

**Further
Planning Area
Description
and Evaluation**

APPENDIX C. FURTHER PLANNING AREA DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION

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INTRODUCTION

The Inyo National Forest has 623,818 acres in 18 separate areas that have been evaluated during the Forest planning process for possible wilderness designation. The planning process has developed alternative wilderness and nonwilderness scenarios for each further planning area. A final recommendation for future management of each area has been made in the proposed Forest plan.

The following narratives describe individual Inyo National Forest further planning areas, analyze their wilderness values, address current and potential nonwilderness uses, and examine the consequences of managing each area under alternative management prescriptions.

Each narrative contains five major subheadings: description, capability, availability, need, and environmental consequences. The following annotated outline describes the kind of material included in each section and defines the terms and abbreviations used.

OUTLINE FOR FURTHER PLANNING AREA NARRATIVES

Name/number Acres*: National Forest (other ownership)

A. DESCRIPTION

This section describes the area in terms of its geographic location, prominent physical and biological characteristics, attractions, and current use. Location is described in terms of county, ranger district, and access by road and trail to and into the area. The boundary is defined by naming surrounding roads, wildernesses, and/or non-Forest lands.

Mountain range, watershed, range of elevation, and geometric shape constitute the area's geography. Topography is described in terms of slope, geology, miles of perennial stream, and number of lakes.

Vegetation types in the area are described using a condensed version of the wildlife habitat types according to the R-5 Wildlife Habitat Relationship (WHR) System. (For correlations between the condensed and the complete set of WHR types, see the planning records.) Unusual species or associations of plants are also noted.

Scenic values are described in terms of variety class, and scenic landmarks within the area are listed.

*The acreages in these narratives are derived from the Forest planning data base; they differ from acreages found in the RARE II literature. In addition, certain areas for which included private land was indicated in RARE II do not indicate private land here. In some cases, the land has been acquired; in other cases, the land is on the area's periphery and was inappropriately included by RARE II within the area boundary.

"Other attractions" include primarily noteworthy wildlife species or associations of species. (Threatened, endangered, or sensitive species are discussed below under the capability section.)

The current uses of the area are summarized here; greater detail is found in the availability section of the narrative.

B. CAPABILITY

This section describes the area in terms of wilderness attributes, boundary manageability, and special features that enhance the area's wilderness values.

The wilderness attributes discussed are those identified in the Wilderness Act of 1964:

Natural integrity - the degree to which natural ecological processes in the area are free from the influence of human activities.

Natural appearance - the degree to which the area appears to the observer to be free from the influence of human activities. (This can differ from natural integrity. For example, a road that has very little influence on natural processes may be quite evident to the observer; or, conversely, grazing may have caused major vegetation changes which are not evident to the observer.)

Opportunity for solitude - the opportunity to be separated from other people and from evidence of human activity. This attribute is a function of the area's size and shape, topographic and vegetative screening, and the visibility of human activities outside the area.

Opportunity for primitive recreation - the opportunity to recreate without the aid of motor vehicles or developed facilities. Primitive recreation, like solitude, is related to size and screening. It also includes the elements of diversity (water sources, campsites, destination points, and kinds of recreational activity available); challenge (possibility of getting lost or injuring oneself in pursuit of recreational activities); and absence of developed facilities.

"Special features" include habitat for sensitive, threatened, or endangered species; and scientific research opportunities in the area.

This section of the narrative includes a discussion of boundary manageability. A wilderness boundary is considered manageable if conflicting uses can reasonably be excluded and if areas high in wilderness value can be separated from areas of lower value. In many cases, the further planning area boundary originally defined would not be manageable if the area were designated wilderness. However, in most cases, a manageable boundary for the area could be described without significant loss of acreage. This discussion addresses the manageability of the existing boundary and the feasibility of alternate boundaries.

Some Inyo National Forest further planning areas adjoin roadless lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Specified BLM wilderness study areas adjoin two Inyo National Forest further planning areas: Area 5056 (Benton Range) and Area 5064 (Paiute). The amount of adjoining roadless BLM land, its status, and the Forest's role in evaluating that land is discussed in the capability section of the narratives for the affected areas.

C. AVAILABILITY

The availability section of each narrative addresses the subject of trade-offs between wilderness values and other resources and uses for a given area. The section discusses current and projected uses and/or developments by resource or activity. The following paragraphs define the terms and units of measurement used to describe each resource and highlights ways in which wilderness designation could involve a trade-off with other activities.

Recreation use is expressed in recreation visitor days (RVDs). Recreation is described in terms of the following categories: developed (involving facilities); dispersed nonmotorized (hiking, camping, nordic skiing); dispersed motorized (vehicle-based); and wildlife-related (hunting, fishing and wildlife observation). Motorized recreation, which includes much of the existing hunting and fishing, would be excluded from an area if it were designated wilderness.

Wildlife management opportunities are expressed in terms of acres suitable for habitat manipulation; fish habitat management is discussed in terms of proposed improvement projects such as construction of instream structures. Habitat manipulation and use of motorized construction equipment or vehicles would be prohibited or restricted in wilderness.

Water resources are described in terms of the downstream uses of water from the area and small hydroelectric proposals. If water is destined for domestic use, an undisturbed and undeveloped watershed (such as one would expect in wilderness) would have positive value. Small hydroelectric development represents a potential trade-off, as it would be precluded by wilderness designation.

Watershed condition is described in terms of watershed restoration projects proposed for the area. Such projects might be more costly without the option of using motorized equipment normally prohibited in wilderness.

Current and potential grazing levels are expressed in animal unit months (AUMs). The value of existing range improvements is noted. The distinction between actual and potential use reveals a possible wilderness/nonwilderness trade-off. Grazing in wilderness has typically been allowed to continue at or below those levels that were grazed before wilderness designation. Whereas grazing need not be reduced in wilderness, the potential to increase use may be foregone. The value of range improvements is an indirect indicator of the importance of the area to the range permittee and of the amount of vehicular access currently required to maintain improvements.

Ecological resources include existing or proposed research natural areas and special interest areas set aside to preserve or interpret noteworthy natural features. Wilderness management could conflict with the management objectives of such areas.

Timber in the area is described in terms of acres suitable for timber management and the commercial tree species present. Timber harvest would not be permitted in wilderness.

Acres by mineral potential rating and the number of active claims within the area are displayed. The results of recent mineral surveys are summarized. Areas which lie within a known geothermal resource area (KGRA), areas which have been withdrawn from mineral entry, and outstanding mineral rights are also noted. Mining claims can not be located in designated wilderness; valid existing rights as of December 31, 1983 will be recognized. Mineral development under existing claims, while not automatically excluded from wilderness, is more restricted there than on nonwilderness lands. Lands which have been withdrawn are not available for mineral entry, regardless of the wilderness/nonwilderness decision.

Cultural and historical resource values are described within the limits of our knowledge about the area (most Forest lands have not yet been inventoried for cultural features). Whereas wilderness designation could add a layer of protection to archaeological sites, it could also conflict with cultural resource management, if excavation or the retention of an historical structure not consistent with wilderness values were desired.

Finally, existing uses under special-use permit and included non-National Forest land are described. Special uses are identified by type of activity. Non-Forest land is identified by ownership [i.e., private, City of Los Angeles (DWP), Inyo or Mono Counties, or Southern California Edison (SCE)] and present or proposed use, if known. In the case of either special uses or inholdings, conflicts could arise from the desire for vehicle access across wilderness land and/or the type of use in relation to wilderness values.

D. NEED

The need for more wilderness acreage is examined in terms of several factors: current use of and geographical relationship with neighboring wildernesses and further planning areas; distance from population centers; interest by wilderness proponents; the results of public involvement for RARE II; the results of other public involvement activities related to the area; and the desire for representation of a full range of ecosystems in the wilderness preservation system.

Individual further planning area narratives address only those need variables specific to a given area. A discussion of variables that affect all Inyo National Forest further planning areas, or groups of similar areas, is contained below under the heading: "The Need for More Wilderness on the Inyo National Forest."

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section displays the range of management prescriptions that were considered for the further planning area in question and the consequences of applying those prescriptions. It is important to note that the choice is not simply between wilderness and nonwilderness management, but also among different nonwilderness management options.

Factors that were examined include effects on present use, development opportunities foregone, and wilderness values foregone. Effects are quantified wherever possible and include relevant economic factors. A table of management prescription allocations, by alternative and a table of key resource outputs from the area under each alternative are included in this section.

For purposes of this analysis, an alternative that was eliminated from detailed study is displayed in the discussion of environmental consequences. The reason for doing so is that some of the further planning areas analyzed were not recommended for wilderness in any of the alternatives studied in detail. Amenity C (AMC), an alternative eliminated from detailed study, did recommend all further planning areas for wilderness.

THE NEED FOR MORE WILDERNESS ON THE INYO NATIONAL FOREST

Current Use of Neighboring Wildernesses

The Inyo National Forest presently includes five wildernesses: the Hoover, the Ansel Adams (formerly Minarets), the John Muir, the Golden Trout, and the South Sierra. All of these areas but the South Sierra are heavily used; daily use quotas have been placed on trailheads for the Ansel Adams and John Muir in order to manage those areas within their capacities. There are more requests for wilderness permits on quota trailheads than there are permits issued. It would therefore appear that the public would make use of considerably more wilderness acreage on the Inyo National Forest if it were available.

The amount of use that can be projected for new wilderness is, however, influenced by factors other than the number of people who currently seek wilderness recreation in neighboring wildernesses. Current levels of use in existing wilderness are linked to the kind of terrain and the kind of recreational experiences available there. Water is almost an absolute requirement for most wilderness users--not only as a life-support factor, but also as a major component of wilderness aesthetics. Scenic variety and well-defined recreational destination points are also important to many people. Finally, people seem to seek those areas with the least evidence of human activity. Those wilderness attributes that foster heavy wilderness use are limited (or lacking) in many of the further planning areas on the Forest.

Most Inyo National Forest further planning areas lack reliable sources of water, recognizable destination points, and/or scenic variety. Many are visibly influenced by human activity and/or are visually intruded by activities outside the boundary.

In assessing need, it is important to note not only the current use levels in geographically neighboring areas, but the type of current use in physically and biologically similar areas. All of the Forest's existing, heavily-used wilderness is in the Sierra Nevada physiographic province. It is therefore difficult to directly assess the need for wilderness recreation opportunities in the Basin and Range province. Indirect measures of need are: 1) the types of recreation presently found in those areas, and 2) the attitude of wilderness proponents toward those areas during public involvement for the RARE II study.

There appears to be a low level of wilderness-type recreation use on lands in the Basin and Range. Due primarily to the lack of drinking water and the difficulty of carrying water over long distances, most recreation in arid country is vehicle-based. On the other hand, wilderness proponents in State and national organizations have targeted parts of the White and Inyo Mountains for wilderness designation. Local environmental groups were divided on this subject and responded more specifically to individual areas.

Distance from Population Centers

Approximately 60 percent of summer wilderness users on the Inyo National Forest come from Southern California; most of the remaining 40 percent come from the San Francisco Bay area. Further planning areas on the Forest are a four-to

Interest by Wilderness Proponents

Wilderness advocacy organizations singled out only a few further planning areas on the Inyo for wilderness recommendation. The Boundary Peak subpart of the White Mountains area has received the greatest amount of attention. The part of the Inyo Mountains around Seephole and Side Hill Springs is seen as desirable wilderness by some local environmental advocates.

RARE II Public Involvement Results

Written responses to the RARE II Draft EIS were weighted heavily in favor of wilderness designation for each area. On a Forest-wide basis, by signature, 70 to 80 percent of written responses favored wilderness. Most of these were personal letters, and approximately 85 percent came from within California. Only 20 to 30 percent of the total responses favored nonwilderness, of which most used response forms and about 70 percent came from within California. Very few respondents in either group addressed specific areas; most parties made broad statements which applied indiscriminately to all roadless areas on the Forest.

The majority of local opinion strongly opposed any additional wilderness acreage on the Inyo National Forest. Although only in a few cases was a measureable effect on local communities anticipated, overriding sentiment resisted additional restriction of public lands. The feeling is strong that big government is already too powerful (a sentiment that reflects the fact that only three percent of Inyo and Mono Counties are privately owned.) There is a perceived lack of local control over land-use decisions.

In addition, the majority of local people do not themselves seek wilderness recreation. The typical area resident hunts, fishes, gathers fuelwood, and/or camps from a pickup truck or 4-wheel drive vehicle. Many of the Forest's further planning areas represent the local "back-yard" for such people, and a sense of proprietary ownership is strong. Such people do not want to see the exclusion of vehicles from traditional recreation sites.

Various Forest user groups have expressed interest in the influence wilderness management would have on their activities. These groups are concerned with the situation that affects them, wherever it arises, rather than being especially interested in any particular area.

The mineral industry favors nonwilderness management of any lands with mineral potential. Geothermal interests favor nonwilderness for lands with geothermal potential. Small hydroelectric proponents favor nonwilderness where there is development potential.

Hunters and fishermen typically favor nonwilderness management so that they can reach their recreation sites by vehicle.

Range permittees favor nonwilderness where they access the range by vehicle, and/or where there is the potential to increase grazing. Special-use permittees and inholders generally favor nonwilderness in order to avoid further restrictions on access and/or activities.

Specific economic interests include timber management, mining, grazing, and recreation.

Need for Ecosystem Representation

The Inyo National Forest has further planning areas with ecosystems belonging to two physiographic provinces. The southern Sierra Nevada physiographic province is already well represented in wilderness on the Inyo, on other National Forests in the Pacific Southwest Region, and in the National Park Service backcountry.

On the other hand, ecosystems typical of the southern Basin and Range province are not represented in existing wilderness on the Forest or in the Region. If it is, indeed, desirable to designate wildernesses that represent major ecosystems, the Inyo National Forest could be in a good position to contribute to that end.

Results of Other Public Involvement

The Inyo National Forest has conducted public involvement activities for several reasons since the RARE II study. These efforts have included public involvement for the Forest planning process, for Mammoth Mountain Ski Area development, for geothermal leasing, for management of the Golden Trout Wilderness, and for the 1983-84 reevaluation of roadless areas. In addition, public hearings have been held by other government parties to review proposals for the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area and an alternate access road to the community of Mammoth Lakes.

These efforts have revealed little change in local public opinion during the years between RARE II public involvement and the present. There is still vocal resistance to any kind of additional restriction on public land. Economic growth is still seen as dependent on development, primarily in the recreation industry. Developments such as geothermal and small hydroelectric projects, which could potentially reduce the recreational attraction of the area, are viewed with more caution. There is considerable support for maintaining existing mining and commercial timber operations. Support for additional wilderness is represented by a small but vocal group of local citizens, as well as State and national wilderness advocacy organizations.

A. DESCRIPTION

The Coyote SE area is located in Inyo County, on the White Mountain Ranger District. The Coyote jeep road leads six miles from Bishop to the area boundary, parallels the boundary for 15 miles, and forks to form a corridor that penetrates the area. Trails lead into the area from Big Pine Creek, Bishop Creek, the jeep road, and the foothills northwest of Big Pine.

The boundary is defined by the Glacier Lodge Road and the John Muir Wilderness on the south, the Bishop Creek Road on the west, Coyote jeep road on the northwest, and BLM and City of Los Angeles land on the east and northeast.

The area lies on the east side of the Sierra Nevada in the Owens River, Bishop Creek, and Big Pine Creek watersheds. It is roughly triangular, measures 13 miles long by 12 miles wide, and is nearly bisected by a road corridor. Elevations range from 4,800 feet on the east to 12,226 feet at The Hunchback.

Terrain forms an extensive, steep-sided, high-elevation plateau. The plateau is geologically significant for two reasons: 1) the rolling topography is the remnant of an ancient erosion surface that has been uplifted by earth movements, and 2) it is the only place in the eastern Sierra where the bedrock has bent (downwarped) rather than broken along fault lines as the mountains have risen relative to the valley. Twenty-six miles of perennial stream, of which 11 miles contain trout, cross the area; there are five lakes.

Primary vegetation types are big sagebrush, bitterbrush, and pine-juniper woodland.

Scenic variety in the area falls into class A, 35 percent; class B, 65 percent. The entire eastern side of the Sierra Nevada is a major landmark from Highway 395, which is State-designated as a scenic highway in the Owens Valley. Sugarloaf, Piper Peak, and Round Mountain are identifiable features.

The surrounding area is also scenic, including the dramatic glaciated canyons of Big Pine Creek and Bishop Creek, the rugged high peaks of the Sierra crest, and the Owens Valley.

Another attraction is Grouse Spring, which supports five species of one genus of chipmunk.

Current uses include recreation and cattle grazing.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity of the area has been influenced to a low degree, and natural appearance to a very low degree. A range improvement project replaced sagebrush with grasses 20 years ago, and grazing is scattered across the area. There are many fences and trails and some unimproved roads.

Opportunities for solitude are moderate. The intruding road corridor limits the benefits of the area's large size. The area is topographically isolated from the John Muir Wilderness and adjacent backcountry. Vegetative and topographic screening is moderate. Aircraft using the neighboring Coyote airstrip are seen and heard within the area.

Opportunities for primitive recreation, including diversity and challenge, are also moderate. There are no developed facilities.

A sensitive plant species, Lupinus dedeckeriae, grows in the area between High Meadows and Logging Flat. A population has also been found near the area boundary west of Ford Flat.

The original inventory boundary would be unmanageable as wilderness. Vehicle access (4-wheel drive) to much of the area is easy, and evidence of human influence on the area could not be easily separated. A major boundary adjustment could allow for the western one-third of the area (that is lowest in conflicts and impacts) to be added to the John Muir Wilderness.

Six parcels of roadless BLM land, encompassing 2,231 acres, adjoin the area.

C. AVAILABILITY

There are several potential trade-offs between wilderness designation and other resources and activities. Wilderness management would close the area (except on identified road corridors) to vehicles, limit the potential to increase grazing or improve wildlife habitat, prohibit or severely modify potential small hydroelectric development on Baker Creek, and restrict or prohibit mineral exploration and development.

Dispersed nonmotorized recreation, including camping, sightseeing, backpacking, and nordic mountaineering, account for 1,000 RVDs a year; motorized recreation amounts to 500 RVDs. Other recreational activities include big game hunting (700 WFUDs) and fishing (700 WFUDs). Most recreationists are local area residents.

Approximately 4,230 acres are suitable for wildlife habitat manipulation. Green Lake and Rocky Bottom Lake are CDFG-designated for special management of Kamloops rainbow trout. Both lakes are also being considered for designation as wild trout fisheries.

Water from the area flows into the Owens River. Most of the water is exported for domestic use; the remainder is used for local irrigation and domestic needs. A small hydroelectric project has been proposed for Baker Creek.

Watershed restoration projects have been proposed for several meadows in the area. Vehicle access would be important for project sites in the Rawson Creek drainage.

Cattle grazing represents 1,050 AUMs of use; maximum potential is estimated at 2,140 AUMs. Existing improvements are valued at \$14,000.

The area is incapable of producing commercial timber.

Of the lands in this area, 9 percent are rated high in mineral potential; 0 percent are medium, and 91 percent are low. There are four active mining claims in or immediately outside the area, of which none are currently producing. There are small, subeconomic tungsten resources, but the geology is not favorable for large deposits.

Cultural resource values include evidence of prehistoric human activity, historic mining and cattle ranching, and the Baker Creek Ranger Station site.

Special uses include a cabin and two fences. The boundary includes 410 acres of undeveloped private and DWP land.

D. NEED

The area belongs to the southern Sierra Nevada physiographic province; current use of wildernesses in that province is extremely heavy. The area is typical of the province. This area adjoins the existing John Muir Wilderness and is near the Table Mountain further planning area.

Public involvement for RARE II indicated strong local support for retaining this area as nonwilderness. The Coyote plateau symbolizes unrestricted recreation for local residents, who do not think of it as a roadless area. Many retired people dependent on vehicle access use the area. Local Paiute Indians use the area for teaching their children to live off the land.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-1 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the roadless area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-2.

**Table C-1
Management Prescription Allocations
by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
Coyote Southeast (5033)**

Management Prescription	Alternatives						
	PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness				55.6	55.6	11.8	55.6
				100%	100%	21%	100%
11. Range		13.6	13.6				
		24%	24%				
17. Semi-Primitive Rec	55.6	42.0				43.8	
	100%	76%				79%	
18. Multiple Resource Area			42.0				
			76%				

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription: # 2

Alternative(s): CEE, AMN, AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness designation would maintain the natural integrity and appearance characteristic of the area. Opportunities for finding solitude would increase, as roads penetrating the area would be closed to vehicle use. Management of the area as wilderness would be difficult and costly. The terrain does not provide a natural barrier for preventing illegal vehicle access, and the evidence of human influence would not be easily mitigated.

A loss of motorized recreation would result; a consequence that would be of local concern, as the activity is deeply rooted in the area. Primitive recreation would dramatically increase. The quality of the wilderness experience offered would be high, but lower than experiences available in the adjacent John Muir Wilderness.

Opportunities to manipulate vegetation to enhance livestock grazing would be foregone, though current grazing would be maintained.

Watershed restoration projects could not use motorized equipment. The proposed small hydroelectric project would not be allowed to develop.

The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

Access to and development of private inholdings would degrade wilderness values. A permit authorizing a cabin occupancy would be terminated.

Economic consequences would include those associated with motorized recreation (including some hunting and fishing), grazing, hydroelectric development, and mining. Eight miles of trail and two trailheads would represent the initial costs of wilderness management. Annual administrative costs would increase considerably.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or major resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Wilderness (revised boundary)/nonwilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): AMB

Effects on the Area: The intent of recommending this combination of prescriptions with the revised wilderness boundary would be to improve wilderness manageability and to recommend only those lands with the highest level of wilderness values, especially primitive recreation opportunities, for wilderness designation.

The revised boundary would reduce potential conflicts, as most other uses and resource opportunities are located on the nonwilderness part of the area.

The exception to this rule, however is mineral potential. Lands recommended for wilderness under this combination have higher proportional mineral potential ratings (21 percent high; 79 percent low) than the entire area (9 percent high; 91 percent low). The wilderness part of the area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted. For this reason, the increased likelihood of Congress designating wilderness with this revised boundary would be compromised by the potential for conflict with mineral activity would compromise that overall benefit.

Wilderness designation would maintain the natural integrity and appearance on lands managed under Prescription 2. Opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would be also be maintained. Management of the area as wilderness would be fairly easy; terrain would discourage vehicle entry, there is little sign of human disturbance, and existing and most likely potential use patterns are compatible with wilderness. Primitive recreation on those lands would be expected to increase somewhat with the attraction of wilderness designation. The quality of the wilderness experience would be similar to that found in the adjacent John Muir Wilderness.

The wilderness characteristics of the nonwilderness lands would remain at a level similar to the current situation. Vehicle use would be restricted to existing routes, and any new mining roads would be closed to public use.

Opportunities to directly enhance livestock grazing and wildlife habitat would be maintained on nonwilderness lands. Current grazing and hunting would continue, and the opportunity to increase outputs maintained. Management of wildlife and grazing could make use of vehicles, new structural improvements, and vegetation manipulation.

Watershed restoration projects could be completed by conventional methods using motorized equipment. The proposed small hydroelectric project would be allowed to develop.

There would be no public roads constructed for discretionary purposes. Existing vehicle routes would be maintained and new mining roads, though closed to the public, could be constructed.

Access to and development of private inholdings would not represent a conflict, as those properties lie in the nonwilderness part of the area.

Economic consequences would include the maintenance of those benefits associated with motorized recreation (including most hunting and fishing), grazing, and hydroelectric development, with the additional benefits associated with wilderness recreation. Some mineral opportunities would be lost. Six miles of trail and one trailhead would represent the initial costs of wilderness management. Annual administrative costs would increase considerably.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or major resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 17

Alternative(s): PRF

Effects on the Area: Wilderness attributes would be essentially maintained, as the area would be managed to limit vehicle access and public road construction. The present motorized and nonmotorized recreation would continue to steadily increase. Vehicles would be limited to existing roads and trails; primitive and semiprimitive recreation would be emphasized.

Natural appearance would be maintained, except for localized impacts occurring from mining, motorized vehicle use, special use facilities and wildlife or grazing vegetation treatment. The overall impact would not be significant, however, primarily because vehicle use would be limited.

Cattle grazing AUMs would be allowed to increase; vehicle access for range management would be allowed.

Options to consider hydroelectric projects would be maintained. Watershed restoration projects could be accomplished with motorized equipment.

The area would remain available for mineral exploration and development. Activities on valid mining claims would be affected only by applicable mining restrictions. New mining roads would be closed to public entry.

Conflicts between private land uses and management under this prescription would not be significant in comparison with management under a wilderness prescription. Vehicle access to private land would not present a serious concern. Special-use activities would not be affected, and the option would exist to allow other special uses.

Economic consequences would include benefits associated with recreation (motorized and non-motorized), fish and wildlife, grazing, hydroelectric development, and mining. A social consequence would be the loss of the area as potential wilderness.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or major resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 11, 17

Alternative (s): CUR

Effects on the Area: The effects of these two prescriptions on wilderness values would be somewhat greater than those described above for Prescription # 17 alone. Lands managed under Prescription #11 are available for road construction, and any mining roads constructed on lands under that prescription could be left open for public access.

In addition, #11 indicates a greater likelihood of vegetation treatment and structural improvement for range management purposes than # 17.

If the number of fences and other structural improvements increased, some of the existing dispersed recreation in the area could be displaced.

All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.

The primary opportunity gained and economic benefit derived from this combination of prescriptions is the option of improved access for livestock management and associated benefits for range permittees. In addition, mining opportunities would be enhanced as access throughout the area would be increased.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 11, 18

Alternative (s): RPA

Effects on the Area: The effects of these two prescriptions on wilderness values would even greater than those described above for Prescriptions 11 and 17. Lands managed under both of these prescriptions are available for road construction or open ORV designation, and any mining roads constructed on lands under these prescriptions could be left open for public access.

Motorized recreation would be expected to increase; access for range management purposes would be virtually unrestricted, and mining opportunities would be enhanced as access throughout the area would be increased.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

The primary opportunities gained and economic benefits derived from this combination of prescriptions is the option of increased opportunities for motorized (including ORV) recreation. In addition, mining opportunities would be enhanced as access throughout the area would be increased.

Table C-2
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Coyote Southeast (5033)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	0	0	0	55.6	55.6	11.8	55.6
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	55.6	55.6	55.6	0	0	43.8	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	1500 2250	1500 2250	1500 2250	0 0	0 0	1185 1178	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	9300 11400	1950 2925	9300 11400
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	1400 2100	1400 2100	1400 2100	1000 1350	1000 1350	1320 1980	1000 1350
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	1268 2140	1268 2140	1268 2140	1050 1050	1050 1050	1268 2140	1050 1050
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	66 86	66 86	66 86	178 220	178 220	153 189	178 220
Costs (M\$)	1 5	18 21	18 21	18 21	336 140	336 140	291 122	336 140
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	48 65	48 65	48 65	-158 80	-158 80	-138 67	-158 80

A. DESCRIPTION

The Table Mountain area lies in Inyo County on the White Mountain Ranger District. The Tyee Lakes trail leads across an arm of the area from the South Lake Road into the wilderness. The center of the area is most accessible on foot, cross-country north from the trail.

The boundary is defined by the South Lake and Lake Sabrina Roads on the northeast and northwest, and by the John Muir Wilderness on the south.

The area lies on the east side of the Sierra Nevada, in the Bishop Creek watershed. It is roughly triangular, approximately six miles long and two miles wide. Elevations range from 8,200 to 11,936 feet.

Terrain forms a steep-sided plateau. The plateau represents an ancient erosion surface that has been raised by mountain-building and separated from similar lands on the Coyote plateau by stream erosion. There is one mile of perennial stream, with trout found throughout, and no lakes.

Primary vegetation types in the area are eastside pine, big sagebrush, and subalpine fir forest.

The entire area falls into variety class A. The surrounding country is also scenic. The deep, glaciated canyons of Bishop Creek's middle and south forks, the rugged peaks of Thompson Ridge and the Sierra Crest, and two large, scenic reservoirs are visible at close range. The Owens Valley, the White Mountains, and the volcanic highlands north of Bishop can be seen in the distance.

The only current use is recreation.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity and natural appearance of the area are essentially unmodified. The Tyee Lakes trail is the only sign of human influence.

Opportunities for solitude are high. The area is large in combination with adjoining wilderness and National Park backcountry. Topographic screening is high; vegetative screening is moderate. The visual intrusion of the two adjacent roads is moderated by the steep slopes of the area and vertical distance from the traffic.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are low. Although the area (in combination with neighboring areas) is large and there are no facilities, diversity is limited by the steep topography and lack of water. There are few challenges.

The inventory boundary would be manageable as wilderness, with only minor adjustments at most; steep slopes form a natural barrier to vehicles.

C. AVAILABILITY

There are no trade-offs between wilderness designation and other resources and activities.

Hiking and camping account for 500 RVDs of use each year; big game hunting amounts to 80 WFUDs.

Water from the area flows into Bishop Creek, where it is used to generate hydroelectric power. Some is then used for local domestic needs; the rest flows into the Owens River from which it is exported for domestic use.

The area is not capable of commercial timber production.

Of the lands in this area, 7 percent are rated high in mineral potential; 51 percent are medium, and 42 percent are low. There is one active mining claim in the area, which has a subeconomic tungsten deposit.

D. NEED

The area belongs to the southern Sierra Nevada physiographic province; current use of wildernesses in that province is extremely heavy. The area is typical of the province. This area adjoins the existing John Muir Wilderness and is near the Coyote Southeast and Buttermilk further planning areas.

Public involvement for the RARE II study indicated that most local residents already see this area as wilderness; there appear to be no conflicts.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-3 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the roadless area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-4.

Table C-3
Management Prescription Allocations
by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
Table Mountain (5035)

Management Prescription	Alternatives						
	PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness	4.1 100%				4.1 100%		4.1 100%
17. Semi-Primitive Rec		4.1 100%				4.1 100%	
18. Multiple Resource Area			4.1 100%	4.1 100%			

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): PRF, AMN, AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness designation would preserve the wilderness attributes of the area. The quality of the experience and quantity of use received would be lower than that found in the contiguous John Muir Wilderness area. The inventory boundary would be manageable as wilderness; it would not be difficult or costly to administer.

Current uses would not change; recreation use would continue to be nonmotorized (primarily hiking, camping and big game hunting). Because of the lack of water and few challenges, the use level would remain low.

The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

There are no known social or economic dependencies related to the area. A social benefit would be formal wilderness designation.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 17

Alternative(s): CUR, AMB

Effects on the Area: Wilderness attributes would not be affected. The area is steep and difficult to access, hence it would be feasible to continue limiting vehicle access to the area. There would be no effect on the present low level of nonmotorized recreation.

The area would remain available for mineral entry and leasing; only applicable mining restrictions would affect activities. New roads constructed for mining access would be closed to the public.

Economic and social benefits would not significantly change. A social cost would be the loss of a potential wilderness designation.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 18

Alternative(s): RPA, CEE

Effects on the Area: The effects of Prescription # 18 would differ very little from those of # 17 in this area. Although road construction would be allowed, the terrain would tend to prevent such construction on all but the outside edges of the area. If a mining road were constructed, it could be left open for public access and increased motorized recreation opportunities.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

Table C-4
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Table Mountain (5035)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	4.1	0	0	0	4.1	0	4.1
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	0	4.1	4.1	4.1	0	4.1	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	500 750	500 750	500 750	0 0	500 750	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	700 1090	0 0	0 0	0 0	700 1090	0 0	700 1090
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	80 120	80 120	80 120	80 120	80 120	80 120	80 120
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Gross Benefits (M\$)	1 5	12 18	8 12	8 12	8 12	12 18	8 12	12 18
Costs (M\$)	1 5	20 13	4 4	4 4	4 4	20 13	4 4	20 13
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	-8 5	4 8	4 8	4 8	-8 5	4 8	-8 5

A. DESCRIPTION

The Buttermilk area is located in Inyo County, on the White Mountain Ranger District. The Buttermilk jeep road leads four miles from the Bishop Creek Road to the area boundary. The area is accessible on foot cross-country from that road.

The boundary is defined by the John Muir Wilderness on the west, the Buttermilk jeep road on the east, the McGee Creek road on the south, and the Horton Creek mining road on the north.

The area lies on the eastern escarpment of the Sierra Nevada, in the Owens River and Horton Creek watersheds. It is rectangular, and measures 1 mile wide by 2.25 miles long. Elevations range from 7,660 feet on the east to 8,400 feet on the west.

Terrain is moderately steep, consisting mainly of alluvial material. Two miles of perennial stream, of which one mile contains trout, cross the area; there are no lakes.

The predominant vegetation type is bitterbrush; small amounts of eastside pine are present at higher elevations.

Scenic variety in the area falls into class A, 50 percent; class B, 50 percent. The surrounding area is also scenic. Uphill and to the west, terrain rises steeply to the rugged peaks of the Sierra Crest. A cluster of jumbled, smoothly eroded granite domes lies east of the area. The White Mountains, Owens Valley, and Casa Diablo area are visible in the distance.

Current uses include recreation and cattle grazing.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity and natural appearance of the area have been influenced to a low degree. Grazing has changed the vegetation on more than 50 percent of the area, and a fence bisects the area.

Opportunities for solitude are low. Although the area is large when combined with the adjoining wilderness and National Park backcountry, there is little vegetative or topographic screening. Recreation use is concentrated in the aspen groves along the streams. Many dirt roads are easily seen, even from the center of the area. Opportunities for primitive recreation are also low. There is little diversity, and no challenge within the area.

The original inventory boundary would not be manageable as wilderness; although conflicting uses could be excluded with an adjustment, the evidence of human influence is scattered throughout the area and could not be separated.

C. AVAILABILITY

There are few potential trade-offs between wilderness designation and other resources and activities.

Dispersed nonmotorized recreation represents 200 RVDs and big game hunting 200 WFUDs a year.

Approximately 20 acres are suitable for wildlife habitat manipulation. There is some deer winter range in the area.

Water from the area is used locally for irrigation and domestic needs; most then flows into the Owens River, from which it is exported for domestic use.

Cattle grazing represents 100 AUMs of use; maximum potential is estimated at 152 AUMs. Existing range improvements are valued at \$2,000.

The area is incapable of producing commercial timber.

Of the lands in this area, all are rated low in mineral potential. There are no active mining claims in the area.

The boundary includes 300 acres of private and DWP land; the only development is a water transmission line.

D. NEED

The area belongs to the southern Sierra Nevada physiographic province; current use of wildernesses in that province is extremely heavy. The area is not typical of the province, as it is low in elevation and lacking in recreational attraction. This area adjoins the existing John Muir wilderness and is near the Table Mountain further planning area.

Neither wilderness proponents nor opponents, locals nor non-locals have expressed much interest in the area.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-5 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-6.

Table C-5
 Management Prescription Allocations
 by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
 Buttermilk (5038)

Management Prescription	Alternatives						
	PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness					0.9 100%		0.9 100%
11. Mule Deer Habitat	0.9 100%					0.9 100%	
17. Range		0.9 100%	0.9 100%	0.9 100%			

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): AMN, AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness designation would maintain the wilderness attributes of the area. However, as the evidence of human influence and encroachment is distributed throughout the area, those attributes are not especially high. Developments or activities on private inholdings could further degrade the area's wilderness values.

Recreation use, primarily nonmotorized hiking, fishing, and big-game hunting, would remain low. The conditions necessary for attracting intensive wilderness recreation would not exist.

The options of constructing improvements or using prescribed fire for wildlife habitat improvement would be foregone.

Existing grazing use would continue under more stringent regulations. However, opportunities to improve range conditions and increase use would be foregone. The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

There are no known social or economic dependencies on the area except for grazing. Income generated in this area by increased recreation use would be insignificant. Formal wilderness designation would represent a social benefit.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or major resource affects requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 4

Alternative(s): PRF, AMB

Effects on the Area: The natural appearance and integrity of the area would be temporarily reduced where wildlife habitat was improved by vegetation treatment.

Options to manipulate wildlife habitat would remain available. However, only minor benefits would be received as the acreage suitable for treatment is limited. Cattle grazing would be held to current levels, as any increase in forage would be allocated to deer.

The area would remain available for new mineral claims.

Private inholdings would not present a conflict with management of the area.

A slight economic benefit would occur from increased big-game hunting opportunities on or near the area. These benefits would somewhat offset by the social loss of a potential wilderness designation.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or major resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 11

Alternative (s): CUR, CEE, RPA

Effects on the Area: The effects of this prescription on the area would be similar to that of Prescription 4, described above, except that new public roads for range management would be allowed, and any mining roads that developed would be open to public use. The major difference would be an increase of up to 50% in cattle grazing, as any increase in forage would be allocated to livestock.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

Table C-6
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Buttermilk (5038)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	0	0	0	0	0.9	0	0.9
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9		0.9	0.9
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	0 0	200 300	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	250 310	0 0	250 310
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	100 100	112 152	112 152	112 152	100 100	100 100	100 100
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	9 9	9 9	9 9	9 9	9 10	9 9	9 10
Costs (M\$)	1 5	2 2	2 2	2 2	2 2	6 3	2 2	6 3
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	7 7	7 7	7 7	7 7	3 7	7 7	3 7

A. DESCRIPTION

The Wheeler Ridge area lies in Inyo (29 percent) and Mono (71 percent) Counties, on the White Mountain Ranger District. The area is accessible to 4-wheel drive vehicles by unimproved road, or on foot cross-country from the Kenneth and Dorothy Lakes areas in the John Muir wilderness.

The boundary is defined by the Pine Creek Road and the Pine Creek mining road on the southeast and southwest, the Forest boundary on the east, and the Sand Canyon mining road on the north and west. The area curves around a protrusion of the John Muir Wilderness.

The area lies on the east side of the Sierra Nevada, in the Rock Creek watershed. The area is long (11 miles) and narrow (3.75 miles wide), and curves around the lower slopes and north end of a projecting ridge.

Terrain includes the dissected, precipitous slopes on both sides of a ridge between deep canyons, and part of the rolling ridgetop area. Geology consists primarily of exposed metamorphic rock which has been upthrust several thousand vertical feet, then eroded by water and glacial action. There are four miles of perennial stream, but no fisheries, and one small lake.

Primary vegetation types are lodgepole pine forest, big sagebrush, and mountain mahogany, with smaller amounts of eastside pine and subalpine fir forest.

Scenic variety in the area falls into class A, 93 percent; class B, 5 percent; class C, 2 percent. Wheeler Ridge and Pine Creek canyon are major landmarks from Bishop and Highway 395. The surrounding area is also scenic, and views from the roadless area spectacular. The Owens Valley, Mt. Tom, the rugged high peaks of the Sierra Crest, the deep canyons of Big Pine and Rock Creeks, the White Mountains, and the volcanic highlands of the Casa Diablo Peak area are all visible from the center of the area.

Current uses include recreation and wildlife management.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity of the area is essentially unmodified; influences on its natural appearance are moderate. The top of Wheeler Ridge shows localized evidence of mining, including tailings and vegetation damage; cut-and-fill roads to Morgan Pass, and onto Wheeler Ridge are highly visible; air pollution from the Pine Creek tungsten mill affects the extreme southern end of the area.

Opportunities for solitude are high. The area is large, especially in combination with the adjoining wilderness and National Park backcountry. Screening is moderate, and visual intrusions separated by steep slopes. Only the Pine Creek mine and mill are visible at close range, and those only from a small part of the area.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are low, pas there are few challenges, and little diversity.

Special features include a herd of California bighorn sheep transplanted to the area in 1978.

Although the original inventory boundary would not be manageable as wilderness, major boundary adjustments could be made to exclude human impacts and conflicting activities.

Two parcels of roadless BLM land, encompassing 3,197 acres, adjoin the area.

C. AVAILABILITY

The Wheeler Ridge area represents two notable trade-offs between wilderness designation and other activities. Wilderness management would close the area to vehicular recreation, and would limit the feasibility of wildlife habitat manipulation.

Four-wheel drive recreation amounts to 100 RVDs, dispersed nonmotorized recreation 100 RVDs, and small game hunting 100 WFUDs a year. A State-funded green sticker project has been approved for the Wheeler Crest mine road area.

California bighorn sheep were reintroduced into the area in 1978. Approximately 40 acres are suitable for wildlife habitat manipulation.

Water from the area is used locally for irrigation and domestic needs, then flows into the Owens River and is exported for domestic use.

The area is incapable of commercial timber production.

Of the lands in this area, 15 percent are rated high in mineral potential; 85 percent are rated low. There are no active mining claims in the area. The Pine Creek Mine and other mines along the southern boundary of the roadless area have produced a large part of the world supply of tungsten.

D. NEED

The area belongs to the southern Sierra Nevada physiographic province; current use of wildernesses in that province is extremely heavy. The area is typical of the province, except for its lack of water. This area adjoins the existing John Muir Wilderness; no other further planning areas are nearby.

Neither proponents nor opponents of wilderness have expressed interest in this particular area.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-7 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the roadless area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-8.

Table C-7
Management Prescription Allocations
by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
Wheeler Crest (5040)

Management Prescription	Alternatives						
	PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness					16.2		16.2
					100%		100%
3. Mountain Sheep Habitat	7.7	7.7				7.7	
	48%	48%				48%	
17. Semi-Primitive Rec	8.5	8.5				8.5	
	52%	52%				52%	
18. Multiple Resource Area			16.2	16.2			
			100%	100%			

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): AMN, AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness designation would maintain the attributes of solitude and natural integrity that are characteristic of the area. Bighorn sheep management concerns would be an essential consideration in determining wilderness recreation capacity. The many conflicting activities and human influences in the area would make wilderness administration difficult.

Motorized recreation would be eliminated from the area. While limited by the lack of water, the amount of primitive recreation would grow, particularly in the absence of vehicles. The experience offered would be of lower quality than that found in the adjacent John Muir Wilderness.

Options to improve wildlife habitat would be foregone. Bighorn sheep habitat would receive adequate protection. The scenic quality of the area as seen from Highway 395 would receive maximum protection.

The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

The Wells Meadow administrative site (of historical significance) would be impacted, as the facility is currently used to for government livestock grazing; that use could not continue in wilderness.

There are no direct economic dependencies on this area. Social benefits would result from increasing the amount of wilderness on the Forest and protecting an important viewshed. Economic costs would be incurred from the administration of wilderness regulations and construction of a trailhead. Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 3, 17

Alternative(s): PRF, CUR, AMB

Effects on the Area: Wilderness attributes would be essentially maintained for the eastern portion of the area, which would be managed with a bighorn sheep emphasis. Roads, trails, and recreation use would be prohibited or modified. Visual quality would be maintained.

Wilderness attributes on the western portion of the area would be slightly more affected than those on the east. Four-wheel drive recreation on existing routes would be allowed to continue and to increase. The potential for visual degradation would not be severe, however, as vehicles are mainly seen only from within the area.

Wildlife habitat manipulation options would be maintained. Management of bighorn sheep habitat would take priority over other management considerations on the eastern portion.

Mining opportunities would be retained; any new mining roads would be closed to the public.

Use of Wells Meadow area for administrative livestock would remain unchanged.

Economic and social benefits would be few. The most significant cost would be the loss of potential wilderness designation. The option of seeking State funding to develop a green sticker project for off-road vehicle use would be maintained.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 18

Alternative(s): RPA, CEE

Effects on the Area: Wilderness attributes would deteriorate over time under this prescriptions. As vehicle access improved, ORV use would increase with corresponding effects of natural appearance and opportunities for solitude. As motorized use increased, opportunities for primitive recreation would decrease.

Four-wheel drive recreation would be allowed to continue and to increase. Visual quality would deteriorate somewhat, especially if new mining roads were constructed or ORV tracks proliferated.

Options to improve wildlife habitat would be maintained. Bighorn sheep habitat would be managed for population viability, but would not be emphasized.

Mining opportunities would be enhanced as access throughout the area increased; any new mining roads could be left open for public access.

Use of Wells Meadow area for administrative livestock would remain unchanged.

Economic and social benefits would include improved opportunities for motorized recreation and mining. The most significant cost would be the loss of potential wilderness designation. The option of seeking State funding to develop a green sticker project for off-road vehicle use would be maintained.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs would result.

Table C-8
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Wheeler Ridge (5040)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	0	0	0		16.2	0	16.2
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	16.2	16.2	16.2	16.2	0	16.2	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	0 0	200 300	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	352 546	0 0	352 546
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	100 150	100 150	100 150	100 150	100 150	100 150	100 150
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Timber Volume (MCF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
(MBF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	3 4	3 4	3 4	3 4	5 8	3 4	5 8
Costs (M\$)	1 5	2 2	2 2	2 2	2 2	22 6	2 2	22 6
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	1 2	1 2	1 2	1 2	-17 2	1 2	-17 2

A. DESCRIPTION

The Laurel-McGee area lies in Mono County on the Mammoth Ranger District. The McGee Creek, Convict Lake, Laurel Canyon and Sherwin Creek Roads lead to and/or parallel the boundary. Several jeep roads and four constructed trails lead into or across the area.

The boundary is defined by the McGee Creek Road on the south, the Sherwin Creek Road on the north, the Sherwin Lakes trail on the northwest, the John Muir Wilderness on the south and west, and the Forest Boundary on the east. The adjoining land is administered by the BLM, with some parcels in private ownership. The Laurel Canyon jeep road intrudes the area.

The area lies on the eastern escarpment of the Sierra Nevada, in the Lake Crowley and Hot Creek watersheds. It is long and convoluted, and wraps around the lower slopes of McGee, Laurel, and Bloody Mountains. Total length is 9 miles; width varies from 0.75 to 3 miles. Elevations range from 7,160 to 11,067 feet.

Terrain ranges from steep to gradually sloping, rolling to flat. The exposed rock of the upper slopes is metamorphic; the lower slopes consist mostly of glacial till. The oldest fossils yet found in the Sierra Nevada are in this area. The lateral moraines of Convict, Laurel, and McGee canyons and the terminal moraine of Sherwin Creek are classic examples of those features. Six miles of perennial stream, with fisheries throughout, cross the area; there are four lakes.

The predominant vegetation type is bitterbrush.

Scenic variety in the area falls into class A, 65 percent; class B, 28 percent; class C, 7 percent. McGee Mountain, the unnamed peak just east of Mt. Morrison, and the lateral moraines listed above, are scenic landmarks from Highway 395; most of the area serves as a scenic backdrop for the Mammoth Lakes community. The surrounding countryside is also scenic. Mt. Morrison, Laurel and Bloody Mountains rise steeply to the west. Lake Crowley, the Glass Mountains, Mammoth Knolls, Mammoth Mountain, and the Sierra crest are visible from within the area.

Current uses include recreation, cattle grazing, and wildlife management.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity of the area has been influenced to a low degree, and its natural appearance to a very low degree. Most impacts are localized and/or very near the area boundary. Signs of human influence include several dirt roads, trails, an irrigation ditch, a powerline, a waterline, trailhead facilities, an organization camp, a cattle water tank, range fences, an effluent storage pond, spoil piles at the Tiptop and Laurel mines, grazing, vegetation type conversion areas, and several cabins.

Opportunities for solitude are high. The area is large, especially in combination with adjoining wilderness. Topographic screening is high, but

vegetative screening is low. Intrusions are low at the higher elevations, but high on the periphery. Noise from the Sherwin moto-cross track can be heard from the western end of the area.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are also high. Large size is a factor, along with limited development and very diverse opportunities. Ski mountaineering offers significant challenge.

The original inventory boundary would not be manageable as wilderness without adjustments. Terrain does not serve as an effective barrier against vehicle access. Most of the impacts, conflicting uses, and terrain accessible by vehicle are near the periphery and could be excluded by a boundary revision. One parcel of roadless BLM land, encompassing 100 acres, adjoins the area.

C. AVAILABILITY

There would be several potential conflicts between wilderness designation and other resources and activities. Wilderness management would close the area to vehicles; if roads were not excluded by boundary adjustment, some motorized recreation would be lost; management of the grazing area would be more difficult; use of the organization camp would be restricted. The effluent storage pond would represent a conflict unless the area boundary were revised to exclude the pond. The western half of the area would be affected by the sights and sounds of ski area use if the Sherwin Bowl potential ski area were developed.

Developed recreation accounts for 4,500 RVDs a year; hiking, stock travel, and camping, 5,000 RVDs; 4-wheel drive recreation, 6,400 RVDs; and cross-country skiing, 200 RVDs. Big game hunting amounts to 6,000 WFUDs, small game hunting, 2,600 WFUDs, and fishing 11,000 WFUDs. There is some helicopter skiing on McGee Mountain, and snowmobiling on the lower slopes.

The Sherwin mule deer herd migrates through the area. Approximately 30 acres are suitable for habitat manipulation.

Water from the area is used for local irrigation. It then flows into Lake Crowley, is used to generate hydroelectric power, and is then exported for domestic use. An effluent storage site is located near the boundary at Laurel Pond.

Grazing represents 1,890 AUMs; maximum potential is estimated at 2,265 AUMs. Existing improvements are valued at \$9,000.

The area contains 880 acres of tentatively suitable timber land. Commercial species include Jeffrey pine and red fir. The remainder of the area is unsuitable for timber management.

Of the lands in this area, 16 percent are rated high in mineral potential; 84 percent are rated low. There are more than 100 active mining claims in, or immediately adjacent to the area, of which none is currently producing. Some tungsten has been produced from mines and prospects in, or adjacent to, the area. Subeconomic deposits of zinc, copper, silver, and lead have been found at Lucky Strike Mine; the potential for more, similar deposits is high.

Cultural resource values include an exceptionally large Indian encampment site near Laurel Springs; there are also historic mining and range management sites.

Potentially conflicting special uses include the Laurel Pond effluent facility and the Tobacco Flat Road. There are 80 acres of undeveloped private land.

D. NEED

The area belongs to the southern Sierra Nevada physiographic province; current use of wildernesses in that province is extremely heavy. Most of the area is typical of the province. This area adjoins the existing John Muir wilderness; there are no neighboring further planning areas.

Public involvement for the RARE II Study indicates little interest in the outcome of this area.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-9 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-10.

**Table C-9
Management Prescription Allocations
by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
Laurel McGee (5045)**

Management Prescription	PRF	CUR	RPA	Alternatives			
				CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness				9.1	9.1	9.1	9.1
				100%	100%	100%	100%
4. Mule Deer Habitat	0.8						
	9%						
10. High Level Timber			1.1				
			12%				
11. Range	0.5	1.3	7.0				
	5%	14%	77%				
17. Semi-Primitive Rec	7.8	7.8	1.0				
	86%	86%	11%				

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): CEE, AMN, AMB, AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness characteristics would be maintained, as new activities capable of affecting those characteristics would not be allowed. Opportunities for solitude would be enhanced, since numerous four-wheel drive roads would be closed to vehicle use. Management of the area as wilderness would be costly and difficult near the periphery; the many conflicting uses and potential for illegal vehicle encroachment would pose problems unless the boundary were adjusted.

The primary recreation opportunities foregone would be motorized and wheeled vehicle use (including vehicle-based hunting, fishing, camping, snowmobiling, and all-terrain bicycle riding) and developed sites (such as the existing organization camp). Opportunities for primitive recreation, on the other hand, would be enhanced.

The critical visual quality of the area would receive maximum protection, preventing further degradation of this resource (except for impacts caused by the development of existing mining claims).

An important deer migration route would be protected. Hunting and fishing would decline somewhat, as much of the existing use is vehicle based.

Although grazing would not be eliminated, opportunities to increase grazing outputs would be foregone. Use of the range allotment would be more restrictive.

Suitable timber occupying 880 acres would not be available for harvest.

The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted. Since profitable mining operations exist, and since there is evidence of additional mineral resources, there would be a predicted adverse effect on mineral opportunities.

Social and economic dependencies include sheep and cattle grazing, mining, recreation, and special-use activities. Wilderness designation would not eliminate grazing or mining, but these activities would be considerably more restricted. Costs associated with these operations would be greater than at present, with little or no opportunity to increase outputs.

Other adverse socioeconomic impacts would be associated with a sewage effluent storage pond, an organization camp, recreation residences, and helicopter skiing.

Social benefits would be gained with more wilderness and lost with the loss of a popular four-wheel drive area. Wilderness management, including the enforcement of regulations (particularly along the north and east boundaries) would be costly. Trail and trailhead projects would also be associated with implementing this prescription.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or major resource tradeoffs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 4, 11, 17

Alternative(s): PRF

Effects on the Area: For the most part, wilderness characteristics would be maintained in the area, as the activities most capable of affecting those characteristics (such as new road construction or timber harvest) would be restricted or prohibited. Only mineral activity and vegetation treatment for wildlife could affect natural integrity and natural appearance. Opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation would remain essentially the same as at present.

Primary recreation opportunities would still include motorized and wheeled vehicle use (including vehicle-based hunting, fishing, camping, snowmobiling, and all-terrain bicycle riding) as well as hiking and equestrian use. The existing organization camp could continue in operation. The critical visual quality of the area would receive a high level of protection.

An important deer migration route would be protected, and vegetation could be manipulated to benefit wildlife.

Although grazing would not be eliminated, opportunities to increase grazing outputs would be foregone as wildlife would have priority for any increases in forage.

Suitable timber occupying 880 acres would not be available for harvest, as those acres would be managed with an emphasis on primitive recreation.

New mining claims could be filed, and mining activities would be subject only to applicable mining laws and coordination with other resources; any new mining roads would be closed to public use.

The need for access to private inholdings would not conflict with the management of adjoining lands.

Social and economic dependencies such as grazing, mining, motorized recreation, and special-use activities would benefit from the range of management options available (in contrast with wilderness). Other socioeconomic benefits would be associated with maintenance of a sewage effluent storage pond, the organization camp, recreation residences, four-wheel drive recreation, and helicopter skiing. There would be a social cost in the lack of wilderness designation for an area with wilderness values similar to those in the adjoining John Muir Wilderness.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or major resource tradeoffs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 11, 17

Alternative(s): CUR

Effects on the Area: Wilderness attributes of solitude, natural integrity and appearance would be little affected for most of the area. Near the periphery, however, those attributes would be degraded by activities such as recreation, grazing, wildlife, timber, and special uses.

Motorized recreation would continue to increase; the increase would be greater under Prescription 11 as new public roads would not be constructed under Prescription 17. Nonmotorized recreation, especially in winter, would also maintain a steady growth rate.

There would be many potential impacts on visual resources; although overall visual integrity would be maintained, isolated impacts would occur throughout the area.

Vegetation could be manipulated to improve grazing with temporary effects on natural appearance. Other range improvements could be developed; duck nesting habitat would probably be constructed at Laurel Pond and water sources and fencing added to the range allotments. Range outputs would increase.

Timber harvesting would be prohibited, as it would adversely affect emphasized recreation and wildlife values.

The area would remain open to new mining claims. Mining activities would be affected only by applicable regulations. New road construction or upgrading of existing roads would be likely to result. New mining roads would be closed to public use unless they fell within lands administered under Prescription 11.

Existing improvements would not be affected. The option to permit additional special uses would exist.

Economic benefits would occur from increasing grazing, motorized recreation (including hunting and fishing), and mining opportunities. Social costs would include a loss of potential wilderness designation for an area with wilderness qualities comparable to the existing John Muir Wilderness.

All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or major resource tradeoffs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 10, 11, 17

Alternative(s): RPA

Effects on the Area: The effects of this combination of prescriptions would be similar to the effects of 11 and 17 discussed above. The only difference would be commercial timber harvest affecting 880 acres of trees over a 1,100-acre area. Additional roads would be built, improving access to the

area. The appearance of vegetation would shift from natural to managed. Existing recreational use of those lands would drop. Mining opportunities would be enhanced as access throughout the area would be increased. All wildfires would be controlled on lands under Prescription 10.

The economic benefit would amount to 134,000 board feet of timber in the first decade, dropping to 78,000 board feet by the fifth decade.

Table C-10
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Laurel-McGee (5045)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	0	0	0	9.1	9.1	9.1	9.1
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	9.1	9.1	9.1	0	0	0	0
Total Developed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	4500 4500	4500 4500	4500 4500	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	11600 17400	11600 17400	11600 17400	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	18000 19500	18000 19500	18000 19500	18000 19500
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	19600 29400	19600 29400	19600 29400	15000 22500	15000 22500	15000 22500	15000 22500
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	1890 1890	1965 2265	1965 2265	1890 1890	1890 1890	1890 1890	1890 1890
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0	0 0	882 882	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	.021 .012	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	.134 .078	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Gross Benefits (M\$)	1 5	597 791	612 799	616 801	572 848	572 848	572 848	572 848
Costs (M\$)	1 5	465 123	475 131	479 132	46 64	46 64	46 64	46 64
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 1	132 668	137 558	137 669	526 784	526 784	526 784	526 784

A. DESCRIPTION

The Horse Meadow area lies in Mono County on the Mono Lake Ranger District. Several dirt roads lead from Highway 395 or the Tioga Pass Road to the area boundary. Three trails cross the area.

The boundary is defined by the Parker Lake road on the south, the Big Bend campground road on the north, the Minarets Wilderness on the west, and several dirt roads on the east.

The area lies on the east side of the Sierra Nevada in the Mono Lake watershed. It is irregular in shape, consisting of three arms projecting from a center. Each arm is 2-3 miles long and 0.25 to 0.5 mile wide. Elevations range from 6,880 to 8,841 feet.

The terrain ranges from rolling to steep. The lower slopes lie on glacial moraines; the upper elevations on precipitous cliffs of exposed metamorphic rock. The lateral moraines below Bloody Canyon are geologically significant because they provided the evidence that led to Russell's hypothesis that there had been more than one glacial episode in the Sierra Nevada. There are four miles of perennial stream, of which two miles contain trout, but no lakes.

Primary vegetation types are eastside pine, bitterbrush, big sagebrush, and pine-juniper woodland. There are several large, scenic meadows.

Scenic variety in the area falls into class A, 67 percent; class B, 33 percent. The foothills of the Sierra Crest, Williams Butte, the lower slopes of Lee Vining Canyon are scenic landmarks from Highways 395 and 120. There are several large, scenic meadows and aspen stands within the area; fall colors are outstanding. The surrounding area is also scenic. Mono Lake and the Mono Craters are seen to the east; Bloody Canyon and the dramatic peaks of the Sierra Crest rise steeply to the west.

Current uses include recreation and sheep grazing.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity and natural appearance of the area have been influenced to a moderate degree. Impacts include a buried penstock associated with hydroelectric generation on Lee Vining Creek, a small water transportation ditch, sheep grazing scattered through the area, and a few unimproved roads.

Opportunities for solitude are moderate to low. The area is fairly large, and screening is moderate to high. There are, however, intrusions from surrounding highways and scattered developments; one protruding finger of the area lies within a mile of Highway 395.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are low. There is little challenge or diversity.

The area would not be manageable as wilderness. Although some impacts could be excluded by major boundary adjustments, the natural integrity and appearance of the remaining area would not be significantly improved. The ease of access from roads near and parallel to the boundary would make wilderness permit administration quite difficult.

C. AVAILABILITY

The Horse Meadow area represents several trade-offs between wilderness designation and other resources or uses. In particular, wilderness management would eliminate the dispersed motorized recreation that now occurs in the area, and would complicate interaction between National Forest management and the owners of adjoining private lands.

Dispersed nonmotorized recreation amounts to 400 RVDs; motorized recreation, 200 RVDs; big game hunting, 200 WFUDs, and fishing 100 WFUDs.

Approximately 540 acres are suitable for wildlife habitat manipulation.

The majority of water from the area is channeled under Deadman Summit into the Owens River, used to generate hydroelectric power, and exported for domestic use. The remainder is used locally for domestic and livestock needs, or flows into Mono Lake for wildlife needs.

Grazing accounts for 2,000 AUMs of use per year; maximum potential is estimated at 2,150 AUMs. Range improvements are valued at \$6,000.

The area contains no land suitable for commercial timber management.

Of the lands in this area, 29 percent are rated medium in mineral potential; 71 percent are rated low. There are no active mining claims.

Special uses include water gauging devices and an associated access road.

D. NEED

The area belongs to the southern Sierra Nevada physiographic province; current use of wildernesses in that province is extremely heavy. The area is somewhat typical of the province, but is lower in elevation and more arid than the most popular wildernesses. This area adjoins the existing Ansel Adams wilderness and is near the Tioga Lake and Log Cabin-Saddlebag further planning areas.

Public involvement for the RARE II study indicated local interest in maintaining this area as nonwilderness. The area receives heavy recreation use, much of which is vehicle-based. The economy of the June Lake Loop depends on revenue related to that recreation. Due to the amount of adjoining private land and the number of unimproved roads, local people do not see wilderness values in the area. Local Indians use the area for pine nut gathering.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-11 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-12.

**Table C-11
Management Prescription Allocations
by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
Horse Meadow (5049)**

Management Prescription	Alternatives						
	PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness					5.6 100%		5.6 100%
11. Range		5.6 100%	5.6 100%				
17. Semi-Primitive Rec	5.6 100%			5.6 100%		5.6 100%	

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): AMN, AMC

Effects on the Area: Where they exist, the wilderness attributes of natural appearance and integrity would be maintained. Opportunities for finding solitude would increase upon eliminating vehicle use. However, it would be difficult to avoid the evidence of human influence in much of the area. It would be difficult and costly to manage the area as wilderness, since the terrain does not readily restrict vehicle access at many locations.

Existing motorized recreation use would be lost. The primitive recreation that would displace the motorized recreation would occur at a relatively low intensity compared with that found in the adjacent Ansel Adams wilderness.

The valuable visual quality of this area as viewed from local scenic highways and the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area would receive maximum protection.

Options to manipulate vegetation for wildlife habitat improvement would be foregone.

Grazing would be maintained. However, activities associated with the grazing of the area would be considerably more restricted, and ultimately, more costly.

The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

Conflicts would be likely between the management of this area and that of adjoining private lands would be evident.

Grazing is the only economic dependency on the area. Recreation use generates the greatest revenue associated with the area. While the type of use would change, the amount of use would remain fairly constant. Therefore, economic changes would be minor. Costs for developing trails and a trailhead would result. The greatest social benefit would be a formal wilderness designation.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or major resource trade-offs would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 17

Alternative(s): PRF, AMB, CEE

Effects on the Area: Wilderness attributes would be little affected by application of this prescription, as vehicle access would be limited to existing routes. The present recreation use would be maintained.

Visual resources would be protected to a high degree by application of visual quality objectives and limitations on the proliferation of roads. Wildlife would also benefit from limitations on increased access.

Options to manipulate vegetation for wildlife habitat or livestock would remain available; under this prescription, increased forage would probably go to wildlife.

The area would remain open to new mining claims; any new mining roads would be closed to public use.

Activities occurring on adjacent private lands, and under special use permit on National Forest Lands, would generally not be in conflict with the overall management objectives of the area.

Social and economic consequences would be few. The greatest social cost would be a loss of potential wilderness designation. Grazing and recreation activities would continue with opportunities for some further development.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other known environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 11

Alternative(s): RPA, CUR

Effects on the Area: The effects of this prescription would be similar to those of Prescription 17 discussed above. The primary difference would be a subtle change of emphasis from dispersed recreation and wildlife to domestic

livestock grazing. Any vegetation treatment would probably be undertaken to benefit livestock rather than deer. Although road construction would be allowed, it is unlikely that any new roads would be developed for purposes of grazing administration. If any roads were constructed, they could be open for public use.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

Table C-12
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Horse Meadow (5049)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	0	0	0	0	5.6	0	5.6
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	0	5.6	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0						
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	600 900	600 900	600 900	600 900	0 0	600 900	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	700 800	0 0	700 800
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	300 450						
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	2030 2150	2030 2150	2030 2150	2030 2150	2000 2000	2030 2150	2000 2000
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0						
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0						
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0						
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	42 56	42 56	42 56	42 56	39 47	42 56	39 47
Costs (M\$)	1 5	20 28	20 28	20 28	20 28	27 23	20 28	27 23
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	22 28	22 28	22 28	22 28	12 24	22 28	12 24

A. DESCRIPTION

The Tioga Lake area lies in Mono County on the Mono Lake Ranger District. The Tioga Pass Road leads to within 0.1 mile of the boundary. An unimproved trail leads across the area into the wilderness.

The boundary is defined by the Tioga Pass Road on the north and west, the Minarets Wilderness on the east, and the Forest boundary on the south. Adjoining lands are administered by the National Park Service.

The area lies on the east side of the Sierra Nevada in the Mono Lake watershed. It is roughly rectangular, 2 miles long by 1 mile wide. Elevations range from 9,500 to 11,360 feet.

Most of the terrain is very steep, as the area lies on the upper wall of Lee Vining Canyon. There are a few small benches, and gentle meadowy slopes. The exposed rock is metavolcanic and metasedimentary. The canyon has been glacially scoured, and the area lies at the mouth of a hanging valley cut off by a glacier. Flowing across the area are 1.5 miles of stream, but no fisheries; there are a few small tarns in the southwest corner.

The primary vegetation type is lodgepole pine forest. Subalpine fir forest, alpine shrub, and barren areas are also present.

The entire area falls into variety class A. The canyon wall and hanging valley are scenic landmarks from the Tioga Pass Road. The surrounding area is extremely scenic, with Mt. Dana and the Dana Plateau above, Lee Vining Canyon below, and Mono Lake in the distance.

The only current use is recreation.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity of the area is essentially unmodified; its natural appearance has been altered to a very low degree. A powerline that crosses the area is buried, but the scar of vegetation removal remains; an unmaintained trail is the only other sign of human disturbance.

Opportunities for solitude are moderate. The area is large in combination with adjoining wilderness and National Park backcountry, and there is good vegetative screening. Topographic screening, however, is poor and there are many visual intrusions from developments and activities along the Tioga Pass Road.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are high. Size and the absence of facilities enhance these opportunities and there are some challenges.

The existing boundary would be manageable as wilderness; the only impact is a pipeline which would not be easy to separate by a boundary adjustment.

C. AVAILABILITY

The Tioga Lake area represents no major trade-offs between wilderness designation and other resources and uses.

Recreation includes dispersed nonmotorized recreation (200 RVDs) and big game hunting (200 WFUDs).

Water from the area flows into Lee Vining Creek, where it is used for power generation. Most of this water is then channeled into the Owens River and exported for domestic use; the remainder is used locally for irrigation, mining, or livestock watering or released into Mono Lake for wildlife.

The area is incapable of commercial timber production.

Of the lands in this area, all are rated low in mineral potential. There are two active mining claims for molybdenum and tungsten in the area, of which neither is producing. Samples show low value for those minerals and a low level of potential for other valuable minerals. A mineral entry withdrawal covers 100 acres.

D. NEED

The area belongs to the southern Sierra Nevada physiographic province; current use of wildernesses in that province is extremely heavy. The area is typical of the province. This area adjoins the existing Ansel Adams wilderness and is near the Hall and Log Cabin-Saddlebag further planning areas.

Public involvement for the RARE II study indicated little interest in the outcome of this area. Wilderness proponents did not identify it as a target area. Local residents see it as wilderness already.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-13 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-14.

Table C-13
 Management Prescription Allocations
 by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
 Tioga Lake (5050)

Management Prescription	PRF	CUR	RPA	Alternatives			
				CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness	0.9 100%			0.9 100%	0.9 100%	0.9 100%	0.9 100%
17. Semi-Primitive Rec		0.9 100%	0.9 100%				

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): PRF, CEE, AMN, AMB, AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness designation would maintain the wilderness attributes of the area. The type of use received would be similar to the contiguous Ansel Adams Wilderness and Yosemite National Park backcountry; the amount of use would be expected to increase under wilderness designation. The inventory boundary would not be difficult or costly to administer as wilderness.

Designation as wilderness would provide the highest degree of visual protection for this area as it would be viewed from the Tioga Pass Road (a scenic highway).

The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

There are no known direct social or economic dependencies on the area. A slight economic benefit would result from increased wilderness recreation. Social benefits would come from formal wilderness designation. Wilderness management of this area would complement that of the surrounding wilderness.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 17

Alternative(s): CUR, RPA

Effects on the Area: Wilderness values would be little affected as vehicle access would be limited, both by the management prescription and by the steep terrain. The only other potential impact on wilderness quality would be road access for mining purposes.

Dispersed recreation activities (hunting, hiking, ice-climbing and camping) would increase only slightly. Visual quality would remain high, to meet the retention VQO.

The area would remain open to new mining claims; only applicable mining restrictions would affect activities. New roads constructed for mining access would be closed to the public.

Economic and social benefits would not change. A social cost would be a loss of potential wilderness designation.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Table C-14
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Tioga Lake (5050)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	0.9	0	0	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	0	0.9	0.9	0	0	0	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	200 300	200 300	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	620 750	0 0	0 0	620 750	620 750	620 750	620 750
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	11 16	6 9	6 9	11 16	11 16	11 16	11 16
Costs (M\$)	1 5	7 1	3 4	3 4	7 1	7 1	7 1	7 1
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	4 15	3 5	3 5	4 15	4 15	4 15	4 15

A. DESCRIPTION

The Hall Natural area lies in Mono County on the Mono Lake Ranger District. The Tioga Pass and Saddlebag Lake Roads lead to and parallel the boundary. An improved road leads into the area to rustic facilities at the experiment station. There are no improved trails, but cross-country foot travel is easy.

The boundary is defined by the Tioga Pass Road on the south, the Hoover Wilderness on the north, the Saddlebag Lake Road on the east, and the Forest boundary on the west. Adjoining lands are administered by the National Park Service.

The area lies on the east side of the Sierra Nevada in the Mono Lake watershed. It is rectangular, 6 miles long by 2 miles wide. Elevations range from 9,600 feet to 12,590 feet at Mt. Conness.

Terrain is extremely rugged; slope varies from moderate to steep. There are many points of geologic interest. The eastern fourth of the area is metasedimentary; the western three-fourths, granitic. Cirques, U-shaped valleys, polish, and till are signs of recent glaciation. There are also several currently active glaciers in the area. There are 12 miles of perennial stream, of which 5 miles contain trout.

Primary vegetation types are lodgepole pine forest and alpine shrub, in roughly equal proportions. There are more than 500 species of flowering plants, and a grove of outstanding mountain hemlock specimens.

The entire area falls into variety class A. The surrounding area is also extremely scenic. The rugged granite peaks of the Yosemite National Park backcountry can be seen west from the ridge; Saddlebag Lake and the Twenty Lakes Basin are visible to the north, and Mt. Warren and Lee Vining Peak to the east.

The area is currently used primarily for scientific research, and secondarily for daytime recreation.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity of the area has been influenced to a very low degree; its natural appearance to a low degree. There is a cut-and-fill road and rustic facilities associated with an experiment station belonging to the Carnegie Institution.

Opportunities for solitude are high. The area is large, especially in combination with adjoining wilderness and National Park backcountry. Topographic screening is excellent, though there is little vegetative screening; there are no visual intrusions.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are high. Challenge and diversity are limited only by existing management of the area, which precludes overnight use.

Special features include the essentially undisturbed alpine plant community, and a rare insect (Behr's sulfur butterfly). The Hall area has been heavily used for botanical research since the late 1920's. Dr. John C. Merriam wrote in 1932, "this natural area may be one of the most significant opportunities for certain aspects of scientific research in this country." R.V. Stuart, Chief of the Forest Service, proposed the area for management with a research emphasis in the same year with the following words: "There was complete agreement that the future value of the area for such [scientific] purposes undoubtedly transcended any other values or uses to which it might be dedicated."

The original inventory boundary would not be manageable as wilderness. Although adjustments could separate all impacts, even the revised boundary would not be definable on the ground.

C. AVAILABILITY

The Hall Natural area represents one potential trade-off between wilderness designation and other management opportunities. The majority of the roadless area is designated as a research natural area (RNA). The uses and management direction appropriate to an RNA may not always be compatible with those appropriate to wilderness.

Dispersed nonmotorized recreation amounts to 5,000 RVDs; fishing amounts to 1,100 WFUDs. There is a short interpretive trail to the Bennetville historic site.

Water from the area flows into Lee Vining Creek, where it is used to generate hydroelectric power. Much of the water is then exported for domestic use, while the remainder is used locally for domestic and livestock needs, or released into Mono Lake for wildlife.

Approximately 260 acres are suitable for wildlife habitat manipulation.

The Hall Research Natural Area includes 3,883 of the area's 5,209 acres.

The area is incapable of commercial timber production.

Of the lands in this area, 61 percent are rated medium in mineral potential; 30 percent are low. There are 10 active mining claims in the area, of which none are currently producing. Geologic features indicate subeconomic levels of gold and silver near the Great Sierra Mine. There is low to moderate potential for molybdenum and tungsten in the eastern part of the area. Outstanding reserved mineral rights cover 100 acres; 4,000 acres have been withdrawn from mineral entry.

Cultural resource values include signs of prehistoric occupancy and historic mining.

Research station facilities and access road are maintained under a cooperative agreement with the Carnegie Institution.

D. NEED

The area belongs to the southern Sierra Nevada physiographic province; current use of wildernesses in that province is extremely heavy. The area is typical of the province. This area adjoins the existing Hoover wilderness and Yosemite National Park backcountry; it is near the Tioga Lake and Log Cabin-Saddlebag further planning areas.

Public involvement for the RARE II study indicated no strong interest in the outcome for this area. However, Forest correspondence files indicate that in 1971 the Sierra Club raised the question of designating the area as wilderness. The Carnegie Institution has not expressed itself on the subject. Local people see this area as wilderness already.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-15 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-16.

Table C-15
Management Prescription Allocations
by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
Hall Natural (5051)

Management Prescription	PRF	CUR	RPA	Alternatives			
				CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness				5.2 100%	5.2 100%		5.2 100%
5. Research Natural Area	3.9 75%	3.9 75%	3.9 75%			3.9 75%	
17. Semi-Primitive Rec	1.3 25%	1.3 25%	1.3 25%			1.3 25%	

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): CEE, AMN, AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness designation would maintain the wilderness attributes of the area, a character similar to the contiguous wilderness area and Yosemite National Park. As the majority of the area would also be designated as a research natural area (RNA), management conflicts could easily develop. The purposes and uses of wilderness and RNAs are not entirely compatible. Overnight recreation use would continue to be prohibited, but day use would increase to approximately the same levels as neighboring wildernesses. Research activities would be more costly and restricted. The inventory boundary would be difficult and costly to administer as wilderness.

Use of the area would not change, except that recreation use of the 1,300 acres outside the RNA would increase to levels similar to those in adjacent

wildernesses. Many of the potential wilderness recreation opportunities within the RNA could not be fully realized.

Under wilderness designation, the Bennetville interpretive site would be eliminated, representing a lost opportunity to interpret cultural values.

The amount of fishing would not change markedly.

Most of the area is presently withdrawn from mineral entry. Upon designation, the remainder of the area would be withdrawn. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

Existing research facilities (a road and buildings) under a cooperative agreement with the Carnegie Institution would present a nonconforming use within wilderness. Unless specifically exempt by a congressional act, these facilities would be removed.

Only minor economic benefits would occur, as most of the potential to increase wilderness recreation would be lost due to the restriction on overnight camping within the RNA. The social benefit of wilderness designation would be gained. There would be increased costs associated with wilderness administration.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource tradeoffs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 5 and 17

Alternative(s): PRF, CUR, RPA, AMB

Effects on the Area: Wilderness values would be little affected, as the area would either remain within the RNA or be managed under limited vehicle access. The only activity that would be likely to affect this area would be mining.

Research activities would not be subject to conflicting management direction. Nonmotorized daytime recreation would not change from the current situation. The historical interpretation would continue, and options to actively manage cultural properties would remain available. While the visual resource would receive considerable protection, the potential for activities, such as mining, that could affect it would remain on the 1,300 acres outside the RNA.

The area outside the RNA would remain open to new mining claims; only applicable mining restrictions would affect activities. New mining roads would be closed to the public.

Economic and social benefits would not change. A social cost would be a loss of potential wilderness designation. A benefit would be the continued scientific emphasis within the Hall RNA.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Table C-16
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Hall Natural (5051)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	0	0	0	5.2	5.2	0	5.2
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	5.2	5.2	5.2	0	0	5.2	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	5000 7500	5000 7500	5000 7500	0 0	0 0	5000 7500	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	7500 10000	7500 10000	0 0	7500 10000
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	1100 1650	1100 1650	1100 1650	1100 1650	1100 1650	1100 1650	1100 1650
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	112 169	112 169	112 169	119 173	119 173	112 169	119 173
Costs (M\$)	1 5	25 37	25 37	25 37	26 11	26 11	25 37	26 11
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	87 132	87 132	87 132	93 162	93 162	87 132	93 162

A. DESCRIPTION

The Log Cabin-Saddlebag area lies in Mono County on the Mono Lake Ranger District. Highway 395 and the Tioga Pass, Saddlebag Lake, and Lundy Lake Roads lead to and parallel the boundary. Two constructed trails and a few user trails lead into the area; a mining road intrudes to the center of the area.

The boundary is defined by the Tioga Pass Road on the south, the Hoover Wilderness on the west, the Lundy Lake Road on the north, and Highway 395 on the east.

The area lies on the east side of the Sierra Nevada, in the Mono Lake watershed. It is irregular in shape, approximately 7 miles long and ranging from 0.25 to 4 miles wide. Elevations range from 6,640 feet to 12,327 feet at Mt. Warren.

Terrain forms a steep-sided plateau consisting of glacially-scoured metasedimentary rock. There are nine miles of perennial stream, of which two miles contain trout, and one lake.

Primary vegetation types are lodgepole pine forest, subalpine fir forest, mountain mahogany, low sagebrush, and barren areas.

Scenic variety in the area falls into class A, 93 percent; class B, 7 percent. Mono Dome, Lee Vining Peak, Mt. Warren, and Tioga Peak are all scenic landmarks from Highway 395 and the Tioga Road. The surrounding area is also extremely scenic. Lee Vining Canyon and the peaks of the Sierra crest can be seen to the east and south; Lundy Canyon, Lundy Lake, and the Mono-Walker divide to the north; Mono Lake and the Mono Craters to the east; and the White and Sweetwater Mountains on the eastern horizon.

Current uses include recreation and grazing.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity of the area has been influenced to a low degree; its natural appearance to a moderate degree. Impacts include an underground water tank, a 6-inch pipeline, an abandoned telegraph line, inactive mining sites including tailings and diggings, sheep grazing on meadows in the center of the area, and many unimproved roads near the eastern boundary.

Opportunities for solitude are high. The area is large, especially in combination with adjoining wilderness and National Park backcountry. Screening and visual intrusions are moderate.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are moderate. The area is large, especially in combination with adjoining wilderness. There is a moderate amount of diversity and challenge.

The original inventory boundary would be manageable as wilderness only with major adjustments. Adjustments could exclude impacts along the eastern and western edges. Approximately 3,000 acres would be lost, and most unimproved roads would be eliminated. Only mining impacts, grazing, and a waterline would remain.

C. AVAILABILITY

The Log Cabin-Saddlebag area represents a few trade-offs between wilderness designation and other resources and activities. If the boundary were not adjusted, the potential for four-wheel drive recreation on the area's unimproved roads would be foregone. Some aspects of Scenic Area management could conflict with wilderness management, but the details of the latter have yet to be developed.

Dispersed nonmotorized recreation presently accounts for 400 RVDs; fishing, 200 WFUDs.

The eastern-most 4,806 acres of the area lie within the Mono Basin National Forest Scenic Area, designated by Congress in 1984. The Scenic Area was designated with the intention of emphasizing public enjoyment and interpretation of the outstanding scenic and scientific values of the Mono Basin.

Peregrine falcons have been introduced, and California bighorn sheep have been proposed for introduction into Lee Vining Canyon; both species are likely to range into the area. Approximately 50 acres are suitable for wildlife habitat manipulation.

Most of the water from the area is used locally for mining, irrigation, livestock, or domestic needs, then flows into Mono Lake. Some is diverted into the Owens River and exported for hydroelectric power generation and domestic use.

Grazing represents 800 AUMs of use per year; maximum potential is estimated at 985 AUMs.

The area contains no land suitable for commercial timber management.

Of the lands in this area not already withdrawn 3 percent are rated high in mineral potential; 31 percent are medium, and 56 percent are low. More than 100 claims were recorded for the entire area between 1895 and 1915; of these, 7 claims are now active, but none are producing. Moderate levels of gold and silver are known in the area of the Klondike, North Log Cabin, and Centipede Prospects and the Log Cabin and Lakeview Mines on the east side of the area and the Saddlebag Lake Prospect and Australian claim on the west. There is high potential for additional reserves near known deposits. There are also minor amounts of tungsten, copper, lead, and zinc. A mineral entry withdrawal covers 4,900 acres.

Cultural resource values include signs of prehistoric occupancy and historic mining.

D. NEED

The area belongs to the southern Sierra Nevada physiographic province; current use of wildernesses in that province is extremely heavy. The area is typical of the province. This area adjoins the existing Hoover wilderness and is near the Hall Natural and Tioga Lake further planning areas.

Public involvement for the RARE II study indicated some local concern that the roadless area boundary came too close to the town of Lee Vining. There was also local concern that wilderness designation might restrict the potential for mining development in the area.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-17 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-18.

**Table C-17
Management Prescription Allocations
by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
Log Cabin-Saddlebag (5052)**

Management Prescription	PRF	CUR	RPA	Alternatives			
				CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness				17.1	17.1	17.1	17.1
				100%	100%	100%	100%
3. Mountain Sheep Habitat	3.0						
	18%						
6. Mono Basin NF Scenic Area*	4.8	4.8	4.8	(4.8)	(4.8)	(4.8)	(4.8)
	28%	28%	28%				
11. Range		4.3	4.3				
		25%	25%				
17. Semi-Primitive Rec	9.3	8.0	8.0				
	54%	47%	47%				

* Acres in parentheses indicate dual designation: Wilderness and MBNFSA.

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): CEE, AMN, AMB, AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness designation would enhance the wilderness attributes of the area. The natural integrity, appearance and opportunities for finding solitude would be improved with the exclusion of vehicles, roads, and various minor improvements. The type of use received would be similar to that in the contiguous Hoover Wilderness. The inventory boundary would be difficult and costly to administer as wilderness along the eastern edge, where there are many roads and influences of the town of Lee Vining.

Motorized recreation would be eliminated. The amount of recreation use would increase moderately under wilderness designation. The wilderness experience would be somewhat compromised by unnatural visual detractors associated with grazing, mining, old roads and off-site developments.

The level of grazing would remain constant. Opportunities to manipulate the vegetation or construct improvements would be foregone. Motorized equipment could not be used to facilitate use of the allotment.

The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

Economic dependencies on the area include grazing, mining, and recreation (primarily vehicle-based). These activities would be adversely impacted by wilderness designation. The economic benefits associated with more primitive recreation would not outweigh the losses of existing economic benefits. The greatest social benefit would be formal wilderness designation. Administrative costs of managing the area would increase. There would also be costs associated with developing needed trails and a trailhead.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions except within Prescription 6.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 3, 6, 17

Alternative(s): PRF

Effects on the Area: Wilderness attributes would be essentially maintained for most of the area. Approximately 18 percent of the area, primarily the slopes within Lee Vining Canyon, would be managed to provide high quality bighorn sheep habitat. Another 54 percent of the area would be managed under limited vehicle access. Twenty-eight percent would be managed for scenic and interpretive values as part of the Scenic Area.

This combination of management prescriptions would provide considerable protection for the natural integrity and appearance of the area. Recreation use would be little affected; however, more stringent vehicle access restrictions would be imposed to protect the scenic resource and bighorn sheep habitat. Motorized recreation opportunities would be limited to existing routes. Opportunities for nonmotorized recreation would remain high.

Bighorn sheep habitat would receive maximum protection.

Domestic livestock grazing would probably be reduced in response to bighorn sheep habitat needs.

The area would remain open to new mining claims, except for the 4,900 acres now under mineral withdrawal. New roads constructed for mining access would be closed to the public.

Direct economic dependencies would be little affected. Opportunities to realize economic growth, however, would be limited for certain activities. A social implication would be the loss of potential wilderness designation.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions except within Prescription 6.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 6, 11, 17

Alternative(s): RPA, CUR

Effects on the Area: The effects would be similar to those for the combination of Prescriptions 3, 6, and 17 discussed above. The primary difference would be the lack of emphasis on bighorn sheep habitat; under this combination, bighorn sheep would probably not be reintroduced into Lee Vining Canyon; domestic livestock grazing would increase. The 25% of the area managed under Prescription 17 would be available for new public roads constructed for mining or range management purposes.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions except within Prescription 6. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

Table C-18
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Log Cabin-Saddlebag (5052)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	0	0	0	17.1	17.1	17.1	17.1
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	17.1	17.1	17.1	0	0	0	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	400 600	400 600	400 600	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	800 1200	800 1200	800 1200	800 1200
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	800 600	840 985	840 985	800 800	800 800	800 800	800 800
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	20 20	21 23	21 23	25 32	25 32	25 32	25 32
Costs (M\$)	1 5	9 9	9 9	9 10	23 18	23 18	23 18	23 18
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	11 11	12 14	12 14	2 14	2 14	2 14	2 14

A. DESCRIPTION

The Benton Range roadless area lies in Mono County on the Mono Lake and the White Mountain Ranger Districts. Two adjoining parcels comprise BLM wilderness study area (WSA) No. CA-010-077. The Inyo National Forest has the lead role in joint study of the National Forest and BLM roadless lands in this area. Maintained roads lead to and parallel the boundaries of the lands being studied.

The further planning area boundary is defined on the west by the road between Chidago Flat and Watterson Meadow, on the south by the Red Rock Canyon Road, and on the north and east by the Forest boundary. The adjoining BLM WSA parcels are adjacent to the northern and eastern edges of the further planning area.

The entire area lies in the Benton Range, in the North Owens River and Hammil Valley watersheds. It is roughly rectangular, measuring 9.5 miles long by an average of 4.5 miles wide. Elevations range from 5,800 to 8,252 feet.

Most of the terrain is steep and rugged, with some gentler slopes and flats on the northern end. Rock is volcanic and granitic, with a ridge of eroded granitic domes along the northeastern boundary. There are no perennial streams or lakes.

The predominant vegetation type is pine-juniper woodland.

Scenic variety in the area falls into class A, 4 percent; class B, 94 percent; class C, 2 percent. The immediate surroundings, including the BLM land, are similar in appearance to the area itself. The White and Glass Mountains are visible from high points in the area.

Current uses include woodcutting, recreation, prospecting, and grazing.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity and natural appearance of the area have been influenced to a low degree. There are small and scattered mineral developments, scattered grazing, and a short, narrow mining road.

Opportunities for solitude are moderate to low. Although there is some topographic and vegetative screening, the area is small, even in combination with the BLM land. Buildings and roads in the Hammil Valley, though distant, are visible.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are low. There is very little challenge or diversity; there is no reliable surface water.

The inventory boundary would be manageable as wilderness only with major boundary adjustments to exclude a mining road and the lower elevations of the BLM land. A revised boundary could be manageable, as topography would prevent vehicle access.

C. AVAILABILITY

The Benton Range area and the adjoining BLM WSA represent some trade-offs between wilderness designation and other activities. The small amount of vehicle-based recreation and public wood cutting would be excluded by wilderness management, mineral exploration and development would be restricted, and the option of increasing grazing would be precluded.

Dispersed nonmotorized recreation on National Forest land accounts for 100 RVDs; motorized recreation, 200 RVDs and big game hunting, 300 WFUDS; use on BLM land is estimated at 30 RVDs and 30 WFUDs.

Cattle grazing on NF land accounts for 1,130 AUMs per year; maximum potential is estimated at 1,300 AUMs; the BLM parcels support 118 AUMs, with no potential for increase.

The area is incapable of producing commercial timber.

Of the National Forest and BLM lands making up this area, 65 percent are rated high in mineral potential; 7 percent are medium, and 28 percent are low. Since 1865, at least 685 unpatented claims have been filed on lands within this area; of these, 28 were current in 1980. Subeconomic levels of gold and silver have been identified. There is potential for tungsten outside, and perhaps extending into the area. None of the mines are currently in production.

Cultural resource values include some prehistoric features.

D. NEED

There appears to be little wilderness-type recreation use in the Basin and Range physiographic province. The Benton Range area is typical of the province. There are no neighboring wildernesses or further planning areas.

Public involvement for the RARE II study indicated little interest in the area by wilderness proponents. The residents of the Benton community strongly oppose wilderness designation for any neighboring National Forest lands.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-19 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-20.

Table C-19
 Management Prescription Allocations
 by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
 Benton Range (5056)

Management Prescription	Alternatives						
	PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness							10.5 *(4.1) *100%
4. Mule Deer Habitat	9.0 86%			9.0 86%	9.0 86%	9.0 86%	
11. Range	1.5 14%	10.5 100%	10.5 100%	1.5 14%	1.5 14%	1.5 14%	

*BLM acres are in parentheses; percentage figure applies to total acres--National Forest and BLM taken together.

THE FOLLOWING NARRATIVES ADDRESS BOTH NATIONAL FOREST AND BLM LANDS

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness attributes would be retained or even improved, as any activities affecting those attributes would be prohibited. The area represents an ecological type not yet represented in wilderness on the Forest. Administration of the area as wilderness would be difficult without a major boundary adjustment, as the terrain does not present a natural barrier to vehicles at many locations.

The character of recreation use would change dramatically. Traditional motorized recreation would be prohibited, and various 4-wheel drive vehicle routes would be closed. Big-game hunting would be restricted to foot travel. Recreation use would decrease, as few people would find the area attractive for a wilderness experience. The small size of the area, the lack of water, and the lack of challenge would maintain use at a low level.

Since considerable impacts on cultural resources have already resulted from artifact-hunters accessing the area with 4-wheel drive vehicles, closing the area to all motorized use would add protection for those values.

Some mule deer winter range would be affected, as the option of manipulating wildlife habitat would be foregone.

Cattle grazing would remain unchanged, though any opportunities to manipulate the range for increased forage production would be foregone.

Fuelwood gathering would be prohibited.

The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

There would be an overall loss of potential revenue from the area, as cattle grazing, motorized vehicle use, and new mining claims would be eliminated. A benefit would be a formal wilderness designation, adding small acreage in an underrepresented ecological type to the wilderness preservation system.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 4, 11

Alternative(s): PRF, AMN, AMB, CEE

Effects on the Area: Under the combination, wilderness values in the area would erode over time. Four-wheel drive and ORV recreation, range and wildlife habitat manipulation, and mining activities would incrementally degrade the area of its natural values. The acres under Prescription 11 (14 percent) would be the most affected.

Historical recreation uses (big-game hunting, four-wheel drive recreation, wood and pine-nut collecting) would be unchanged. On 86 percent of the area, new public roads would not be allowed and mining roads would be closed to public use; the remaining 14 percent would not be subject to that restriction.

Cultural resources would be exposed to continuing vandalism and theft.

On 86 percent of the area, cattle grazing would be held at current levels; any increase in forage would go to mule deer. Prescribed fire would be used to rejuvenate vegetation for deer. Big game hunting would be expected to increase with an increase in the mule deer population. On the remaining 14 percent of the area, cattle grazing would continue at current levels or increase; any vegetation treatment would.

The area would remain open to new mining claims; only applicable mining restrictions would affect activities.

Fuelwood gathering would continue where compatible with other resources.

Social and economic impacts would be represented by the lost opportunity to increase grazing on 80 percent of the area; increased hunting and associated benefits would offset that loss. Local residents favoring easy access and a nonwilderness designation would benefit. There would be a social cost of a loss of potential wilderness designation for an ecological type not yet represented on the Inyo National Forest.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 11

Alternative(s): CUR, RPA

Effects on the Area: The effects of this prescription would be similar to the effects of Prescription 4 with a few key exceptions. A primary range emphasis on the entire area would entail vegetation treatment to benefit livestock and an increase in animal numbers.

New road construction for range management would be allowed, and new mining roads could be open for public use. Improved access would result in overall increases in habitat disturbance for deer.

If access were improved, the use of the area for fuelwood gathering would increase, until and unless pinyon pine stands had been replaced by shrub and grass types.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

Mining opportunities would be enhanced as access throughout the area would be increased. Any mining roads constructed in the area could remain open for public use.

Table C-20
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Benton Range (5056)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	10.5
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0						
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	300 450	300 450	300 450	300 450	300 450	300 450	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	150 300
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	500 750	300 450	300 450	500 750	500 750	500 750	100 150
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	1165 1300	1165 1300	1165 1300	1165 1300	1130 1130	1130 1130	1130 1130
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0						
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0						
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0						
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	39 48	38 40	38 40	39 48	39 48	39 48	6 9
Costs (M\$)	1 5	20 22	20 18	20 18	20 22	20 22	20 22	6 4
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	19 26	18 22	18 22	19 26	19 26	19 26	0 5

A. DESCRIPTION

The White Mountains area lies in California's Inyo and Mono Counties, and Nevada's Mineral and Esmeralda Counties. This area has such a complex and potentially confusing history of names and numbers that it might be useful to summarize that history here.

The RARE II study identified subparts A and B, naming "A" White Mountains and "B" Pellesier-Bristlecone. Pellesier-Bristlecone represented the higher elevations of the area, constituting an island within the larger White Mountains area. Both subparts were placed in further planning by the RARE II Final EIS in January 1979.

The President, in his April 1979 wilderness recommendations to Congress, recommended most of 5058B and some of 5058A for wilderness. Since the boundary of the recommended wilderness differed from the RARE II boundaries, the subparts were now given different names and numbers: the recommended wilderness subpart was named Boundary Peak (5058W); the remainder was kept in further planning under the name White Mountains (5058F). Wilderness bills from 1980 to 1983 included 5058W as wilderness.

In March 1983 the Forest Service was directed to reevaluate all roadless areas as part of the Forest planning process, regardless of RARE II recommendations. The entire 5058 area was, therefore, included in the reevaluation. The interior boundaries between subparts were dissolved for analysis purposes.

The California Wilderness Act of 1984 listed White Mountains A and B (California only) for further planning; the Nevada portion of the area is still subject to the reevaluation process, as no wilderness legislation for Nevada has yet been passed. The following discussion deals with the entire White Mountains area; where one subpart is recommended for wilderness and another for nonwilderness, the boundary was drawn with concern for manageability and elimination of conflicts and does not coincide with any earlier subpart boundaries.

The White Mountains area is on the White Mountain Ranger District. The lower reaches of most of its many canyons are accessible by mining roads. Some jeep tracks lead further toward the interior. The southern half of the area is bisected by the White Mountain Road, which follows the crest of the range from Westgard Pass to White Mountain Peak. Cross-country access on foot from the White Mountain road is fairly easy. Access to the northern half of the area (north of White Mountain Peak) is quite difficult.

The boundary is defined on the north by the Forest boundary and the Queen Canyon-Trail Canyon road; on the south by the Silver Canyon and Crooked Creek roads; and on the east and west by the Forest boundary, except where mining road corridors intrude the area. Most of the adjoining land is administered by the BLM; some parcels are in private ownership.

The area lies in the White Mountains and in the watersheds of the Southeast and Northeast White Mountains; the Owens River; and the Chalfant, Hammil, Benton, Queen, Fish Creek, and Deep Springs Valleys.

The area is elongated, irregular in shape, and intruded by mining road corridors. It is 39 miles long and ranges in width from 7 to 18 miles. The wider southern half is bisected by the White Mountain Road corridor. Elevations range from 4,560 feet to 14,242 feet at White Mountain Peak.

Terrain consists mainly of extremely steep slopes dissected by steep, narrow canyons, leading to a narrow summit ridgeline. There is some rolling plateau on the crest, and a few small benches in the canyons. There are 128 miles of perennial stream, of which 38 miles contain trout, and many intermittent streams and springs, but no lakes. The rock is metasedimentary, much of it dolomite, with large granitic intrusions. Geologic points of interest include evidence of glaciation unusual for desert mountains, and the highest waterfalls in the desert ranges.

Primary vegetation types are pine-juniper woodland, alpine shrub, and big sagebrush.

Scenic variety in the area falls into class A, 62 percent; class B, 38 percent. The entire White Mountain range, most of which is in the roadless area, is a scenic landmark from Bishop, Highway 6, and Fish Lake Valley. White Mountain, Montgomery, and Boundary Peaks are identifiable features. The immediately surrounding area is somewhat less varied, composed primarily of arid desert valleys with little topographic relief. However, the middle and far distances provide spectacular views of the Glass Mountains, Benton Range, and Sierra Nevada on the west, and the desert ranges of Nevada on the east.

Other attractions include ancient bristlecone pines; Boundary Peak, which is the highest point in Nevada; wild horses, desert bighorn sheep, and beavers; and Pellisier Flat, which contains classic examples of active, polar-type frost features including large solifluction terraces.

Current uses include recreation, grazing, scientific research, and mineral exploration.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity of the area is essentially unmodified; its natural appearance has been influenced to a low degree. Impacts include scattered fences, trails, and mining sites (including structures, diggings, and machinery); widely scattered grazing; and unimproved roads. Impacts are localized, and the area is so large that most are easily absorbed.

Opportunities for solitude are high. The large size of the area offsets its low to moderate amount of screening and the visual intrusions of neighboring mines, roads, and the Barcroft Laboratory.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are moderate. Size, challenge, and diversity are the main contributors to this rating; there is, however, little water.

Special features include two species of sensitive plants (Arabis pinzlae and Hackelia brevicula), the threatened Paiute cutthroat trout, and extensive ecological and archaeological research.

The inventory boundary would be very difficult to manage as wilderness, due to the many intruding road corridors and vehicle routes. A manageable boundary could, however, be developed by managing only the steeper upper elevations as wilderness. This boundary is applied where part of the area is recommended for wilderness in the alternatives discussed below.

Eleven parcels of roadless BLM land, encompassing 5,419 acres, adjoin the area.

C. AVAILABILITY

The area represents some trade-offs between wilderness designation and other resources and activities. Wilderness management would restrict mineral exploration and development, small hydro development, vegetation manipulation to benefit range or wildlife, and (possibly) some kinds of scientific research that would conflict with wilderness values.

Dispersed nonmotorized recreation, accounts for 7,000 RVDs; big game hunting for 2,000 WFUDs.

Approximately 500 acres are suitable for wildlife habitat manipulation. The Cottonwood Creek basin is proposed for fish habitat enhancement (including spawning bed treatment and instream flow control structures) and expansion of the range for threatened Paiute cutthroat trout.

Water from the area is used for irrigation, domestic, and livestock needs in Hammil, Chalfant, Oasis, and Fish Lake Valleys. A small amount flows into the Owens River and is exported. Small hydroelectric projects have been proposed for Cottonwood, Lone Tree, Coldwater, Upper Piute, Pellisier and Rock Creeks along the area's western edge. There are presently two one-acre impoundments in the area.

Watershed restoration projects have been proposed for meadows on Chiatovich Flat and the drainage of Cottonwood Creek. Cost-effectiveness would require helicopter use and vehicle access over existing roads.

Cattle grazing represents 680 AUMs; maximum potential is estimated at 900 AUMs. Existing improvements are valued at \$23,000.

Existing and proposed special areas within the roadless area boundary recognize points of ecological significance. The Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest is a botanical special interest area which highlights the world's oldest living trees. The White Mountain Research Natural area (RNA) affords additional protection to a unique stand of bristlecone pines. The McAfee Meadow recommended RNA would represent the Great Basin alpine fellfield plant community. The entire White Mountain range has been nominated by the Department of Interior for listing as a national natural landmark (NNL).

The area is incapable of producing commercial timber.

Of the lands in this area, 8 percent are rated high in mineral potential; 27 percent are medium, and 65 percent are low. There are 133 active mining claims in the area, of which none are currently producing. Withdrawal from mineral entry affects 8,400 acres; outstanding reserved mineral rights, 400 acres.

There is a large number of prehistoric and historic cultural resource sites. Recent research into prehistoric high-elevation encampments has uncovered sites above 12,000 feet in the White Mountains, and prompted plans for additional research in the area. Historic sites include sheep and cattle camps, mines, a ranger station site, a powerline shack, and a toll road.

A power line in the area is operated under special-use permit; a helicopter test site is operated under a memorandum of understanding. Two mining access roads have been permitted, but not yet constructed. There is one included patented mining claim which is not currently active but has many signs of past disturbance.

D. NEED

There appears to be little wilderness-type recreation use in the Basin and Range physiographic province. The White Mountains area differs from many areas in that province by having outstanding scenic attractions and recreational challenges. However, lack of water and difficulty of access would probably limit the amount of use in this particular area. Neighboring further planning areas include Sugarloaf, Blanco Mountain, and Black Mountain.

Public involvement for the RARE II study indicated strong advocacy of wilderness in the White Mountains by State and national environmental groups. They value the White and Inyo Mountains for unique plants, animals, and ecosystems and for the solitude they offer.

Local residents, in contrast, see the Whites as an escape area, and value their remoteness and lack of restrictions.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-21 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-22.

Table C-21
 Management Prescription Allocations
 by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
 White Mountains (5058 A&B)

Management Prescription	PRF	CUR	RPA	Alternatives			
				CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness	120.0 47%	53.2 21%		251.9 21%	251.9 100%	53.2 21%	251.9 100%
3. Mountain Sheep Habitat	19.4 8%	19.4 8%				19.4 8%	
5. Research Natural Area*	4.6 2%	4.6 2%	4.6 2%	(4.6)	(4.6)	4.6 2%	(4.6)
7. Ancient Bristlecone	6.0 3%	6.0 3%	6.0 3%	(6.0)	(6.0)	6.0 3%	(6.0)
17. Semi-Primitive Rec	101.9 40%	90.5 36%	53.2 21%			168.9 66%	
18. Multiple Resource Area		78.2 30%	188.0 74%				

*Acres with dual designation (proposed wilderness and RNA, Scenic Area, etc.) are displayed in the acreage total for Prescription 2 and indicated in parentheses under the other applicable prescription.

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription#: 2

Alternative(s): CEE, AMN, AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness designation would maintain the exceptionally high quality wilderness attributes of the area. Within subparts of the area containing vehicle use and other signs of human influence, this prescription would actually enhance wilderness attributes, as vehicles and various conflicting uses would be prohibited. Management of the area as wilderness would be difficult in certain area subparts, as vehicle intrusion and various nonconforming uses would be difficult to eliminate. Certain existing and potential research activities could conflict with wilderness management. That part of the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest within the area would receive maximum protection, but visitors to that area would be subject to additional regulation associated with wilderness.

Vehicle-based recreation would be prohibited. Nonmotorized recreation would increase considerably wilderness designation. Opportunities for a high quality wilderness experience would be exceptional. One of the highest valued scenic mountain ranges in California would receive maximum visual protection.

Cultural resources in the area, known to be regionally significant, would receive maximum protection. Archaeological research would become slightly more costly, and perhaps limited.

Options to manipulate wildlife or fish habitat would be foregone. Bighorn sheep habitat would receive adequate protection, as wilderness management would acknowledge bighorn habitat needs. Proposed projects involving the expansion of Paiute cutthroat trout (a threatened species) range would

probably not be implemented. The presence and use of the area by wild horses would pose a conflict for wilderness management, as these animals are not native to the area.

The current light grazing would continue. However, use and management of the range resource would be more difficult and limited. Opportunities to increase outputs would be foregone.

Watershed restoration projects, if implemented, could not make use of motorized equipment. Small hydroelectric development opportunities would be foregone.

The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

Unique geological features would be protected from damage or destruction. Numerous nonconforming uses (power line, helicopter test site, mining access roads and sites, and a patented mining claim) would be difficult to manage and would detract from wilderness values if retained.

Wilderness designation would protect sensitive plant, wildlife, and fish species.

Mining, wildlife and fish, grazing, research, and water extracted from the area constitute the direct economic dependencies associated with the area. There would be increased costs associated with these activities and, in some cases, a reduction in development opportunities. This would be particularly true for mineral exploration and small hydroelectric development. Significant long-term economic benefits related to wilderness recreation would result. The greatest social implication would be the preservation of a unique and significant wilderness resource of national stature. Some adverse research consequences would be a social concern.

Necessary costs of implementation would be construction of approximately 40 miles of trails and 5 to 7 trailheads. Administrative costs would increase dramatically.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Wilderness (revised boundary)/nonwilderness

Prescription #: 2, 3, 5, 7, 17

Alternative(s): PRF, AMB

Effects on the Area: This combination of prescriptions includes both wilderness designation for the higher elevations (47 percent in the PRF and 21 percent in the AMB) of the area and an emphasis on amenity values on the remainder of the area. Wilderness attributes in the wilderness part of the area would receive maximum protection and enhancement, as described for the entire area under Prescription 2, above. The wilderness recommendation would encompass approximately 120,000 acres under the PRF Alternative and 53,200 acres under the AMB.

The wilderness boundary proposed under this combination would greatly improve the chances of eventual wilderness designation. The boundary would be manageable, as topography would reinforce statutory closures to prevent vehicle entry. The wilderness characteristics of the area proposed for wilderness are much higher, and primitive recreation opportunities greater in the area recommended for wilderness under this combination than in the remainder of the White Mountains area.

The revised area clearly separates the recommended wilderness from the majority of existing conflicting uses and potential development opportunities. The lands outside the recommended wilderness are rated higher in mineral potential than those inside. The two RNAs and the botanical area would lie outside the recommended wilderness, thus avoiding potential conflicts in management. The majority of watershed improvement needs and fish habitat expansion potential lie outside recommended wilderness. And, finally, all identified potential hydroelectric projects lie outside recommended wilderness.

Nonwilderness amenity values, such as scenic quality, fish and wildlife habitat management, scientific research, and dispersed recreation would be maintained at high levels on all nonwilderness lands; the wilderness attributes on those lands would also be expected to remain at high levels.

Watershed improvement projects could be accomplished using vehicle access and motorized equipment. Cultural resources would be protected to a moderate degree while opportunities for research and interpretation were retained.

Commodity production and off-road vehicle travel would be restricted under these prescriptions. There would be no open ORV areas; all vehicle travel would be restricted to existing routes. Mining roads in nonwilderness areas would be closed to public use. Grazing would continue at current low levels of intensity; although vehicles could be used for range management, the amount of vegetation treatment and structural improvement would be small.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

Wild horses would not represent a conflict.

Designation: Wilderness (revised boundary)/nonwilderness

Prescription #: 2, 3, 5, 7, 17, 18

Alternative(s): CUR

Effects on the Area: This combination of prescriptions would have virtually the same effects as those of the wilderness/nonwilderness combination discussed above. The difference is that the 30 percent of the area managed under Prescriptions 18 would be available for mining roads open to public use and for open ORV areas. On those lands, natural appearance and natural integrity would be expected to decline as access and vehicle use increased. Mining opportunities would be enhanced as access throughout the area improved. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 5, 7, 17, 18

Alternative(s): RPA

Effects on the Area: Nonwilderness management could have negative long-term effects on the wilderness attributes of the area. Those effects would be greatest in the parts of the area with the lowest level of wilderness quality, i.e., lands below 9,000 to 10,000 feet elevation. On those lower slopes, vehicle use and other signs of human influence would continue and, probably, increase. Mineral exploration and development could have major impacts if the economic situation made currently uneconomic deposits valuable enough for extraction. The higher elevations would be subject to fewer impacts, primarily because vehicle access would be difficult-to-impossible and because of the lower level of estimated mineral potential associated with the geology of those areas.

Existing and potential research activities could take place with minimal restriction, but the natural features subject to scientific study could be damaged by increased impacts. That part of the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest within the area would receive the level of protection and type of use it currently receives.

Vehicle-based recreation would be confined to existing roads and trails, and no new public roads could be constructed under Prescriptions 5, 7, or 17. Open ORV areas could, however, be established, new roads could be constructed, and mining roads could be left open for public use on lands managed under Prescription 18. Primitive recreation would be confined to the higher elevations inaccessible by vehicle.

The scenic values of the mountain range would be most subject to impacts where Prescription 18 was applied; the major potential for visual impacts would be associated with mining.

Cultural resources in the area, known to be regionally significant, would receive moderate protection. Archaeological research would be less costly and limited than under wilderness designation.

Options to manipulate wildlife or fish habitat would be retained. Bighorn sheep habitat would be managed for population viability, but would not be emphasized. Proposed projects involving the expansion of Paiute cutthroat trout (a threatened species) range could be implemented. The presence and use of the area by wild horses would not represent a conflict.

Livestock grazing would increase where there was an opportunity to do so. Vegetation treatment and structural improvements would increase. Management of the range resource would be accomplished using traditional means, including unrestricted vehicle access.

Watershed restoration projects could be implemented with full use of motorized equipment and vehicle access. Small hydroelectric development opportunities would be retained.

Most of the area would remain open to new mining claims, subject only to applicable mining laws and regulations. The existing mineral withdrawal would continue to apply, and the recommended RNAs would be withdrawn from mineral entry; those withdrawals would, however, affect only five percent of the area. Mining opportunities would be enhanced on lands managed under Prescription 18, as access throughout the area would be increased. Under the other prescriptions, only mining roads would be constructed, and they would be closed to public use. While the extent of the mineral reserve is undetermined, the opportunities for mining could be significant in some parts of the area.

The numerous special uses (power line, helicopter test site, mining access roads and sites, and a patented mining claim) could continue.

Sensitive plants, wildlife, fish, and unique geologic features would have moderate to high levels of protection based on the Forest-wide standards and guidelines and the direction contained in Prescriptions 5, 7, and 17.

Mining, wildlife and fish, grazing, research, and motorized recreation constitute the direct economic dependencies associated with the area. Those activities and associated development opportunities would be retained. Long-term economic benefits related to wilderness recreation and the social benefits of wilderness designation would be foregone.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Table C-22
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
White Mountains (5058 A&B)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	120.6	53.2	0	251.9	251.9	53.2	251.9
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	131.3	198.7	251.9	0	0	198.7	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	1000 1500	1000 1500	7000 10500	0 0	0 0	1000 1500	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	8200 12710	8200 12710	0 0	16000 24800	16000 24800	8200 12710	16000 24800
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	2000 3000	2000 3000	2000 3000	2000 3000	2000 3000	2000 3000	2000 3000
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	725 900	725 900	725 900	680 680	680 680	725 900	680 680
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	233 334	233 334	302 402	279 427	279 427	233 334	279 427
Costs (M\$)	1 5	462 174	462 174	257 142	572 294	572 294	462 174	572 294
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	-229 160	-229 160	45 260	293 133	293 133	-229 160	-293 133

A. DESCRIPTION

The Blanco Mountain area lies in Mono and Inyo Counties, on the White Mountain Ranger District. Constructed dirt roads lead to and parallel the boundary; jeep trails and foot trails penetrate the area.

The boundary is defined by the Crooked Creek road on the north, the Wyman Canyon road on the south, the Dead Horse Meadow road on the east, and the Sage Hen Flat road on the west.

The area lies in the White Mountains, in the Deep Springs Valley and Northeast and Southeast White Mountains watersheds. It is rectangular, 7 miles long by 4 miles wide. Elevations range from 8,200 feet to 11,278 feet at Blanco Mountain.

Terrain is mostly rugged, with some gently sloping plateau. Canyons are deeply incised. There are 5 miles of perennial stream, of which 2 miles contain trout, and many intermittent streams, but no lakes. Most of the rock is metasedimentary, with some granite outcrops.

Primary vegetation types are big sagebrush and pine-juniper woodland. Smaller amounts of mountain mahogany and subalpine fir forest are also present. Other botanical attractions include the ancient bristlecone pine trees.

Scenic variety in the area falls into class A, 56 percent; class B, 44 percent. The surroundings are similar in appearance to the area itself; views from high points include the Sierra Nevada in the distance to the west, and rows of desert mountains to the east.

Current uses include grazing and recreation.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity of the area has been influenced to a very low degree; its natural appearance to a moderate degree. Impacts include a telephone line with associated service roads, a few fences, scattered grazing, vegetation manipulation, and some unimproved roads.

Opportunities for solitude are moderate. The area is small, and screening is low to moderate. Surrounding roads, Camp Bristlecone, and powerlines are somewhat intrusive.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are low. There is some diversity, but rare opportunities for challenge.

Special features include a sensitive plant species, Trifolium dedeckerae.

The original inventory boundary would not be manageable as wilderness. None of the impacts listed above would be separable by boundary adjustments, as they are scattered and penetrate to the interior of the area.

C. AVAILABILITY

The Blanco Mountain area represents some trade-offs between wilderness designation and other resources and activities. Wilderness management would exclude vehicle-based big game hunting, wildlife habitat or range improvements involving vegetation manipulation, and watershed restoration using earth-moving equipment.

The major recreational use of the area is big game hunting, which represents 600 WFUDs; other dispersed motorized recreation amounts to 400 RVDs.

Approximately 930 acres are suitable for wildlife habitat manipulation.

Water from the area is used locally for domestic needs, livestock, and agriculture in Deep Springs Valley.

Major watershed restoration projects have been proposed for meadows on the Cave Fork and South Fork of Crooked Creek. Proposed methods, including the use of bulldozers, would not be compatible with wilderness management.

Cattle grazing amounts to 135 AUMs a year; maximum potential is estimated at 150 AUMs. Existing improvements are valued at \$23,000.

The Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest, a botanical special interest area, encompasses about one-third of the roadless area.

The area is incapable of producing commercial timber.

Of the lands in this area, 9 percent are rated high in mineral potential; 67 percent are medium, and 24 percent are low. There are 49 active mining claims in the area, of which none is currently producing. Lead, silver, and gold deposits are sparse and scattered. A mineral entry withdrawal affects 4,900 acres.

The included private land (100 acres) is undeveloped.

D. NEED

There appears to be little wilderness-type recreation use in the Basin and Range physiographic province. The Blanco Mountain area is typical of the province. This area is near the Birch Creek and White Mountains further planning areas.

Public involvement for the RARE II study indicates strong support for wilderness in the White and Inyo Mountains on the part of national, state, and local environmental organizations. This area was not singled out for specific treatment.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-23 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present

uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-24.

Table C-23
Management Prescription Allocations
by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
Blanco Mountain (5059)

Management Prescription	PRF	CUR	Alternatives				AMB	AMC
			RPA	CEE	AMN			
2. Proposed Wilderness							16.3	100%
7. Ancient Bristlecone	7.3 45%	7.3 45%	7.3 45%	7.3 45%	7.3 45%	7.3 45%	7.3	(7.3)
17. Semi-Primitive Rec	9.0 55%					9.0 55%	9.0	
18. Multiple Resource Area		9.0 55%	9.0 55%	9.0 55%				

*Acres with dual designation (proposed wilderness and RNA, Scenic Area, etc.) are displayed in the acreage total for Prescription 2 and indicated in parentheses under the other applicable prescription.

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness designation would maintain, or even enhance, the present wilderness attributes of the area, as motorized vehicle use and various improvements would be eliminated. As the quality of the wilderness experience offered would be relatively low, recreation use would also remain low. Management of the area as wilderness would be difficult, considering the existing non-conforming uses and opportunity for illegal ORV use. The Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest would receive maximum protection under wilderness designation, but public use of the area would be more restricted than at present. On-site interpretation of the area would not be appropriate.

The natural appearance of the area would improve, as 4-wheel drive trails and other visual impacts would be eliminated to restore to a natural condition.

Opportunities to manipulate wildlife habitat would be foregone.

Cattle grazing would continue essentially unchanged, except that motorized vehicles could not be used to monitor cattle, nor would structural improvements be allowed. Maintenance of existing range improvements would be more difficult and costly. Opportunities to increase grazing outputs would be foregone.

Watershed restoration projects proposed for the area would be more costly without the option of using motorized equipment.

The part of the area not yet withdrawn from mineral entry would be withdrawn upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on existing valid claims could be restricted.

There would be a negligible economic effect. Mining and grazing activities would continue, but under more costly restrictions. The change in recreation use from motorized to nonmotorized would not contribute a noticeable economic change. However, a social cost would be the loss of more motorized recreation in the future. A social benefit of a formal wilderness designation would result. There would be no costs associated with constructing trails or trailheads, as there are not opportunities for those facilities. Administrative costs would be high due to the difficulty of managing the boundary.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 7, 17

Alternative(s): PRF, AMN, AMB

Effects on the Area: Wilderness attributes of the area would be essentially maintained. The Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest would be managed in near-natural condition, while management of the remainder of the area would limit vehicle access and public road construction. Four-wheel drive recreation would be confined to existing roads and trails.

Recreation use would not be affected; the low level of historical use would continue. Motorized vehicle access would be similar to the existing access situation.

Opportunities would exist to implement wildlife habitat improvement projects. Grazing use and management would not change as opportunities to increase outputs are limited. Watershed improvement projects could be accomplished efficiently with motorized equipment.

The area outside the existing mineral withdrawal would remain open for new mineral claims. Mining claims would be affected only by applicable mining restrictions. New mining roads would be closed to public use.

The present socioeconomic situation would be maintained. The few grazing, wildlife, recreation, and mining benefits would be maintained with opportunities for some further development. A social cost would be the loss of potential wilderness designation.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 7 and 18

Alternative(s): CUR, RPA, CEE

Effects on the Area: For the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest, the consequences of applying this prescription would be the same as the previous nonwilderness combination, as the special management direction for that area would prevail. However, the remainder of the area would be managed to allow motor vehicles to travel anywhere, providing opportunities for challenge and freedom of movement. The wilderness attributes of natural appearance, integrity, and solitude could be significantly lost through the enhancement of ORV, grazing, wildlife, and mining opportunities.

Motorized recreation use would increase as the area became more accessible. Visual impacts would result from resource management activities, ORV use, and mining.

Vegetation treatments for wildlife habitat and livestock grazing would probably occur.

Watershed restoration projects could be accomplished efficiently using motorized equipment.

Mining opportunities would be enhanced as access throughout the area would be increased.

Economic benefits would occur from increased motorized recreation, hunting, grazing, and mining opportunities. Economic costs would be those necessary to implement resource and use opportunities. A social consequence would be the loss of potential wilderness designation.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Table C-24
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Blanco Mountain (5059)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	0	0	0				16.3
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	16.3	16.3	16.3	16.3	16.3	16.3	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	200 300	300 450	300 450	300 450	200 300	200 300	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	150 233
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	300 450	400 600	400 600	400 600	300 450	300 450	100 150
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	140 150	140 150	140 150	140 150	140 150	140 150	135 135
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	19 29	25 38	25 38	25 38	19 29	19 29	9 10
Costs (M\$)	1 5	9 16	11 19	11 19	11 19	9 16	9 16	5 4
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	10 13	14 19	14 19	14 19	10 13	10 13	4 6

A. DESCRIPTION

The Birch Creek area lies in Inyo County on the White Mountain Ranger District. Constructed dirt roads lead to and parallel the boundary; unimproved roads penetrate the area.

The boundary is defined by the Wyman Canyon road on the north, the Forest boundary on the south and east, and the White Mountain Road and some of its side roads on the west. Adjoining lands are administered by the BLM.

The area lies in the White Mountains in the Deep Springs Valley, North Owens River, and Southeast White Mountains watersheds. It is roughly triangular, 9 miles long by 2 to 9 miles wide; two road corridors deeply intrude the area.

Terrain is rugged and slopes steep, with some rolling, high plateau. The steep canyons channel intermittent streams; there are 2 miles of perennial stream, but no fisheries, and no lakes. Rock is mostly metasedimentary, with granite outcrops.

The primary vegetation type is pine-juniper woodland, with smaller amounts of big sagebrush, saltbush-greasewood, mountain mahogany, and subalpine fir forest. Another botanical attraction is the Methuseleh Tree, a bristlecone pine that is the world's oldest known living thing.

Scenic variety in the area falls into class A, 23 percent; class B, 77 percent. The surroundings are similar in appearance to the area itself. Views from high points include the desert ranges to the east and the Sierra Nevada far to the west.

Current uses include cattle grazing and recreation.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity and natural appearance of the area have been influenced to a very low degree. There are many small mining prospects with localized impacts, scattered grazing, a trail, and a few unimproved roads.

Opportunities for solitude are moderate. Size and screening are moderate, and there are no visual intrusions.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are low, as there is little diversity or challenge.

Special features include the research in dendrochronology and species ecology associated with the Schulman Grove of bristlecone pines.

The original inventory boundary would not be manageable as wilderness; the impacts are widely scattered and could not be separated by boundary adjustments.

One parcel of roadless BLM land, encompassing 851 acres, adjoins the area.

C. AVAILABILITY

The Birch Creek area represents few trade-offs between wilderness designation and other resources and activities. Wilderness management would exclude vehicle access for big game hunters and prospectors, preclude vegetation manipulation to benefit wildlife or range, and restrict mineral exploration and development.

Big game hunting amounts to 200 WFUDs of recreation use a year; dispersed motorized recreation, 100 RVDs.

Approximately 70 acres are suitable for wildlife habitat manipulation.

Water in the area is used locally for livestock.

Cattle grazing represents 115 AUMs; maximum potential is estimated at 160 AUMs. Existing improvements are valued at \$3,000.

The Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest, a botanical special interest area, includes about one-fifth of the area.

The area is incapable of producing commercial timber.

Of the lands in this area, 44 percent are rated high in mineral potential; 39 percent are medium, and 17 percent are low. There are 245 active mining claims in the area, of which none is currently producing. Subeconomic deposits of silver, lead, zinc, and gold are inferred to contain 31,000 tons. There is moderate to high potential that more will be found. Withdrawal from mineral entry affects 5,900 acres.

Cultural resource values include signs of prehistoric occupancy and historic mining.

The 600 acres of included private and County land is undeveloped.

D. NEED

There appears to be little wilderness-type recreation use in the Basin and Range physiographic province. The Birch Creek area is typical of the province. This area is near the Blanco Mountain and Black Canyon further planning areas.

Public involvement for the RARE II study indicate that wilderness proponents strongly favor wilderness designation for all of the White and Inyo Mountains. The Birch Creek area has not been singled out for special treatment.

Local people in general prefer nonwilderness management for remaining roadless areas. Local Paiute Indians collect pine nuts in the area.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-25 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the area under each alternative. The narratives following the table

discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-26.

Table C-25
Management Prescription Allocations
by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
Birch Creek (5060)

Management Prescription	Alternatives						
	PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness							32.7 100%
7. Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest*	9.1 28%	9.1 28%	9.1 28%	9.1 28%	9.1 28%	9.1 28%	(9.1)
17. Semi-Primitive Rec	23.6 72%				23.6 72%	23.6 72%	
18. Multiple Resource Area		23.6 72%	23.6 72%	23.6 72%			

*Acres with dual designation (proposed wilderness and RNA, Scenic Area, etc.) are displayed in the acreage total for Prescription 2 and indicated in parentheses under the other applicable prescription.

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness designation would maintain or enhance the wilderness attributes of the area, as motorized vehicle use would be prohibited. As the quality of the wilderness experience offered would be low use would also be low. Management of the area as wilderness would be difficult due to the various non-conforming uses. The Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest would receive maximum protection under wilderness designation, but public use of the area would be more restricted than at present. On-site interpretation of the area would not be appropriate.

The natural appearance of the area would improve as 4-wheel drive trails and many other visual impacts would be eliminated or restored to a natural condition.

Wildlife habitat would not be manipulated; however, little opportunity for this activity is found in the area.

Grazing would not be affected, except that monitoring of livestock and structural or vegetative improvements would be more restricted. Opportunities to increase grazing outputs would be foregone.

The area not already withdrawn from mineral entry would be withdrawn upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

Socioeconomic effects would be few. Mining and grazing activities would continue, but under more costly restrictions. Recreation use, changing from motorized to nonmotorized would not produce a noticeable economic effect. However, a social cost would be the loss of motorized recreation opportunities. A social benefit would be a formal wilderness designation. A trailhead and approximately eight miles of new trail would be a cost of implementation.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 7 and 17

Alternative(s): PRF, AMN, AMB

Effects on the Area: Wilderness values would be essentially maintained. The Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest would be managed in its near-natural condition with adequate protection. The remainder of the area would be managed to limit vehicle access and public road construction. Recreation use would continue at the present low level. Motorized recreation would be restricted to existing roads and trails. Natural appearance would be expected to change little from the present.

The options of making wildlife or range habitat improvements would be maintained; however the opportunities are limited. Only marginal outputs would be received from these investments. Grazing and hunting would increase slightly.

The entire area outside the existing mineral withdrawal would remain available for new mineral claims. Mining activities would be affected only by applicable mining restrictions. New mining roads would be closed to public use.

The current economic situation would be maintained. A social cost would be the loss of potential wilderness designation.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-off requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 7 and 18

Alternative(s): CUR, CEE, RPA

Effects on the Area: For the Ancient Bristlecone Pine Forest, the consequences of applying this prescription would be the same as for the nonwilderness combination described above, as the established special management direction for that area would prevail. The remainder of the roadless area would be managed to allow motor vehicle use with minimal restrictions, providing opportunities for challenge and freedom of movement. The wilderness attributes of natural appearance, integrity, and solitude

would be lost for much of the area if ORV use and mining activities increased in response to this lack of restriction. Motorized recreation use would increase if the area became more accessible.

Some wildlife and grazing enhancement opportunities would exist, but only minor benefits could be realized.

Economic benefits would occur from motorized recreation, hunting, grazing, and mining. Economic costs would be associated with implementing resource improvements. The loss of potential wilderness designation would be a social cost.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Table C-26
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Birch Creek (5060)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	32.7
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	32.7	32.7	32.7	32.7	32.7	32.7	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	600 900	600 900	600 900	600 900	400 600	400 600	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	150 200
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	800 1200	800 1200	800 1200	800 1250	600 900	600 900	150 200
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	120 145	120 145	120 145	120 145	120 145	120 145	115 115
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	50 76	50 76	50 76	50 76	38 58	38 58	13 19
Costs (M\$)	1 5	22 38	22 38	22 38	22 38	18 32	18 32	26 9
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	28 36	28 36	28 36	28 36	20 26	20 26	-13 10

A. DESCRIPTION

The Black Canyon area lies in Inyo County on the White Mountain Ranger District. State Route 168 (Westgard Pass), the Bristlecone Road, and several dirt roads lead to and parallel the boundary; some unimproved roads penetrate the area.

The boundary is defined by the Forest boundary on the west, the White Mountain Road and associated side roads on the east, Highway 168 on the south, and Silver Canyon Road on the north. Most of the adjoining land is administered by the BLM; some parcels are privately owned.

The area lies on west slope of the White Mountains in the North Owens River and Southeast White Mountains watersheds. It forms a rectangle with intruding road corridors, measuring 11.5 miles long by 6 miles wide. Elevations range from 4,200 to 10,454 feet.

Terrain is mostly steep, with some rolling high plateau. There are springs and intermittent streams; 2 miles of perennial stream, but no fisheries; and no lakes. Rock is metasedimentary with granite outcrops.

Primary vegetation types are pine-juniper woodland and big sagebrush. Saltbush-greasewood and shadscale scrub are also present in smaller amounts.

Scenic variety in the area falls into class A, 34 percent; class B, 66 percent. The west face of the White Mountains is a scenic landmark from Bishop, Big Pine, and Highway 395. The surroundings are also scenic; the open plateau country of the White Mountain crest lies to the east; the dramatic Owens Valley with its Sierra Nevada backdrop are seen to the west.

Current uses include recreation and woodcutting.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity and natural appearance of the area have been influenced to a very low degree. The unimproved road which leads up Black Canyon to Schulman Grove is the only impact.

Opportunities for solitude are moderate. The area is fairly large, and affords a moderate amount of screening. Visual intrusions from the Owens Valley and noise from ORV use in Poleta Canyon are only significant at lower elevations.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are low, as there is little diversity or challenge.

A sensitive plant species, Dedeckera eurekaensis, grows on the area's western boundary.

The original inventory boundary would only be manageable as wilderness if the Black Canyon Road could be closed. That road bisects the area, and is therefore not separable by a boundary adjustment.

Three parcels of roadless BLM land, encompassing 6,518 acres, adjoin the area.

C. AVAILABILITY

The Black Canyon area represents two major trade-offs between wilderness designation and other activities. If the Black Canyon road were closed, the associated 4-wheel drive recreation would be lost, and under wilderness designation the area would be withdrawn from mineral entry.

Big game hunting accounts for 600 WFUDs of use a year; other motorized recreation amounts to 400 RVDs. The canyon has been used in recent years by hang gliders traveling to their take-off point.

The lower elevations fall into Tule elk range.

Approximately 60 acres are suitable for wildlife habitat manipulation.

The area is incapable of producing commercial timber, but there is some public wood gathering at the higher elevations.

Of the lands in this area, 20 percent are rated high in mineral potential; 68 percent are medium, and 12 percent are low. There are 15 active mining claims in the area, of which none are currently producing. Mineral resources include gold, silver, lead, zinc, and tungsten. Eight mines have produced ore. Two other properties have 40,000 tons of identified subeconomic gold and silver deposits. Five additional properties have gold, silver, and lead potential.

Cultural resource values include prehistoric features and signs of historic mining and woodcutting.

D. NEED

There appears to be little wilderness-type recreation use in the Basin and Range physiographic province. The Black Canyon area is typical of the province. This area is near the White Mountains, Blanco Mountain, and Birch Creek further planning areas.

Public involvement for the RARE II study indicated strong support on the part of wilderness proponents for wilderness in the White and Inyo Mountains; that interest was not focused on this area in particular.

Local people favor nonwilderness. Local Paiute Indians use the area for pine nut gathering.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-27 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities.

Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-28.

Table C-27
Management Prescription Allocations
by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
Black Canyon (5061)

Management Prescription	Alternatives						
	PRF	CJR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness							34.8 100%
17. Semi-Primitive Rec	34.8 100%				34.8 100%	34.8 100%	
18. Multiple Resource Area		34.8 100%	34.8 100%	34.8 100%			

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): AMC

Effects on the area: Wilderness designation would slightly enhance wilderness attributes of the area, as vehicle access over the Black Canyon Road would be eliminated. The type of recreation would change from motorized to nonmotorized, with an overall decline in the intensity of use. Other mechanized activities, such as hang gliding and all-terrain bicycling, would also be prohibited.

Fuelwood gathering would be eliminated. Pine-nut gathering would pose a source of potential conflict with wilderness administration.

The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

The only existing or potential economic dependencies on the area are motorized recreation and mining, which would be lost or restricted under wilderness. The greatest social benefit would be a formal wilderness designation. Administrative costs would increase slightly. There would be a cost associated with constructing trailheads to facilitate use of the area.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 17

Alternative(s): PRF, AMN, AMB

Effects on the Area: Wilderness values would be essentially maintained. The area would be managed to limit vehicle access and public road construction. The present motorized recreation would continue at a low level. Vehicles would be limited to existing roads and trails.

Natural appearance would be maintained, with the exception of a few isolated road, ORV, and mining impacts; the visual quality of the area as seen from U.S. Highway 395 (a State designated scenic highway) would be maintained at a moderately high level.

The option to allow fuelwood and pine-nut gathering would not change.

The area would remain available for new mineral claims. Mining activities would be affected only by applicable mining restrictions. New mining roads would be closed to the public.

There would be no direct economic effect. The limited recreation and mining would continue without change. Social losses would result from the loss of potential wilderness designation and the loss of an open ORV area.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or major resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 18

Alternative(s): CUR, RPA, CEE

Effects on the Area: Wilderness values would decline, and eventually be lost as the area would be managed to allow motor vehicle use to travel essentially uncontrolled, providing opportunities for challenge and freedom of movement. Motorized recreation use would increase as the area became roaded and more accessible. Natural appearance would be affected by increased, uncontrolled motorized recreation.

The option to allow fuelwood and pine-nut gathering would not change.

The area would remain available for new mineral claims. Mining opportunities would be enhanced as access throughout the area improved.

Economic consequences would be few. Increased mining and recreation opportunities would create minor benefits. The greatest social cost would be the losses of potential wilderness designation and a natural environment.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

No other foreseeable environmental changes or major trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Table C-28
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Black Canyon (5061)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	0	0	0				34.8
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	34.8	34.8	34.8	34.8	34.8	34.8	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	400 600	600 900	600 900	600 900	400 600	400 600	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	150 200
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	600 900	800 1200	800 1200	800 1200	600 900	600 900	150 200
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	38 58	50 76	50 76	50 76	38 58	38 58	9 14
Costs (M\$)	1 5	18 32	22 38	22 38	22 38	18 32	18 32	15 5
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	20 26	28 36	28 36	28 36	20 26	20 26	-6 9

A. DESCRIPTION

The Andrews Mountain area lies in Inyo County on the Mt. Whitney Ranger District. A number of unimproved roads and vehicle tracks penetrate the area.

The boundary is defined by a loop jeep road that leads from the Waucoba road to Papoose Flat and Squaw Flat and returns.

The area lies in the Inyo Mountains in the Owens River watershed. It is diamond-shaped, 8 miles long by 4 miles wide. Elevations range from 7,000 to 9,460 feet.

Terrain is mostly rolling, with some flats and steep slopes. A few intermittent streams provide the only water. Rock is metasedimentary with granite outcrops.

The primary vegetation type in the area is pine-juniper woodland.

Scenic variety in the area falls into class B, 97 percent; class C, 3 percent. The surroundings are similar in appearance to the area itself. The Sierra Nevada on the west and desert ranges to the east can be seen in the far distance from the highest points. The surrounding scenery is similar to scenery within the area.

Current uses include recreation, wood gathering, and prospecting.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity of the area has been influenced to a low degree; its natural appearance to a very low degree. There are several cat-constructed mining roads, which though limited in area are visible for 2 to 3 miles. Mining claims and diggings are also visible, though they are scattered and their impact localized. Many scattered unimproved roads are also apparent.

Opportunities for solitude are low. The area is small, and screening is low to moderate; however there are no intrusions.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are also low. There is no diversity or challenge.

The original inventory boundary would not be manageable as wilderness. Minor adjustments could exclude the constructed roads mentioned above; the remaining impacts are scattered throughout the area.

C. AVAILABILITY

The Andrews Mountain area represents trade-offs between wilderness designation and vehicle-based recreation, wood gathering, and mining.

Existing recreation use includes dispersed motorized recreation (100 RVDs), nonmotorized recreation (100 WFUDs), and big game hunting (100 RVDs).

The area is incapable of producing commercial timber. The public gathers pinyon-juniper fuelwood in the area.

Of the lands in this area, 69 percent are rated high in mineral potential; 31 percent are rated low. There are 3 active mining claims in the area, of which none are currently producing.

Cultural resource values include prehistoric features and historic mining sites.

D. NEED

There is apparently little wilderness-type recreation use in the Basin and Range physiographic province. The Andrews Mountain area is typical of the province. This area is near the Paiute further planning area.

Public involvement for the RARE II study indicates that State and National environmental organizations favored the designation of wilderness in the White and Inyo Mountains. The Andrews Mountain area was not singled out for special treatment.

Local people favor nonwilderness options.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-29 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-30.

Table C-29
Management Prescription Allocations
by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
Andrews Mountain (5063)

Management Prescription	Alternatives						
	PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness					13.6 100%		13.6 100%
17. Semi-Primitive Rec						13.6 100%	
18. Multiple Resource Area	13.6 100%	13.6 100%	13.6 100%	13.6 100%			

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): AMN, AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness attributes would be maintained, or even enhanced, as motorized use would be prohibited. As the quality of the wilderness experience offered would be low, use would also remain low. Management of the area as wilderness would be difficult, as the terrain does not provide a natural barrier to vehicle entry. The natural appearance of the area would gradually improve, as 4-wheel drive trails would be allowed to restore, and prospecting for new mineral claims would be prohibited.

Fuelwood gathering would be prohibited.

The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

There are only minor potential economic dependencies on the area; they are associated with motorized recreation and mining. A social benefit would be a formal wilderness designation of an ecological type underrepresented in wilderness on the Forest. Administrative costs would increase. Approximately six miles of trail would be constructed.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription(s): 17

Alternative(s): AMB

Effects on the Area: Wilderness attributes would be maintained, as motorized use would be confined to existing routes and would not be expected to increase. Only a major mining operation could noticeably affect natural appearance and integrity and opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

Fuelwood gathering would continue to be allowed.

The area would be open to new mining claims; mining activities would be subject only to applicable mining laws. Any new mining roads would be closed to public use.

There are only minor potential economic dependencies associated with motorized recreation and mining in the area; they would be retained at current or increased levels. A social cost would be the lack of formal wilderness designation.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 18

Alternative(s): PRF, CUR, RPA, CEE

Effects on the Area: Wilderness values would be lost over time as the area would be managed to allow motor vehicle use to travel essentially uncontrolled, providing opportunities for challenge and freedom of movement. Motorized recreation use would increase as the area became roaded and more easily accessible.

Natural appearance would be affected by increased motorized recreation travelling uncontrolled.

The option to allow fuelwood and pine-nut gathering would not change.

The area would remain open to new mining claims. Mining opportunities would be enhanced as access throughout the area increased.

Economic consequences would be few. Increased mining and recreation opportunities and activities would contribute minor benefits. The greatest social cost would be the loss of potential wilderness designation in an underrepresented ecological type.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Table C-30
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Andrews Mountain (5063)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	0	0	0	0	13.6	0	13.6
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	13.6	13.6	13.6	13.6	0	13.6	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	0 0	100 150	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	100 150	0 0	100 150
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	150 225	150 225	150 225	150 225	150 225	100 150	100 150
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	12 19	12 19	12 19	12 19	12 19	10 15	7 11
Costs (M\$)	1 5	6 10	6 10	6 10	6 10	6 10	5 8	22 6
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	6 9	6 9	6 9	6 9	6 9	5 7	-15 5

A. DESCRIPTION

The Paiute area lies in Inyo County on the Mt. Whitney Ranger District. It is accessible from the Waucoba and Saline Valley roads, which parallel the boundary; and from the Papoose-Squaw Flat, Harkless Flat, and Mazourka Canyon jeep roads which intrude the area. Many additional unimproved roads and trails penetrate the interior.

Subparts A and B were assigned by the RARE II study; the boundary between the two was a north-south line that roughly bisected the area. The subparts have been reaggregated for purposes of this analysis; where only part of the area is recommended for wilderness, the revised boundary was drawn to improve manageability and reduce conflicts and does not coincide with the internal subpart boundary from RARE II.

The boundary of the entire area is defined by the Waucoba and Saline Valley roads on the north, and the Forest boundary on the east, west, and south. The road corridors mentioned above intrude the area. Adjoining lands are administered by the BLM or the City of Los Angeles.

The area encompasses a large part of the Inyo Mountains, in the North and South Owens River, Southeast White Mountains, and Saline Valley watersheds. Its irregular shape is due primarily to the abundance of road corridor intrusions. The perimeter is roughly rectangular, 11 miles wide and 24 miles long. Elevations range from 3,800 feet to 11,123 feet at Waucoba Mountain.

Terrain comprises a steep-sided ridge with high, rolling summit plateaus and flat benches. Intermittent streams follow steep, narrow canyons down both sides of the crest; there are 3 miles of perennial stream, but no fisheries. Several major springs nourish pockets of riparian vegetation.

The geology of the area is noteworthy. Mazourka Canyon itself represents a deeply-eroded layer of shale between two masses of granite, resulting in the deepest canyon in the range. Several impressive, smoothly-eroded granite monoliths stand out on the ridgetop. The exposed rock on the east slope of Waucoba and Squaw Mountains includes a distinctive marble outcrop and rock representing a variety of metasedimentary formations and geologic periods.

Primary vegetation types are pine-juniper woodland, big sagebrush, and shadscale scrub. Seep Hole and Side Hill Springs support unique plant associations. Spring desert wildflower displays in Mazourka and Rose canyons are especially attractive.

Scenic variety in the area falls into class A, 32 percent; class B, 64 percent; class C, 4 percent. The west slope of the Inyo Mountains is banded with colorful rock layers. This slope is a scenic landmark from Highway 395, State-designated a scenic highway in the Owens Valley. The surrounding area is also quite scenic. There are excellent views of the Owens Valley and Sierra crest to the west, and of Saline Valley to the east.

Other attractions include Nelson bighorn sheep and wild horses and burros.

Current uses include recreation, grazing, woodcutting and mining.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity of the area has been influenced to a high degree; its natural appearance to a very high degree. The major impacts, which affect 50 to 75 percent of the area, are numerous mining sites involving considerable disturbance and many miles of unimproved road and vehicle tracks. Additional signs of disturbance are scattered cabins, signs of woodcutting, two one-acre reservoirs, fences, foot trails, grazing, water pollution and trampling at springs used by cattle and wild horses and burros, and wildlife guzzlers. There are also two unauthorized mining occupancies in the area.

Opportunities for solitude are high. The area is quite large, and adjoins additional roadless land administered by the BLM. Screening is poor, and there are some intrusions from traffic on intruding roads.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are low, in spite of the size of the area. Access is difficult--there are few trails, and terrain is steep. There is little diversity, and only a little challenge.

Special features include research being conducted on the Inyo herd of Nelson bighorn sheep, and three sensitive plant species (Sclerocactus polyancistrus, Cryptantha roosiorum, and Caulostramina jaegeri). The latter two species grow at Sidehill and Seephole Springs.

The area would not be manageable as wilderness without major boundary adjustments. Due to the number of unimproved roads, vehicle access would be very difficult to control. If the area were reduced in size to approximately 55,000 acres in the southeast corner, the boundary would be manageable, the key wilderness values would be retained, trade-offs with other resources and uses would be minimized, and major mining sites and roads would be excluded. The revised area would rate very high in natural integrity and natural appearance.

Five parcels of roadless BLM land, encompassing 34,427 acres, adjoin the area. Of these, two are wilderness study areas currently favored by the BLM for wilderness, which adjoin the National Forest lands on the southeast.

C. AVAILABILITY

The Paiute area represents trade-offs between wilderness designation and vehicular recreation, woodcutting, and vegetation manipulation to benefit wildlife. Mining development could also conflict with wilderness values.

Current recreation use includes dispersed nonmotorized recreation (600 RVDs), dispersed motorized recreation (500 RVDs), big game hunting (500 WFUDs), small game hunting (200 WFUDs), and wildlife observation (200 WFUDs).

Approximately 4,460 acres are suitable for wildlife habitat manipulation.

Water from the area is used locally for mining, irrigation, livestock, wildlife, and domestic needs.

The proposed Whippoorwill Flat research natural area on the east side of Squaw and Waucoba Mountains would preserve undisturbed stands of pinyon pine and limber pine.

Grazing amounts to 120 AUMs with no potential for increased outputs; improvements are valued at \$8,000.

The area is incapable of commercial timber production. Some public woodcutting takes place in pinyon pine areas.

Of the lands in this area, 34 percent are rated high in mineral potential; 15 percent are medium, and 51 percent are low. There are 39 active mining claims in the area, of which none are currently producing. Eleven mines have produced ore. Metals known or suspected to occur in the area are gold, silver, tungsten, and scheelite. Nonmetal minerals of possible value are marble, graphite, and talc.

Cultural resource values include prehistoric features and many historic mining sites. The Paiute Monument (also called Winnedumah) is a granite monolith on the divide. Various Paiute legends have developed around this feature.

D. NEED

There is little apparent wilderness-type recreation use in the Basin and Range physiographic province. The Paiute area is typical of the province, except for a few destination points at perennial springs, and scenic views in every direction. This area is near the Andrews Mountain further planning area.

Public involvement for the RARE II study indicated strong National and State interest in wilderness designation for the majority of the White and Inyo Mountains. Local people favored nonwilderness options.

There is, nevertheless, interest in some form of protection and/or recognition for unique features within the area. Local Paiute Indians value the Winnedumah Monument. Geologists value the close association of varied rock strata. The local chapter of the California Native Plant Society would like to see the proposed research natural area established, and some form of protection given to vegetation at Side Hill and Seep Hole Springs. Wildlife enthusiasts favor protection of the Nelson bighorn sheep.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-31 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-32.

Table C-31
Management Prescription Allocations
by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
Paiute (5064 A&B)

Management Prescription	Alternatives						
	PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness	47.5 37%	54.4 41%			130.6 100%	130.6 100%	130.6 100%
5. Research Natural Area	3.3 3%	3.3 3%	3.3 3%	3.3 3%	(3.3)	(3.3)	(3.3)
18. Multiple Resource Area	79.8 60%	73.3 56%	127.2 97%	127.2 97%			

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): AMN, AMB and AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness designation would maintain wilderness attributes within areas of existing high levels of natural ecological integrity and appearance. In areas containing low natural integrity and appearance, wilderness attributes would be somewhat enhanced, as motorized vehicle use would be eliminated. For much of the area, opportunities for finding solitude would be high. However, the overall quality of the primitive experience would remain low, due to the degree of past human influence and perceived desirability of the wilderness environment. Primitive recreation use in the area would, nevertheless, increase somewhat upon wilderness designation. Established motorized recreation would be eliminated.

Management of the area as wilderness would be difficult and costly, as the terrain does not restrict vehicle access at many locations. Since the area is quite isolated and difficult to manage, monitoring of use would be a problem. Mining under existing valid claims would also significantly complicate management.

Options to directly enhance wildlife habitat would be foregone; however, bighorn sheep habitat would receive considerable protection. Management of wild horses and burros would be more complicated and costly. Since these animals are nonnative species, they would constitute a wilderness management conflict.

The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

Unique geological features and sensitive vegetation would receive maximum protection from human influences. Wilderness designation would provide full protection for the proposed research natural area (RNA); however, the purposes and uses of wilderness and the RNA would not be completely compatible. Management conflicts could develop.

Socioeconomic consequences include lost opportunities for motorized recreation, hunting, woodcutting, and mining. The greatest social benefit would be a formal wilderness designation in an ecological type not yet represented in wilderness on the Forest. Costs of implementation would include construction of approximately 21 miles of trail and 5 trailheads. Administrative costs would increase dramatically.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource tradeoffs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Wilderness(revised boundary)/nonwilderness

Prescription #: 2, 5, 18

Alternative(s): PRF, CUR

Effects on the Area: The area recommended for wilderness under this combination of prescriptions would rate much higher in wilderness values, be more manageable as wilderness, and would conflict less with other existing and potential uses than would be the case if the entire area were managed as wilderness. For these reasons, a wilderness recommendation with the revised boundary proposed here would be more likely to be designated by Congress than the entire areas would be. The fact that the size of the revised area is considerably smaller than the entire area is offset by the fact that the revised area adjoins two large BLM wilderness study area currently favored by the BLM for wilderness.

Under this combination, wilderness designation and RNA management would maintain wilderness attributes within areas with existing high levels of natural ecological integrity and appearance. Areas containing low natural integrity and appearance would be open for vehicle access, and the existing low quality of wilderness attributes would continue to deteriorate over time.

For much of the area, both inside and outside of wilderness, opportunities for solitude would be high. The overall quality of the primitive experience would be low, even in wilderness, due primarily to lack of water. Primitive recreation use in the wilderness part would nevertheless increase upon wilderness designation. There is no existing motorized recreation in that area.

Management of the wilderness part would not be difficult or costly, as the terrain presents natural barriers to vehicle access along most parts of the boundary. Since the area is quite isolated, monitoring of use would be a problem.

The recommended wilderness and RNA areas would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted. This effect would be moderated by the fact that the wilderness part of the area rates lower in mineral potential (5% high, 39% medium, and 56% low) than the entire area (34% high, 15% medium, and 51% low).

The effects of wilderness designation, in combination with RNA management, on other resources and activities would be similar for the wilderness and RNA parts of the area to those discussed above for the entire area under Prescription 2. The following discussion will address only the effects of Prescription 18 on the remaining area.

Parts of the area seen from Highway 395 would be nonwilderness, allowing for greater potential visual impacts as seen from a major scenic highway. Assigned VQOs for that area would, however, represent a fairly high level of protection.

Options to enhance wildlife habitat would be maintained. Bighorn sheep habitat would receive little protection. Wild horses and burros would represent no conflicts with management objectives.

Unique geological and ecological features are concentrated in the wilderness part of the area, and would, therefore, be protected from human influences.

Most facilities would be retained, as they are concentrated in the nonwilderness part of the area.

Exercise of lawful rights for road access to private land would constitute no conflict, as the private land is in the nonwilderness part.

As the proposed research natural area would lie outside of wilderness, there would be no potential conflicts between the management of wilderness and the RNA.

Socioeconomic benefits include opportunities for continued and increased motorized recreation, grazing, hunting, woodcutting, and mining. The greatest social loss would be a loss of potential wilderness designation for considerable acreage in an ecological type not yet represented in wilderness on the Forest.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource tradeoffs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 5, 18

Alternatives(s): RPA, CEE

Effects on the Area: The effects of this combination of prescriptions would be similar to those described above under the combination of Prescriptions 2, 5, and 18 except that wilderness attributes would be expected to deteriorate over the entire area (outside 3,300 acres in the RNA) in this scenario.

Bighorn sheep would be managed for population viability, but would receive no overall protection. Outstanding ecological and geological features would be increasingly vulnerable to damage or destruction as vehicle use increased in the area.

Mining opportunities would be enhanced as access throughout the area would be increased.

Vehicle-based recreation opportunities and mining with minimal restrictions would be social benefits under this combination.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

Table C-32
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Paiute (5064 A&B)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	54.4	54.4	0	0	130.6	130.6	130.6
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	76.2	76.2	130.6	130.6	0	0	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0						
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	1000 1500	1000 1500	1300 1950	1300 1950	0 0	0 0	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	600 900	600 900	0 0	0 0	1800 2000	1800 2000	1800 2000
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	500 750	500 750	1000 1500	1000 1500	400 600	400 600	400 600
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	120 120						
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0						
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0						
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0						
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	78 117	78 117	80 120	80 120	50 65	50 65	50 65
Costs (M\$)	1 5	520 70	520 70	183 47	183 47	638 47	638 42	638 42
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	-442 47	-442 47	-103 73	-103 73	-588 23	-588 23	-588 23

A. DESCRIPTION

The Sugar Loaf area lies in Mineral and Esmeralda Counties, Nevada; on the White Mountain Ranger District. Mining roads lead from Highway 6, 2-3 miles to the area boundary. Many unimproved roads and some stock driveways lead into the area.

The boundary is defined by the Forest boundary and mining roads on the north, the Queen Canyon-Trail Canyon jeep road and the B & B Mine-Trail Canyon road on the south, and the Forest boundary on the east and west. Most adjoining lands are administered by the BLM; the remainder are privately owned.

The area lies at the north end of the White Mountains in the North Owens River and Northeast White Mountains watersheds. It is roughly rectangular, 5 miles long by 4.5 miles wide. Elevations range from 6,480 feet to 10,248 feet at Horseshoe Rock.

Terrain is a steep and dissected escarpment with gentler plateau on top. There are many intermittent streams; one mile of perennial stream, but no fisheries; and no lakes. Rock is primarily metasedimentary, with granitic intrusions.

The primary vegetation type is pine-juniper woodland. Bitterbrush and mountain mahogany are also present in moderate amounts.

Scenic variety in the area falls into class A, 21 percent; class B, 79 percent. The surrounding area is also fairly scenic. Views include the desert valleys and mountains to the west, north, and east, and the high ridges and peaks of the White Mountains at short range to the south.

The current uses are grazing and mineral exploration.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity of the area has been influenced to a moderate degree, its natural appearance to a high degree. A powerline passes through the area, there are scattered mineral impacts, and many unimproved roads crisscross the area.

Opportunities for solitude are moderate. The area is small, and there are some intrusions, but screening is moderate.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are low. There is little diversity and challenges are rare.

The original inventory boundary would be unmanageable as wilderness. Impacts are not separable, and vehicle access on unimproved roads is fairly easy.

C. AVAILABILITY

The Sugar Loaf area represents a few trade-offs between wilderness designation and other uses. Wilderness management would preclude increasing

grazing or improving wildlife habitat by vegetation manipulation, and would restrict mineral exploration and development.

Motorized recreation amounts to 200 RVDs per year; big game hunting amounts to 200 WFUDs.

Water in the area is used locally for irrigation, mining, livestock, and domestic needs.

Cattle grazing amounts to 50 AUMs; maximum potential is estimated at 60 AUMs.

The area is incapable of producing commercial timber.

Of the lands in this area, 2 percent are rated high in mineral potential; 20 percent are medium, and 78 percent are low. More than 600 claims have been filed for the area since 1862; 255 of these were filed between 1980-1982; there are no producing mines. There is one mine on a patented claim and one prospecting permit. The principal metallic minerals in the area are silver, gold, and mercury. There are smaller amounts of lead, zinc, and copper. Alurite, a possible source of aluminum, is widespread in the southeast part of the area. Geologic formations indicate the likelihood of additional resources.

Cultural resource values include prehistoric features and remnants of gold and silver mining in the 1870's.

The included private land (120 acres) is undeveloped.

D. NEED

There appears to be little wilderness-type recreation use in the Basin and Range physiographic province. The Sugar Loaf area is typical of the province. This area is near the White Mountains further planning area.

Public involvement for the RARE II study indicated support from national and state environmental organizations for wilderness in the White and Inyo Mountains.

Local residents and prospectors strongly favor nonwilderness in order that mining and other existing uses can continue with minimum restrictions.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-33 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-34.

Table C-33
 Management Prescription Allocations
 by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
 Sugar Loaf (5296)

Management Prescription	PRF	CUR	RPA	Alternatives			
				CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness							10.7 100%
17. Semi-Primitive Rec					10.7 100%	10.7 100%	
18. Multiple Resource Area	10.7 100%	10.7 100%	10.7 100%	10.7 100%			

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness values would be maintained, or possibly improved. Activities capable of affecting wilderness values (except valid existing mining claims) would be prohibited. Administration of the area, as inventoried, would be difficult and costly.

The amount of wilderness recreation would be low due to the small size of the area, the lack of water or challenges and active mining influences. The area would be used primarily to access the north end of wilderness in the White Mountains area. Natural appearance would be improved with the exclusion of motor vehicles and elimination of 4-wheel drive trails.

Cattle grazing would continue essentially unchanged, except that motorized vehicles could not be used to monitor cattle, nor would structural improvements or vegetation manipulation be allowed.

The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

There would be a negative economic effect on the area. Mining and grazing activities would continue, but under costly restrictions. Motorized recreation would be eliminated. Benefits of increase wilderness recreation would be minor. However, there would be a social benefit of a formal wilderness designation of an ecological type underrepresented in wilderness on the Forest.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 17

Alternative(s): AMN, AMB

Effects on the Area: Wilderness attributes would likely be reduced from the existing situation due to the potential for further mineral exploration and development. Other activities capable of eroding wilderness values would be 4-wheel drive vehicle access and range improvements.

Motor vehicle use would be limited to existing roads and trails; use would resemble the existing situation but not be allowed to increase uncontrolled. Illegal vehicle use would, however, be difficult to control. Hunting and 4-wheel driving would not be affected. Natural appearance would be expected to gradually degrade over parts of the area with the continuation of mining and vehicle access.

The option of increasing livestock grazing would be retained.

Mining in the area would not be affected, nor would opportunities for future exploration and development change. Only applicable mining restrictions would affect mineral activities.

The present socio-economic situation would be maintained. Grazing and mining activities would continue with opportunities for some further development.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

No other foreseeable environmental changes or resource trade-offs requiring mitigation would result.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 18

Alternative(s): PRF, CUR, RPA, CEE

Effects on the Area: The effects of Prescription 18 on this area would not be very different from the effects of 17, discussed above. The major differences would be that new vehicle routes would be allowed to develop, open ORV areas could be established, and mining roads could be left open to public use. The increased vehicle use that would result from this lower level of restriction would ease access and improve opportunities for nonwilderness recreation and resource management activities, but would have a corresponding negative effect on wilderness attributes.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

Mining opportunities would be enhanced as access throughout the area would be increased.

Table C-34
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Sugar Loaf (5296)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	10.7
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	10.7	10.7	10.7	10.7	10.7	10.7	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	250 425	250 425	250 425	250 425	200 300	200 300	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	150 225
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	250 425	250 425	250 425	250 425	200 300	200 300	100 150
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	51 57	51 57	51 57	51 57	51 57	51 57	50 50
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	9 13	9 13	9 13	9 13	8 12	8 12	6 9
Costs (M\$)	1 5	8 8	8 8	8 8	8 8	8 8	8 8	7 5
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	1 5	1 5	1 5	1 5	0 4	0 4	-1 4

A. DESCRIPTION

The Excelsior area lies in Mineral County, Nevada. It is administered by the Mono Lake Ranger District. Many unimproved roads lead into the area from the direction of U.S. Highway 6.

The boundary is defined on the north and east by the Forest boundary, and on the southeast by the Nevada state line. Adjoining lands are administered by the BLM or by the Toiyabe National Forest.

The area lies on the south end of the Excelsior Mountains, in the Huntoon Creek watershed. The area forms an irregular triangle, roughly five miles on each side.

Terrain is moderately rugged. There are some seeps and springs, but no fisheries and no lakes.

Vegetation types are pine-juniper woodland and big sagebrush.

Scenic variety in the area falls into class B, 36 percent; and class C, 64 percent. The immediate surroundings are similar in appearance to the area itself. The Excelsior and White Mountains can be seen to the northeast and south from high points within the area.

Another attraction is the Pizona herd of wild horses, which ranges over the area. Current uses include recreation and grazing.

B. CAPABILITY

The natural ecological integrity and natural appearance of the area have been influenced to a low degree. Unimproved roads in the area receive continuing use and would be very difficult to close. Other signs of human activity include fences, other range improvements, and grazing animals.

Opportunities for solitude are high. The area is quite large when considered in combination with adjoining roadless lands on the Toiyabe National Forest. Screening and visual intrusions are moderate.

Opportunities for primitive recreation are low, due primarily to the size of the area in combination with Toiyabe National Forest lands. Diversity and challenge are low, and there is no available water.

Special features include abundant cultural resource sites.

The area boundary would be difficult to manage as wilderness due to the ease and history of vehicle access and the distance from Forest Service administrative centers.

C. AVAILABILITY

The Excelsior area represents some trade-offs between wilderness designation and other resources and activities. Wilderness management would exclude

vehicle-based recreation, which is currently the primary use of the area. It would also preclude the increase of grazing or improvement of wildlife habitat by vegetation manipulation. Although wilderness designation would protect cultural resources from vehicle-based artifact hunters, it would also restrict access for legitimate research.

Dispersed motorized recreation accounts for approximately 200 RVDs of use in the area; big game hunting amounts to 200 WFUDs. The majority of visitors to the area come from the local Benton community.

Approximately 3,800 acres within the area are suitable for wildlife habitat manipulation; Truman Meadows is key mule deer winter range.

Watershed improvement projects have been proposed for Truman Meadows and McBride Springs. Vehicle access would be needed for the projects to be cost effective.

There is currently no cattle grazing in the area, as wild horses have priority for forage. The area is, however, suitable for grazing and could be managed with that emphasis if priorities changed. The Pizona herd of wild horses ranges through the area.

The area is incapable of producing commercial quality timber.

There are many prehistoric cultural sites, including Indian pine-nut gathering and wintering areas.

Of the lands in this area, all are rated low in mineral potential. There are no active mining claims in the area.

There is one parcel of undeveloped private land (35 acres).

D. NEED

There appears to be little wilderness-type recreation use in the Basin and Range physiographic province. The Excelsior area is typical of, though perhaps more scenic than average for the province. This area adjoins the Excelsior roadless area on the Toiyabe National Forest.

The area is an 8-hour drive from Los Angeles, and 8.5 hours from San Francisco.

The area described here (in combination with 45,938 additional acres in California) was recommended for wilderness by the RARE II Final EIS and by all California wilderness legislation drafted between 1979 and 1983. In 1983, this area (along with most roadless lands nationwide) was identified for reevaluation. The adjoining California lands were subsequently released for nonwilderness uses by the California Wilderness Act of 1984, while the Nevada lands remained under reevaluation. Wilderness legislation for Nevada currently being considered in congressional committees does not propose this area or the adjoining Toiyabe National Forest lands for wilderness designation. The proposed Toiyabe National Forest plan (now in public review) allocates the Toiyabe Excelsior area to nonwilderness uses.

Public involvement for the RARE II study indicated general support from State and national environmental organizations for wilderness designation; however, this area was not targeted for special attention.

There was, in contrast, considerable opposition to wilderness management of this area (and adjoining California lands). Local residents, especially senior citizens, resist exclusion of vehicles from the area; they do not see the area as roadless.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

Table C-35 indicates which management prescriptions were applied to (all or part) of the area under each alternative. The narratives following the table discuss the effects of each prescription on the area in terms of present uses, wilderness attributes, and nonwilderness development opportunities. Resource and activity outputs for the area under each alternative are displayed in Table C-36.

Table C-35
Management Prescription Allocations
by Alternative (M Acres and Percent of Area)
Excelsior - Nevada part (5989)

Management Prescription	Alternatives						
	PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
2. Proposed Wilderness							8.0 100%
4. Mule Deer Habitat	3.1 39%				3.1 39%	3.11 39%	
17. Semi-Primitive Rec	4.9 61%				4.9 61%	4.9 61%	
18. Multiple Resource Area		8.0 100%	8.0 100%	8.0 100%			

Designation: Wilderness

Prescription #: 2

Alternative(s): AMC

Effects on the Area: Wilderness values would be maintained, or possibly improved under this prescription. Activities capable of affecting wilderness values would be prohibited. Administration of the area as wilderness would, however, be difficult and costly. The isolation of the area and ease of access would make illegal vehicle entry very likely.

The amount of wilderness recreation would be low, based on the area's lack of water, diversity, and challenge. Opportunities for solitude would be high. Existing natural appearance would be maintained, or possibly improved with the exclusion of vehicles and restoration of 4-wheel drive trails.

Options to manipulate vegetation and construct improvements for wildlife or livestock benefits would be foregone. As wild horses are a nonnative species, their presence in wilderness would represent a conflict.

Cultural resources would receive maximum protection from damage or destruction, but wilderness designation would restrict ease of access for legitimate research.

The area would be withdrawn from mineral entry upon designation as wilderness, resulting in a loss of mineral opportunity. No new mining claims could be located, and activities on mining claims with existing valid claims could be restricted.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

There are no major economic dependencies in the area. As big game hunting and other vehicle-based based recreation are locally based, they do not affect the local economy. Wilderness designation could bring more nonlocal people into the area, with benefits for the local economy. The potential to graze livestock in the area represents an economic opportunity foregone (this opportunity is already, however, foregone with the emphasis on wild horses). There would be a negative social impact on the area, as historical recreation patterns would be disrupted. On the other hand, a social benefit would be derived from wilderness designation in an ecological type not yet represented in wilderness on the Forest.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 4, 17

Alternative(s): PRF, AMN, AMB

Effects on the Area: Wilderness values would generally be maintained under this combination of prescriptions. Most activities capable of affecting wilderness values (such as new public road construction or open ORV areas) would be restricted or prohibited. The amount of recreation use would remain low. Options to manipulate vegetation and construct improvements for wildlife would be retained. Wild horses would not represent a conflict with wilderness, but might come into competition with deer.

Cultural resources would receive moderate protection from damage or destruction, as no new vehicle routes would be allowed. Research parties would have the option of vehicle access to research sites.

The area would be open for new mining claims; only applicable mining laws would apply. Any new mining roads would be closed to vehicle access.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions.

There are no major economic dependencies in the area. Existing big game hunting and other vehicle-based based recreation would continue unchanged, representing a social benefit. On the other hand, a social loss would be derived from lack of wilderness designation for the area.

Designation: Nonwilderness

Prescription #: 18

Alternative(s): CUR, RPA, CEE

Effects on the Area: Wilderness attributes in the area would be expected to decline under this prescription, as vehicle access (including open ORV areas)

could increase, and new routes proliferate. Under conditions of improved access, natural integrity and appearance would decline. Use would increase somewhat, although the distance of the area from population centers would prevent major increases. Opportunities for solitude would probably remain high, and opportunities for primitive recreation would continue to be limited by lack of water. Mining opportunities would be enhanced as access throughout the area increased.

Confinement or containment would be the appropriate fire suppression strategies applied under most conditions. (All wildfires would be controlled under the CUR alternative.)

The maintenance of traditional recreation opportunities would be a social benefit; the lack of formal wilderness designation would be a social cost. There would be no major economic effects.

Table C-36
Average Annual Outputs for Decades 1 and 5
Excelsior - Nevada part (5989)

Resource or Activity	Decade	Alternatives						
		PRF	CUR	RPA	CEE	AMN	AMB	AMC
Recommended Wilderness (M acres)	--	0	0	0	0	0	0	8.0
Nonwilderness (M acres)	--	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	8.0	0
Total Developed Recreation (M RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Dispersed Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	0 0
Wilderness Recreation (RVDs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	150 200
Total Wildlife and Fish User Days (WFUDs)	1 5	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	200 300	100 150
Grazing (AUMs)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Suitable Timber Land (acres)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Timber Volume (MMCF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
(MMBF)	1 5	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0	0 0
Gross Benefits(M\$)	1 5	8 12	8 12	8 12	8 12	8 12	8 12	6 9
Costs (M\$)	1 5	8 8	8 8	8 8	8 8	8 8	8 8	7 5
Net Benefits (M\$)	1 5	1 5	1 5	1 5	1 5	1 5	1 5	-1 4