basins, ridgelines, and even mountaintops that provide outstanding opportunities for solitude because of their jagged and diverse topography.

e. Presence of outside sights and sounds: After the exclusion of the imprints of the sight of the New Cornelia Mine, the presence of outside sights and sounds has been eliminated. 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 Black Mountain with the existence of the New Cornelia Mine. The sight of the mine may act to further enhance the contrast of Wilderness to extractive resource actions. 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)).

Under this direction, the New Cornelia Mine creates a point of reference for the wilderness traveler in which he or she can reflect upon the extent of human impacts on the land. The philosophy of Multiple Use can also more fully be realized by protecting wilderness values directly adjacent to the mine.

Scenic of large ocotillo at Black Mountain

Primitive and Unconfined Recreation

The Black Mountain unit allows a variety of primitive and unconfined recreational activities. Black Mountain offers 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 geological, zoological, and especially botanical features are all possible primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities within the Black Mountain proposed wilderness unit. Desert wildflower viewing in this unit in the spring can be outstanding, with blooming of the perennial and annual ground flowers in March and the succession of palo verde, ironwood, and finally

culminating in the beginning of summer with the Saguaro bloom. The majestic ocotillos present in this unit will bloom anytime they get enough rain. Lastly, opportunities for extended backpacking trips can be kicked off or ended in this unit, as it is adjacent to the Cuerda de Leña Wash unit and the designated wilderness of Organ Pipe Cactus NM and the Cabeza Prieta NWR.

Supplemental Values

Various supplemental values as described in section 2(c) of The Wilderness Act exist in the Black Mountain unit.

Geology

The Black Mountain unit is unique geologically in relation to the surrounding mountain ranges because it is some of the youngest rock surrounding the town of Ajo. The nearby Ajo Peaks are composed of a beautiful red conglomerate that overlays the Mesozoic igneous rocks of the Little Ajo Mountains, which contain the regions rich copper deposits. In the vicinity of Black Mountain the conglomerate dips below the tertiary lava flows that make up the mass of Black Mountain. It is assumed that this volcanism began to occur during the formation of the conglomerate because basalt cobbles have been found inside the underlying conglomerate.[1] Although none of this underlying conglomerate is visible in the Black Mountain unit, the volcanic rock of Black Mountain lends itself to interpreting the intriguing geologic landscape of the Ajo area.

Special Status Species within the Black Mountain Unit

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 Black Mountain wilderness unit. All species described here are at risk and would be more adequately protected with wilderness designation.

[1] Bryan K. 1925. The papago country, Arizona: a geographic, geologic, and hydrologic reconnaissance with a guide to desert watering places. Washington DC: US Department of Interior. 436 p.

Sonoran green toad

Bufo retiformis

The Sonoran green toad is found along washes in mesquite grasslands and creosote bush flats between 500 and 1500 feet (150 to 450 m). Once the summer rains begin, males move into grasses around temporary rainwater pools and washes and begin to call. Toad and spade foot activity is highly correlated with the monsoon season. Some species may be active as early as late spring while others will be out only after summer rains. If it is cool enough, desert amphibians may occasionally be active during the day. However, most species are primarily active at night when one often hears the strange calls of males from quite a distance. This toad is not federally listed, but is managed for by the AZGF. It inhabits the bajada of the southeastern portion of the unit. Potential hazards are from ORV use in washes and in grassy areas.

Sonoran Pronghorn

Antilocapra americana sonoriensis

The Sonoran pronghorn is federally listed as endangered and is wildlife of special concern in Arizona according to the Arizona Game and Fish Heritage Data Management System (HDMS). This species is a historic inhabitant of the west and southwest. They require a variety of habitats for forage and migration. Some of these habitats include open creosote-bursage areas, allowing for expansive views to locate and escape predators. The Sonoran pronghorn populations are quickly decreasing due to habitat fragmentation and loss. The proposed Black Mountain wilderness unit provides essential forage and fawning habitat for Sonoran pronghorn. Protection of any population in the state is crucial to their survival. Habitat protection is the only way this species will not be extirpated from Arizona.

Organ pipe shovel-nosed snake

Chionactis palarostris organica

The Organ pipe shovel-nosed snake is listed as a sensitive species in the Arizona Game and Fish Heritage Data Management System (HDMS). It is a subspecies of the

Sonoran shovel-nosed snake (*C. palarostris*). It is a relatively small (10-17 inches long), dark and light banded snake with a shovel-shaped snout, which is flatter than most other snakes**.** It is a snake of arid lands. In Arizona, it occurs in upland desert in the palo verde-saguaro association. The ground surface may be rocky or sandy, but is generally coarse and irregular. The Organ pipe shovel-nosed snake is only found in extreme southern Arizona, mainly in the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and along the Sonoyta-Ajo road to about 25 miles north of the border with Mexico. Other species of the Sonoran shovel-nosed snake occur in Sonora to south of Hermosillo, Mexico. *C. p. organica* currently exists within the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and the surrounding area. Its protection is based primarily upon management practices employed within the monument's boundaries. Outside of the Monument, however, it is unprotected. It inhabits the bajadas and hillsides of the Black Mountain area. Because its range is limited, it is important to protect any known habitat where current populations exist. Wilderness protection is the best option for enabling this species to proliferate.

Maricopa leaf-nosed snake

Phyllorhynchus browni lucidus

The Maricopa leaf-nosed snake is a sensitive species in the Arizona Game and Fish Heritage Data Management System (HDMS). Other leaf-nosed species inhabit alluvial fans or desert basin floors, and so for lack of specific information on this subspecies, it is assumed that this species lives in similar vegetative communities and within the Sonoran Desert. A major predator of the leaf-nosed snaked is the long-nose snake, which inhabits the same ranges in the desert southwest. This species would best benefit from wilderness protection and limited ORV use, which can damage habitat and individual snakes.

Organ pipe cactus

Stenocereus thurberi

Organ pipe and hedge-hog cacti

The organ pipe cactus is a BLM sensitive species, under the Arizona Native Plant Law their salvage restricted to limited permit holders. They occur only in a small area of the Sonoran Desert from southwestern Arizona to western Sonora, Mexico. They like south-facing, hot, sunny slopes from 1,000 to 3,500 feet best and bloom at night, from May through July, showing lavender-white flowers about 2-1/2 inches long. This columnar cactus is the second largest in the U.S. (next to the Saguaro) growing as tall as 23 feet. Instead of having a central stem, however, a cluster of 5 to 20 slender branches grows from a point at ground level and curve gracefully upward. Like the Saguaro, they store water in their trunks and expand when saturated with water. Their fruit has provided a food source to Native Americans for centuries. This plant is so isolated to the Sonoran Desert that its habitat must be protected from ORV use and recreational shooting and firewood cutting. Because it is so unique a species, it is valuable to the biodiversity of the Sonoran Desert and would benefit most from wilderness protection.

Ajo mountain copper leaf

Acalypha pringlei

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

Conflicting Resource Issues

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 Black Mountain unit. Some of the sections queried occur only partially within the Black Mountain unit. The individual claim locations are only broken down into quarter sections, so some claims that were counted may occur outside the proposed 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 Black Mountain unit contains approximately 41 active mineral claims of 244 historically staked. All active claims could potentially become active mines before wilderness consideration or undergo a validity examination with consideration of this unit for wilderness. After the validity exam these claims would either be extinguished or be determined as valid and could submit an operating plan to begin mining operations. Through the queries performed for the Black Mountain unit it was found that most of the mining claims occur in the sections that are only partially included in the proposed wilderness boundary. The sections and the claims for them are listed

below. The sections are labeled in the Black Mountain Proposed Wilderness map shown earlier in this proposal.

T 12 S R 6 W	T 12 S R 5 W	T 13 S R 6 W
Sections:	Sections:	Sections:
36- 25 of 45 active	30- 0 of 4 active	1- 4 of 39 active
	31- 8 of 43 active	2- 4 of 13 active
	32- 0 of 4 active	11- 0 of 44 active
		12- 0 of 12 active
		13- 0 of 2 active
		14- 0 of 29 active
		24- 0 of 4 active

Off Road Vehicle use

Many of the existing wildcat routes have been created by irresponsible Off Road Vehicle-users. Destruction of vegetative, geological, scenic qualities of the Black Mountain unit occurs mostly around highly impacted Off Road Vehicle routes (see photos: BM-1-3; BM-1-9; BM-1-11; BM-2-18; BM-2-26).

BM-2-18 ORV damage on route 14

The occurrence of torn-up vegetation and erosion leading to topsoil loss from Off Road Vehicle use is highly destructive to this fragile desert ecosystem. Such actions are not appropriate anywhere. Off Road Vehicle use in this area is the number one impact to resource values. The evidence is so clear that it would not take a study to determine that the problem is the proliferation of illegal wildcat routes used for the sole purpose of recreational Off Road Vehicles. These uses are incompatible with the preservation and protection of the values of the study unit and therefore do not pose a valid resource conflict other than that they are rapidly destroying the wilderness character of the Black Mountain unit.

Responsible Off Road Vehicle use is also a major use of the routes adjacent to the Black Mountain unit and protection of the wilderness characteristics would maintain and enhance these responsible ORV users experience.

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 Black Mountain (unit # 2-179) was chosen as an initial inventory area. In the Initial Inventory process 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",

> This unit was originally proposed as 'clearly and obviously' not meeting wilderness criteria. None of the positive comments received questioned BLM's rationale for dropping the unit. We conclude that this unit will <u>not</u> be intensively inventoried, and is therefore dropped from further review.

The historical review of the initial inventory processes for the Black Mountain unit is inconclusive and shows that the Black Mountain unit was not adequately studied. The BLM failed to consider supplemental wilderness characteristics as well as aspects of naturalness, solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. The initial inventory

process was conducted based on existing information.[2] This process was conducted with no field inventory and undoubtedly units that were worthy of consideration for wilderness were neglected because lack of information or poor information based on opinions from staff and the public. In Arizona's 1990 "Arizona Desert Wilderness Act" Congress concluded that BLM fulfilled its responsibility under section 603 of FLPMA, but BLM still has the authority and obligation to inventory and consider protecting lands as Wilderness Study Areas (WSA) under sections 201 and 202 of FLPMA.

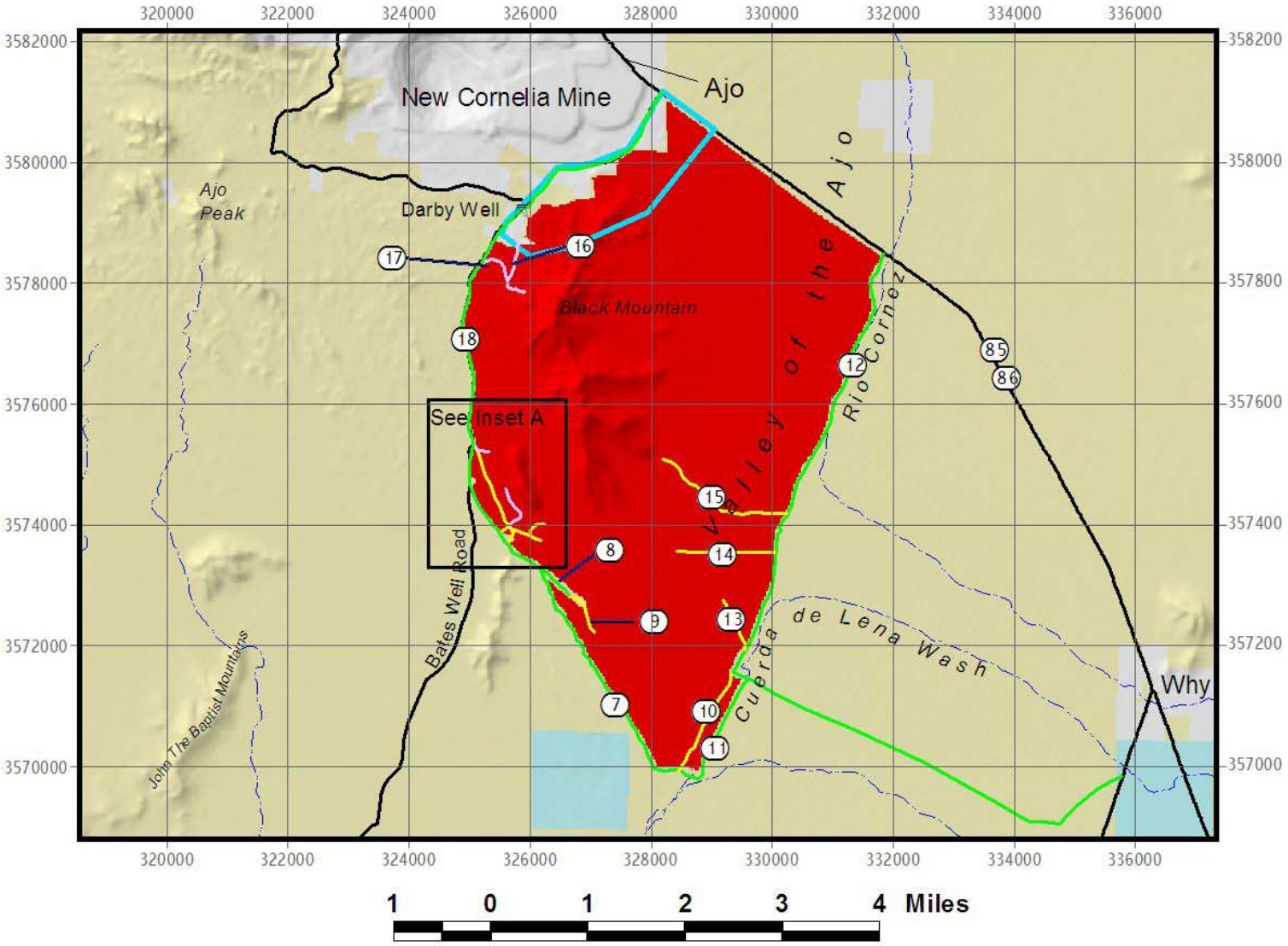
This proposal and historical review provides a piece of the, "New Information" criterion as explained in the BLM H-6310-1 handbook section .06 (E)(b). The BLM must consider many aspects of new information, including but not limited to: population expansion, Threatened and Endangered species, and changing recreational uses. In conclusion, the BLM must reconsider wilderness for the Black Mountain unit to evaluate the flaws that occurred in past inventories, as well as for the purposes of protecting valuable wildlands.

Conclusion

The Black Mountain unit meets all the requirements for Wilderness. The documentation and photographs 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. Black Mountain contains valuable habitat for the various endangered and sensitive species listed here, but it also provides habitat for more common species of cactus wrens, great horned owls, and mule deer. Protecting this unit as wilderness will also preserve the outstanding opportunities for hunting, hiking, and quiet reflective solitude. The best management decision for this isolated mountain range is wilderness protection.

[2] USDI. Bureau of Land Management. 1978. Wilderness inventory handbook, policy, direction, procedures, and guidance for conducting wilderness inventory on the public lands. Washington DC: Government Printing Office. 30 p.

Inventoried Routes



Legend

- Major Roads
- Proposed Wilderness
- Incomplete Inventory

Land Ownership

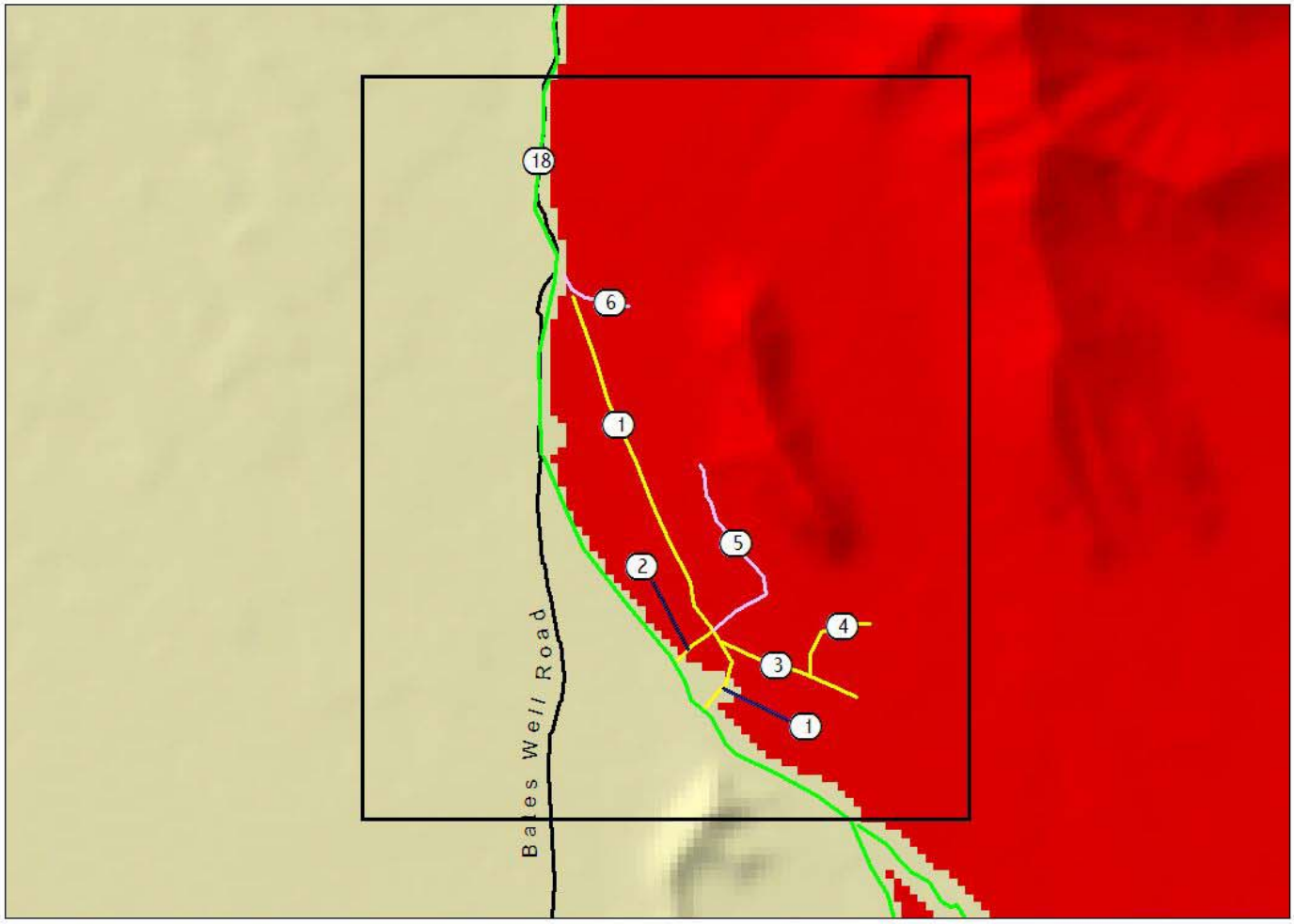
- BLM
- Private
- State

Recommended and Observed Status of Routes

- close
- open
- reclaimed

N
W E
S

Inset A
Inventoried Routes



1 0 1 Miles

Legend

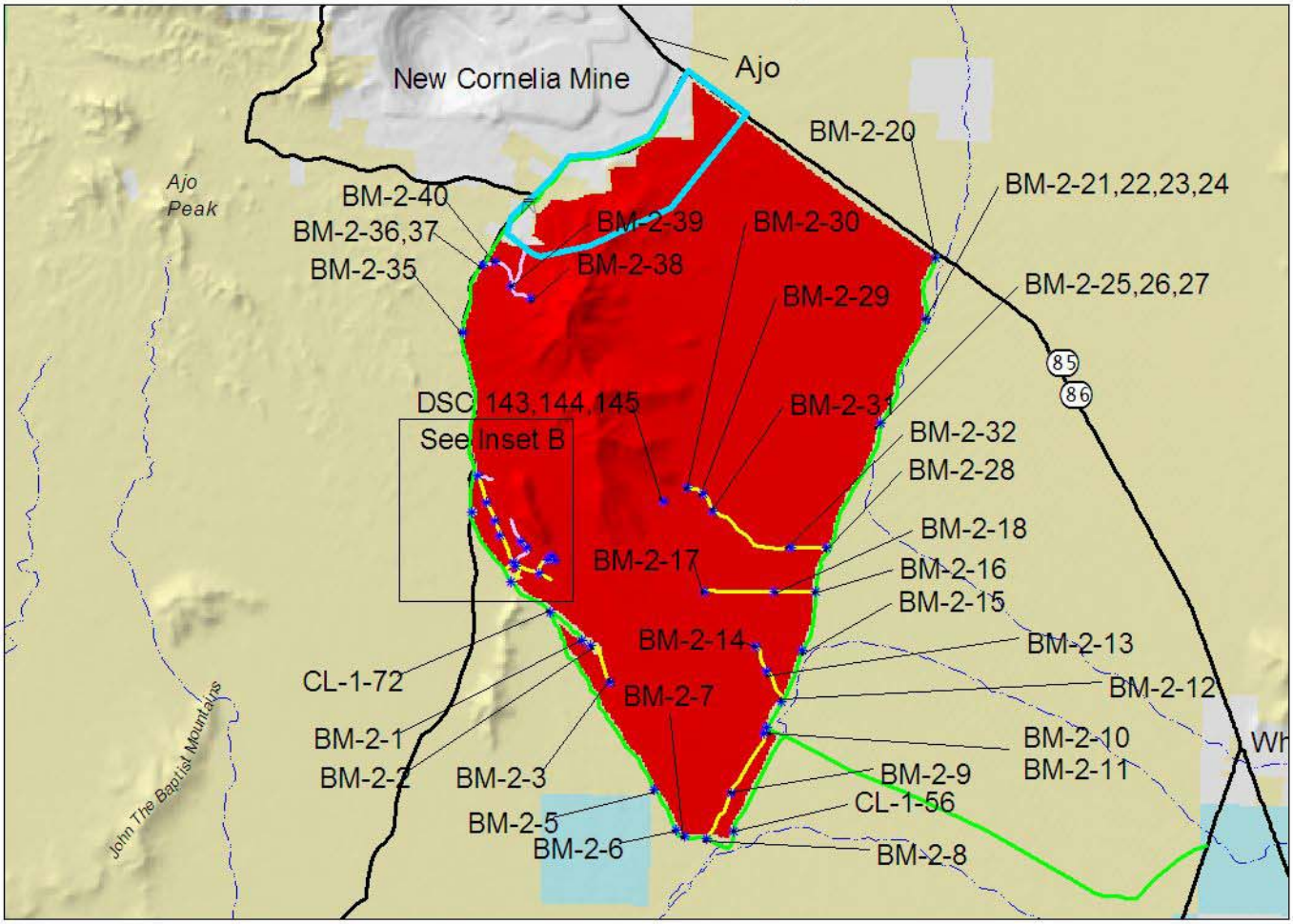
Major Roads
Proposed Wilderness
Incomplete Inventory

Land Ownership
BLM
Private
State

Recommended and Observed Status of Routes
close
open
reclaimed

N
W E
S

Photo Points for Route Analysis



3 0 3 6 Miles

Legend

- Major Roads
- Proposed Wilderness
- Incomplete Inventory

Land Ownership

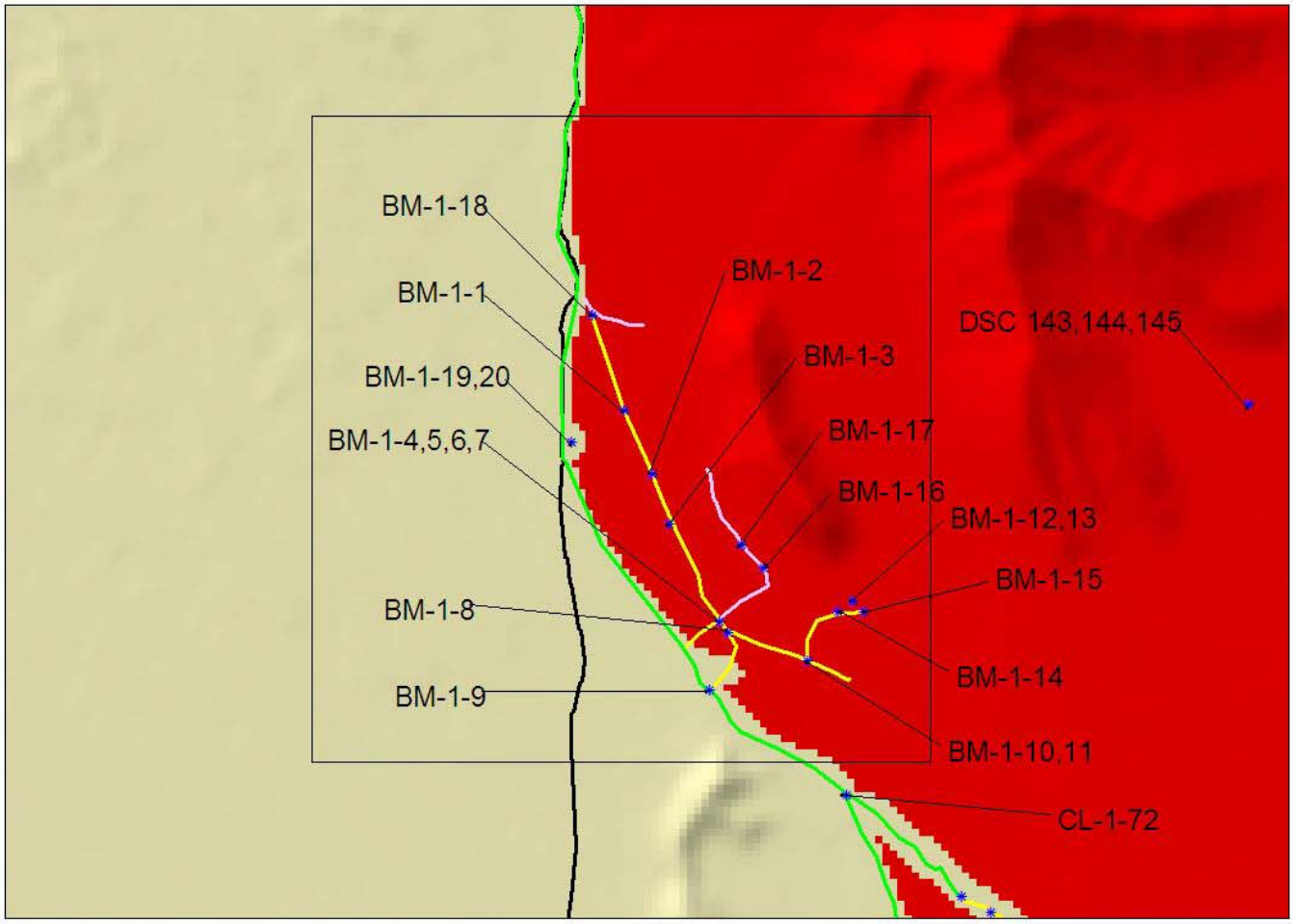
- BLM
- Private
- State

Recommended and Observed Status of Routes

- close
- open
- reclaimed

N W E S

Inset B
Photo Points



1 0 1 Miles

Legend

- Major Roads
- Proposed Wilderness
- Incomplete Inventory

Land Ownership

- BLM
- Private
- State

Recommended and Observed Status of Routes

- close
- open
- reclaimed

N
W E
S

Route Analysis and Photo Documentation
For the
Black Mountain Unit

Route #: 1
Photos: BM-1-1 thru BM-1-9
Length: 1.07 miles
Construction Type: Bladed long ago for prospecting
FLPMA Road Definition: NO
Campsites: 2
Vehicle Type: HC 2WD
Erosion: N/A
Vegetation Present: bare soil between 25-50% of surface
Other Impacts: numerous one time cross country travel ORV tracks
Proposed Action: Close
Notes: This route was used for prospecting at one time, but does not appear to have any recent activity for prospecting. Many claim posts exist. During the study phase it will be determined if there are any active claims, which would keep this route open. The western half of this route has not seen a lot of traffic while the eastern end near photo BM-1-9 will be excluded from this proposal as in has camping and staging area for ORVs.

BM-1-1 Average conditions on route 1
Direction: E

BM-1-3 ORV damage on desert pavement/cross-country travel off of route 1
Direction: S

BM-1-5 Average conditions on 1
Direction: NW

BM-1-2 Prospect, well, and claim posts on route 1
Direction: SW

BM-1-4 Junction route 1 and 2
Direction: SW

BM-1-6 Junction route 1 and 5
Direction: NE

BM-1-7 Average conditions on route 1
Direction: SE


BM-1-9 ORV play area and camping
Direction: NW

BM-1-8 Junction with routes 1 and 3
Direction: SE

Route #: 2
Photos: BM-1-4 (see above)
Length: .13 miles
Construction Type: Bladed long ago for prospecting
FLPMA Road Definition: NO
Campsites: 0
Vehicle Type: HC 2WD
Erosion: N/A
Vegetation Present: bare soil between 25-50% of surface
Other Impacts: no
Proposed Action: Close
Notes: This route was used for prospecting at one time, but does not appear to have any recent activity for prospecting. There were ORV tracks present on this route. It should be closed to help restore this area to natural conditions and prevent illegal route proliferation

Route #: 3
Photos: BM-1-8; BM-1-10; BM-1-11
Length: .35 miles
Construction Type: None
FLPMA Road Definition: NO
Campsites: 1 very old
Vehicle Type: HC 2WD
Erosion: N/A
Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface
Other Impacts: some one time cross country travel ORV tracks and donuts as in photo BM-1-11
Proposed Action: Close
Notes: This route appears to be user-created. It is a direct result of cross-country travel from route 1. It should be closed to protect wilderness characteristics in the area, as it does not provide good opportunities for ORV riding.

Route #: 4
Photos: BM-1-10; BM-1-11; BM-1-14; BM-1-15
Length: .24 miles
Construction Type: None
FLPMA Road Definition: NO
Campsites: 1
Vehicle Type: HC 2WD
Erosion: N/A
Vegetation Present: bare soil >50% of surface/ Desert Pavement
Other Impacts: few one time cross country travel ORV tracks
Proposed Action: Close
Notes: This route appears to be user created. It is a direct result of cross-country travel from route 1. It should be closed to protect wilderness characteristics in the area, as it does not provide good opportunities for ORV riding.

BM-1-10 Junction with routes 3 and 4
Direction: E

BM-1-11 ORV donuts on route 4,
Direction: SE

BM-1-14 end 4 used fire ring
Direction: S

BM-1-15 Old route no use evident
Direction: E

Route #: 5
Photos: BM-1-6; BM-1-16; BM-1-17
Length: .5 miles
Construction Type: Bladed long ago
FLPMA Road Definition: NO
Campsites: 0
Vehicle Type: N/A
Erosion: N/A
Vegetation Present: bare soil is between 25-50% of surface/ Desert Pavement
Other Impacts: few one time cross country travel ORV tracks
Proposed Action: reclaimed/close
Notes: This is an old prospect route that is reclaimed and has no seen any recent use. It fades out even more past the point where it is marked on the map. It should be closed to protect wilderness characteristics.

BM-1-17 Route 5 overgrown no use evident
Direction: E

BM-1-16 Average conditions on route 5 mining claim posts Direction: S

Route #: 6
Photos: BM-1-18
Length: .17 miles
Construction Type:
FLPMA Road Definition: NO
Campsites: 0
Vehicle Type: N/A
Erosion: N/A
Vegetation Present: bare soil is between 25-50% of surface/ Desert Pavement
Other Impacts: N/A
Proposed Action: reclaimed/close
Notes: This route was not found. It should be removed from the quadrangles.


BM-1-18 Junction routes 1 and 6
Direction: SE

Route #: 7
Photos: BM-1-19; BM-1-20; BM-2-5; BM-2-6; BM-2-7
Length: 3.87 miles
Construction Type: bladed and maintained
FLPMA Road Definition: yes
Campsites: numerous
Vehicle Type: 2WD
Erosion: N/A
Vegetation Present: bare soil is >50% of surface
Other Impacts: numerous one time cross country travel ORV tracks
Proposed Action: open
Notes: This route is along the Southwest boundary of the Black Mountain unit. It provides access to campsites and range facilities. It also provides opportunities for sightseeing and ORV riding.

BM-1-19 Corral
Direction: N

BM-1-20 Water tank
Direction: S

BM-2-5 Reclaimed route off of route 7
Direction: NW

BM-2-6 Old shortcut route on route 7
Direction: E

BM-2-7 Bad erosion on shortcut no use evident
Direction: SE

Route #: 8
Photos: CL-1-72; BM-2-1
Length: .38 miles
Construction Type: bladed
FLPMA Road Definition: no
Campsites: 0
Vehicle Type: 2WD
Erosion: N/A
Vegetation Present: bare soil is >50% of surface
Other Impacts: numerous one time cross-country travel ORV and vehicle tracks
Proposed Action: open
Notes: This route has an AZ Game and Fish guzzler at its end, and it appears that many users visit this area. There are also many ORV and vehicle tracks present between this route and route 7. May be used as an ORV staging area.


CL-1-72 Junction routes 7 and 8
Direction: S


BM-2-1 End route 7 at guzzler
Direction: E

Route #: 9
Photos: BM-2-1; BM-2-2; BM-2-3
Construction Type: none
FLPMA Road Definition: no
Campsites: 1
Vehicle Type: 2WD
Erosion: N/A
Vegetation Present: bare soil is >50% of surface
Other Impacts: numerous one time cross country travel ORV tracks
Proposed Action: close
Notes: this route was created by users pushing further on the end of route 8. Only one small campsite exists near wash. Many better campsites exist on other side of road further away from the guzzler, as users must camp at least ¼ mile away from it. Closure would also allow more wildlife to take advantage of the wash corridor to access the guzzler.


BM-2-2 Short route into wash on route 9 stops on other side. Direction: E


BM-2-3 End route 9
Direction: E

Route #: 10
Photos: BM-2-8; BM-2-9; BM-2-10
Length: 1.17 miles
Construction Type: none
FLPMA Road Definition: no
Campsites: 0
Vehicle Type: HC 4WD
Erosion: over 2 feet in some places
Vegetation Present: bare soil is >50% of surface, but is over grown from sides of route
Other Impacts: numerous one time cross country travel ORV and vehicle tracks
Proposed Action: close
Notes: This route is redundant with route 11. Both are in very poor condition. High Clearance 4 wheel drive is absolutely necessary. No matter how this route was created it should be closed since route #11 is on the quadrangle for the area and will be easier for users to understand.

BM-2-8 Junction routes 7 and 10
Direction: NE

BM-2-9 Average conditions on route 10
Direction: S

BM-2-10 Worst erosion on route 10
Direction: SW

Route #: 11
Photos: CL-1-56
Length: 1.19 miles
Construction Type: none evident it is so eroded it is hard to tell
FLPMA Road Definition: no
Campsites: 0
Vehicle Type: HC 4WD
Erosion: over 2 feet in places
Vegetation Present: bare soil is >50% of surface
Other Impacts: numerous one time cross country travel ORV tracks
Proposed Action: open
Notes: This route was probably originally created for ranching operations in the area. It is shown on the quadrangle and should be retained for access to facilities and recreation. It is in very poor condition due to erosion. It forms the Southeastern boundary for the Black Mountain unit.

Route #: 12
Photos: BM-2-11; BM-2-15; BM-2-20 thru BM-2-27
Length: 4.69 miles
Construction Type: probably bladed at one point but no evidence exists
FLPMA Road Definition: no
Campsites: numerous
Vehicle Type: HC 4WD
Erosion: exceeding 3 feet of soil loss in places on northern end, more due to livestock than the road.
Vegetation Present: bare soil is >50% of surface
Other Impacts: numerous one time cross country travel ORV tracks
Proposed Action: open
Notes: This is a main connector route for the areas ranching operations and for people to access the area. This route is on the quadrangle, but has moved to the west on its southern end, probably due to erosion. This extensive erosion could be having negative effects on Cuerda de Leña wash. Closure in the long-term should be considered for better resource protection.


BM-2-11 Junction routes 12 and 10
Direction: NE

BM-2-15 Worst erosion, braided on route 12

BM-2-20 Beginning route 12
Direction: S

BM-2-21 Average conditions of first mile of route 12
Direction: NE

BM-2-22 Erosion impacts off of route 12 and naturalness inside unit. Direction: NW

BM-2-25 Erosion impacts off of route 12 and naturalness inside unit. Direction: N

BM-2-23 Erosion impacts off of route 12 and naturalness inside unit. Direction: SW

BM-2-26 Massive soil lose next to route 12 Direction: SE

BM-2-24 Average conditions on route 12 Direction: S

BM-2-27 Erosion impacts off of route 12 and naturalness inside unit. Direction: W

Route #: 13
Photos: BM-2-12; BM-2-13; BM-2-14
Length: .55 miles
Construction Type: none
FLPMA Road Definition: no
Campsites: 0
Vehicle Type: 4WD
Erosion: about 12 inches of soil lose in some places
Vegetation Present: bare soil is between 25 -50% of surface. Creosote 1.5 feet tall is growing in the tracks
Other Impacts:
Proposed Action: reclaimed/close
Notes: This is a user created route. It appears to be reclaiming, but people are driving the first part and then turning around when they realize it doesn't go anywhere. It also runs along a wash. Closure will protect ecological as well as natural wilderness characteristics.


BM-2-12 Junction routes 12 and 13
Direction: NW

BM-2-13 Average conditions on 13
Direction: NW


BM-2-14 Worst erosion no use evident end route 13
Direction: NW

Route #: 14
Photos: BM-2-16; BM-2-17; BM-2-18
Length: 1.02 miles
Construction Type: none
FLPMA Road Definition: no
Campsites: 0
Vehicle Type: HC 4WD
Erosion: 8-12 inches
Vegetation Present: bare soil is between 25-50% of surface some desert pavement
Other Impacts: ORV donuts BM-2-18
Proposed Action: close
Notes: This route was probably created to maintain the fence line that it runs along. There is a parallel route on the other side of the fence for some of the length. This route has not seen much use by the rancher recently, but ORVs have found it and made some donuts on sensitive desert pavement. I followed it until it looked like no use was evident at photo BM-2-17. It probably continues following the fence. It is unlikely that this route is necessary for maintenance of the fence line and should be closed.

BM-2-16 Junction routes 12 and 14
Direction: S

BM-2-17 End route 14
Direction: W


BM-2-18 ORV damage on route 14
Direction: N/A

Route #: 15
Photos: BM-2-28 thru BM-2-32
Length: 1.46 miles
Construction Type: none
FLPMA Road Definition: no
Campsites: 0
Vehicle Type: HC 2WD
Erosion: 6 inches
Vegetation Present: bare soil is between 25-50% of surface some desert pavement and grasses
Other Impacts:
Proposed Action: close
Notes: This route is a recently user created wildcat route. Users may have wanted access to the more remote rugged country of Black Mountain. This route is a perfect example of what users will do with out being restricted to created and maintained routes. This route has probably seen between 5 and 10 uses and must be closed. Its closure will protect the outstanding wilderness characteristics that are present at its end.


BM-2-28 Junction routes 12 and 15
Direction: W


BM-2-29 Average conditions on route 15
Direction: SW


BM-2-30 End route 15
Direction: NW

BM-2-31 Average on route 15
Direction: E


BM-2-32 Worst erosion on route 15
Direction: N

Route #: 16
Photos: BM-2-39
Length: .40 miles
Construction Type: bladed at one time long ago
FLPMA Road Definition: no
Campsites: 0
Vehicle Type: N/A
Erosion: stable
Vegetation Present: bare soil is between 25-50% of surface some grasses
Other Impacts:
Proposed Action: reclaimed/close
Notes: This route was created for mining prospects in the area and has not seen use in a number of years. It is almost fully reclaimed. It should be removed from the quadrangles to prevent user confusion.


BM-2-39 No use evident on route 16
Direction: N

Route #: 17
Photos: BM-2-36; BM-2-37; BM-2-38; BM-2-40
Length: .64 miles
Construction Type: bladed long ago
FLPMA Road Definition: no
Campsites: 0
Vehicle Type: HC 4WD
Erosion: 18-24 inches of soil lose
Vegetation Present: bare soil is between 25-50% of surface some desert pavement and grasses
Other Impacts:
Proposed Action: reclaimed/close
Notes: This route was created for mining prospects in the area and has seen one use in the recent past. It is mostly reclaimed. It should be closed and removed from the quadrangles to prevent user confusion. It may make a nice hiking trail.


BM-2-36 Junction routes 18 and 17
Direction: E


BM-2-37 Average conditions on route 17
Direction: E


BM-2-38 End route 17
Direction: E


BM-2-40 Worst erosion on route 17
Direction: NW

Route #: 18
Photos: BM-2-35
Length:
Construction Type: bladed and maintained
FLPMA Road Definition: Yes
Campsites: numerous
Vehicle Type: 2WD
Erosion: stable
Vegetation Present: none
Other Impacts: User created routes off of it
Proposed Action: open
Notes: This road is called Darby Well Road and hooks up with Bates Well Road. It forms the entire Western boundary for the Black Mountain Wilderness Study Area Unit. It provides excellent opportunities for sightseeing and camping.

BM-2-35 Campsite along route 18
Direction: SE

BM-2-39 Junction routes 16 and 17
Direction: N