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United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management



Battle Mountain Field Office
Battle Mountain, Nevada

April 2001

NEVADA WILDERNESS STUDY AREA NOTEBOOK



MISSION STATEMENT

The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for stewardship of our public lands. The BLM is committed to manage, protect and improve these lands in a manner to serve the needs of the American people. Management is based upon the principles of multiple use and sustained yield of our nation's resources within a framework of environmental responsibility and scientific technology. These resources include recreation, rangelands, timber, minerals, watershed, fish and wildlife habitat, wilderness, air and scenic quality, as well as scientific and cultural values.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND:

On April 2, 1997 the Nevada State BLM Director approved and signed the **Nevada Wilderness Action Plan**. This Plan provides a framework of critical action items which must be accomplished before the passage of a Nevada BLM Wilderness bill. These action items, when completed, will ensure that the Nevada BLM is ready for the challenge and responsibility of protecting and managing future BLM additions to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

One of the action items in the **Nevada Wilderness Action Plan**, Action Item I.C., required that Wilderness Study Area (WSA) notebooks be prepared for all BLM WSAs in Nevada. The notebooks provide BLM management with "desk reference guides" to WSAs within the State, and may ultimately be used by members of Congress and the general public as enhanced versions of the **NEVADA BLM STATEWIDE WILDERNESS REPORT**.

Printed notebooks have been prepared for the respective jurisdictions of each of the six Nevada BLM Field Offices and for the Nevada portions of the California BLM's Eagle Lake and Surprise Field Offices. Each notebook consists of two parts for each WSA. The first part contains a one to three page narrative, which is simply a condensation of the WSA narrative contained in the **NEVADA BLM STATEWIDE WILDERNESS REPORT**. The elements described in the WSA narratives are as follows:

- * The name, number, and acreage of the WSA
- * A general location and boundary description
- * A characterization of the wilderness values
- * A discussion of the wilderness recommendation and rationale
- * A summary of energy and mineral resource values
- * A summation of issues and public interest in the WSA

The second part of each notebook incorporates a series of six maps for each WSA which display the following Geographic Information System (GIS) themes: 1) contours, 2) counties, 3) geographic names and features, 4) land ownership, 5) public land survey system, 6) roads, 7) water features, 8) BLM WSA, recommended "suitable," and "non-suitable" boundaries, 9) developments and disturbances, 10) rights-of-way, 11) grazing allotments, 12) herd management areas, 13) federally-listed threatened and endangered species, 14) mining claim density, 15) mining operation locations, 16) mineral potential, 17) special-use air space, and 18) military aircraft training routes.

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QUALIFICATIONS:

The information displayed on the subsequent maps is intended to give the reader an overview of the most significant physical, cultural, and resource management data available within and immediately outside WSA boundaries. Because resource data is constantly changing and is frequently modified, accuracy of the data only applies to this publication.

Further, the data presented is limited to that which can be characterized at the scale utilized for this project, as it is impossible to portray all available GIS data in an 8 1/2" by 11" format. For example, not all mineral potential is shown for each WSA. In many cases, only the highest mineral potential for the most valuable mineral is indicated for a given WSA, as it would be spatially and graphically untenable, and visually discordant to attempt to exhibit all mineral potential for all minerals present within a WSA. Consequently, many medium and low mineral potentials for the least valuable minerals have not been depicted on the WSA maps. Refer to the "Definitions and Explanations" section which follows for more specific information regarding mineral potential.

Similarly, only observations of federally listed threatened and endangered species are exhibited on the WSA maps. Proposed and candidate special status species are not shown, nor are State of Nevada listed species.

The physical and resource management data arrayed on these maps has been collected from U.S. Geological Survey 1:100,000 Digital Line Graph files and were digitized from 7 1/2 minute (1:24,000) U.S. Geological Survey quadrangle maps. In some cases, if no WSA boundary exists on a 7 1/2 minute map, linear data may be incomplete for that file or map. Some linear data, such as utility rights-of-way, or livestock water systems or utility lines, may abruptly end on the map without extending all the way to the map frame line.

The physical and resource management data depicted on these WSA maps portrays the most accurate data available at the time of map preparation. Base data has been extracted from various scale base maps and some of the data has not been field-checked or ground-proofed. As more accurate inventory and resource management information becomes available, WSA maps will be amended or revised.

For a comprehensive depiction of mineral potential, special status species, or for complete information regarding any other GIS theme, please address mail to the GIS Coordinator, BLM Nevada State Office, P.O. Box 12000, Reno, Nevada 89520-0006. You may visit the GIS Coordinator at 1340 Financial Boulevard, or you may call the Coordinator at 775-861-6400.

For information regarding a specific resource inventory or database that is not GIS related, please contact appropriate Field Office or Field Station resource specialists. Field Offices and Field Stations in Nevada are located in Elko, Winnemucca, Carson City, Ely, Las Vegas, Battle Mountain, Tonopah, and Caliente. Portions of the northwest section of the State are managed by the Eagle Lake Field Office in Susanville, California and the Surprise Field Office in Cedarville, California.

DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

ALLOTMENT -- An area of land designated and managed for the grazing of livestock.

CHERRY-STEMMED ROAD -- A road that is completely enclosed on both sides by a Wilderness Study Area boundary. The Wilderness Study Area boundary is the edge of the right-of-way if a right-of-way has been granted, or the edge of disturbance if no right-of-way has been issued. Cherry-stemmed roads appear as red and black dashed lines within WSA boundaries on the "WSA Boundaries and Land Ownership" maps. Cherry-stemmed ways, trails, and washes appear as black dashed lines within WSA boundaries on the "WSA Boundaries and Land Ownership" maps. In some instances, these black dashed lines may appear to be a solid line at the page size scale.

DEVELOPMENT -- For purposes of this document, any structure, facility, or enhancement constructed and located on public lands. These include but are not limited to, developed springs, fences, wildlife guzzlers, stock ponds, gabions.

DISTURBANCE -- For purposes of this document, a disruption of the soil or vegetation within a Wilderness Study Area necessitating recontouring of the topography, replacement of topsoil, and/or restoration of native plant cover. These include but are not limited to, mines, material sites, ditches, roads, excavated trash dumps.

HERD MANAGEMENT AREA (HMA) -- A geographic area identified as having been used by a herd as its habitat on the date of passage of the Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971 that has been established for the maintenance of wild horse and burro herds.

INSTANT STUDY AREA (ISA) -- Any of eleven natural areas formally identified by the Nevada BLM through a final action published in the Federal Register before November 1, 1975. The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA, Public Law 94-579, 90 Stat. 2743, 43 USC 1701) required an accelerated wilderness review of these areas which, for all intents and purposes, are Wilderness Study Areas.

MILITARY TRAINING ROUTE -- A route established to accommodate low-altitude military training operations of aircraft that permits speeds in excess of 250 knots indicated air speed below 10,000 feet mean sea level (MSL). Some segments may extend above 10,000 feet MSL due to terrain or other requirements.

MINERAL POTENTIAL -- A prediction of the likelihood of the occurrence of a solid, liquid, or gaseous mineral resource within a Wilderness Study Area expressed in terms of "high," "medium," or "low" potential.

The mineral potential information portrayed on the WSA maps is taken from U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Bulletins prepared in conjunction with the U.S. Bureau of Mines to study the mineral potential of Wilderness Study Areas in Nevada. The USGS and Bureau of Mines conducted mineral surveys on areas approximating recommended "suitable" portions of WSAs to determine the mineral values, if any, that may be present. The recommended "unsuitable" portions of WSAs within WSAs containing recommended "suitable" portions were not surveyed, nor were literature searches conducted on the "unsuitable" portions of these WSAs. The mineral potential for WSAs that were wholly recommended "unsuitable" was not studied by the USGS and Bureau of Mines. However, wholly recommended "unsuitable" WSAs were assessed based on a literature search and, where applicable, on discussions with private industry.

Some inconsistencies may be noted between the discussion of mineral potential in the WSA narratives and the mineral potential displayed on the WSA maps. These inconsistencies are attributable to the fact that the BLM's Geology, Energy, and Minerals (GEM) Reports, which were prepared in the early 1980s, were the primary source of mineral information for the WSA narratives. The GEM Reports predated the Bureau of Mines and U.S. Geological Survey Bulletins, which were prepared as late as 1990, and were the only sources of data utilized in the preparation of WSA maps. Thus, due to the availability of new mineral information, advances in technology, and the refinement of predictive models between 1980 and 1990, some differences may be noted between the WSA narratives and the WSA maps.

The Bureau of Mines and USGS Bulletins were prepared utilizing the best information available. The "best information available" was characterized in the Survey Bulletins as "Levels of Certainty" which ranged from "Available information (A - is not adequate for determination of) (B - only suggests) (C - gives a good indication of) (D - clearly defines) the level of mineral resource potential." "Levels of Certainty" are not displayed on the WSA maps for the minerals present within each WSA due to spatial and graphic limitations.

In some cases, the boundaries of the mineral potential do not coincide precisely with the boundaries of the Wilderness Study Areas because Bureau of Mines and USGS report boundaries were digitized at a different scale compared with the WSA boundaries, and WSA boundaries had not been finalized at the time the mineral reports were published. Furthermore, in some areas of the state where WSAs are clustered and two or more WSAs are separated only by a road, a reader interested in a given WSA may have to refer to the "Mineral Potential" maps of adjacent WSAs for a more comprehensive display of the mineral potential within the WSA of interest. That is to say, larger mineral groupings identified on the "Mineral Potential" maps of adjoining WSAs may extend into the WSA of interest but may not be exhibited in the legend of the WSA of interest.

MINING CLAIM -- The mining claims identified on the “Mining Claim Density and Operations” WSA map are the total number of “active” mining claims and sites within and adjacent to each WSA as of the date specified on the WSA map. “Active” mining claims and sites are defined as “claims and sites for which all required fees and filings have been timely submitted in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.” The mining claim density symbol depicted on the WSA map gives a representation of the number of claims and sites within a section of land. It does not necessarily indicate that mining claims and sites are located wholly within WSA boundaries.

MINING OPERATION -- A mining claim activity for which a 3809 Mining Notice or Plan of Operation or a 3802 Plan of Operation has been filed with the Bureau of Land Management.

Mining operations shown on the “Mining Claim Density and Operations” WSA map, which have no corresponding mining claim beneath them, can be attributed to one or more reasons. First, the information came from two separate and distinct databases that may not have been completely reconciled, one with the other. Second, mining law states that a description of location need only be sufficient for a person to find a claim on the ground. Sometimes the description of location is only the “best guess” of the claimant or the operator as to where the claim is actually located rather than a legally described location. Third, discrepancies may be due to data entry errors.

It is not always necessary to possess a mining claim in order to conduct a mining operation. For example, failure to pay necessary fees and filings in a timely manner will result in mining claim termination. However, the associated mining operation may not terminate with the claim.

RECOMMENDED NON-SUITABLE -- All or a portion of a Wilderness Study Area that the President has recommended to the United States Congress as not appropriate and not acceptable for preservation and designation as wilderness based on an analysis of the existing and potential uses of the land.

RECOMMENDED SUITABLE -- All or a portion of a Wilderness Study Area that the President has recommended to the United States Congress as appropriate and acceptable for preservation and designation as wilderness based on an analysis of the existing and potential uses of the land.

RIGHT-OF-WAY -- An authorization to use or occupy public lands pursuant to the issuance of a right-of-way grant. A right-of-way grant authorizes use over, upon, under or through public lands for construction, operation, maintenance and termination of a project. Right-of-way grants may be issued for, but are not limited to, such uses as roads, trails, reservoirs, canals, ditches, pipelines, transmission lines, railroads, and communication sites. These more common types of right-of-way grants are specifically identified on the “Rights-of-Way” WSA map. Less common types of right-of-way grants, for such uses as weather stations, stock driveways, etc.,

have not been shown on the WSA maps.

ROAD -- For purposes of the wilderness review program, a route that has been improved and maintained by mechanical means to ensure relatively regular and continuous use. "Improved and maintained" means physical actions taken by man to keep the road open to vehicular traffic. "Improved" does not necessarily mean formal construction. "Maintained" does not necessarily mean annual maintenance. "Mechanical means" is the use of hand or power machinery or tools. "Relatively regular and continuous use" means vehicular use which has occurred and will continue to occur on a relatively regular basis.

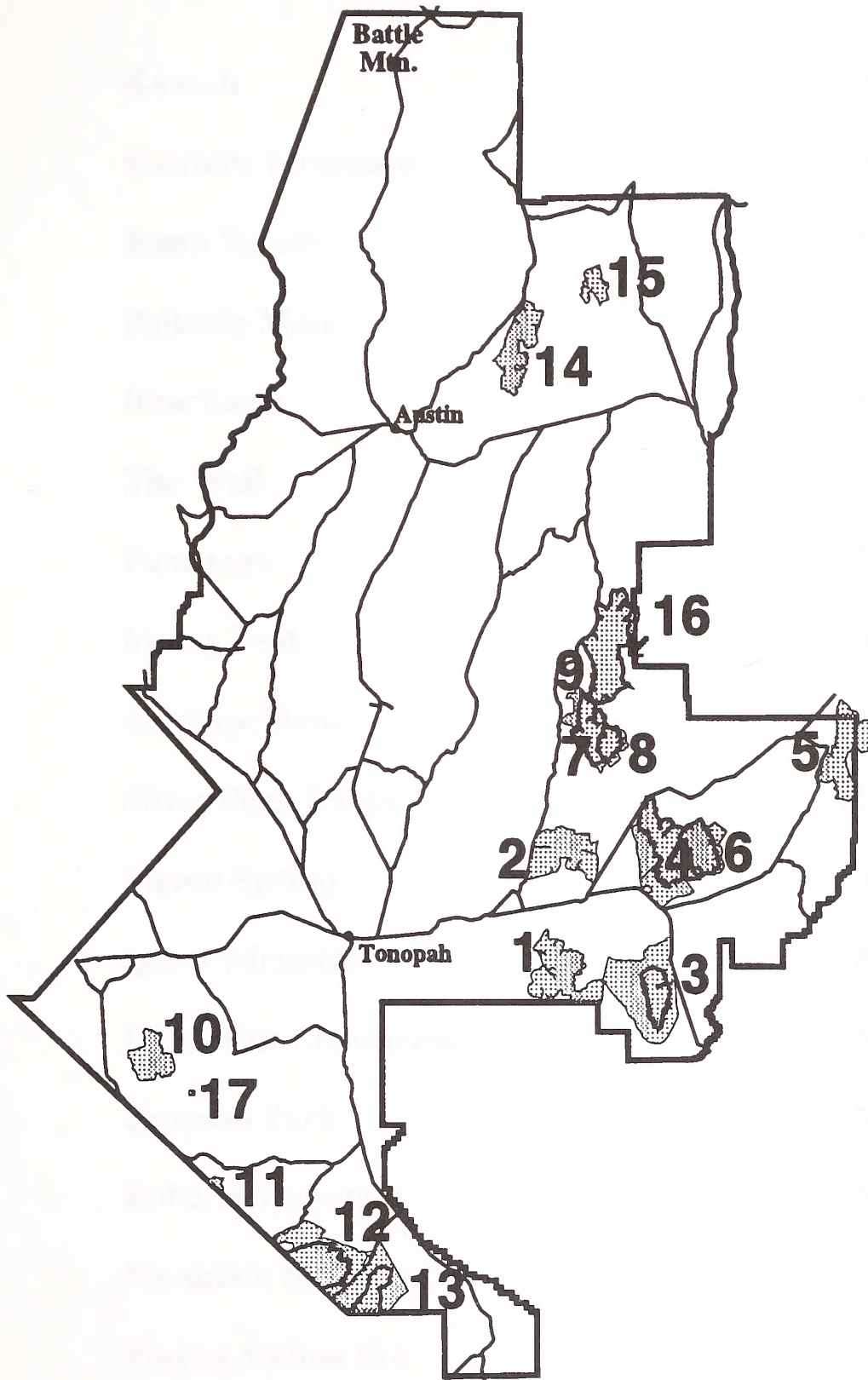
SPECIAL USE AIRSPACE -- Consists of airspace wherein activity must be confined because of its nature and/or wherein limitation may be imposed upon aircraft operations. The purpose of a special use airspace is to identify for other airspace users where military activity occurs, segregate that activity from other users to enhance safety, and allow charting to keep airspace users informed of activity within the special use airspace.

THREATENED AND ENDANGERED (T&E) -- The words "threatened" and "endangered" are used in this document to describe Federal listings authorized by the Endangered Species Act of 1973 as amended. "Threatened" means any species which is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range. "Endangered" means any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. Only Federally listed threatened and endangered species are shown on the WSA maps. Points on the map represent observation records or museum collections only and do not indicate extent of habitat or species distribution.

TRAIL -- A pathway usually created and maintained by human foot traffic, beasts-of-burden, livestock, or wildlife. Trails are not shown on WSA maps but are mentioned in some WSA narrative texts.

WAY -- A track or route within a Wilderness Study Area maintained solely by the passage of vehicles which has not been improved and/or maintained by mechanical means to ensure relatively regular and continuous use. Ways were identified during the intensive inventory phase of the Wilderness Review Process. Although mentioned in some WSA narrative texts, ways are not shown on WSA maps.

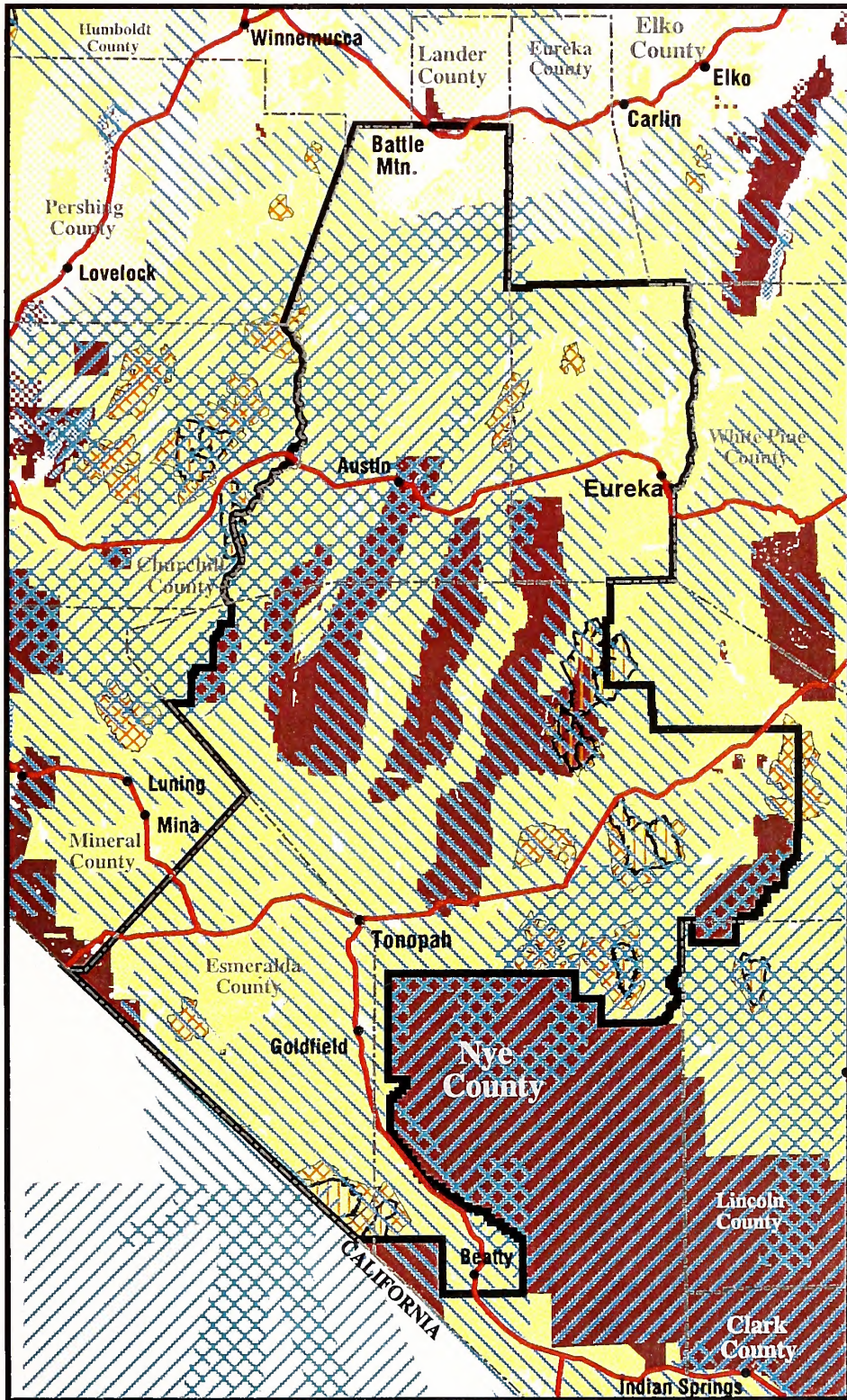
WILDERNESS STUDY AREA (WSA) -- A roadless area or island that has been inventoried and found to possess wilderness characteristics as described in Section 603 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and Section 2(c) of the Wilderness Act of 1964. Private and other agency inholdings within Wilderness Study Area boundaries are officially, legally, and technically not part of the Wilderness Study Area. Some private and other agency inholdings are not shown with the Wilderness Study Area boundary symbol around them.



BATTLE MOUNTAIN
Wilderness Study Areas
INDEX

MAP INDEX NUMBER	STUDY AREA NAME	ID NUMBER
1	Kawich	NV-060-019
2	Rawhide Mountain	NV-060-059
3	South Reveille	NV-060-112
4	Palisade Mesa	NV-060-142/162
5	Blue Eagle	NV-060-158/199
6	The Wall	NV-060-163
7	Fandango	NV-060-190
8	Morey Peak	NV-060-191
9	Antelope Range	NV-060-231/241
10	Silver Peak Range	NV-060-338
11	Pigeon Spring	NV-060-350
12	Queer Mountain	NV-060-354
13	Grapevine Mountains	NV-060-355
14	Simpson Park	NV-060-428
15	Roberts Mountain	NV-060-541
16	Mountain Meadow ISA	
17	Pinyon Joshua ISA	

Battle Mountain Wilderness Study Areas MILITARY AIRSPACE



- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency
- Special Use Airspace
- Military Training Route
- Instant Study Area
- Recommended Non-Suitable
- Recommended Suitable



BATTLE MTN.

KAWICH WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

1. THE STUDY AREA - 54,320 acres

The Kawich Wilderness Study Area (WSA) (NV-060-019) is located in the Kawich Range in northeastern Nye County approximately 50 miles east of Tonopah, Nevada. The WSA includes 54,320 acres of public land and surrounds five privately owned inholdings totaling 560 acres.

The western boundary and the western part of the south boundaries are formed by roads and trails. The rest of the south boundary follows land net lines. The eastern and northern boundaries are formed by a mixture of land net lines, roads and trails and drainages. The Kawich WSA is irregularly shaped, measuring approximately twelve miles north to south and from eight to twelve miles east to west.

Mule deer, mountain loin, pronghorn antelope, wild horses, and chukar partridge are among the numerous wildlife species found in the WSA. The area provides winter habitat for a large population of mule deer.

There were two alternatives analyzed in the EIS: an all wilderness alternative and a no wilderness alternative which is the recommendation of this report.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 0 acres recommended for wilderness 54,320 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation for this WSA is to release all 54,320 acres for uses other than wilderness. Although the recommendation is not the all wilderness alternative, the recommendation for this WSA would be implemented in a manner which would utilize all practical means to avoid or minimize environmental impacts.

The Kawich WSA was recommended for uses other than wilderness because it has high potential for mineral and energy exploration and development and because vegetative manipulations to benefit mule deer would provide for better use of the resource than the benefits provided by wilderness designation. The mineral and energy resource values within the WSA include 2,880 acres rated high and 37,840 acres rated good for the potential occurrence of base, ferrous, and precious metals and 7,040 acres rated good for the potential occurrence of oil and gas and geothermal resources.

A high level of exploration and development activity is expected if this area is not designated wilderness. It is projected there would be five plans of operation per year for the first few years. Three developments on the 393 existing mining claims are expected due to the high potential for precious metals. In the foreseeable future, wilderness values would be lost as a result of mineral development in the area between Tobe Spring and the Craig Canyon drainage, Eden Creek, and Breen Ranch areas. Areas adjacent to the southwest side of the WSA have been heavily explored and mined in the past. Disturbances common to mining operations provide a visual distraction when in the immediate vicinity.

The Kawich WSA area maintains a large mule deer herd in the winter. This is a result of the area having the proper combination of soil, water, and other factors to produce the browse needed to maintain a winter deer herd. This combination is not found in any other area in the vicinity. Pinyon pine and juniper encroachment on this mule deer winter range is resulting in decreased browse availability. Which in turn results in a decrease of the deer herd numbers. It is necessary in this area to manipulate vegetation to allow for browse re-establishment. This is best accomplished through mechanical removal of the trees by chaining or cutting. In the Kawich WSA, an area totalling 9,620 acres, will require mechanical vegetation manipulation for browse re-establishment.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: The Kawich WSA is generally in a natural state. The Kawich WSA consists of mountainous country with a high central plateau and several peaks. There are two small one-half acre lakes, the Bellehelen Lakes, located on the top of the plateau at the northern end of the WSA. Vegetation consists mainly of a dense pinyon pine and juniper woodland with a northern desert shrub understory. Mountain mahogany trees occur in the mountains above 8,000 feet. Within the boundaries of the WSA are approximately twenty-five miles of vehicle ways, three miles of pipeline used for transmitting water outside the WSA, two spring developments, and approximately four miles of fence.

The majority of these vehicle ways are in the valley portion of the WSA. The pipelines are located on the northern and western edges of the WSA. The spring developments and water troughs are located in the southeast corner adjacent to the western boundary of the WSA. The fence is located in Haws Canyon on the western side of the WSA. Total acreage involved is approximately twenty acres. While these imprints are within the WSA, the area generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprints of man substantially unnoticeable.

B. Solitude: The Kawich WSA provides an outstanding opportunity for solitude. The majority of the WSA is mountainous with sharp elevation changes throughout. Topography is rugged and access is often restricted due to excessive slope. A wide flat plateau in the center of the WSA contains two small lakes. Deep, rocky canyons which penetrate the mountains often continue for miles and provide topographic variation. Rock out-croppings occur throughout the WSA. Dense forests blanket virtually all of the mountainous core of the WSA to the point that a secluded place can be found almost anywhere. Because of this more than adequate screening, the lack of any single destination point with strong appeal, and the large number of hiking routes into the core of the WSA, this high level of opportunity could be sustained even with fairly heavy use.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Many forms of recreation can be pursued in the Kawich WSA including hiking, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding, mountain or rock climbing, and sightseeing. While there good opportunities for all of these activities, neither their quality or diversity are outstanding.

The quality of recreation activities varies with topography. In the mountainous areas, opportunities are quite good, made so by the variety of landforms, wildlife populations, and opportunities for solitude. Visual satisfaction is provided by the unique plateau and associated lakes, the rugged mountains covered with a thick blanket of timber, and the emerald green meadows snaking their way throughout every canyon. Although difficult to access, the plateau region offers spectacular views of the WSA and all surrounding valleys.

The visual and ecologic diversity of the setting becomes more subtle as one descends from the high mountains to the foothills and benches. Opportunities for recreation are lower here than in the mountains.

D. Special Features: The large population of mule deer wintering in the WSA are a special attraction as is the large wild and free roaming horses present yearlong along the foothills and benches within the Kawich WSA.

4. MANAGEABILITY

The central mountainous core of the Kawich WSA is considered to be manageable over the long term. However, the presence of 560 acres of private inholdings and the potential off-road use of motorized vehicles in the valleys and canyons of the WSA are the factors which would require additional management commitment. The private lands and associated access roads run through the majority of the canyons penetrating into the interior of the WSA. Additional monitoring and patrolling may be necessary along these

areas to prevent off-road vehicle travel and to evaluate what effects that travel would have on the delicate riparian vegetation associated with the canyons. The easily accessible alluvial benches and rolling hills bordering the mountains would require additional patrolling for off-road vehicle travel, especially during the hunting season.

Mining activity along the eastern border of the WSA is expected to increase with the high probability of a mining operation and additional minerals exploration occurring. Additional management would be required to ensure that the wilderness qualities inherent in the immediate vicinity of the mining operations would not be lost. The proximity of the active mining area in the mountains adjacent to the WSA would make mitigation of impacts from the mine difficult.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

The Kawich WSA contains 11 oil and gas leases covering approximately 9,760 acres. The WSA has 2,880 acres with high and 37,840 acres with good potential for mineral resources. Leasable mineral potential is good for oil and gas and for geothermal resources. The Kawich WSA is literally surrounded by mining districts with Bellehelen on the north, Eden on the east, Silverbow on the south, and Golden Arrow on the west.

A high level of exploration and development activity is expected in the first few years if this area is not designated wilderness. It is projected there would be five plans of operation per year for the first few years. Three developments of the 393 existing mining claims are expected due to the high potential for precious metals. In the foreseeable future, wilderness values would be lost as a result of mineral development in the area between Tobe Spring and the Craig Canyon drainage, Eden Creek, and Breen Ranch areas.

6. SUMMARY OF WSA-SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

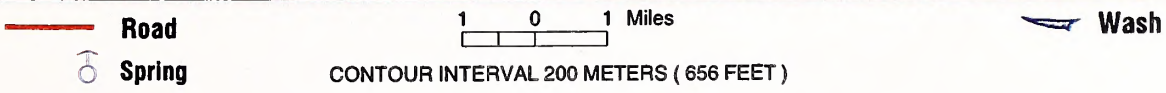
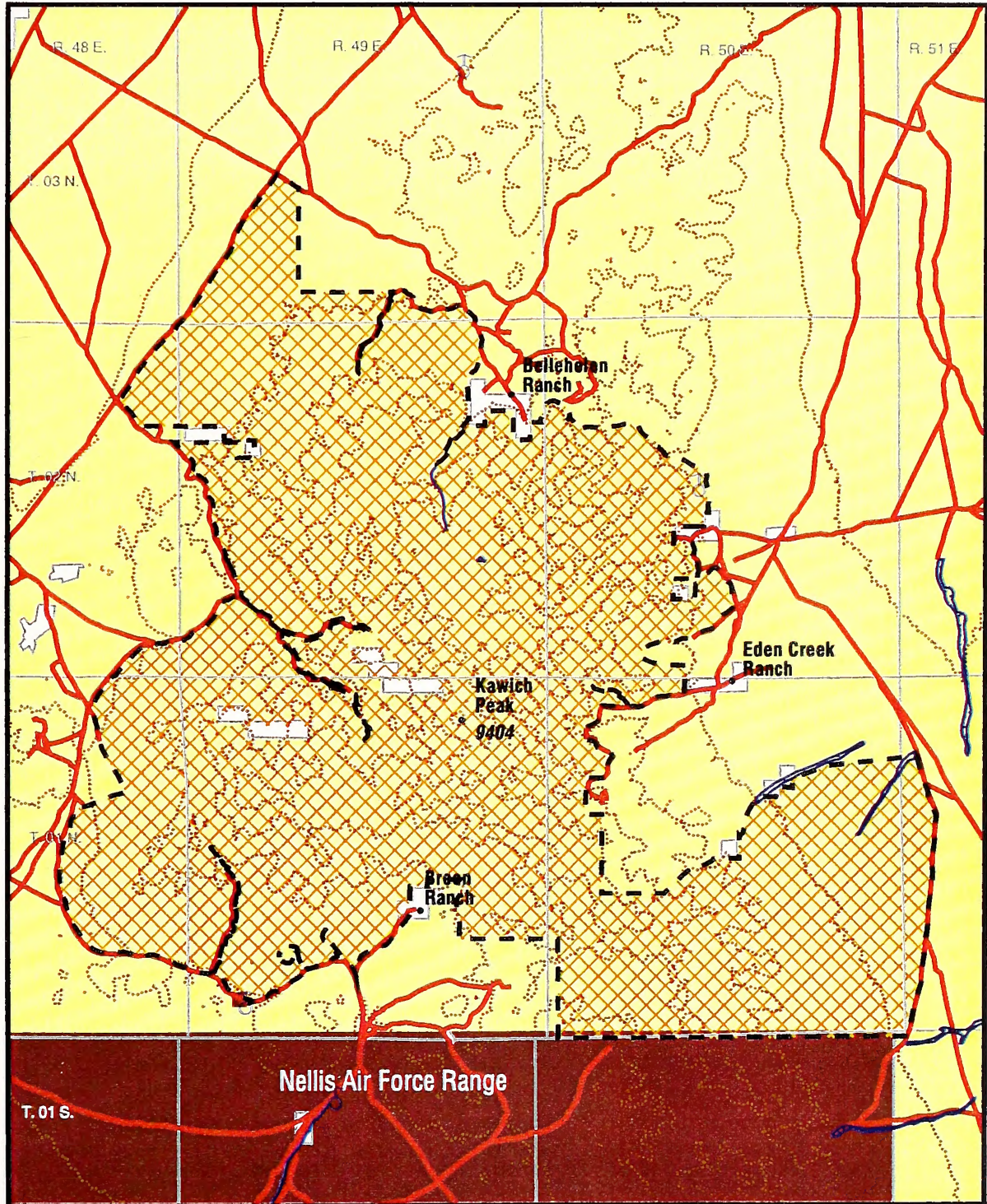
Public involvement has occurred throughout the wilderness review process. During formal public review of the draft EIS, a total of 29 comments specifically addressing this WSA were received. Twenty-one individuals and three environmental organizations favored the Kawich designation and two individuals, one mining organization and two mining companies opposed this designation.

Reasons supporting designation were: outstanding area, provides challenging terrain, good scenic values.

Reasons supporting nondesignation were: enormous mineral and energy potential, mining districts located on all sides, accurate mapping not done to properly assess mineral potential.

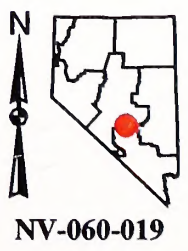
The State, during the consistency review, concurred with the Preferred Alternative.

Kawich Wilderness Study Area WSA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP

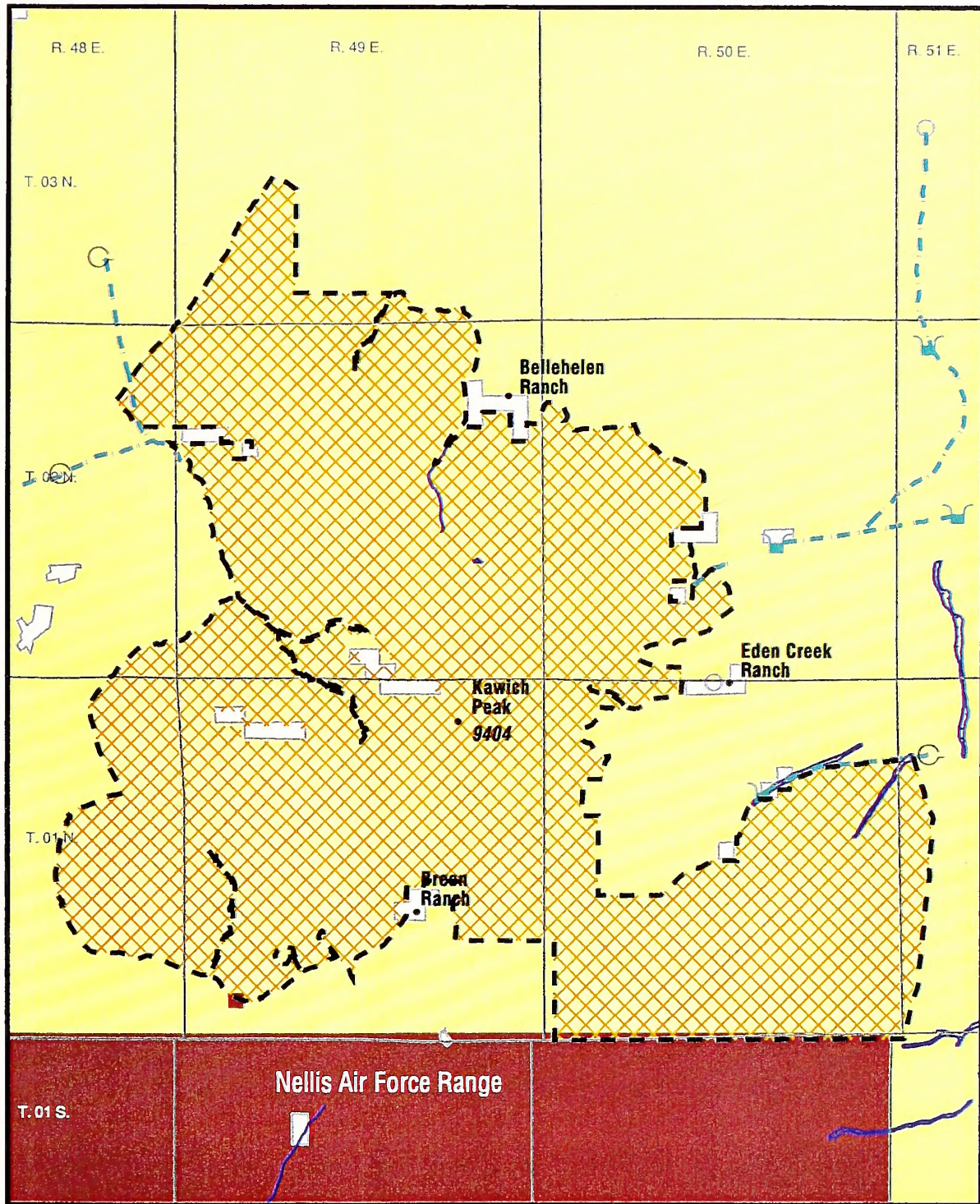


- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable



Kawich Wilderness Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES



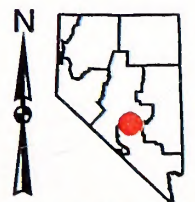
1 0 1 Miles

Wash

○ Well ㄣ Trough
○ Corral - - Pipeline

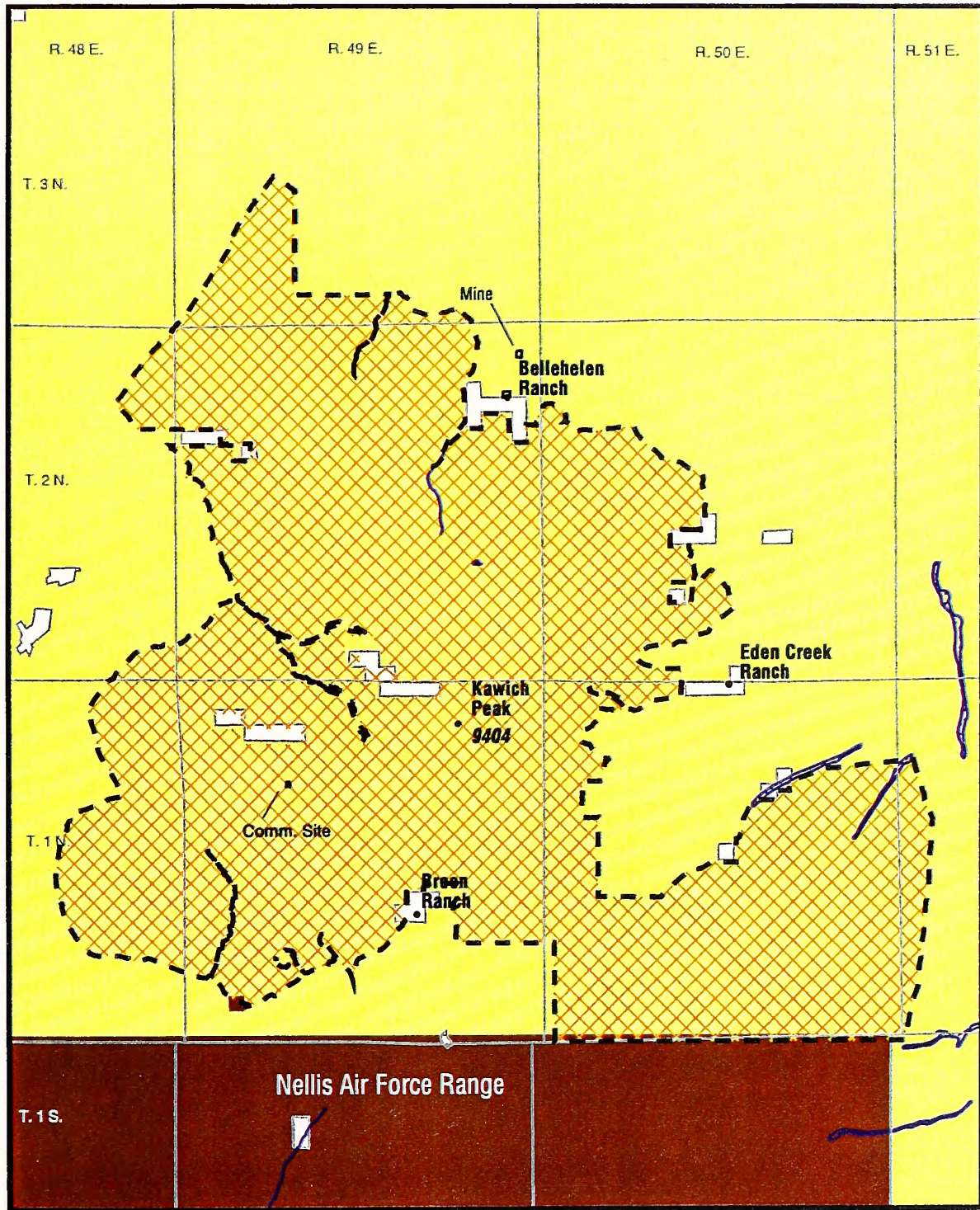
■ BLM
■ Private Land
■ Other Agency

- - Wilderness Study Area Boundary
XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-019

Kawich Wilderness Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY



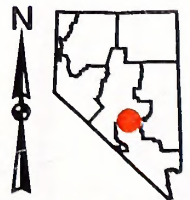
1 0 1 Miles

Wash

- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

- Communication Site
- Mine

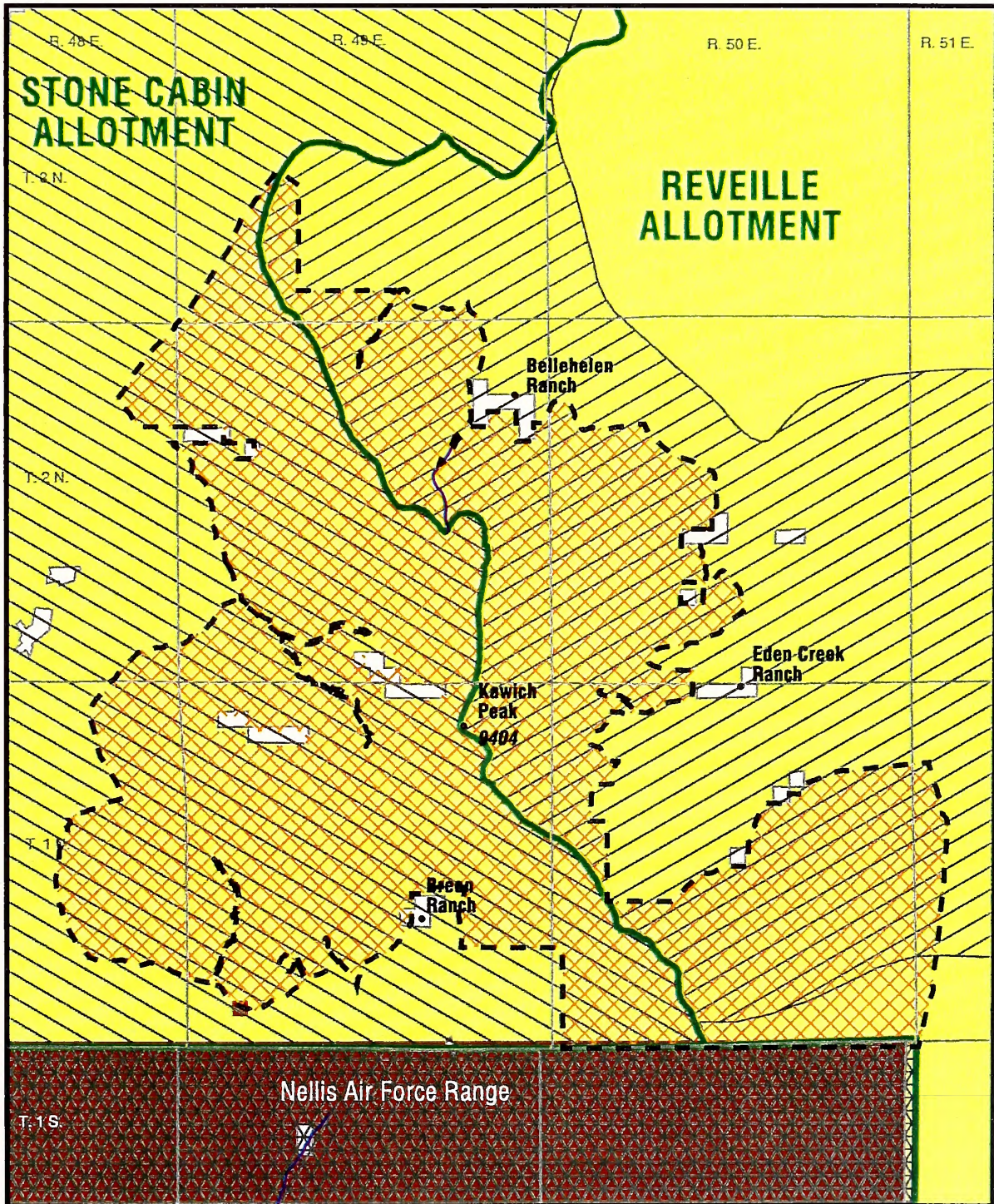
- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-019

Kawich Wilderness Study Area

ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCES



Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species

● Observation Site
NONE ON THIS MAP

1 0 1 Miles

Wash

- Nellis HMA
- Stone Cabin HMA
- Reville HMA

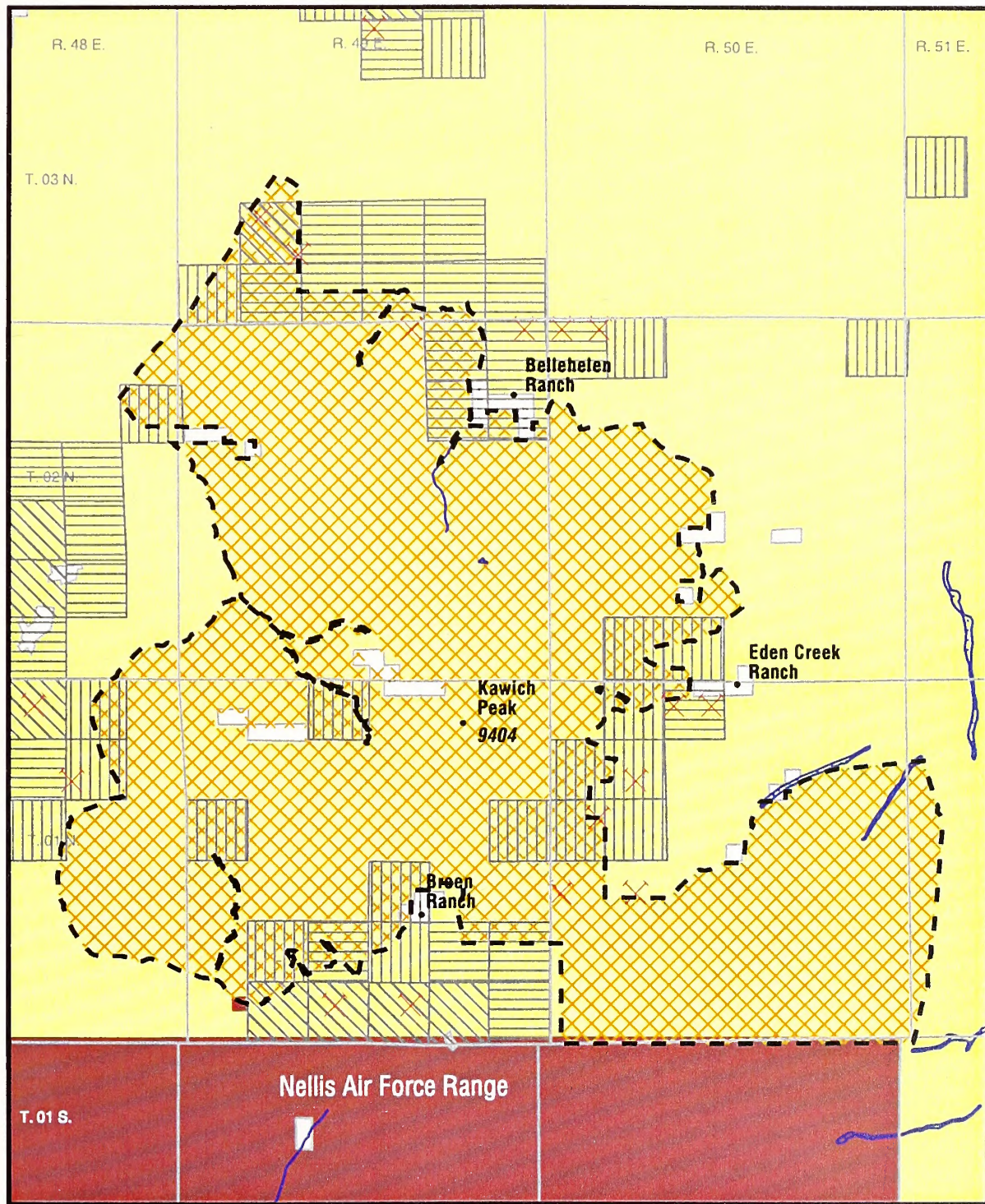
Allotment Boundary

- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable

- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency



Kawich Wilderness Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS



Mining Operations

1 0 1 Miles

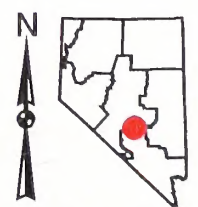
Wash

Mining Claim Density - 3/97

- 1-5 Claims
- 6-35 Claims
- 36 or more Claims

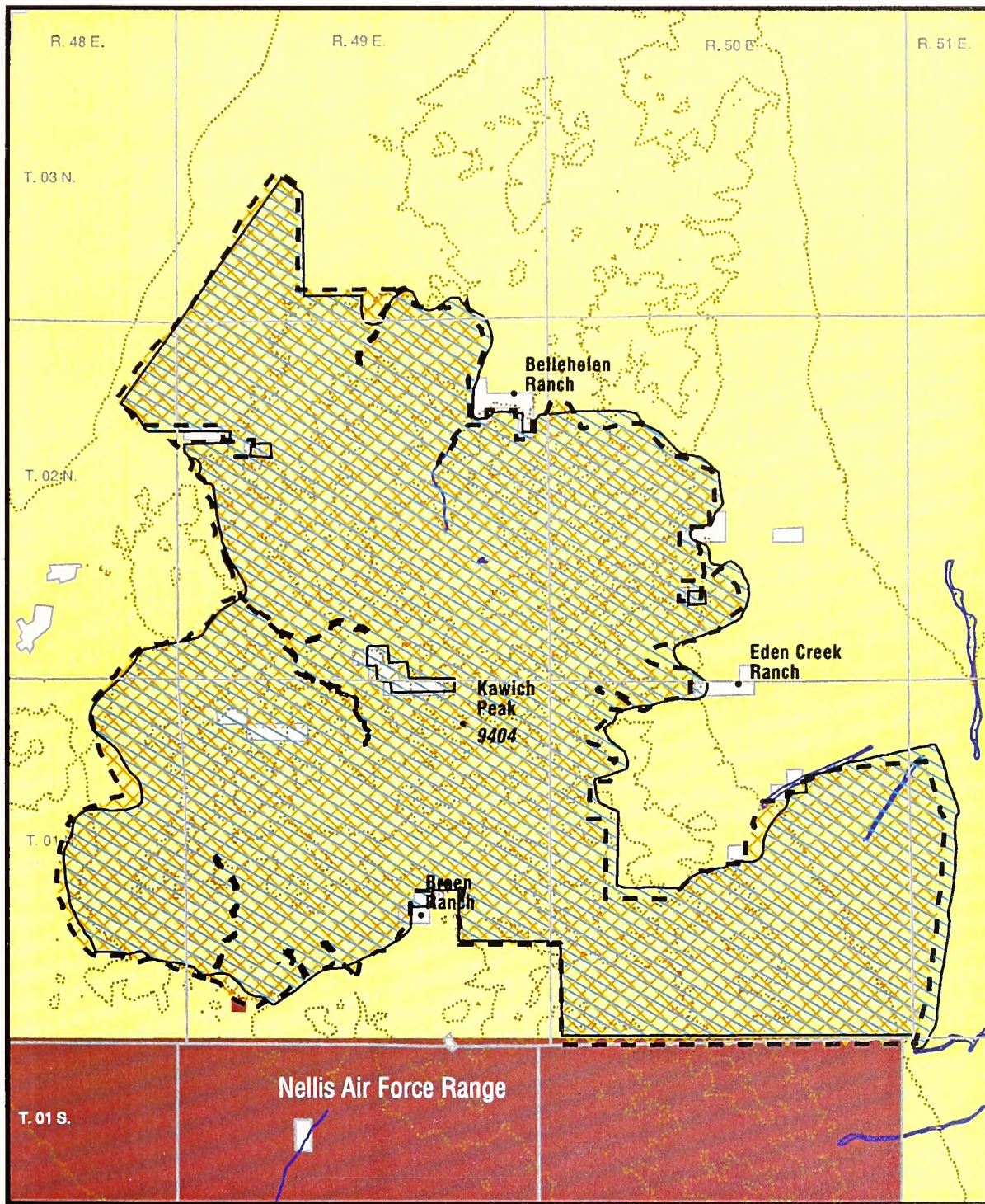
- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-019

Kawich Wilderness Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL



1 0 1 Miles
CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

Wash

- | | |
|--|--|
|  BLM | Mineral Potential |
|  Private Land |  Medium - Gold, Silver |
|  Other Agency |  Wilderness Study Area Boundary |
| |  Recommended Non-Suitable |



RAWHIDE MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

1. THE STUDY AREA - 64,360 acres

The Rawhide Mountain Wilderness Study Area (WSA) (NV-060-059) is located in the Hot Creek Range in northeastern Nye County approximately 50 miles east of Tonopah, Nevada. The WSA includes 64,360 acres of public land. There are no privately owned inholdings in this WSA. The western boundary and most of the southern boundary are formed by roads and trails. The rest of the southern boundary follows land net lines. The eastern and northern boundaries are formed by roads and trails with short sections of land net lines.

The Rawhide Mountain WSA is irregularly shaped, measuring approximately seven to eleven miles north to south and thirteen miles east to west. This WSA is flanked on the west by Stone Cabin Valley and on the east by Hot Creek Valley.

There were three alternatives analyzed in the EIS: An all wilderness alternative, a partial wilderness alternative where 41,960 acres would be designated as wilderness and 22,400 acres would be released for uses other than wilderness, and a no wilderness alternative, which is the recommendation of this report.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 0 acres recommended for wilderness 64,360 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation for this WSA is to release all 64,360 acres for uses other than wilderness.

All wilderness is considered the environmentally preferable alternative as it would result in the least change from the natural environment over the long-term. Although the recommendation is not the all wilderness alternative, the recommendation for this WSA would be implemented in a manner which would utilize all practical means to avoid or minimize environmental impacts.

The Rawhide Mountain WSA was not recommended for wilderness because it has a higher value for mineral and energy exploration and development than the benefits that would be provided by wilderness designation. The mineral and energy resource values within the WSA include 6,240 acres rated high and 8,480 acres rated good for the potential occurrence of base, ferrous, and precious metals and 13,760 acres rated good for the potential occurrence of oil and gas, and 7,360 acres rated good for the potential occurrence of geothermal resources. The WSA borders the historic Tybo mining district and the old mining community of Tybo. Several old mines exist along the southern border of the WSA. While currently not operational, there has been renewed exploration on the properties

Since the publication of the EIS, mining industry interest in this WSA has increased. A high level of exploration and development would be expected in the first few years, if this area is not designated wilderness. It is projected there would be five plans of operation per year the first few years. Due to the high potential for metallic minerals, at least two developed mines on the 913 existing mining claims are anticipated in the foreseeable future. It is expected the wilderness values would be lost due to increased areas of disturbance, noise and fugitive dust from the mining operations, and increased human activity as a result of mineral development, in the area between Midden Mountain and Twin Peaks. The areas of highest wilderness values coincide with the areas of greatest mineral potential.

While the core of the WSA has high wilderness values, the lower elevations of the WSA have fewer wilderness values. Numerous roads and ways penetrate the WSA along all borders. The foothills and alluvial benches bordering the mountainous core of the WSA contain the majority of the roads and ways. Topographic and vegetative screening is virtually non-existent here and wilderness values are relatively low.

The sparsely vegetated and open terrain provides good access and the ability to manage these areas, although not impossible, would require frequent seasonal patrols to regulate the off-road use by hunters and other off-road recreationists.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: The central portion of the Rawhide Mountain WSA is generally in a natural state. The central portion of the range is extremely rugged with elevations ranging from 5,360 feet to over 5,100 feet. Within the range remote drainages and basins are enhanced by pristine riparian settings around springs. The mountainous portions are a maze of peaks, outcrops, and drainages which support a wide variety of vegetation and wildlife. The roadless nature of the interior core has served to preserve the rugged naturalness of this portion of the Hot Creek Range.

Rawhide Peak is painted with a multi-colored strata of rock ranging from yellow to red. The canyons leading into the core of the WSA are composed of craggy rock outcrops bathed in brilliant red and orange, which contrast sharply with the bright green of pinyon pine.

Within the boundaries of the WSA are approximately seventeen miles of vehicle ways and one spring development. The vehicle ways are in the valley portion of the WSA. The spring development and water trough are located in the southeastern corner of the WSA. A total of approximately fifteen acres are involved. While these human imprints are within the WSA, the area generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprints of man substantially unnoticeable.

B. Solitude: Solitude is a guaranteed quality in the mountainous part of the WSA, and the opportunities for enjoying it are outstanding. The mountains are not a single ridgeline; instead they occur as a number of interconnected by distinguishably separate peaks over the area. Undulating mountain slopes are blanketed by dense stands of pinyon pine, juniper, and mountain mahogany, here and there interrupted by bright green pockets of riparian vegetation.

The dense tree cover coupled with the deep, narrow canyons enhances the screening to the extent that secluded spot can be found almost anywhere. Because of this more than adequate screening, the lack of any single destination point with strong drawing power, the large number of canyons providing access routes to the core of the WSA, this high level of opportunity can be sustained even with fairly heavy use.

In the eastern foothill region the opportunities for solitude are limited to rather wide, shallow drainages. On the flats, that lie along both the eastern and western borders, where the vegetation is low growing shrubs, opportunities for solitude are almost impossible to find.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Many forms of recreation can be pursued in the WSA, including hiking, hunting, nature study, photography, and camping. While there are good opportunities for all of these activities, neither their diversity or quality is considered to be outstanding. The quality of recreation opportunities varies with topography. In the mountainous areas, opportunities for recreation are good, made so by variations in land forms and natural features. However, visual and ecological diversity decreases at the lower elevations, especially along the expansive alluvial benches bordering the WSA. Opportunities for recreation and visual satisfaction are greatly lower here than in the mountainous areas.

D. Special Features: There are charcoal kilns within this WSA. These kilns were built in the 1870's to provide charcoal for the smelting furnaces of nearby mining districts. The kilns are built of red brick, are oval in shape with a diameter of 25 feet at the base and a height of approximately 30 feet. The Tybo Kilns, located in the Rawhide Mountain WSA, are on the National Register of Historic Places.

4. MANAGEABILITY

The mountainous core of the Rawhide Mountain WSA is considered to be manageable over the long-term due to the rough and rugged character of the terrain and the limited accessibility. Recreation use is expected to remain fairly low into the foreseeable future, with exception during the hunting season, so that little effort would be needed to monitor recreationists and their impacts. There are no state or private inholdings within the WSA.

Manageability problems would stem from the development of mines. If existing claims are found to have a valid discovery, development would disturb the wilderness values on and in the immediate vicinity of the operations. Surface disturbance would result in modified land forms and the construction of haul roads. Mineral exploration and development is expected to occur regardless of wilderness designation.

The open nature of the terrain provides for easy access to off-road vehicle use. Frequent patrols may be necessary during the hunting season to ensure vehicle use is confined to existing roads and trails.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

The Rawhide Mountain WSA contains 14 oil and gas leases covering approximately 13,280 acres. Three plans of operation have been filed with the BLM. The mountainous portion of the WSA lies within the Tybo Mining District, one of the major districts in northern Nye County. A small area of potential for precious metals exists along the northern boundary of the WSA, adjacent to the Tybo Mining District. There is good potential for geothermal and oil and gas resources in the valley areas of Hot Creek and eastern Stone Cabin Valleys.

Since the publication of the EIS, mining activities have increased in this WSA. A high level of exploration and development would be expected in the first few years, if this area is not designated wilderness. It is projected there would be five plans of operation per year the first few years. Due to the high potential for metallic minerals, it is anticipated that at least two mines will be developed on the 913 existing mining claims in the foreseeable future. It is expected the wilderness values would be lost, as a result of mineral development, in the area between Midden Mountain and Twin Peaks.

6. SUMMARY OF WSA-SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

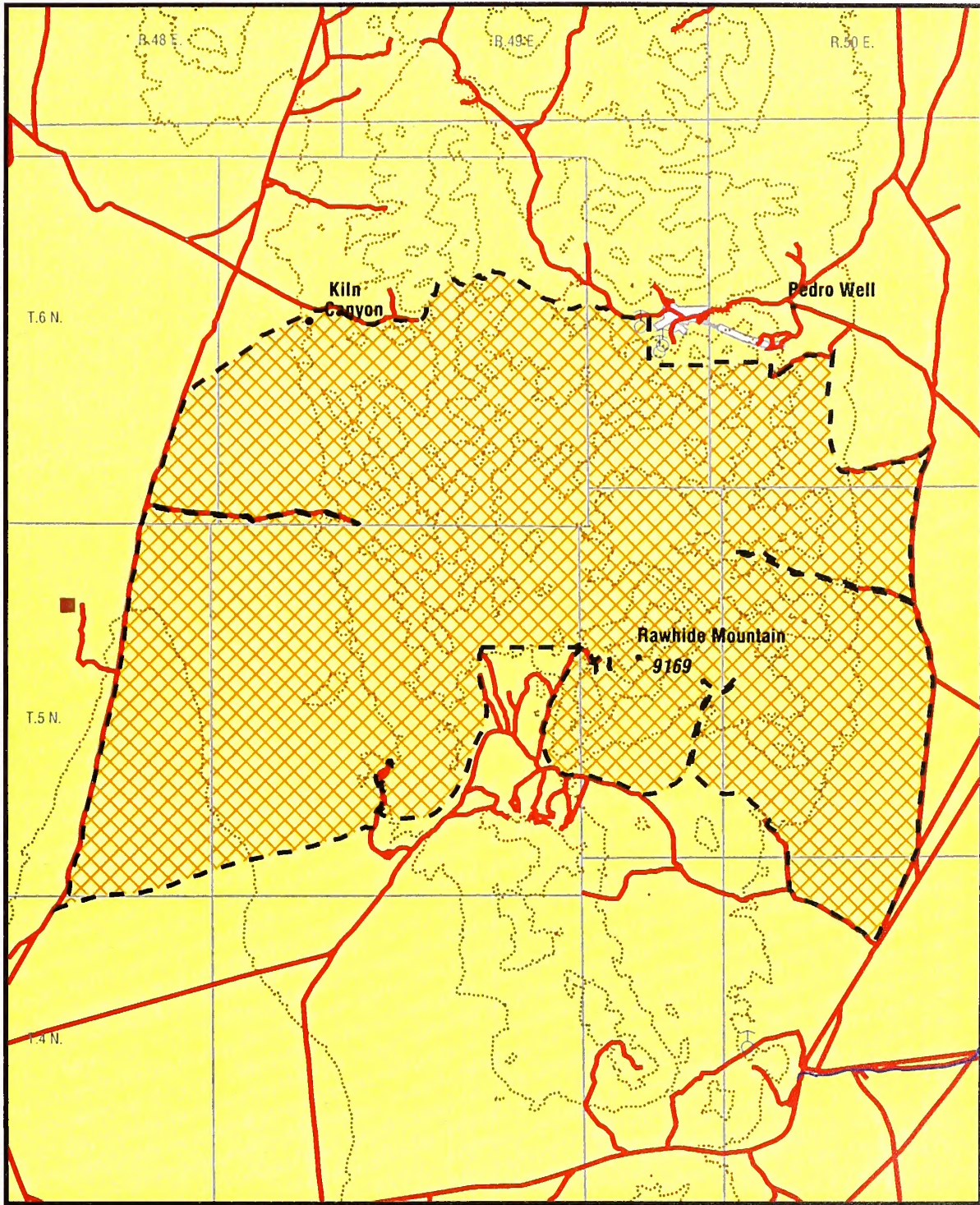
Public involvement has occurred throughout the wilderness review process. During formal public review of the draft EIS, a total of 6 comments specifically addressing this WSA were received. One individual and one state agency favored the Rawhide Mountain WSA designation and two individuals, one mining organization and one mining company opposed this designation.

Reasons supporting designation were: kilns on the National Historic Landmark Register, high scenic and cultural resources.

Reasons supporting nondesignation were: enormous mineral and energy potential, known occurrence of minerals (Tybo).

The State, during its consistency review, concurred with the Preferred Alternative of nonwilderness.

Rawhide Mountain Wilderness Study Area WSA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP



— Road
○ Spring

1 0 1 Miles

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

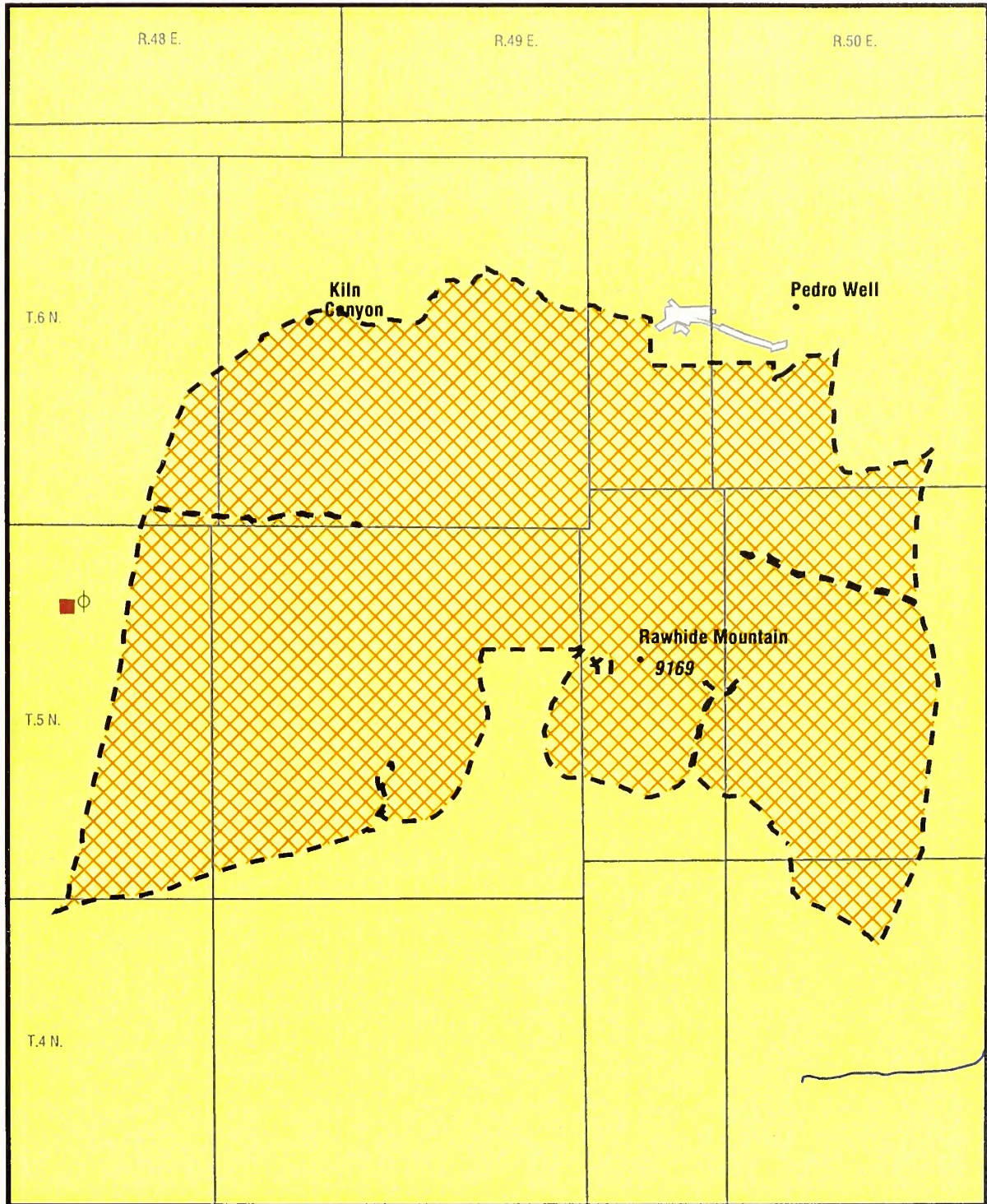
■ BLM
□ Private Land
■ Other Agency

- - Wilderness Study Area Boundary
XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-059

Rawhide Mountain Wilderness Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES



1 0 1 Miles

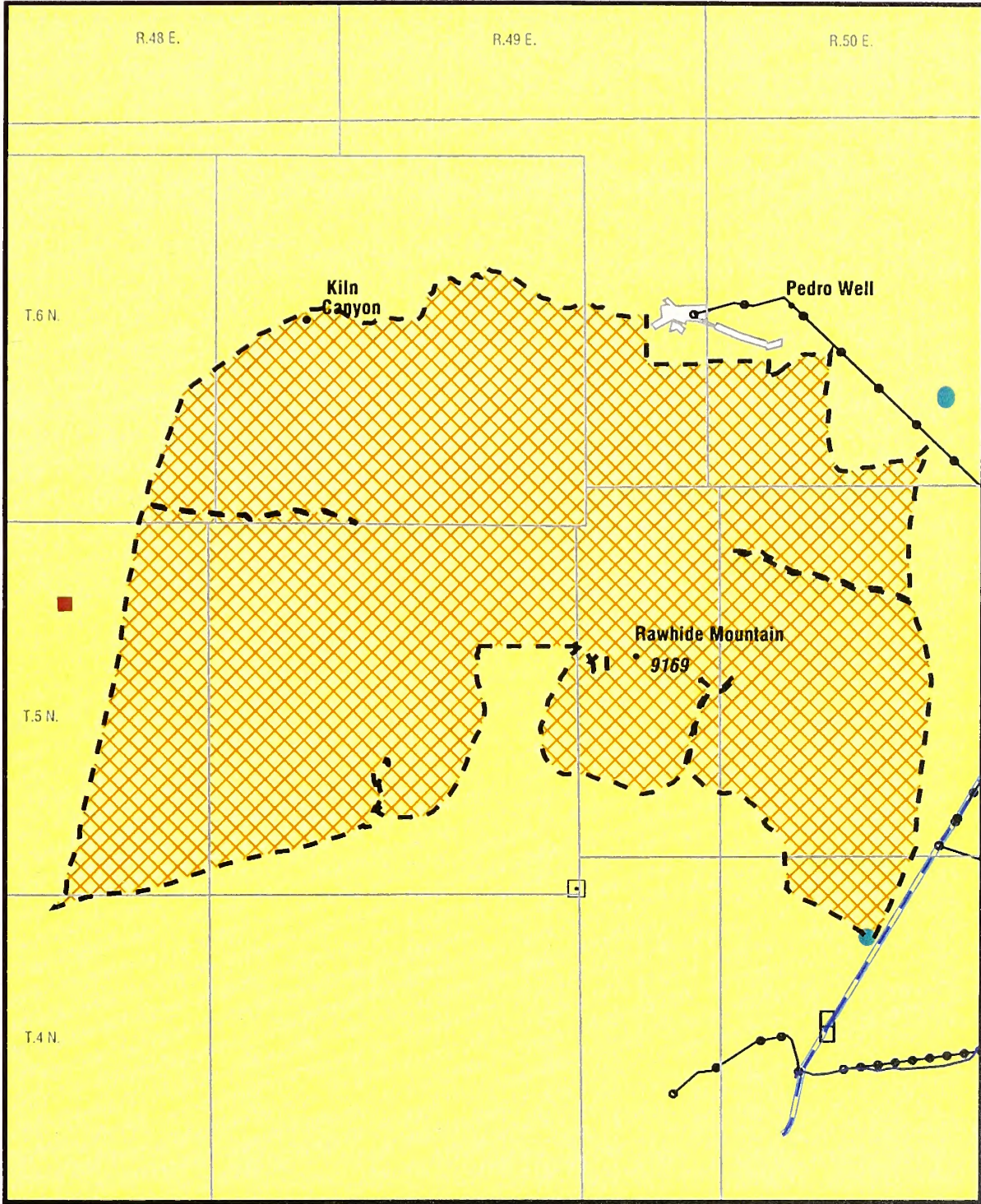
φ Drill Pad

- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable

NV-060-059

Rawhide Mountain Wilderness Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY



1 0 1 Miles

- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

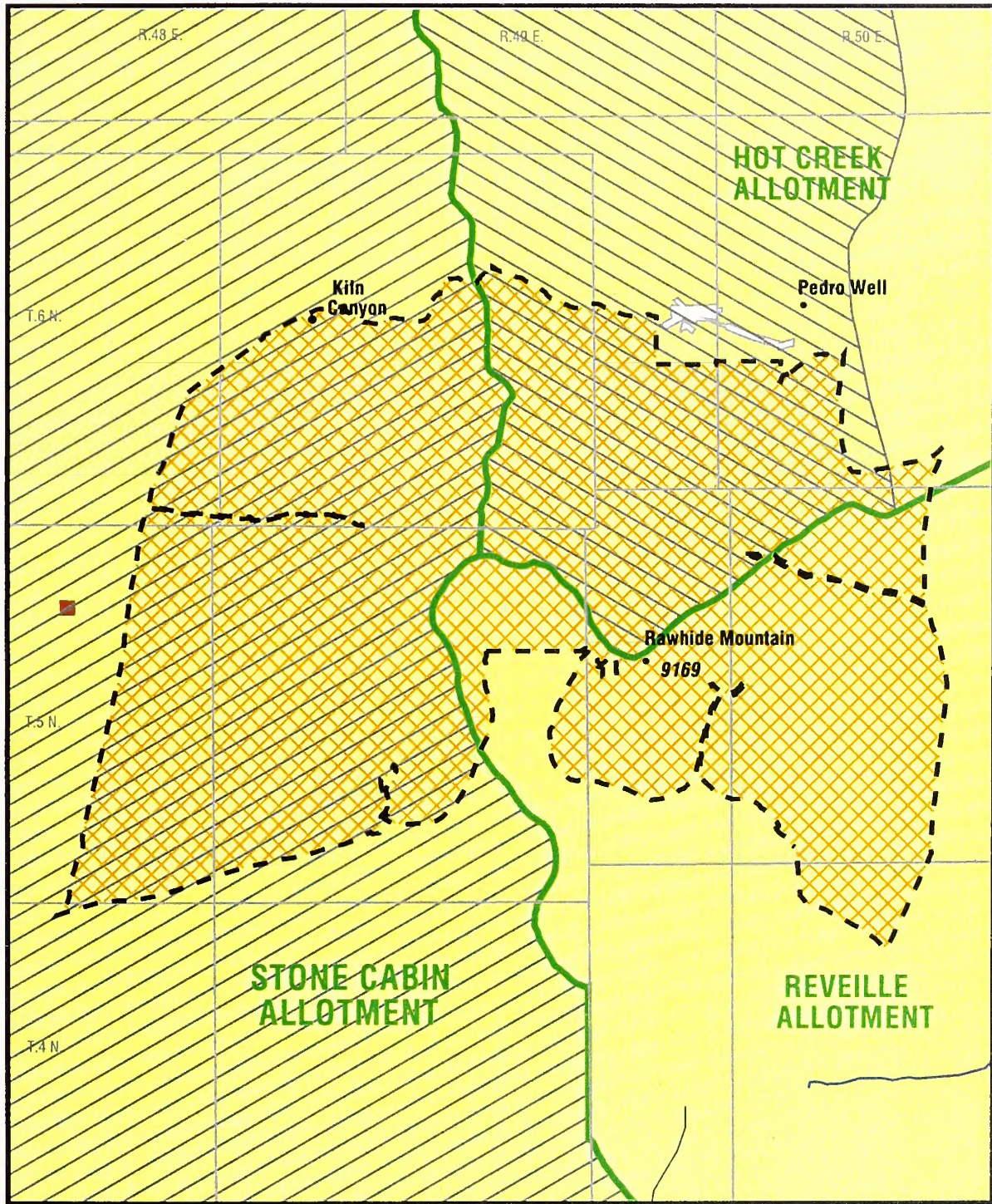
- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable

- Monitoring Well
- Gravel Pit
- Seismic Site
- Road
- Powerline
- Telephone Line



NV-060-059

Rawhide Mountain Wilderness Study Area ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCES



**Federally Listed
Threatened
and
Endangered
Species**

● Observation Site
NONE ON THIS MAP

■ BLM
□ Private Land
■ Other Agency

1 0 1 Miles

▨ Stone Cabin HMA
▨ Hot Creek HMA

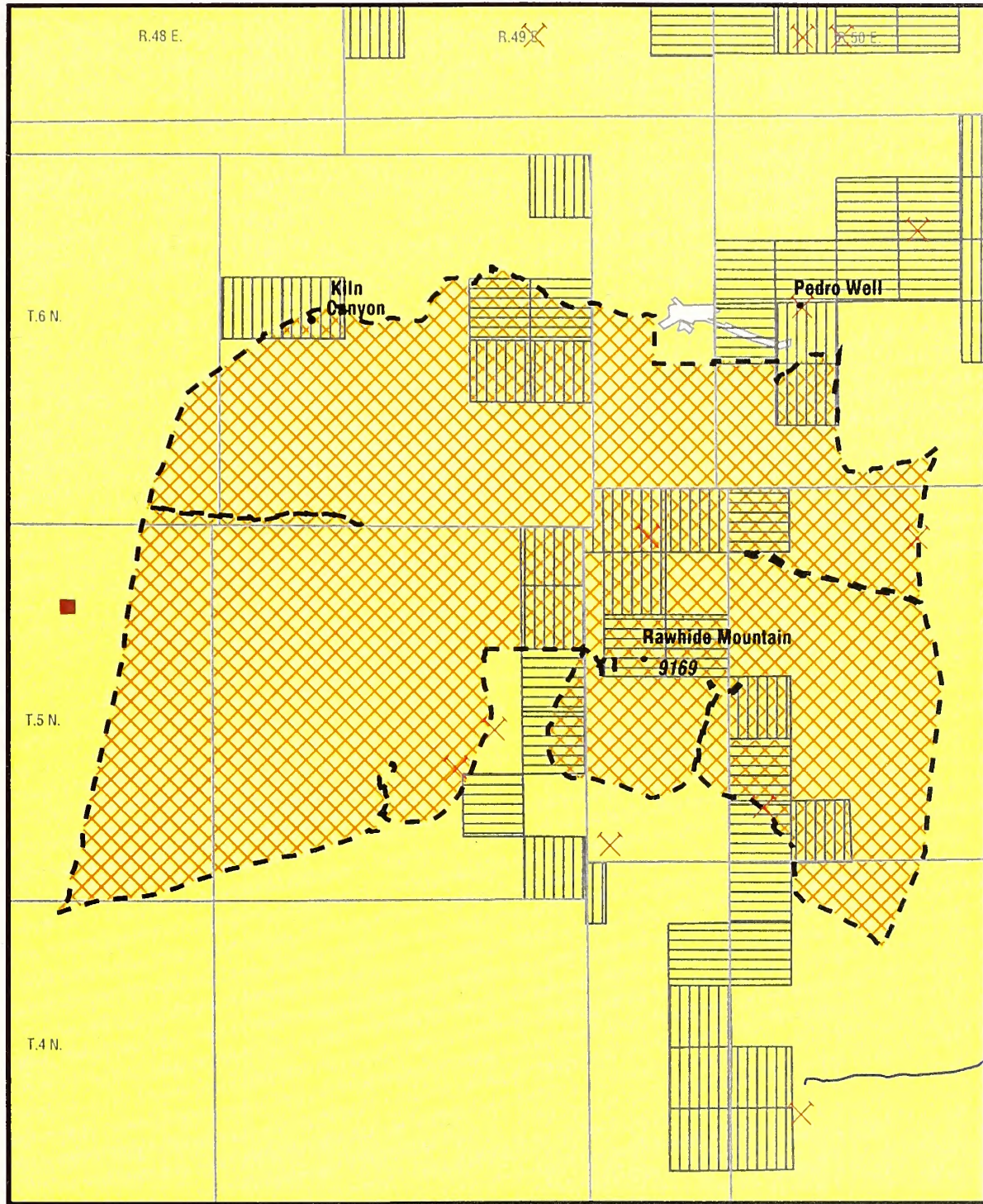
↗ Allotment
Boundary

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-059




Rawhide Mountain Wilderness Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS



 Mining Operations

1 0 1 Miles

Mining Claim Density - 3/97

-  1-5 Claims
-  6-35 Claims
-  36 or more Claims

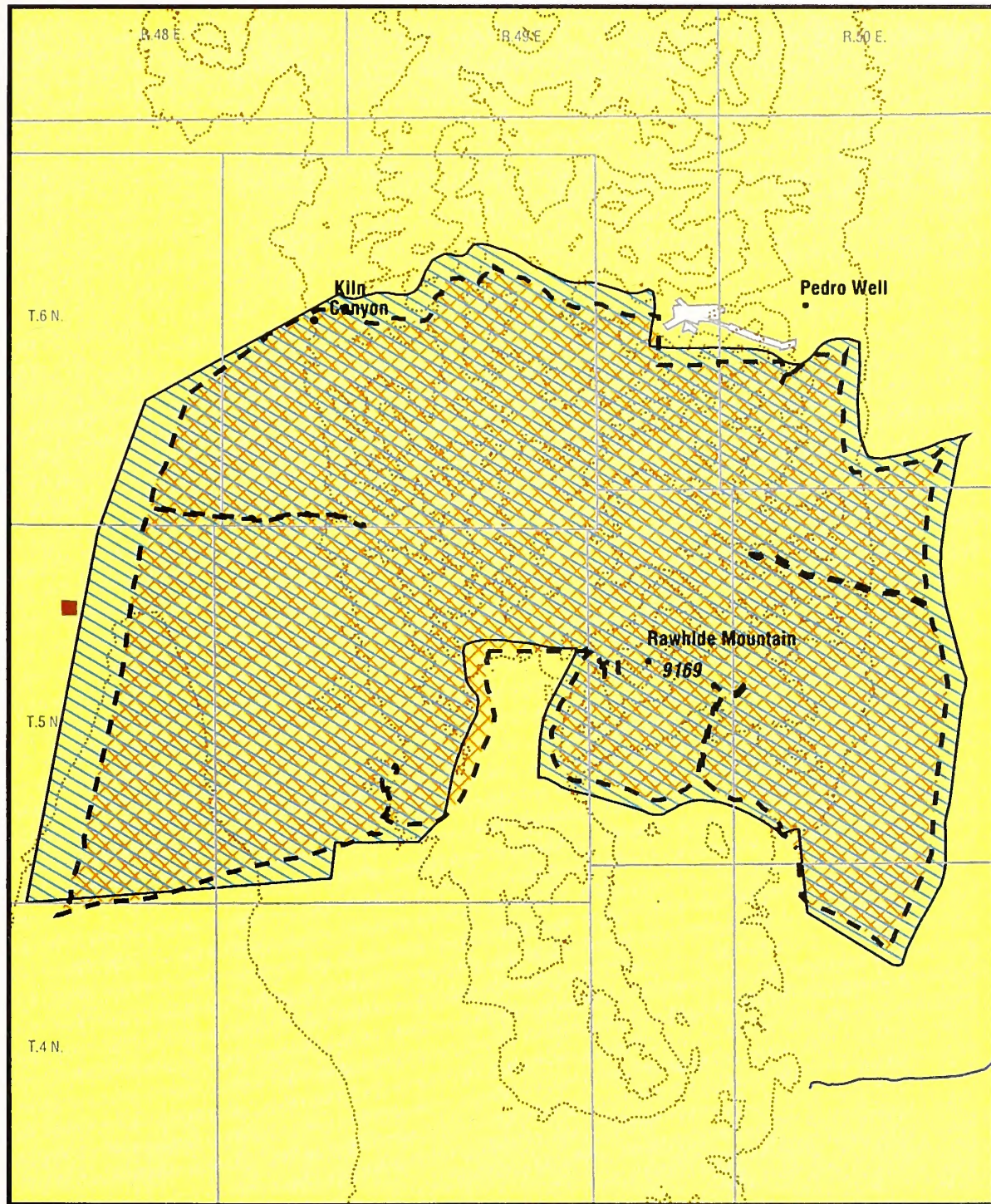
-  BLM
-  Private Land
-  Other Agency

-  Wilderness Study Area Boundary
-  Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-059

Rawhide Mountain Wilderness Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL



1 0 1 Miles

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

Mineral Potential

 Medium - Silver, Lead, Zinc

-  BLM
-  Private Land
-  Other Agency

-  Wilderness Study Area Boundary
-  Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-059

SOUTH REVELLE WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

1. THE STUDY AREA - 106,200 acres

The South Reveille WSA (NV-060-112) is located in northeastern Nye County, approximately 70 miles east of Tonopah, Nevada. The WSA includes 106,200 acres of BLM lands. There are no split estate lands or privately owned inholdings. This WSA is completely surrounded by BLM public lands. State Highway 375 forms about four miles of the north eastern boundary. The east, south, and west boundaries are unnamed dirt roads to the Reveille mine road, which is the northern boundary of the WSA. The South Reveille WSA is oblong shaped, measuring 17 miles north to south and from 6 to 13 miles east to west. The study area covers a good portion of the Reveille Range and Reveille Valley.

There were three alternatives analyzed in the EIS; an all wilderness alternative, a no wilderness alternative, and a partial wilderness alternative, which is the recommendation in this report.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 33,000 acres recommended for wilderness 73,200 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation for this WSA is to designate 33,000 acres as wilderness and release 73,200 acres for uses other than wilderness.

The wilderness values of the 33,000 acres recommended for wilderness designation are outstanding. The area is very natural and the only imprints of man's work are a water impoundment and five developed springs. The opportunities for solitude are outstanding due to the combination of topographic and vegetative features. The large canyons with steep walls, the small canyons with the many rock outcrops, spires and ridges affords many outstanding places to find seclusion. Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation add to the outstanding wilderness values. The abundance of large rock cliffs and outcrops offer a variety of challenges to the climber. The availability and variety of game species along with the good cover makes this area attractive to hunters. The 33,000 acres are capable of being managed as wilderness over the long-term. Conflicts with other resource uses are slight on the 33,000 acres recommended for wilderness.

The 73,200 acres, recommended for uses other than wilderness, have a higher value for potential mineral and energy exploration and development. The mineral and energy resource values within the area recommended for nonwilderness include: 28,160 acres rated good for the potential occurrence of base, ferrous, and precious metals; 55,000 acres rated good for the potential occurrence of oil and gas; and 40,960 acres rated good for the potential occurrence of geothermal resources.

Within the area not recommended for wilderness, there are 145 mining claims. Although there are no developed mines, one small precious metals mine is anticipated in the northern part of the South Reveille WSA. About 10 acres within the WSA would be disturbed, including one mile (1.5 acres) of road, one acre of mine site, three acres for the mill site and 4.5 acres of tailings.

In the foreseeable future, it is assumed there would be a small producing oil field, in the area not recommended for wilderness designation. About 40 acres inside the WSA would be disturbed, including three miles (5 acres) of roads, 20 acres of storage, and 15 acres for load out facilities. About 55,000 acres have a moderate potential for oil and gas.

Although 40,960 acres are rated good for potential occurrence of geothermal resources, no activity or interest has been demonstrated in this area and no action is anticipated.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: The area within the 33,000 acres recommended for wilderness designation is natural. The rugged mountainous core, which forms the heart of the WSA, is a thick, multi-ridged strip of steep-sided mountains rising to crests and flat-topped summits between 8,000 and 9,000 feet. Sheer cliffs form the mountain sides in many places and large canyons with steep walls run out to the edge of the valleys. These canyons are further divided by small canyons joining at all angles with rock outcroppings, spires, rock faces, and ridges with sheer vertical drops of hundreds of feet. Vegetative cover is pinyon pine/juniper at the upper elevations and northern desert shrub type at the lower elevations.

Within the 73,200 acres not recommended for wilderness are approximately five miles of vehicle ways, a five surface-acre water impoundment, and five spring developments. The vehicle ways are found in the valley areas. The water impoundment is located adjacent to the western boundary of the WSA. The spring developments and water troughs are located in the northern and central portions of the WSA. Total acreage involved is approximately twenty acres.

B. Solitude: The opportunities for solitude are outstanding due to the topographic and vegetative features. The large canyons with steep walls, the small canyons with the many rock outcrops, spires and ridges affords many outstanding places to find seclusion. The abundance of pinyon pine and juniper on the upper slopes and mountain tops add to the opportunities for solitude. The size and the shape of the WSA would offer the user a nearly endless choice of secluded spots.

Seclusion, in the 73,200 acres not recommended for wilderness, is some what limited.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are outstanding. The WSA provides for hiking, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding, mountain or rock climbing, photography, bird watching and sightseeing.

Recreationists could choose to camp in a sagebrush covered flat and hills, sagebrush covered hillsides and canyons, or pinyon pine and juniper covered mesas and mountains. Potable water sources are present along the eastern side of the range and in the central portion of the WSA. Two specific attractions in the WSA would be Fang Ridge and Reveille Peak. Trips along the length of the range would be challenging and offer spectacular views. Trips across the WSA would provide a transect of several Great Basin Province ecosystems.

The abundance of large cliffs and outcroppings offer a variety of rock climbing routes. Many of the mountain tops are accessible, from certain directions, only by technical climbing routes.

Due to the large size of the WSA, horseback trips could vary considerably in length. Water is available at springs within the area. Horses could be turned out to graze, but would have to be hobbled to prevent them from being run off by wild horses present in the area.

The terrain and vegetation are such that a hunter could move freely through much of the WSA. Many of the hillsides and all the valley bottom lands are covered with sparse, low growing desert plants. The rock cliffs and outcroppings around Fang Ridge and Reveille Peak are impressive. Sunrise and sunsets turn the rock faces into rainbows of pastel colors. Wildlife sightseeing opportunities are readily available with mule deer, pronghorn antelope, coyote, redtail hawk, prairie falcon, mountain loon, wild horses, and numerous other birds and reptiles of a wide variety present.

D. Special Features: No special features have been identified within the WSA.

4. MANAGEABILITY

The 33,000 acre rugged mountainous core of the WSA, can be managed as wilderness. The boundaries generally follow the base of the mountains. The central core is steep-sided mountains which limit travel by vehicles to the alluvial fans that penetrate the WSA.

The 73,200 acre alluvial fans, not recommended for wilderness designation, can be managed as wilderness but have a potential for impairment of wilderness values due to future mineral and energy activities. Also, the area is classified as having 55,000 acres of moderate potential for oil and gas.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

The U.S. Bureau of Mines and the U.S. Geological Service studied the 33,000 acres recommended for wilderness designation with the following identified mineral resources and mineral resource potential: A single mineralized area was identified in the study area. This area is located within a two square mile area just inside the southern boundary of the WSA as having a moderate potential for gold and silver in a highly fractured quartz vein. The surrounding six square miles are identified as having a low potential for the same metals. The area east of Reveille Peak has little evidence of mineralization. The Fang Ridge area has little evidence of mineralization. The 33,000 acres within the South Reveille WSA, recommended for wilderness designation, have little chance for oil and gas accumulations. No hot springs are present at the surface and no geothermal leases are present in the WSA.

The 73,200 acres not recommended for wilderness designation is classified as having 28,160 acres with moderate potential for metallic mineral resources. Although there are no developed mines, one small precious metals mine is anticipated in the northern part of the South Reveille WSA.

Also, the area, not recommended for wilderness designation, is classified as having 55,000 acres of moderate potential for oil and gas. It is assumed there would be a small producing oil field, in the foreseeable future.

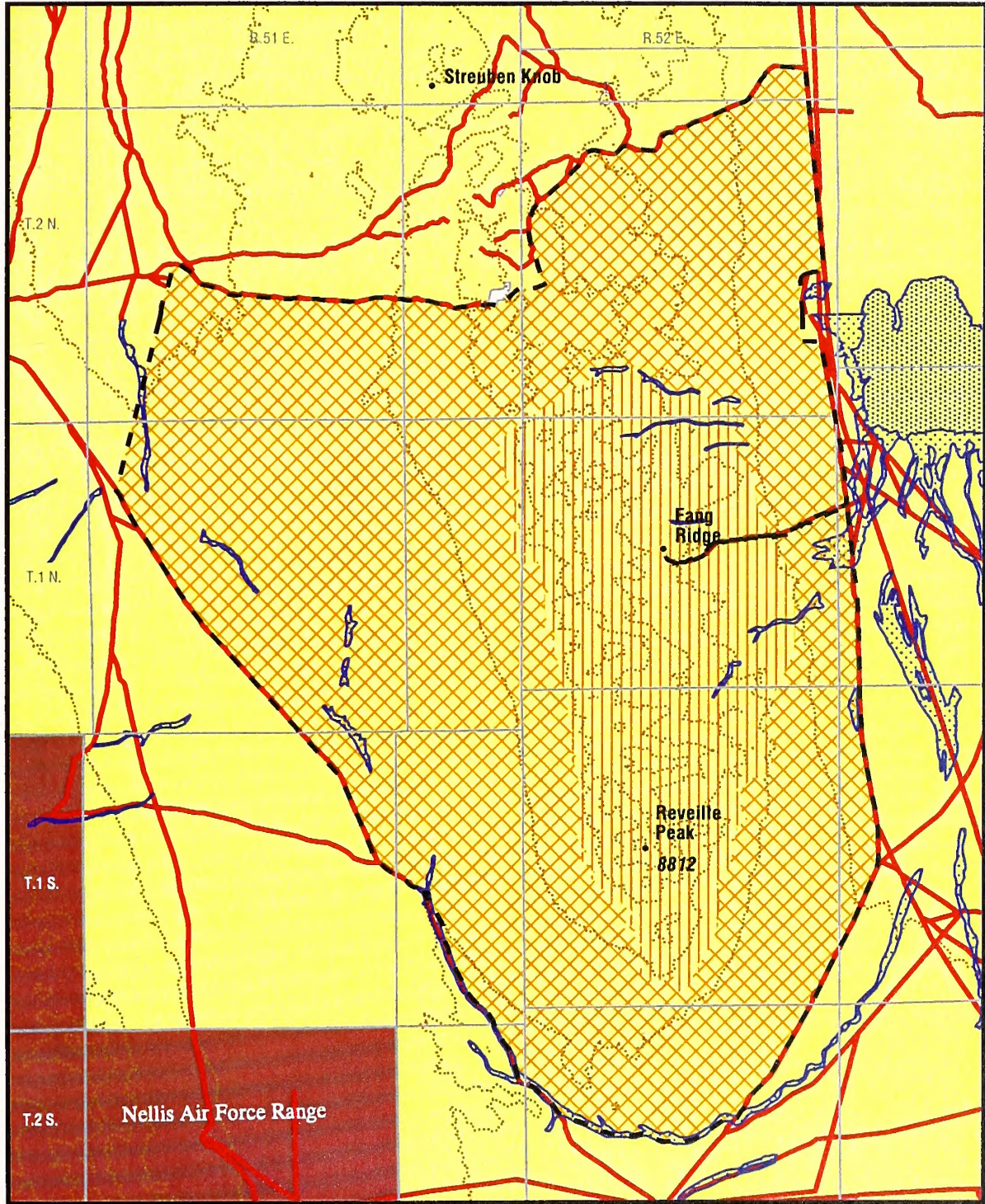
6. SUMMARY OF WSA-SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

During the inventory phase, three comments were received which did not favor wilderness study area designation. Three other comments were received which favored the area being designated a wilderness study area.

Two public hearings were held during the public review period on the draft environmental impact statement, Tonopah, Nevada, June 9, 1982, and Reno, Nevada, June 7, 1982. A total of 28 comments were received. Of these, 25 comments favored wilderness designation and three comments favored a nonsuitable recommendation for the South Reveille WSA. Opposition to the designation stated the areas favorable geology, over 90 mining claims are present, and return to multiple-use management due to enormous mineral and energy potential. Support for wilderness designation cited an outstanding area, follow manageability alternative, larger area has greater benefit, untrammelled basin and range topography, pristine area with very high wilderness values, one of the few valley areas in Nevada that still qualifies as wilderness, add diversity to the National Wilderness Preservation System, and wilderness designation should encompass the valley not just the mountainous core.

Two State agencies commented in favor of wilderness designation for this WSA. The Nevada Division of State Parks confirmed the BLM analysis. The Nevada Division of Mineral Resources stated that the southwest corner of the WSA be recommended as wilderness due to the low mineral potential. The State, during its consistency review, concurred with the Preferred Alternative.

South Reveille Wilderness Study Area WSA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP



— Road
○ Spring

1 0 1 Miles

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

☐ Dry Lake
— Wash

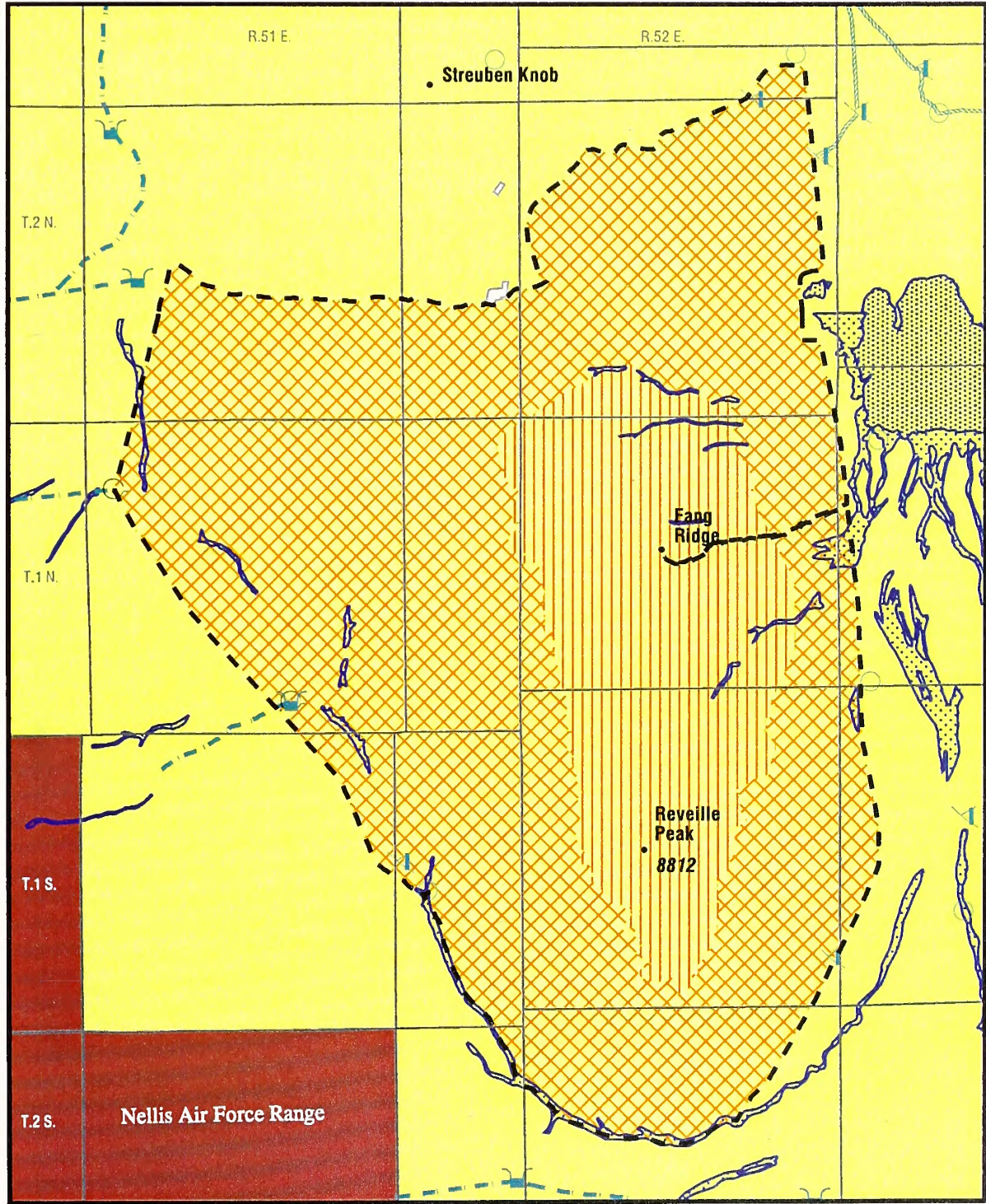
☐ BLM
☐ Private Land
☐ Other Agency

— — Wilderness Study Area Boundary
▨ Recommended Non-Suitable
▨ Recommended Suitable



NV-060-112

South Reveille Wilderness Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES



1 0 1 Miles

Dry Lake
 Wash

- Well
- Corral
- Trough
- Reservoir
- Pipeline
- Ditch

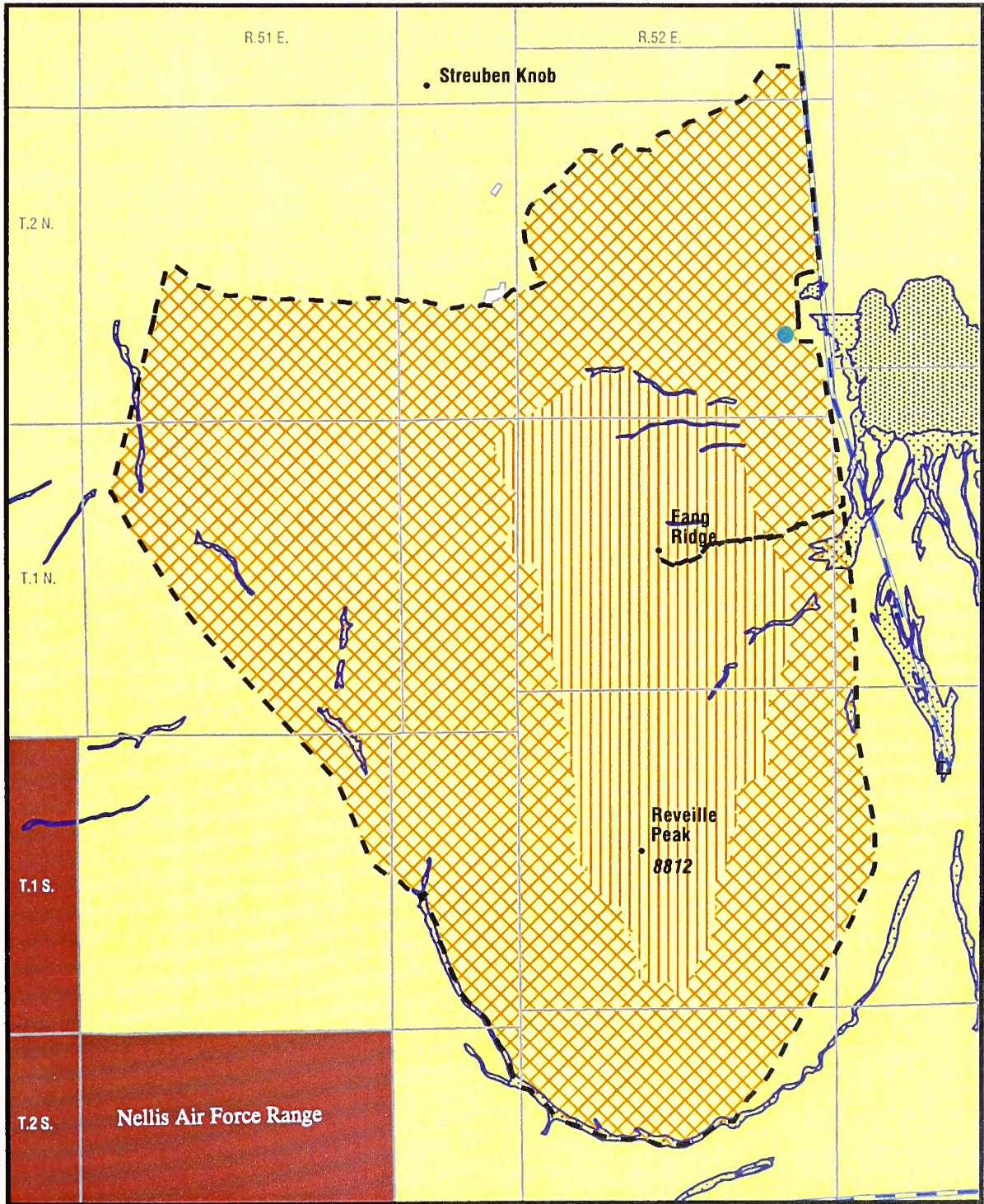
- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable
- Recommended Suitable



NV-060-112

South Reveille Wilderness Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY






1 0 1 Miles

 Dry Lake Wash

 Monitoring Well
 Road

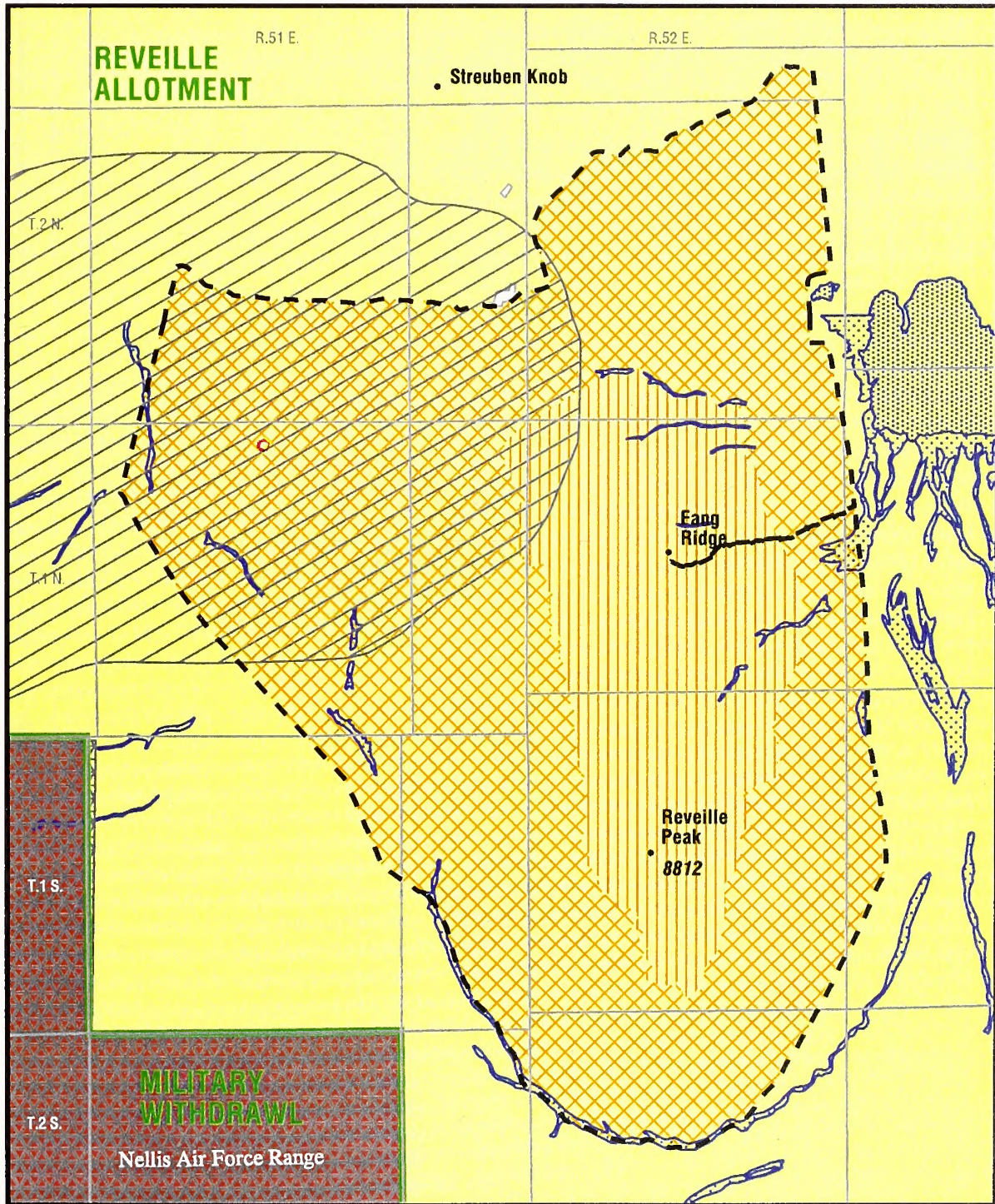
 BLM
 Private Land
 Other Agency

 Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable
 Recommended Suitable



NV-060-112

South Reveille Wilderness Study Area ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCENCES



**Federally Listed
Threatened
and
Endangered
Species**

● Observation Site
NONE ON THIS MAP

- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

1 0 1 Miles

- Reveille HMA
- Nellis HMA

Allotment
Boundary

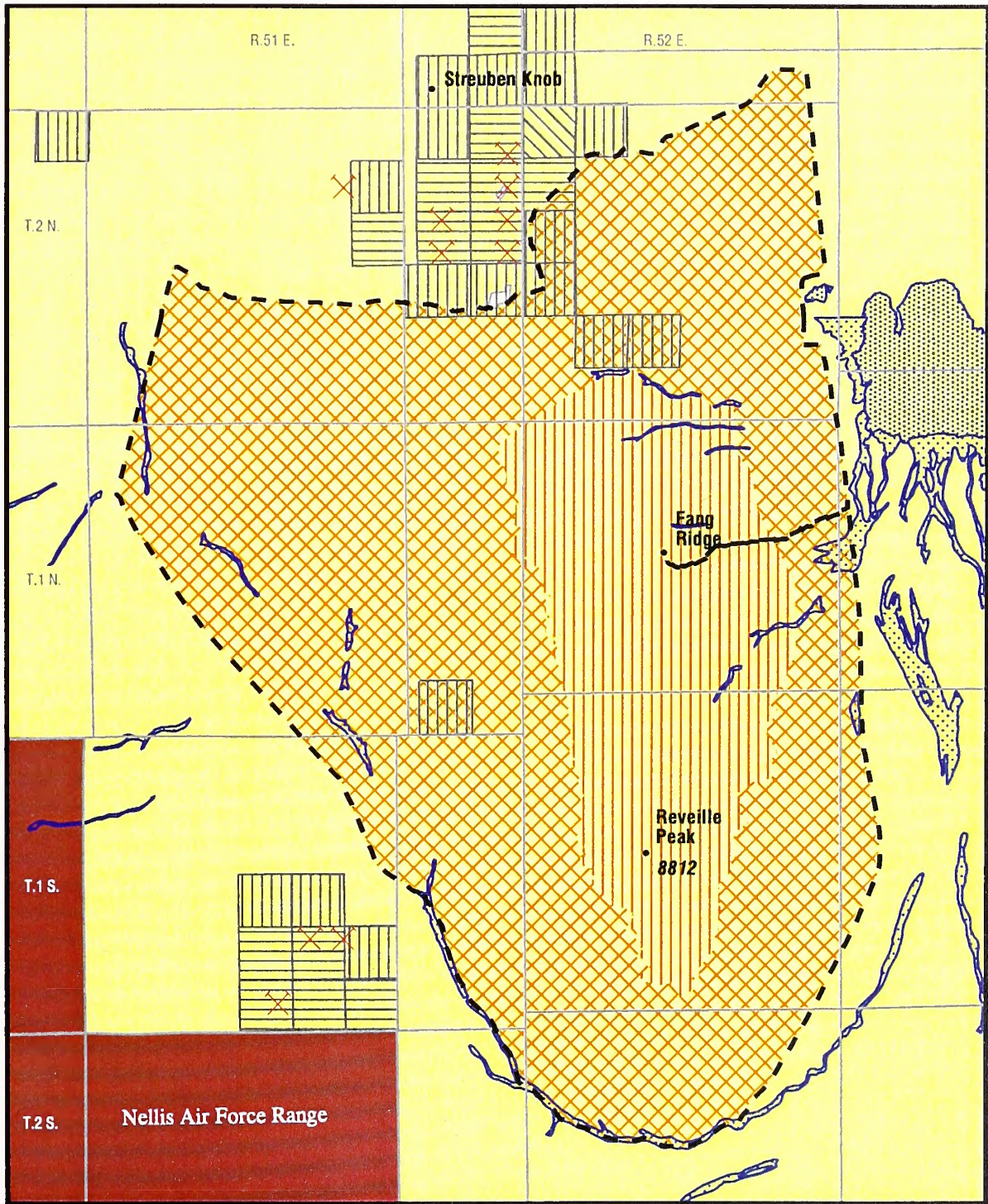
- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable
- Recommended Suitable

Dry Lake
Wash



NV-060-112

South Reveille Wilderness Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS






 Mining Operations




1 0 1 Miles

 Dry Lake
Wash

Mining Claim Density - 3/97

-  1-5 Claims
-  6-35 Claims
-  36 or more Claims

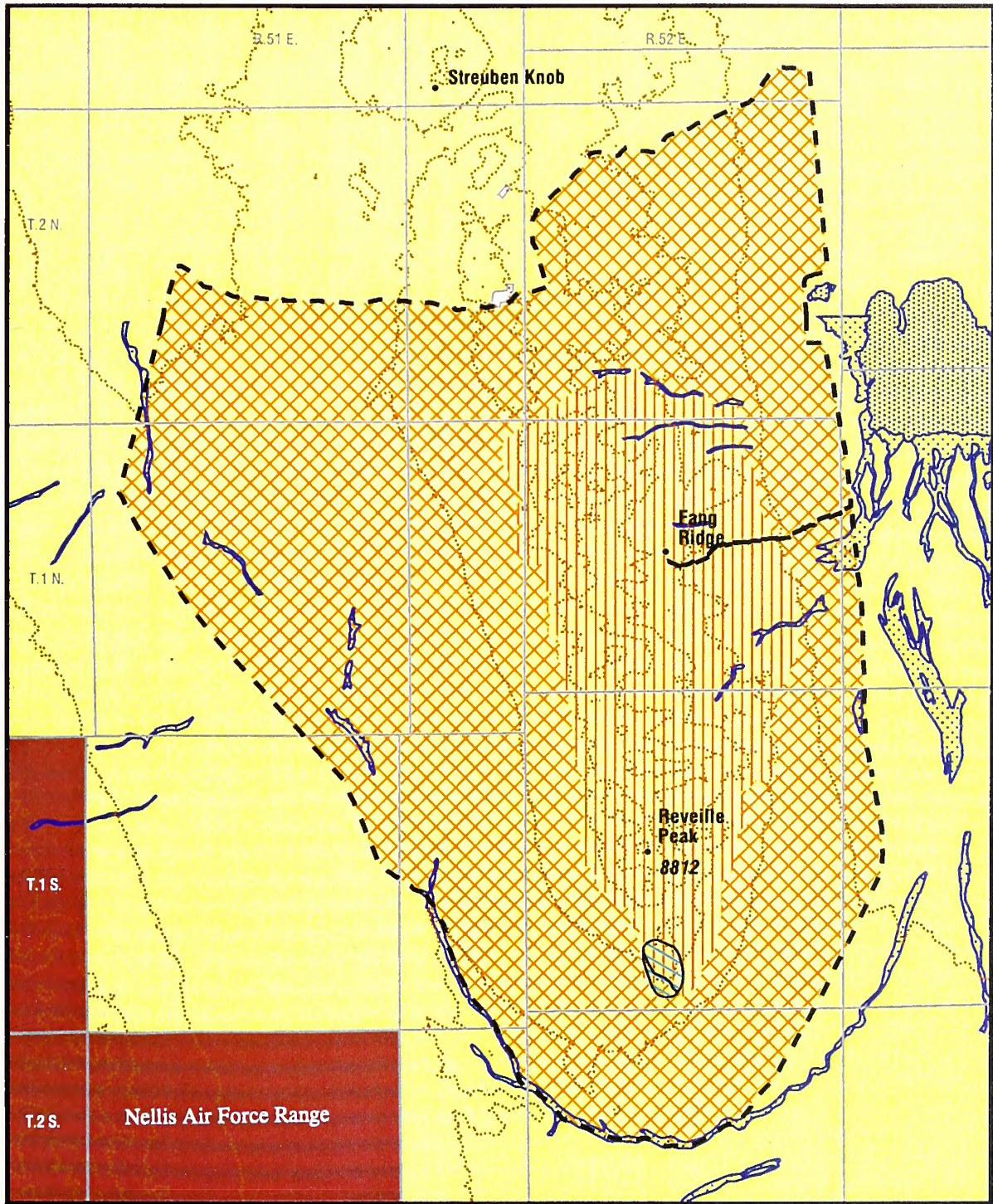
-  BLM
-  Private Land
-  Other Agency

-  Wilderness Study Area Boundary
-  Recommended Non-Suitable
-  Recommended Suitable



NV-060-112

South Reveille Wilderness Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL




1 0 1 Miles




CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

 Dry Lake
 Wash

Mineral Potential

 Medium - Gold, Silver

-  BLM
-  Private Land
-  Other Agency

-  Wilderness Study Area Boundary
-  Recommended Non-Suitable
-  Recommended Suitable



NV-060-112

PALISADE MESA WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

I. THE STUDY AREA - 99,550 acres

The Palisade Mesa WSA (NV-060-142/162) is located in northeastern Nye County approximately 65 miles east of Tonopah and includes 99,500 acres of BLM lands. The Palisade Mesa WSA lies in the Pancake Range, adjacent to The Wall WSA. Roughly rectangular in shape, the WSA is approximately 18 miles north to south and nine miles east to west. The boundary follows various contour lines southwest from Sandy Summit for about one and a half miles to the fenceline, following the fence to the unnamed dirt road that is the western boundary. The Nyala Wash forms the southern boundary. The southeast corner is formed by a combination of a point to point and a land net line. The eastern and the rest of the northern boundaries generally follow unnamed dirt roads.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 66,110 acres recommended for wilderness 33,440 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation of this WSA is to designate 66,110 acres as wilderness and release 33,440 acres for uses other than wilderness. The recommendation for wilderness designation is due to the quality of wilderness values, the lack of man caused disturbances, the lack of competing uses or other resource values, and the area's manageability.

The area recommended for wilderness is in nearly pristine condition. The area's rugged topography has been primarily responsible for the perpetuation of naturalness and also contributes to the scenic quality, especially on the west side where the sheer cliff walls rise up from the valley floor. The view from the top of the mesa looking east is of the unique geologic structures associated with the lunar crater volcanic field. Immediately south of palisade mesa is an area of steep walled canyons carved through solid rock. Numerous small washes and gullies interweave throughout the area. During the infrequent periods of rainfall, the canyons are host to dozens of waterfalls, some as tall as 100 feet. The black beauty mesa rises to the south of the canyons and falls off precipitously into Railroad valley. Huge boulder fields cap the mesas and provide habitat for desert bighorn sheep populations. The area also supports nesting populations of prairie falcons while numerous other raptors can be commonly observed. The area is host to only scattered patches of trees clinging to the sparse soils covering the volcanic rock.

Hiking and camping are difficult because of the terrain and unpredictable sources of water on the mesa. The steep mesa walls are latticed with numerous chimneys, spires, clefts, and boulder fields beckoning climbers of all skill levels. Nature studies are very good due to the undisturbed nature of the area.

Access to any form of ground based vehicle is virtually impossible. The low potential for energy and mineral development and the absence of private inholdings means that the area would be highly manageable. Further enhancing its manageability of the area: steep, rugged, cliffs abruptly rising from the surrounding valley floors would cause the area to be largely self-protecting.

The 33,440 acres recommended for uses other than wilderness have a higher potential for mineral and energy exploration and development and low wilderness values. Manageability of these areas would be more difficult due to the open, easily accessible nature of the area where control of off-road vehicle travel would require more frequent patrolling.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: Within the 66,110 acres recommended for wilderness, the area is predominantly natural. When in the core of the WSA, the forces of nature dominate the senses. The herds of desert bighorn

sheep, raptors soaring on warm air rising against the fortress-like walls, and the prehistoric sense of volcanic craters, cinder cones, and lava flows all join to intensify the feeling of naturalness and antiquity of the backcountry. The only evidence of man's work is evident along the boundaries of the WSA. Within the core of the WSA there are none.

Several two track ways extend into the WSA from the eastern border and the toe of the northern mesa wall contains two spring developments.

B. Opportunities for Solitude: The majority of the WSA is composed of rocky, sheer-sided mesas. Changes in elevation are abrupt, creating a varied and interesting topography. Canyons into the mesas are deep and rugged shielding the visitor from virtually all. Although the terrain on top of the mesas is rather flat and rolling, innumerable drainages and gullies throughout the area combined with enormous boulder fields screen much of the area. The height of the mesas also work to the advantage of providing solitude from whatever activities may be occurring in the valley bottoms. The limited and unpredictable sources of water on the mesas help to disperse recreation so as to promote separation amongst users.

The flat valley portions along the west and south contain little topographic variation, with relief limited to shallow gullies. These areas provide little solitude from surrounding activities.

Secluded spots are primarily a product of excellent topographical variation and occur throughout the WSA.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are available within the WSA. The area is superb for hiking, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding, mountain and rock climbing, photography, bird watching, and sightseeing.

Vertical cliffs along the mesas provide some challenge to a hiker, but the effort to reach the mesa is rewarded by close encounters with desert bighorn sheep and raptors on the wind. Hiking in one of the many secluded canyon dissecting the WSA provides the visitor with challenging adventure rewarded by the thought that many of the steep, rocky draws may never had been visited before. The unit is large enough to accommodate an extended backpacking trip, although lack of predictable water will test the backcountry savvy of those desiring to spend a star night on the mesa top.

Rock climbing opportunities abound along the precipitous cliffs of the mesa. Several areas along the north mesa walls provide opportunity for multi-pitch technical climbs.

Landforms are stark and eye catching. Sculptured rock formations, interesting vistas, and rocky canyons all add to the scenic values and provide excellent subjects for photography. Lunar Crater, a maar volcano listed on the National Natural Landmark Register, is located within this WSA. Basalt, multi-colored obsidian, volcanic cinders and other rocks of volcanic origin are ever present in the WSA and provide for enticing contrasting in color and form with the surrounding mesa walls.

D. Special Features: The WSA is unique in its primeval character. The area is covered with many unusual land forms relating to its volcanic heritage. Lunar Crater, an enormous hole in the earth 3,800 feet in diameter and almost 450 feet deep, formed when hot volcanic gases exploded. Numerous cinder cones dominate the valley forms. The area is less acceptable to livestock which frequent the valley floors adjoining the WSA. The result is vegetation in nearly pristine condition.

4. MANAGEABILITY

The Palisade Mesa wilderness is manageable as wilderness. Manageability is enhanced by the lack of private or State inholdings within the WSA, steep, rugged walls of volcanic rock abruptly rising from the surrounding valleys; cause the area to be largely self-protecting. The exception to this would be along the

southeastern boundary where the land rises more gently from the adjoining hills.

Management of the areas not recommended for wilderness would also be possible although more patrols would be necessary. Several cherrystemmed routes exist in these areas.

The portion of the Palisade Mesa WSA not recommended for wilderness designation contains 30 oil and gas leases covering approximately 38,400 acres and one mining claim.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

The Bureau of Mines and the U.S. Geological Survey performed a mineral investigation for the 66,110 acres of the Palisade Mesa WSA recommended as suitable for wilderness designation concluding: There has been no mining activity in or within two miles of the wilderness study area. No mining claims are present. No metallic mineral resources were identified, however, antimony, copper, gold, lead, silver, and zinc were mined within 15 miles of the study areas but from different geologic environments.

No drilling or oil and gas exploration is known to have occurred in the wilderness study area. Oil and gas resources are unlikely. Geothermal resources exist along major basin and range faults in Railroad Valley, but are not known to occur within the wilderness study area.

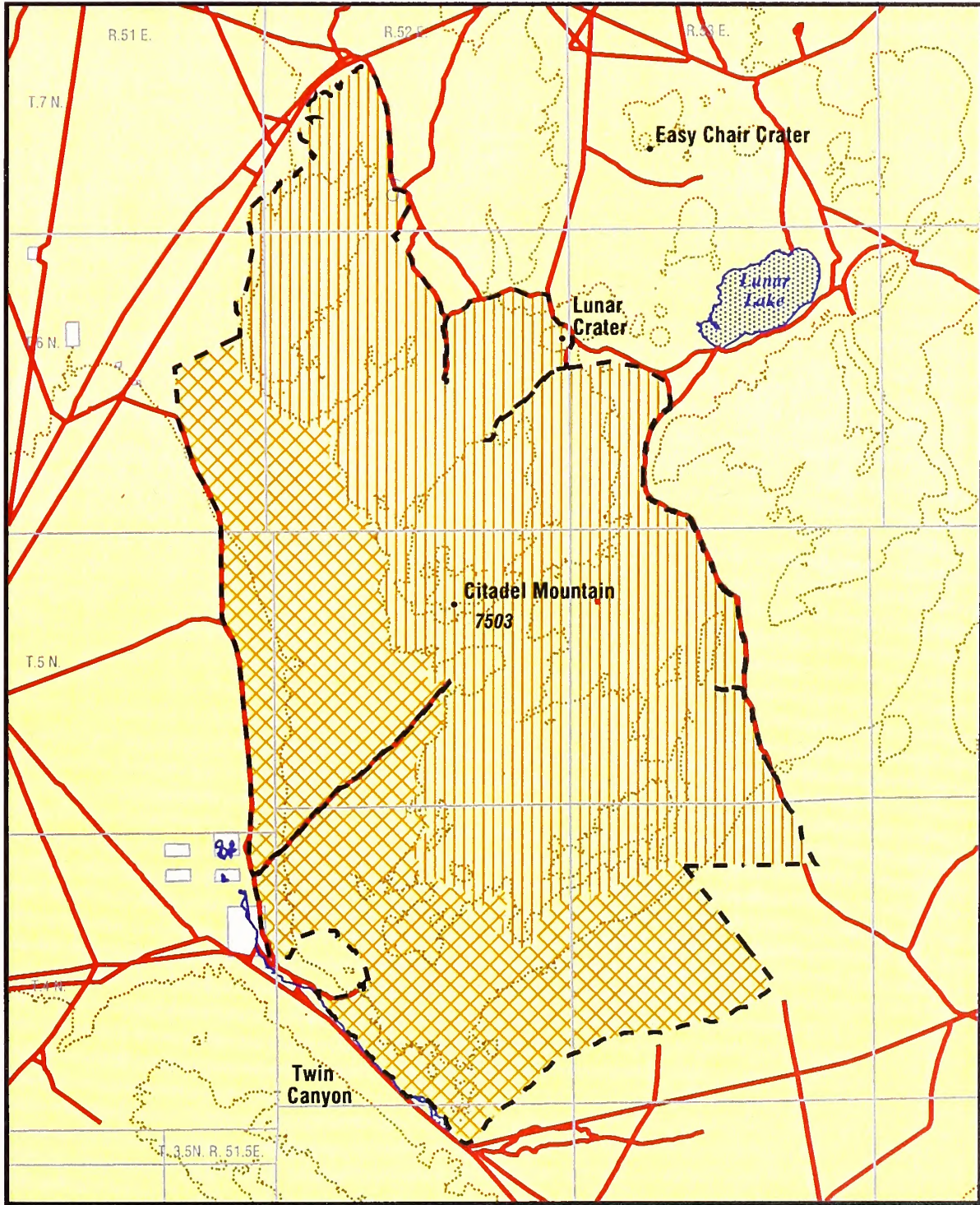
The 33,440 acres not recommended for wilderness designation has a high potential for mineral and energy exploration and development. The mineral and energy resource values include 4,160 acres rated good for the potential occurrence of base, ferrous, and precious metals and 7,360 acres rated good for the potential occurrence of oil and gas.

6. SUMMARY OF WSA-SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

During the inventory phase, nine comments specifically addressing this WSA were received. Three comments supported wilderness designation and six others supported nonwilderness designation. During formal public review of the draft EIS, a total of 16 comments on the Palisade Mesa WSA were received. Nine individuals supported wilderness designation and three individuals, one mining company, and one mining organization recommended nonwilderness designation. Those supporting wilderness designation commented on the outstanding naturalness of the area, the accessibility of the area, the unusual slickrock and rock outcrops which form park like breaks, the diversity of wildlife and plant life, that this is the Southwest's prime rapture area for rare predatory birds, it includes the Lunar Crater National Natural Landmark and Nevada Natural Heritage Landmark, it is a wonderland of smooth and polished rocks in huge slabs. Two comments supported combining the Palisade Mesa WSA with The Wall WSA. Those opposing wilderness designation commented on the enormous mineral and energy potential of the area and if roads must be closed to make a WSA manageable, it should not be wilderness.

Two State agencies commented in favor of wilderness designation. The Nevada Division of State Parks confirmed the BLM analysis. The State, during its consistency review, concurred with the Preferred Alternative.

Palisade Mesa Wilderness Study Area WSA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP



— Road
○ Spring

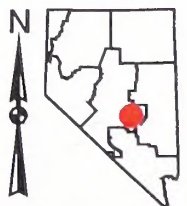
1 0 1 Miles

☐ Dry Lake
☐ Lake

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

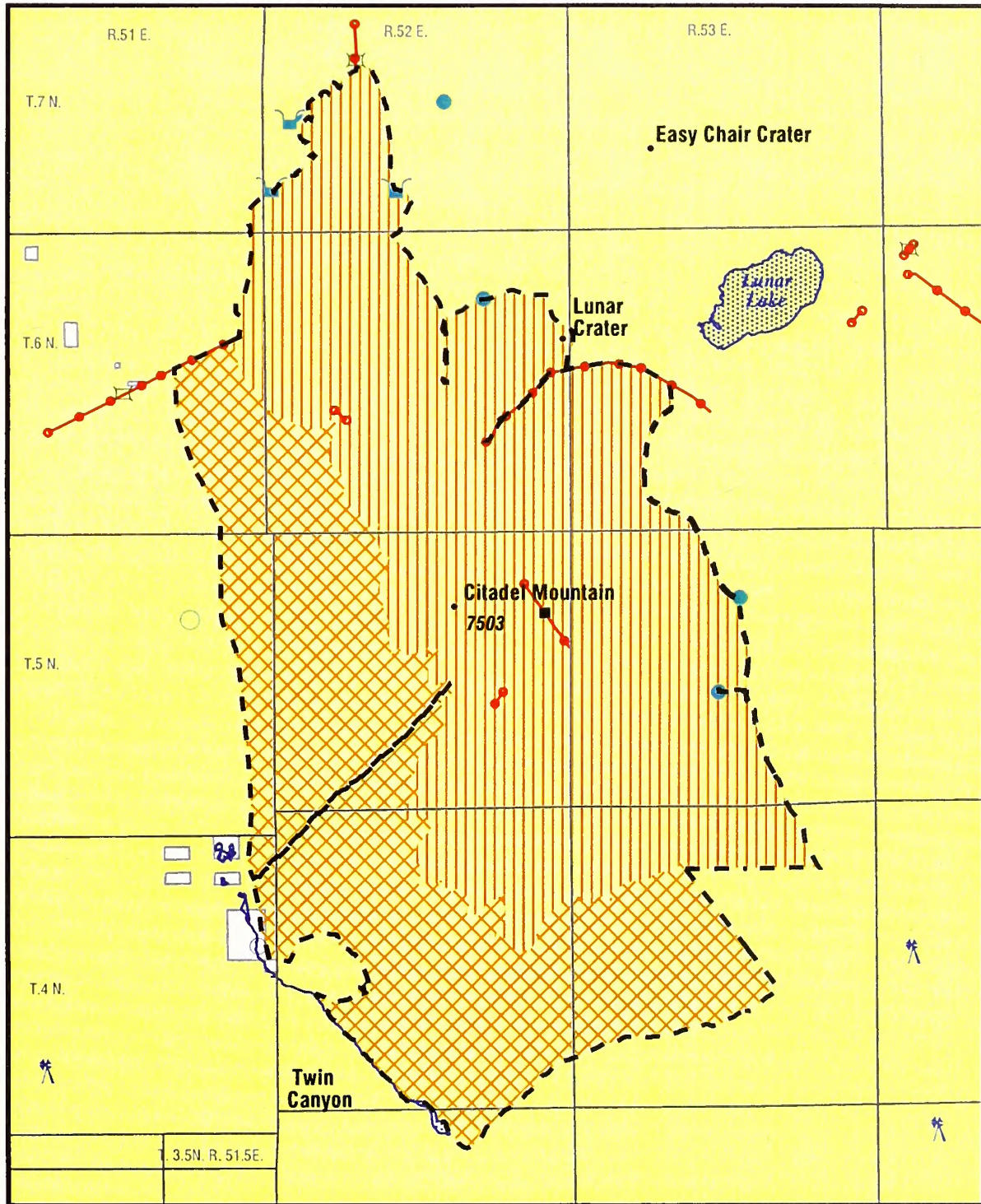
☐ BLM
☐ Private Land

--- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
☒ Recommended Non-Suitable
||| Recommended Suitable



NV-060-142/162

Palisade Mesa Wilderness Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES



1 0 1 Miles

Dry Lake
 Lake

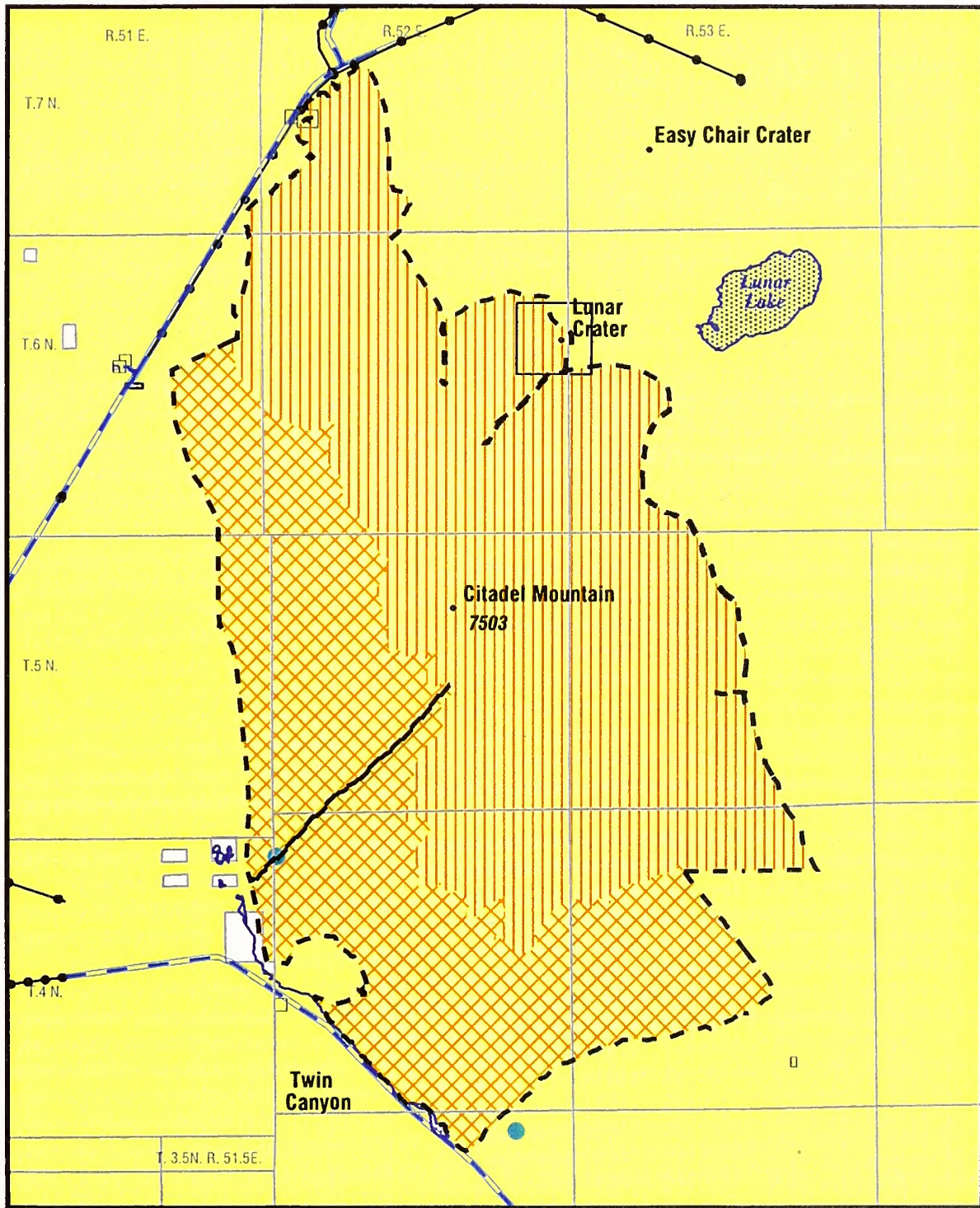
○ Well	⊠ Cattleguard	—●— Fence
● Storage Tank	⚙ Windmill	—■— Pipeline
■ Gate	⌊ Trough	

BLM
 Private Land

- - Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable
 Recommended Suitable



Palisade Mesa Wilderness Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY



1 0 1 Miles

Dry Lake
 Lake

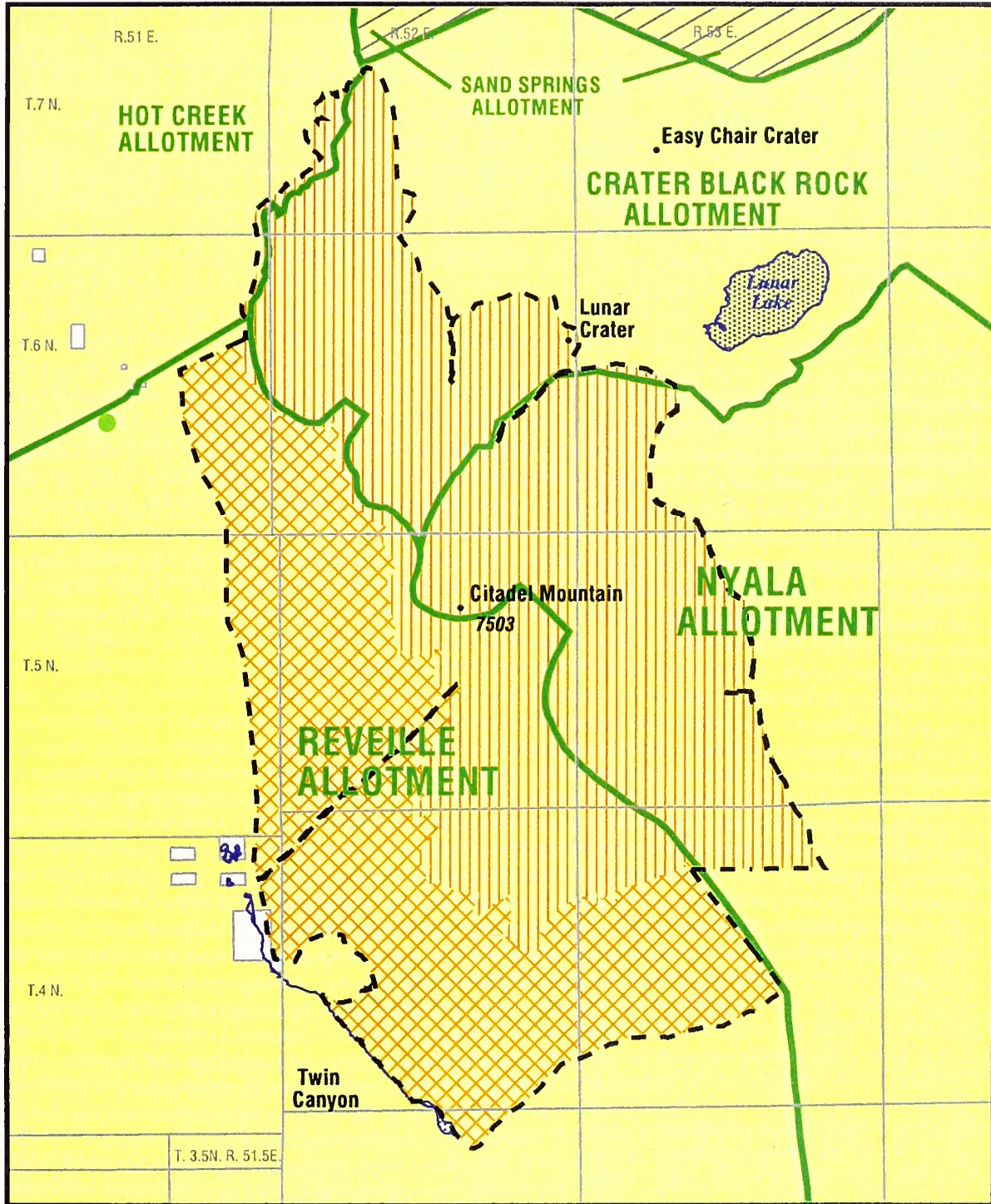
- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Material Site | USAF Withdrawal |
| Monitoring Well | Road |
| Lunar Crater | Powerline |
| R & PP Lease | Telephone Line |

BLM
 Private Land

Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable
 Recommended Suitable



Palisade Mesa Wilderness Study Area ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCENCES



**Federally Listed
Threatened
and
Endangered
Species**

**Observation Site
- Moapa Dace**

BLM
 Private Land

1 0 1 Miles

Sand Springs West HMA

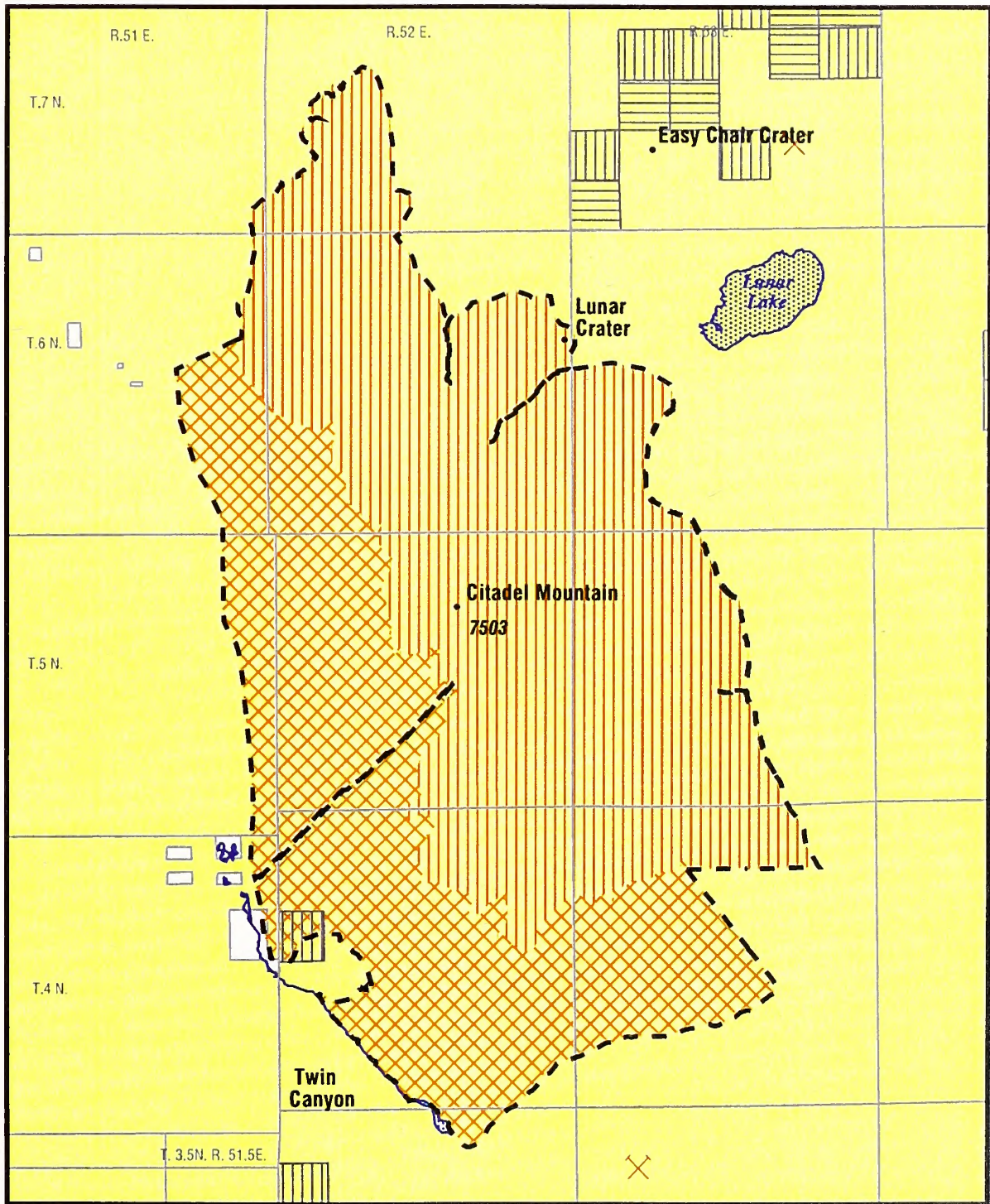
**Allotment
Boundary**


Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable
 Recommended Suitable

Dry Lake
 Lake



Palisade Mesa Wilderness Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS






 Mining Operations



1 0 1 Miles

 Dry Lake
 Lake

Mining Claim Density - 3/97

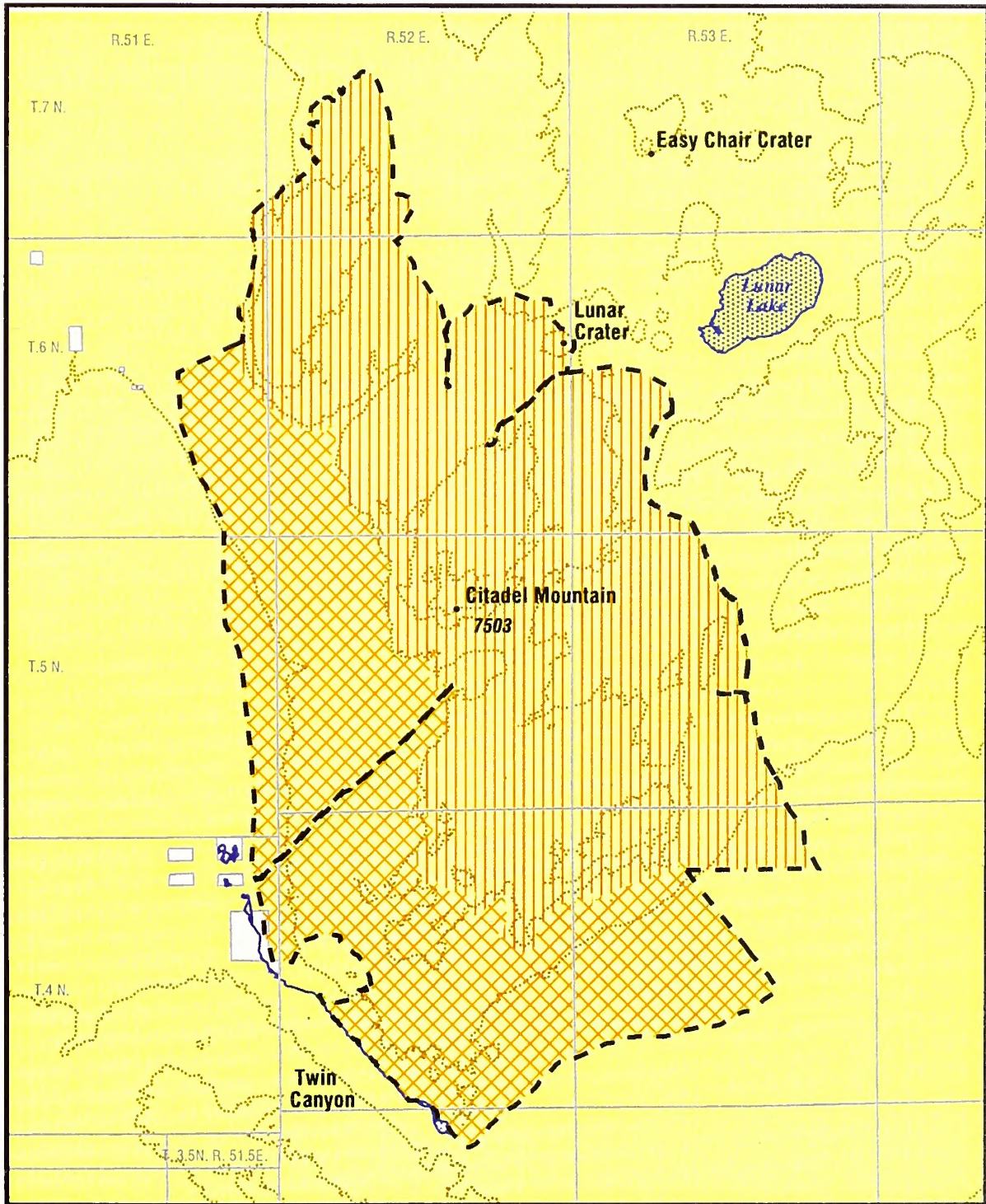
-  1-5 Claims
-  6-35 Claims
-  36 or more Claims

 BLM
 Private Land

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable
 Recommended Suitable



Palisade Mesa Wilderness Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL



1 0 1 Miles

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

 Dry Lake
 Lake

NO HIGH OR MEDIUM MINERAL POTENTIAL IS IDENTIFIED ON THIS MAP.

 BLM
 Private Land

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
XX Recommended Non-Suitable
||| Recommended Suitable



NV-060-142/162

BLUE EAGLE WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

I. THE STUDY AREA - 59,560 acres

The Blue Eagle WSA (NV-060-158/199) is located in northeastern Nye County, Nevada, approximately 100 miles east of Tonopah. The WSA lies in the northern end of the Grant Range and includes a small portion of Railroad Valley. The WSA is bounded on the west mainly by land net and contour lines. The roads up Beatty Canyon and Heath Canyon form the southern boundary, while unnamed dirt roads and jeep trails form the eastern and northern boundaries. The area is oblong in shape, measuring approximately 18 miles north to south and 7 miles east to west. The WSA is the northern most unit of a series of BLM managed wilderness study areas and Forest Service managed wilderness areas encompassing a large extent of the Grant and Quinn Canyon Ranges. The WSA is contiguous with the Ely District managed Riordan's Well WSA.

There were four alternatives analyzed in the EIS; an all wilderness alternative, one partial wilderness alternative, where 58,350 acres would be designated as wilderness and 1,960 acres would be released for uses other than wilderness, a second partial wilderness alternative where 59,350 acres would be designated as wilderness and 960 acres would be released for uses other than wilderness, and a no wilderness alternative which is the recommendation in this report.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - **0 acres recommended for wilderness** **59,560 acres recommended for nonwilderness**

The recommendation for this WSA is to release all 59,560 acres for uses other than wilderness. Although the recommendation is not the all wilderness alternative, the recommendation for this WSA would be implemented in a manner which would utilize all practical means to avoid or minimize environmental impacts.

The recommendation differs from the proposed action partial wilderness alternative, analyzed in the Tonopah Wilderness Recommendations and Final Environmental Impact Statement, where 58,350 acres would be designated as wilderness and 1,960 acres would be released for uses other than wilderness. The decision to change the recommendation was made after reviewing the U.S. Geological Service and Bureau of Mines report. This report assigned the whole WSA a high energy resource potential for oil and gas. Developed oil fields exist to the west of the WSA in Railroad Valley and although geophysical exploration of the WSA has been conducted, there have been no proposals to drill for oil or gas within the WSA boundary.

The USGS/BM report stated that the area has moderate potential in the southern and northern extremes. The southern end of the WSA is near the historic Troy mining district where the geologic structure is favorable for containing host rocks for precious metals. If mineral development occurred, the wilderness values in the immediate vicinity of the mine would be lost and the general area impacted.

Although the vast majority of the WSA provides high wilderness values, the alluvial benches along the western border have fewer wilderness qualities. The benches are in direct proximity to the Railroad valley oil fields and the road network which supports the facilities. The low vegetation and close proximity of access roads would require frequent patrols to regulate off-road use.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: The Blue Eagle WSA is in a highly natural condition with negligible human imprints. The area is generally mountainous and ranges from an elevation of 4,800 feet in Railroad Valley to 9,561 feet

on top of Blue Eagle Peak. High Mountains, with deep, narrow, winding drainages dominate the landscape. The roadless nature of the interior has served to preserve the naturalness of the area.

Around Blue Eagle peak are exposed craggy outcrops of white rock which provide a colorful contrast with the dark green forest canopy blanketing the adjoining mountain slopes. The northern portions of the WSA are dominated with a colorful montage of rolling hills painted in hues of yellow and red.

The majority of human imprints are associated with spring development and water troughs located in the northern corner and along the eastern boundary of the WSA.

B. Solitude: The Blue Eagle WSA contains outstanding opportunities for solitude. The majority of the WSA is comprised of high mountains blanketed with dense stands of pinyon pine and juniper trees at the lower elevations, while at the higher elevations, dense screens of white fir and ponderosa pine ensuring solitude virtually anywhere. The WSA is dissected by several deep, narrow, winding drainages each facilitating opportunities for solitude. The gently rolling hills in the eastern part of the WSA provides for isolation and seclusion enhanced by the dense vegetation which restricts the visibility of the user.

Opportunities for solitude at the lower elevations along the broad alluvial fans are not of the same high quality.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: While the Blue Eagle WSA, combining its size with its diversity of vegetation and topography contains a wide variety of opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation, neither their quality or diversity could be considered outstanding or unique.

The deep canyons rising to 9,000 foot peaks provides an excellent stage for hiking, backpacking, and climbing. The numerous springs and meadows interspersed throughout the dense forest canopy provides suitable sites for camping. The wide variety of wildlife, birds, and the variation in form, texture, patterns, color, contrasts of the soil, and the scenery provides good opportunities for the photographer, bird watcher, and sightseers.

D. Special Features: The rare bristlecone pines that inhabit the higher elevations of Blue Eagle peak are a true relic of the past. Their wind sculpted, curved forms can be thousands of years old. Sharing these higher elevations are one of the rare indigenous desert bighorn sheep populations to have survived the intrusions of man in central Nevada. The lower elevations of the WSA provides critical winter range to the bighorns occupying not only the peaks within the WSA but also from other reaches of the Grant range.

4. MANAGEABILITY

The WSA can reasonably be managed as wilderness to preserve values now present in the area. The boundaries generally follow the base of the mountain on the west. Although there are 76 mining claims within this portion of the WSA, no plans of operation have been filed on these claims. Oil and gas activity is anticipated in this portion in the foreseeable future because of a high potential for energy resources in this area.

The addition of 750 acres along the western boundary would create a more manageable area by delineating the boundary based on topographical features. Without the additional 750 acres, parts of the western boundary are land net lines that are impossible to accurately locate on the ground without the high cost of a survey. This 750 acres is capable of being managed as wilderness over the long term.

Within the 1,960 acres formerly not recommended for wilderness, control of ORV use on the alluvial fans, valleys and canyons would require an extensive patrol effort. While current levels of activity on oil and gas leases have been low, a strong potential exists for impairment of wilderness values due to future activities

on oil and gas leases that have valid existing rights.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

The U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Bureau of Mines conducted a mineral survey of Blue Eagle WSA during 1984 and 1985 with the following conclusion: The entire Blue Eagle Wilderness Study Area has high energy resource potential for petroleum, although appropriate traps have not been identified. Most of the area is covered by oil and gas leases.

Moderate mineral resource potential exists for three types of metal occurrence in five areas. The southwestern corner of the area has moderate potential for tungsten and polymetallic base-metal, the north and central parts have moderate potential for gold, and two areas on the southeastern and western sides have a moderate potential for zinc and antimony. The study area has low resource potential for all other metals, nonmetals, geothermal energy, and coal. The study area has no identified resources.

6. SUMMARY OF WSA-SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

During the inventory phase, five comments were received which stated the area should not be designated a WSA because of roads and the lack of naturalness. Eight other comments were received which favored the area being designated a WSA because of the lack of roads, the outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and naturalness.

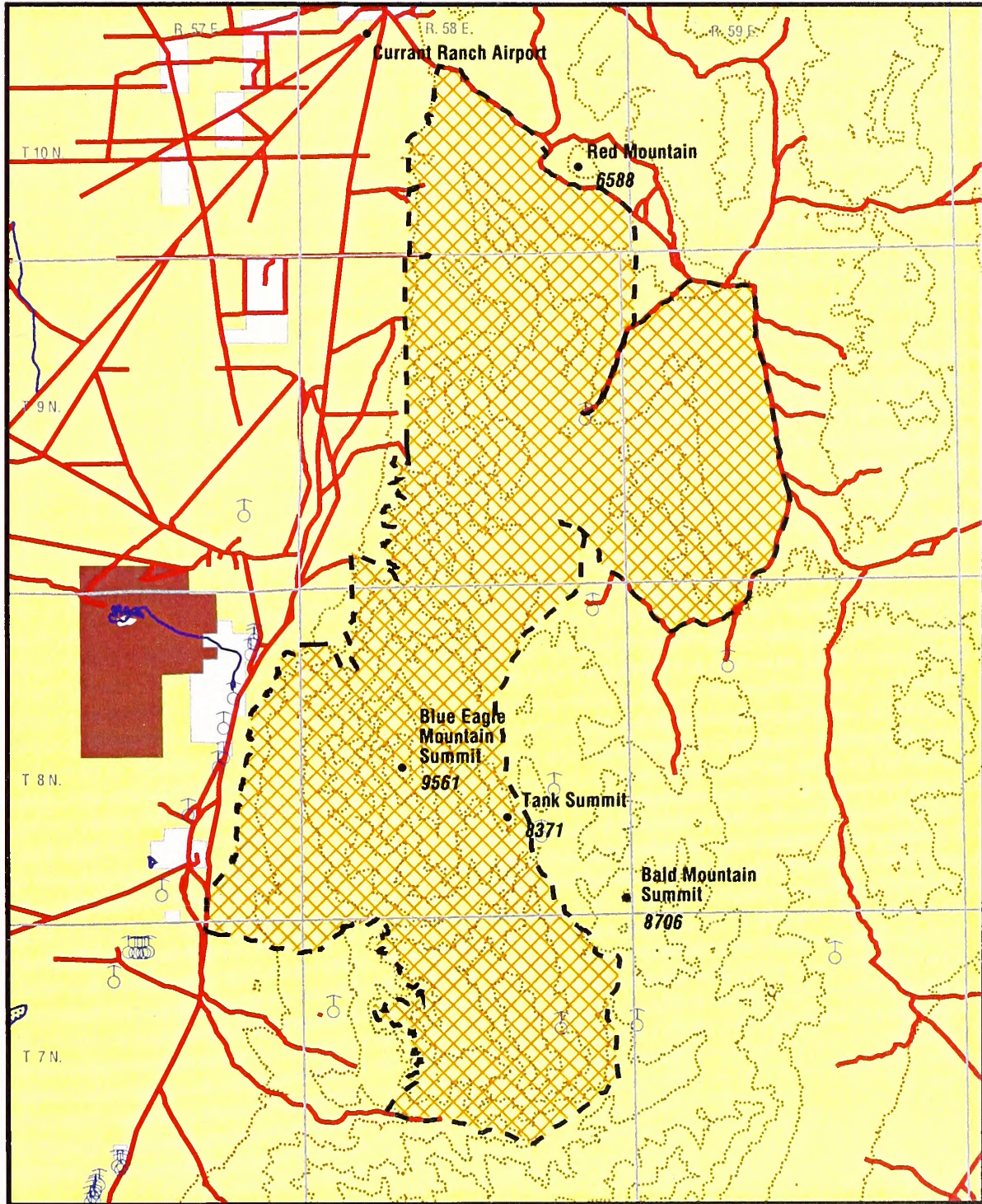
Two public hearings were held during the public review period on the draft environmental impact statement, Tonopah, Nevada, June 9, 1982, and Reno, Nevada, June 7, 1982. A total of 12 comments were received, of these, nine comments favored wilderness designation and three comments favored a nonsuitable recommendation for the Blue Eagle WSA.

Opposition to the designation stated: The mineral and energy potential requires multiple use (nonwilderness). Extremely important deer migration and wintering area (Potential for future adverse impacts). Current need to provide hunter access. Presence of jasperoid zones in sedimentary rocks and intrusive bodies with tungsten and other metals in known mining districts are strong indicators that ore deposits are nearby.

Support for wilderness designation cited: Outstanding area, Limestone cliffs, bighorn sheep, bristlecone pines, and dwarf white fir are present in the WSA. Contains bighorn sheep which deserve protection. Beautiful mountains with limestone cliffs. Adjacent to Grant-Quinn Canyon U.S. Forest Service proposals and Riordans Well BLM WSA area. Three-quarters of a million acres of wilderness separated by only a few dirt roads. Adding 750 acres to western boundary will improve management situation. Warrants inclusion due to wilderness values. Contains not only certain wilderness values but scenic, wildlife, botanic, geologic, and cultural resources as well, and all of national importance.

Two state agencies commented in favor of wilderness designation for this WSA. The Nevada Division of State Parks confirmed the BLM analysis. The Nevada Division of Mineral Resources stated that the southwest corner of the WSA be recommended as wilderness due to the low mineral potential. The State, in its consistency letter felt the suitable boundary for the Preferred Alternative should be reduced to exclude an area that has "significant mineral potential outweighing wilderness values".

Blue Eagle Wilderness Study Area WSA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP



— Road
○ Spring

1 0 1 Miles

☪ Lake

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

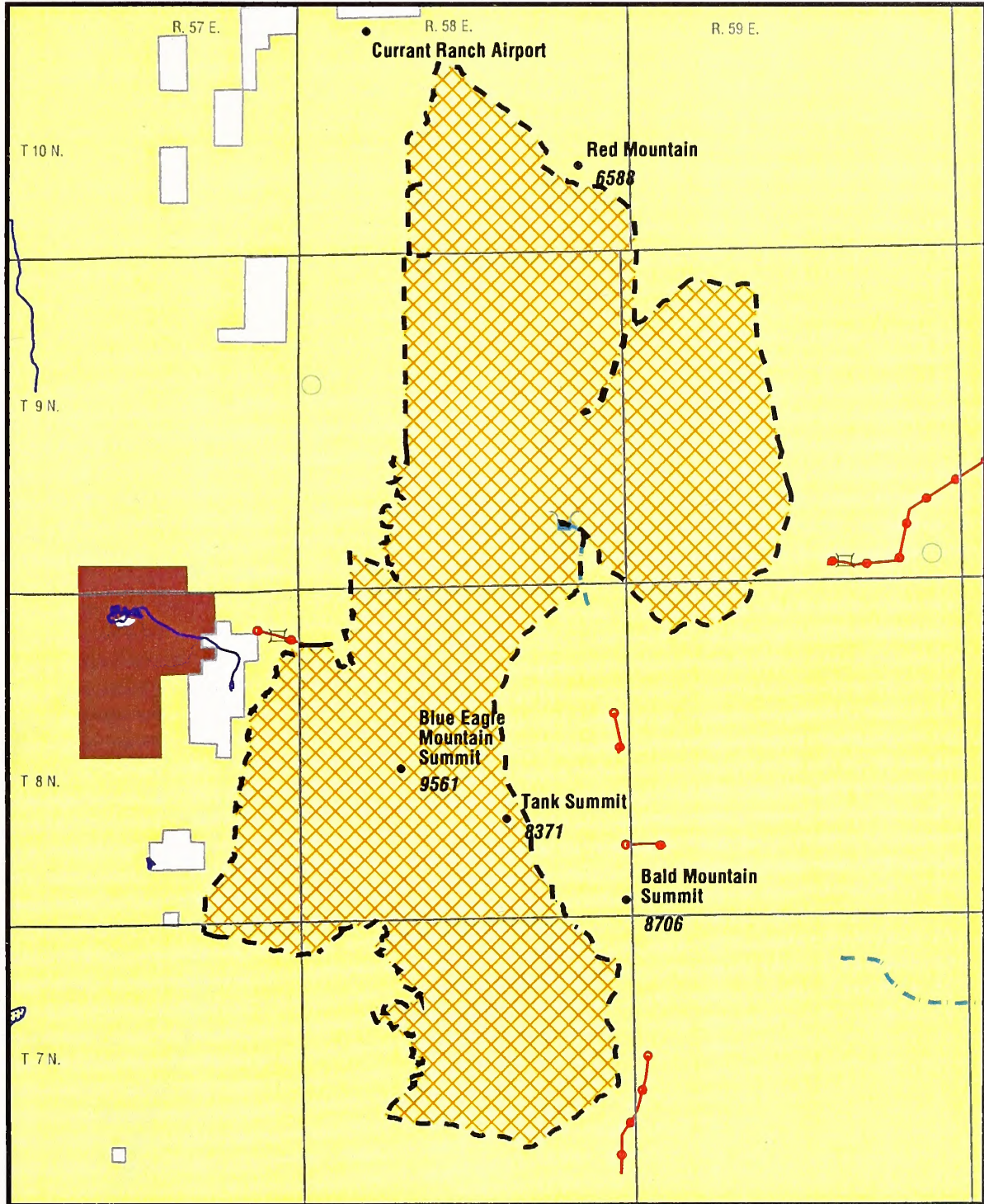
■ BLM
□ Private Land
■ Other Agency

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-158

Blue Eagle Wilderness Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES



1 0 1 Miles

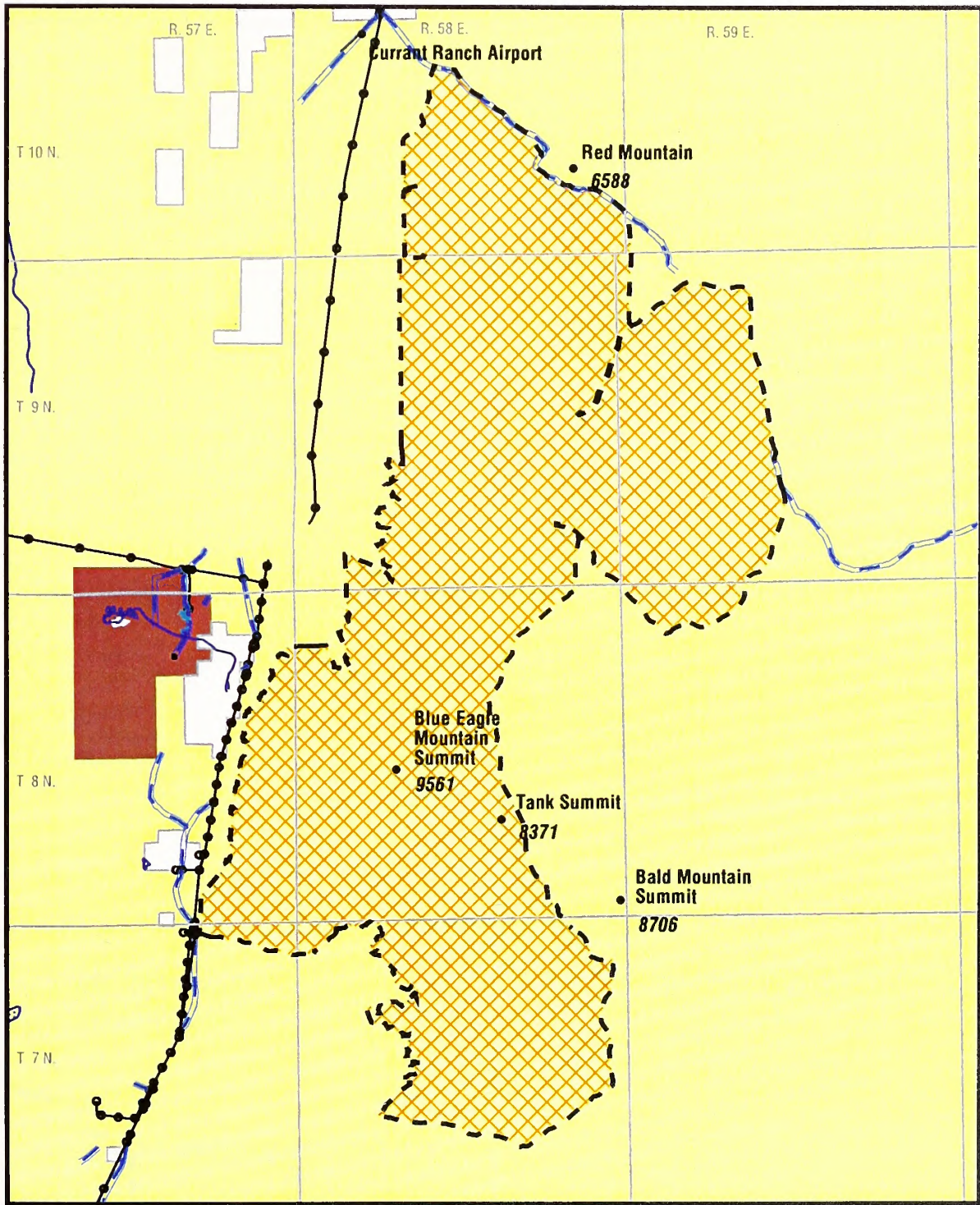
 Lake

-  BLM
-  Private Land
-  Other Agency
-  Well
-  Cattleguard
-  Trough
-  Fence
-  Pipeline
-  Wilderness Study Area Boundary
-  Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-158

Blue Eagle Wilderness Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY







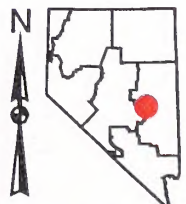
1 0 1 Miles

 Lake

-  BLM
-  Private Land
-  Other Agency

-  Wilderness Study Area Boundary
-  Recommended Non-Suitable

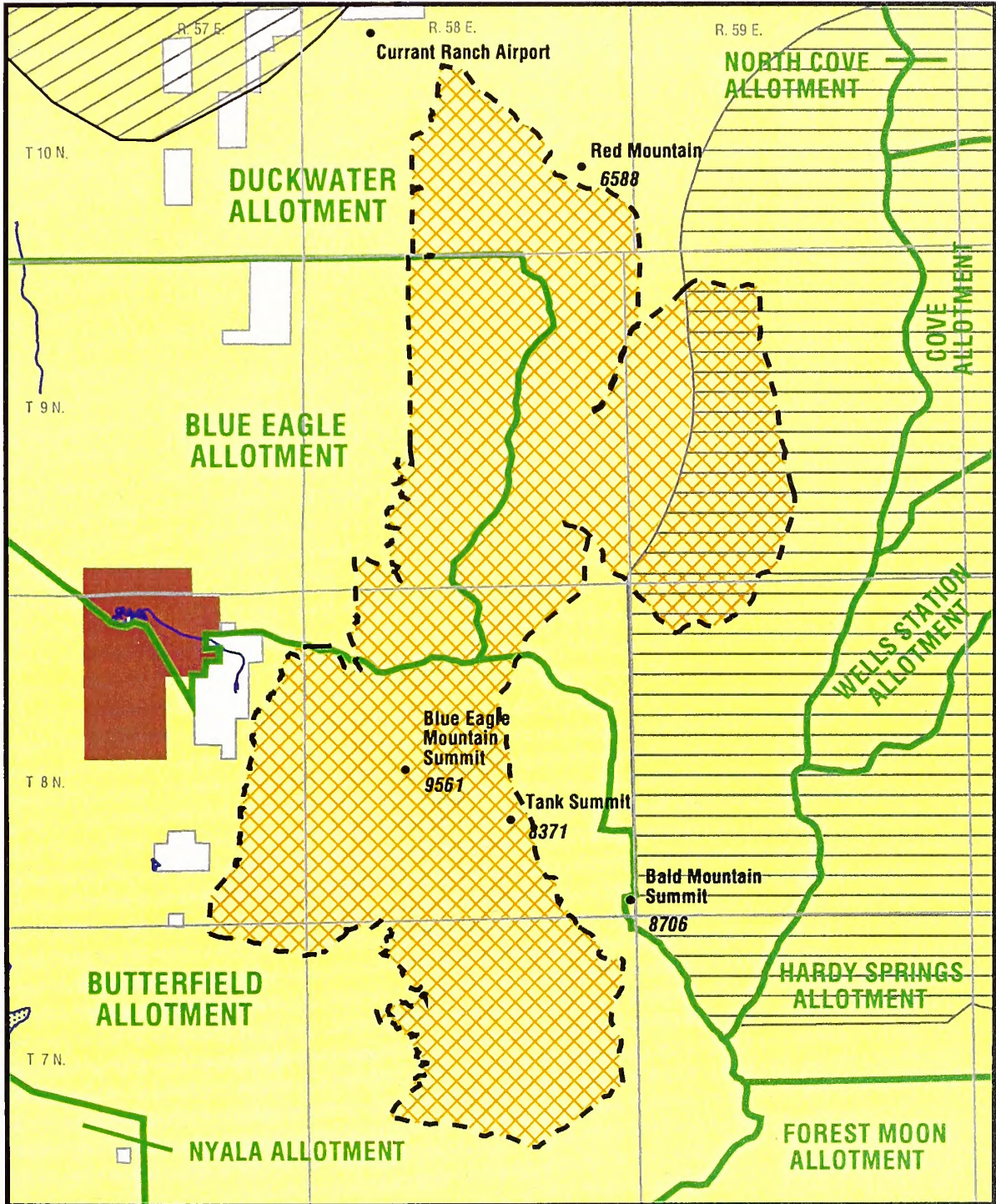
-  Pipeline
-  Road
-  Powerline
-  Telephone Line



NV-060-158

Blue Eagle Wilderness Study Area

ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCES



Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species

Observation Site
NONE ON THIS MAP

BLM
 Private Land
 Other Agency

Monte Cristo HMA
 White River HMA

Allotment Boundary

Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable

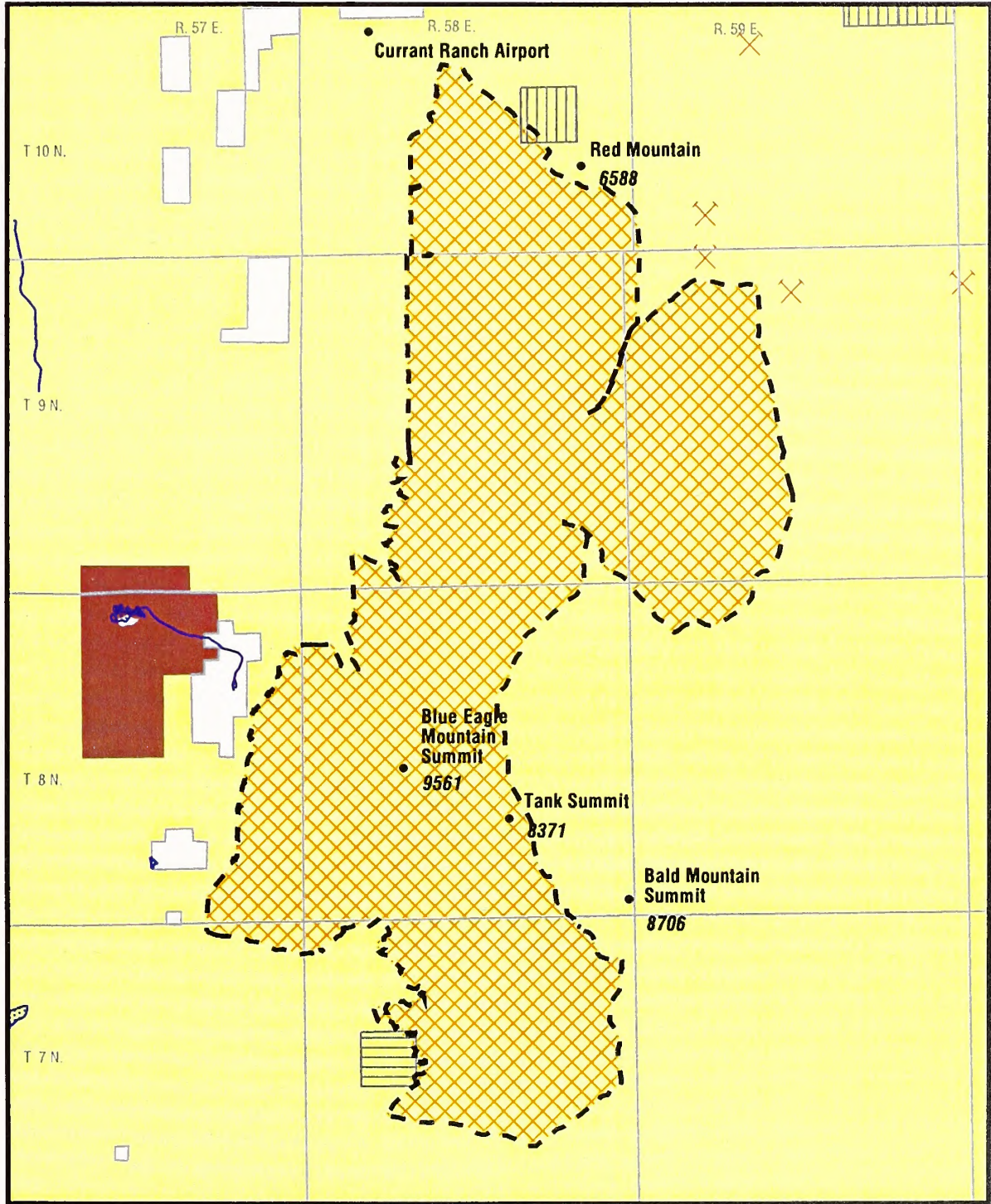
1 0 1 Miles

Lake



NV-060-158

Blue Eagle Wilderness Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS



Mining Operations

1 0 1 Miles

Lake

Mining Claim Density - 3/97

- 1-5 Claims
- 6-35 Claims
- 36 or more Claims

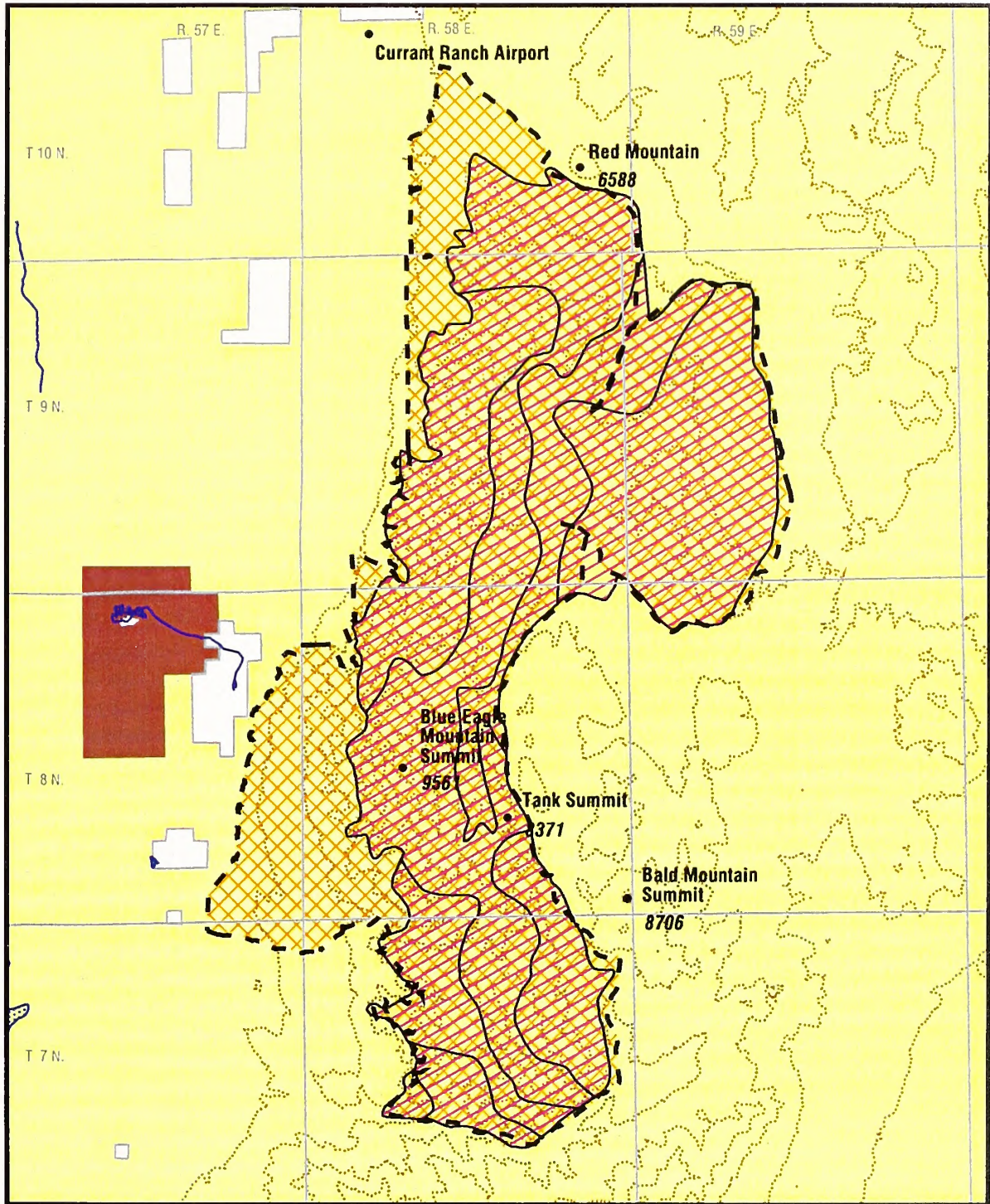
- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-158

Blue Eagle Wilderness Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL



1 0 1 Miles

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

 Lake

Mineral Potential
 High - Oil, Gas

 BLM
 Private Land
 Other Agency

- - Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-158

THE WALL WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

I. THE STUDY AREA - 38,000 acres.

The Wall WSA (NV-060-163) is located in northeastern Nye County approximately 75 miles east of Tonopah, Nevada. The WSA includes 38,000 acres of BLM lands. The WSA boundaries are unnamed dirt roads on all sides except the east side, where the boundary follows a drainage and then traverses along the contour line to Stone Corral well. The WSA lies in the Pancake Range adjacent to the Palisade Mesa WSA and includes a portion of Railroad Valley.

There were four alternatives analyzed in the EIS; an all wilderness alternative, a no wilderness alternative, a partial wilderness alternative which is the recommendation of this report where 30,320 acres would be designated as wilderness and 7,680 acres released for uses other than wilderness, and a second partial alternative which would involve combining the Wall and Palisade Mesa WSAs and designating 113,870 acres as wilderness and releasing 23,680 acres for uses other than wilderness.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 30,320 acres recommended for wilderness 7,680 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation for this WSA is to designate 30,320 acres as wilderness and release 7,680 acres for uses other than wilderness. The partial wilderness alternative, the recommendation of this report, would be implemented in a manner which would utilize all practical means to avoid or minimize environmental impacts.

The 30,320 acres recommended for wilderness designation contains the formation called "The Wall" for which the WSA was named. The vivid examples of volcanic processes present within this part of the WSA, along with the wilderness values of naturalness, solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation opportunities make it a prime candidate for wilderness designation.

The Wall named for its sheer vertical face, is an unusual volcanic formation. It lies at the eastern edge of a larger volcanic field. The Wall formation is derived from volcanic ash and magma which solidified. Over millennia, the surrounding softer ground eroded away leaving the vertical cliffs which guard access to the mesa central to the WSA. The black rock of the Wall formation extends an imposing barrier along the northern, eastern, and southern boundaries of the mesa. The top of the mesa is composed of a labyrinth of erosion gullies and washes. Pinyon pine trees form into scattered groves shading the gullies from above and combining with the dark rock to present a uniquely colored geologic mosaic. The vertical perspective created by the Wall gives the impression of an impenetrable fortress looming over the flat sands and playas of Railroad Valley. Vegetation within the WSA is sparse. The alluvial fans to the south are dominated by desert shrub communities while the top of the mesa is limited to scattered pockets of pinyon pine and shrubs.

The high plateau scattered with the multitude of washes and draws provides excellent screening throughout the area. The wild untrammelled setting provides for excellent opportunities in recreation. The unique geology of the area provides visitors with a setting unlike any other.

Designation of the recommended areas as wilderness would create very few conflicts with other competing resources. Further enhancing its manageability is the nature of the area: steep cliffs comprised of rugged rock formations surrounded by alluvial and colluvial benches of loose sand - characteristics that would serve to make the area largely self-protecting.

The 7,680 acres not recommended for wilderness designation are the alluvial fans that extend into Railroad

Valley on the east. This area has existing vehicle ways and gentle terrain with easy access to motor vehicles.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: The Wall WSA has retained its naturalness with negligible human imprints observable from within the WSA. The area recommended for wilderness is in virtually pristine condition. The area consists of a series of high mesas that rise 600 to 2,000 feet above the surrounding basin floor. Large rock outcrops occur on top of the mesas. The elevation ranges from 4,800 in Railroad Valley to 6,873 feet on top of the highest mesa. The fortress-like affect of the wall has served to preclude development of any type within the central core of the area. The forbidding cliffs and deeply scarred surface of the mesa combine to enhance the primitive feeling of the WSA.

The vegetation consists of plants of the northern desert shrub community with some juniper trees interspersed between the rock outcrops on top of the mesas.

Five miles of vehicle ways are found in the Railroad Valley portion of the WSA. One mile of fences is located in the northern and western parts of the WSA. A water tank and trough are located inside the western boundary of the WSA. The total acreage involved in all these features is less than five acres. The area generally appears to have been affected by the forces of nature with the imprints of man substantially unnoticeable.

B. Solitude: The Wall WSA provides an outstanding opportunity for solitude. The fortress walls of the mesa gives the visitor an instant feeling of entering into a protected realm. Upon scaling the precipitous cliffs the visitor is transcended into a maze of deeply cut gullies and drainages carved into the same hard black rock comprising the cliffs. Seclusion on the mesa is the rule more than the exception with scattered groves of pinyon trees enhancing the masking affects of the surrounding terrain. The lack of permanent waters would serve to disperse recreational use.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The Wall WSA offers outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The unique and imposing geology of the area provides for scenic and imposing landscapes which would lend itself to the rock collector, amateur geologist or photographer. Although the steep cliffs may pose a seemingly insurmountable barrier to many, opportunities for bouldering and limited technical rock climbing abound with numerous chimneys and overhangs to challenge intermediate to advanced climbers. The uniqueness of the terrain will serve as the greatest draw to most visitors, as The Wall WSA provides a landscape unlike any other in Nevada.

Opportunities for recreation in the areas not recommended for wilderness are much lower. The open saltbush bench lands provide some opportunities for easy hiking not available in the recommended portion, but other forms of recreation are adversely affected by the areas lack of variation, seclusion, and vegetation.

D. Special Features: Vivid examples of volcanic processes are present within The Wall WSA. The extensive cliff formations and fortress-like appearance of the area is unique to central Nevada

4. MANAGEABILITY

The Wall WSA is manageable as wilderness. Manageability is enhanced by the lack of private or State inholdings within the WSA.

Management of the area recommended for wilderness would be very easy. Manageability is enhanced by the nature of the area: steep, rugged walls of volcanic rock abruptly rising from the surrounding valleys;

characteristics that would cause the area to be largely self-protecting. Those areas not protected by the sheer volcanic cliffs are composed of large expanses of bare rock or heavily rock strewn soil making cross-country vehicle travel very difficult.

Management of the areas not recommended for wilderness designation which are primarily located along the alluvial fans bordering much of the inner core of mesas would be difficult. Low vegetation cover and gentle terrain provide easy vehicle access.

The Wall WSA has 21 oil and gas leases covering approximately 24,720 acres (most of the eastern half of the WSA). However, due to the low potential for oil and gas, no development is anticipated. The 7,680 acres not recommended for wilderness designation in Railroad Valley have the greatest potential for oil and gas exploration and seismic activities have occurred here. This area contains the vehicle ways, which provide easy motor vehicle access into the area.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

The U.S. Geological Survey and Bureau of Mines prepared a mineral assessment for the 30,320 acres of The Wall WSA recommended for wilderness designation concluding: There has been no mining activity in or within two miles of the wilderness study area. No mining claims are present. No metallic mineral resources were identified, however, antimony, copper, gold, lead, silver, and zinc were mined within 15 miles of the study areas but from different geologic environments.

No drilling or oil and gas exploration is known to have occurred within the recommended portion of this wilderness study area. Oil and gas resources are unlikely. Thick sequences of extrusive igneous rocks are not conducive for hydrocarbon accumulation.

Geothermal resources exist along major basin and range faults in Railroad Valley, but are not known to occur within the recommended portion of this wilderness study area.

6. SUMMARY OF WSA-SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public involvement has occurred throughout the wilderness review process. During the inventory phase, nine comments were received on The Wall WSA, six were in favor and three were opposed.

During formal public review of the draft EIS, a total of ten individuals, a mining organization, and two state agencies commented on The Wall WSA. Seven individuals and two state agencies supported wilderness designation and three individuals and a mining organization supported no wilderness designation.

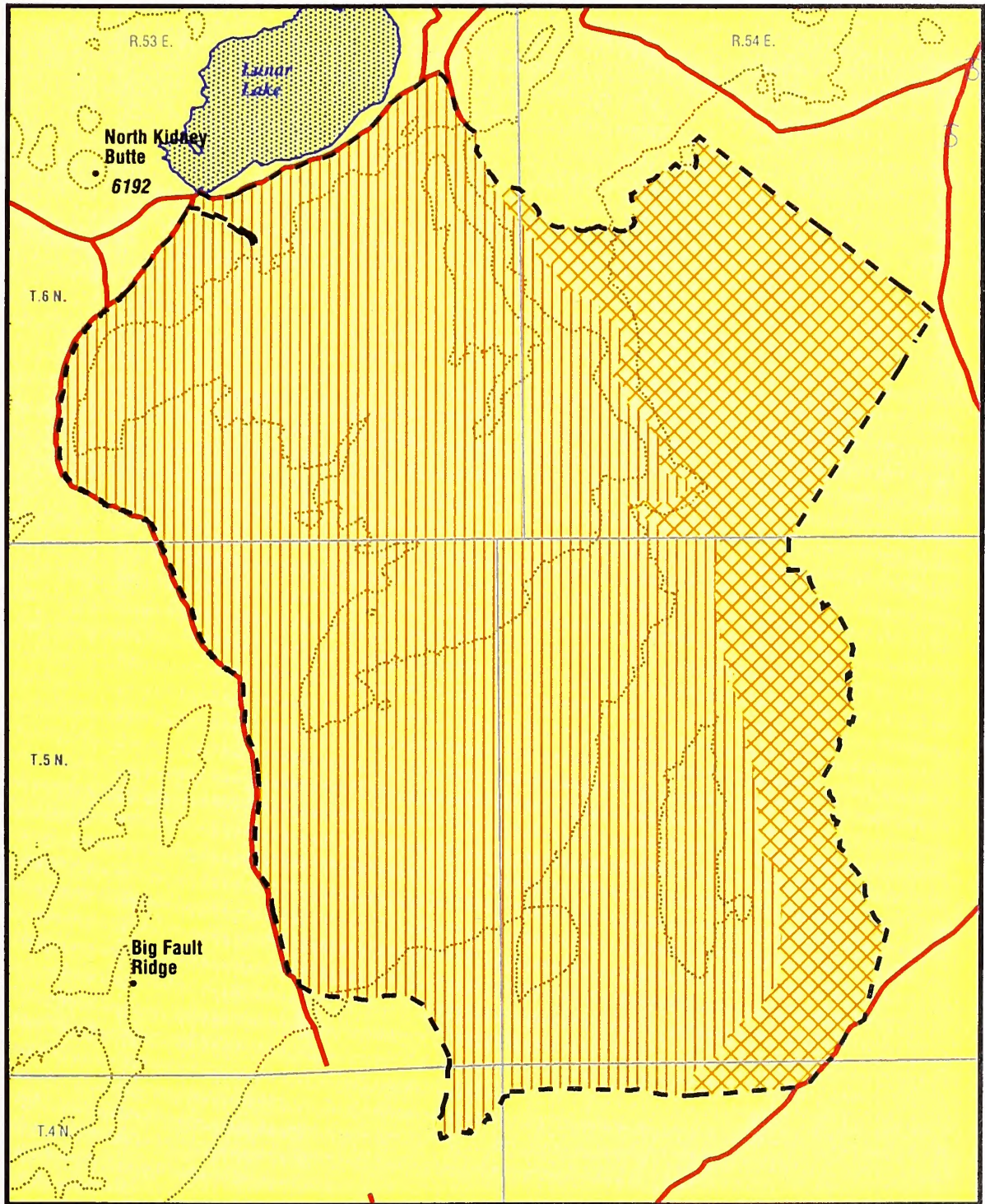
Reasons for supporting the suitable wilderness designation were: unique volcanic features, low potential for minerals, wonderland of smooth, polished rocks in huge slabs, Southwest's prime raptor area for rare predatory birds.

Reasons for supporting the unsuitable wilderness designation were: enormous mineral and energy potential, low potential but should remain open to exploration.

The State, during its consistency review, concurred with the Preferred Alternative.

The Wall Wilderness Study Area

WSA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP



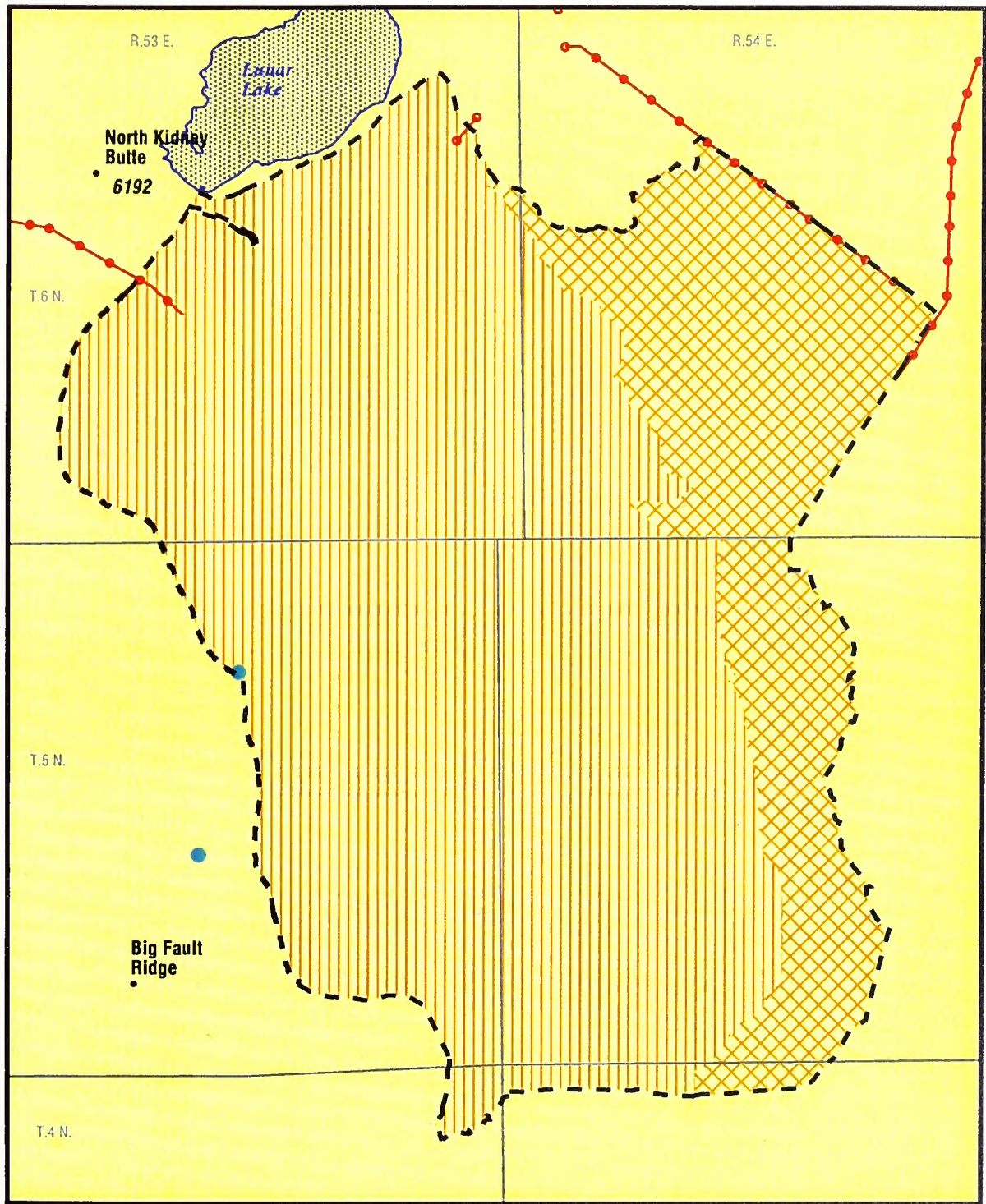
— Road
○ Spring
1 0 1 Miles
CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)
☹ Dry Lake

■ BLM

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
▣ Recommended Non-Suitable
▤ Recommended Suitable



The Wall Wilderness Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES



1 0 1 Miles

 Dry Lake

 Storage Tank

 Fence

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary

 Recommended Non-Suitable

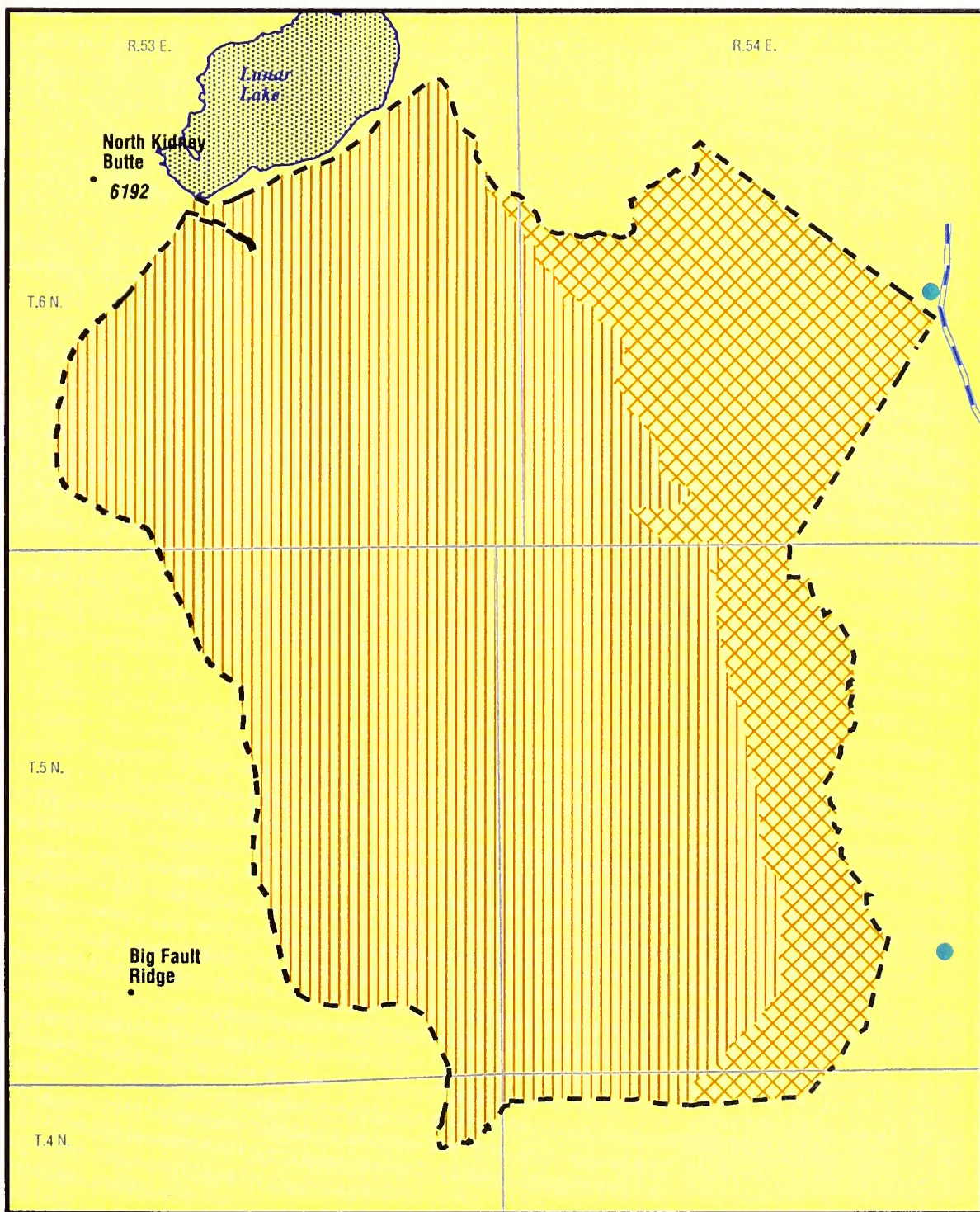
 Recommended Suitable

 BLM



NV-060-163

The Wall Wilderness Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY



 Dry Lake


 Monitoring Well

 Road

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary

 Recommended Non-Suitable

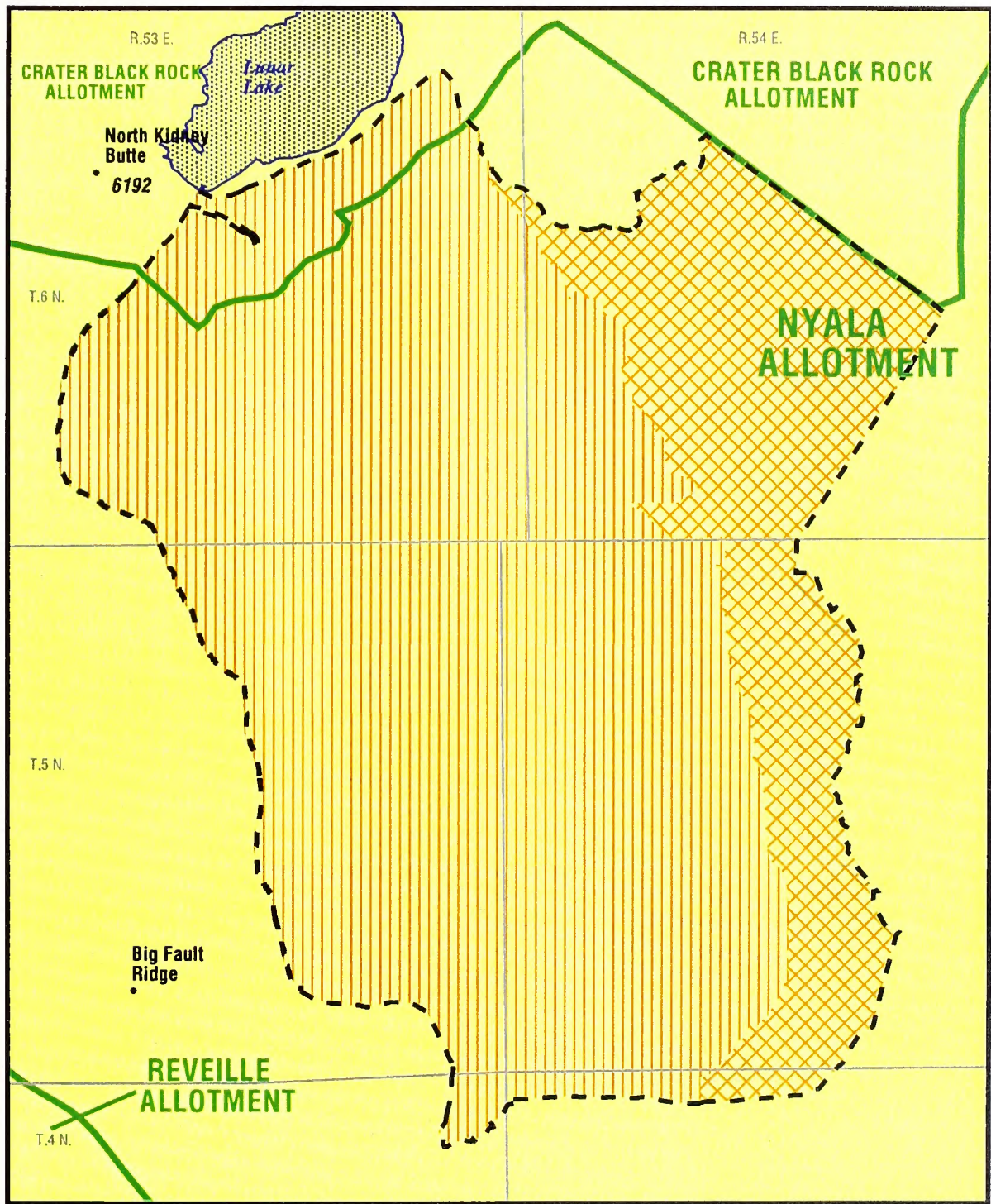
 Recommended Suitable

 BLM



NV-060-163

The Wall Wilderness Study Area ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCENCES



Federally Listed
Threatened
and
Endangered
Species

● Observation Site
NONE ON THIS MAP

BLM

1 0 1 Miles

☁ Dry Lake

NO HMA ON THIS MAP

Allotment
Boundary

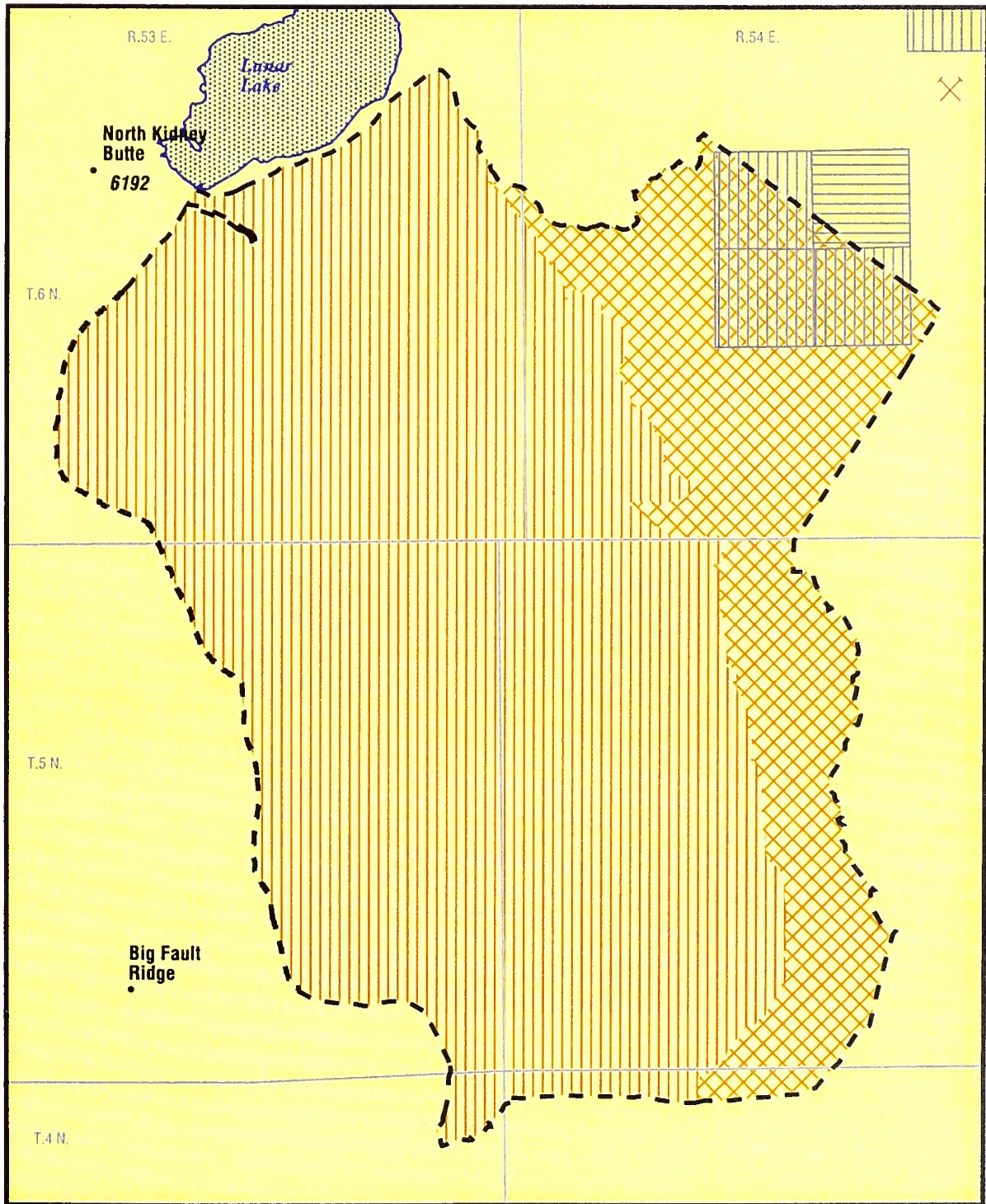
- - Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable
- |||| Recommended Suitable



NV-060-163


The Wall Wilderness Study Area

MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS






 Mining Operations




1 0 1 Miles

 Dry Lake

Mining Claim Density - 3/97

-  1-5 Claims
-  6-35 Claims
-  36 or more Claims

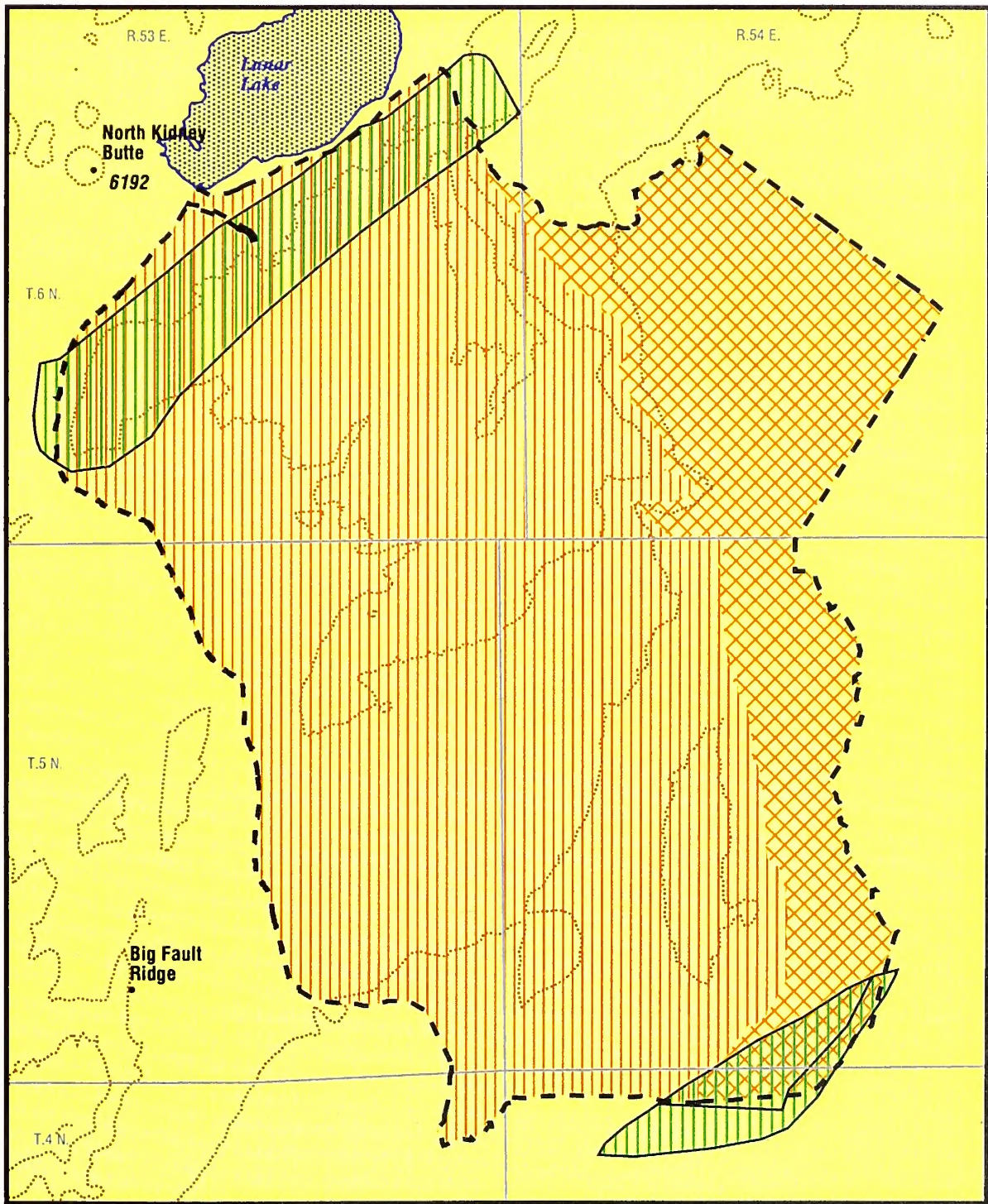
 BLM

-  Wilderness Study Area Boundary
-  Recommended Non-Suitable
-  Recommended Suitable



NV-060-163

The Wall Wilderness Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL



1 0 1 Miles

 Dry Lake

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

Mineral Potential

 Low - Manganese, Lead, Silver, Oil, Gas

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary

 Recommended Non-Suitable

 Recommended Suitable

 BLM



NV-060-163

FANDANGO WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

1. THE STUDY AREA - 40,940 acres

The Fandango WSA (NV-060-190) is located in northeastern Nye County, Nevada, approximately 70 miles east of Tonopah. This WSA encompasses 40,940 acres in the Hot Creek Range and a small portion of Little Fish Lake Valley. The WSA is irregular in shape, measuring approximately 18 miles north to south and from three to eight miles east to west. The northwestern boundary is land net lines south to upper Fish Lake. Pott Hole Valley road, Four Mile Canyon road and short sections of unnamed roads form the southeastern boundary. The eastern boundary is North and South Sixmile Canyon roads with an unnamed road connecting Fourmile Canyon and South Sixmile Canyon. The northern boundary is Cow Canyon road and the unnamed road that connects the Cow Canyon road to the Luther Waddles Wash road and North Sixmile road.

The National Forest and Public Lands of Nevada Enhancement Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-550) transferred administrative jurisdiction of 40,410 acres in the WSA to the Toiyabe National Forest leaving 530 acres under BLM management. The wilderness recommendation for this WSA will be developed by the BLM and submitted to the Secretary of Interior, President and Congress for their consideration.

There were four alternatives analyzed in the EIS; an all wilderness alternative, a no wilderness alternative, a partial wilderness alternative which is the recommendation of this report where 31,740 acres would be designated as wilderness and 9,200 acres would be released for uses other than wilderness and a second partial wilderness alternative which would involve combining the Fandango and Morey WSAs and designating 46,300 acres as wilderness and releasing 14,760 acres for uses other than wilderness.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 31,740 acres recommended for wilderness 9,200 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation for this WSA is to designate 31,740 acres as wilderness and release 9,200 acres for uses other than wilderness. The partial wilderness alternative, the recommendation of this report, would be implemented in a manner which would utilize all practical means to avoid or minimize environmental impacts.

The rugged, mountainous core along the Fandango ridge comprises the recommended portion of the Fandango WSA. A dense blanket of pinyon pine and juniper trees blankets the whole of the area leading up to little fandango ridge where alpine vegetation of grasses and low shrubs break from the timber to present the entire WSA in a sweeping vista. Views from the top of the WSA are indeed spectacular. Morey Peak rises precipitously to the east, while to the west lies the Forest Service administered Table Mountain Wilderness Area with it's high snow covered plateau. To the north lies what appears to be an endless expanse of dense pine and juniper forests, which contrasts to the stark, sparsely vegetated Hot Creek Valley to the south. Lush riparian vegetation fills the numerous canyons and draws. Brilliant fall colors fill the canyons creating veins of gold contrasting with the dark green foliage of the evergreen canopy.

South Sixmile canyon provides host to a self-propagating population of eastern brook trout. The perennial waters which flow through the riparian area, supports wild flowers in spring and summer not usually seen in the dry valleys of central Nevada. The Fandango WSA provides critical winter habitat for mule deer which number in the thousands during the peak of winter. Populations of mountain lion, elk, and wild horses also find shelter in the dense pine forests. Hot desert winds rising from the hot creek valley provides thermal lifting for the many species of raptors.

The Fandango WSA provides a multitude of recreational activities. Opportunities for hiking, backpacking, nature study, photography, and fishing are available in a picturesque setting. The large populations of deer, mountain lion, and upland game birds attracts hunters to the area. There are numerous prehistoric sites throughout the area displaying pictographs and petroglyphs, while more recent historic sites also provide education into the area's mining heritage. Charcoal kilns located in wood canyon provide physical evidence of man's search for mineral wealth in the mining districts adjoining the WSA. The area has proven to be extremely popular with both local and non-local recreationists.

The USGS/BM reported that much of the northern reaches of the recommended wilderness area contained regions of high and moderate mineral potential. The area encompassing the Fandango Ridge was felt to have high potential for precious minerals. Despite these potentials, it is felt that the inherent wilderness values described above outweigh the possibility of mineral development. The northern benches and southern alluvial fan were excluded from the recommended wilderness due to high and moderate mineral and oil and gas potentials.

In summary, the portion of the WSA recommended for wilderness designation has the highest wilderness values, the greatest public support, and can be managed to preserve the wilderness character. The portions not recommended for wilderness has lower wilderness values, manageability concerns, and conflicts with other resources uses.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: While much of the area still retains its natural beauty and scenic splendor, the imprints of man are common throughout the WSA. There are approximately 15 miles of ways, five miles of pipeline, and five spring developments within the Fandango WSA. There is also a fence line about two miles long. Several cherrystem roads carve into the heart of the WSA with ways branching from the boundary roads dissecting the numerous canyons. The pipelines are located in the northern and western parts of the WSA. The spring developments and water troughs are located inside the northern corner and adjacent to the western boundary of the WSA. The fence is located in Big Cow Canyon, within the center of the WSA. There are a total of 20 acres involved in these developments.

The benches along the northwest border are adjacent to and contain small areas of crested wheatgrass seedings. Although only about 100 acres of seedings are within the WSA boundary.

B. Solitude: Despite all of the intrusions which man has made into the area, opportunities still remain good. The dense forest of pinyon pine and juniper trees blanketing virtually all of the recommended wilderness. The numerous canyons with dense thickets of willow, aspen, and cottonwood trees secludes activities and buffers sound. The high ridges are not easily accessible and provide seclusion from the frequently visited areas at the lower elevations. Vehicle access around the WSA is good. Points of interest primarily in the south Sixmile canyon will result in higher concentrations of visitors, relieving pressure from the more remote areas. The northwest benches and southern alluvial fans provide little solitude.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation are provided for hiking, backpacking, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, mountain or rock climbing, photography and bird watching. The WSA is one of ample size to accommodate an extended backpacking trip. Objectives include Big and Little Fandango Peaks, Mahogany Peak, and any of a number of lesser peaks and wooded drainages.

Hunters are attracted to the WSA by the wide variety and large numbers of huntable species within the WSA. A self-propagating population of eastern brook trout exists in the South Sixmile Creek. Sightseers and bird watchers take advantage of the outstanding opportunities for viewing raptors and other nongame birds. Riparian vegetation in the numerous canyons provides habitat for a wide variety of wild flowers and

unique riparian vegetation provides for colorful and educational nature study. The unique contrast in colors, especially in the fall, provide harmonious compositions of color and form - making the Fandango WSA one of the more popular areas in the Tonopah Resource Area for photography.

D. Special Features: Two sets of charcoal kilns lie within the WSA, one along the South Sixmile Canyon Road and the other in Wood Tick Canyon. The kilns were built in the 1870s. The beehive shaped kilns, built entirely of red brick, are 25 feet wide at the base and reach a height of approximately 30 feet. South Sixmile Creek is the only perennial stream in the Hot Creek Mountains.

4. MANAGEABILITY

The recommended portion of the Fandango WSA is manageable as wilderness. Should mineral development increase along the adjacent areas, more management would be necessary. The core of the recommended area is rugged and relatively inaccessible to off-road vehicles. There are no private lands that occur within the WSA. Control of off-road traffic along the canyons and the cherry stem road will necessitate frequent patrolling. The 9,200 acres of the WSA not recommended for wilderness would require extensive patrolling to restrict off-road travel.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

Originally the Fandango WSA was reported to have low potential for all minerals and energy resources.

The U.S. Bureau of Mines and the U.S. Geological Survey prepared a mineral report on the Fandango WSA. This study indicates that there are small identified resources of zinc, lead, and silver at the Lead Pipe property and several areas of high potential for the occurrence of gold. This area has a low resource potential for petroleum, natural gas, uranium and geothermal energy.

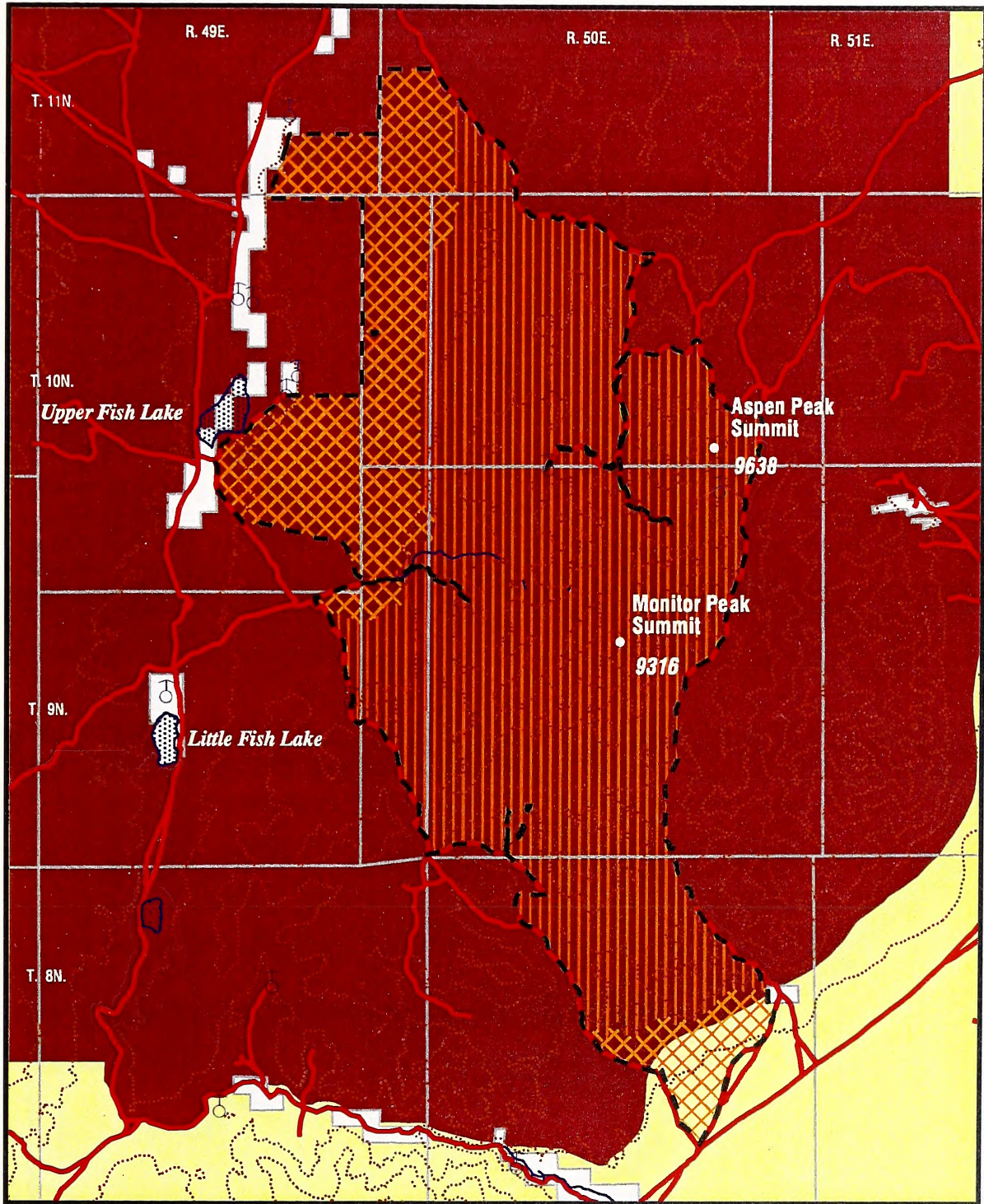
6. SUMMARY OF WSA-SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

During the inventory phase, four comments were received which stated the area should not be designated a WSA because of roads and the lack of naturalness, opportunities for solitude, and primitive recreation opportunities. Eight other comments were received which favored the area being designated a WSA because of the lack of roads, the outstanding opportunities for solitude, primitive recreation, and naturalness.

Two public hearings were held during the public review period on the draft environmental impact statement, Tonopah, Nevada, June 9, 1982, and Reno, Nevada, June 7, 1982. A total of 15 comments were received, seven comments favored wilderness designation and eight comments favored a nonsuitable recommendation for the Fandango WSA. Opposition to the designation stated the areas favorable geology, presence of over 90 mining claims, and return to multiple-use management due to enormous mineral and energy potential. Support for wilderness designation cited an outstanding area, following the manageability alternative as the larger area has greater benefit, pristine area with very high wilderness values.

Two State agencies commented in favor of wilderness designation for this WSA. The Nevada Division of State Parks confirmed the BLM analysis. The Nevada Division of Mineral Resources stated that the central core of the WSA be recommended as wilderness due to the low mineral potential. In the consistency letter, the State feels that wilderness will adversely affect wildlife management. Wilderness designation would prevent vegetative manipulation necessary for deer herd health. Hunter use would be adversely affected. Mineral values are high and wilderness values are not high enough to outweigh these conflicts.

Fandango Wilderness Study Area WSA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP



— Road
○ Spring

1 0 1 Miles
CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

☉ Lake
☉ Alkali Flat

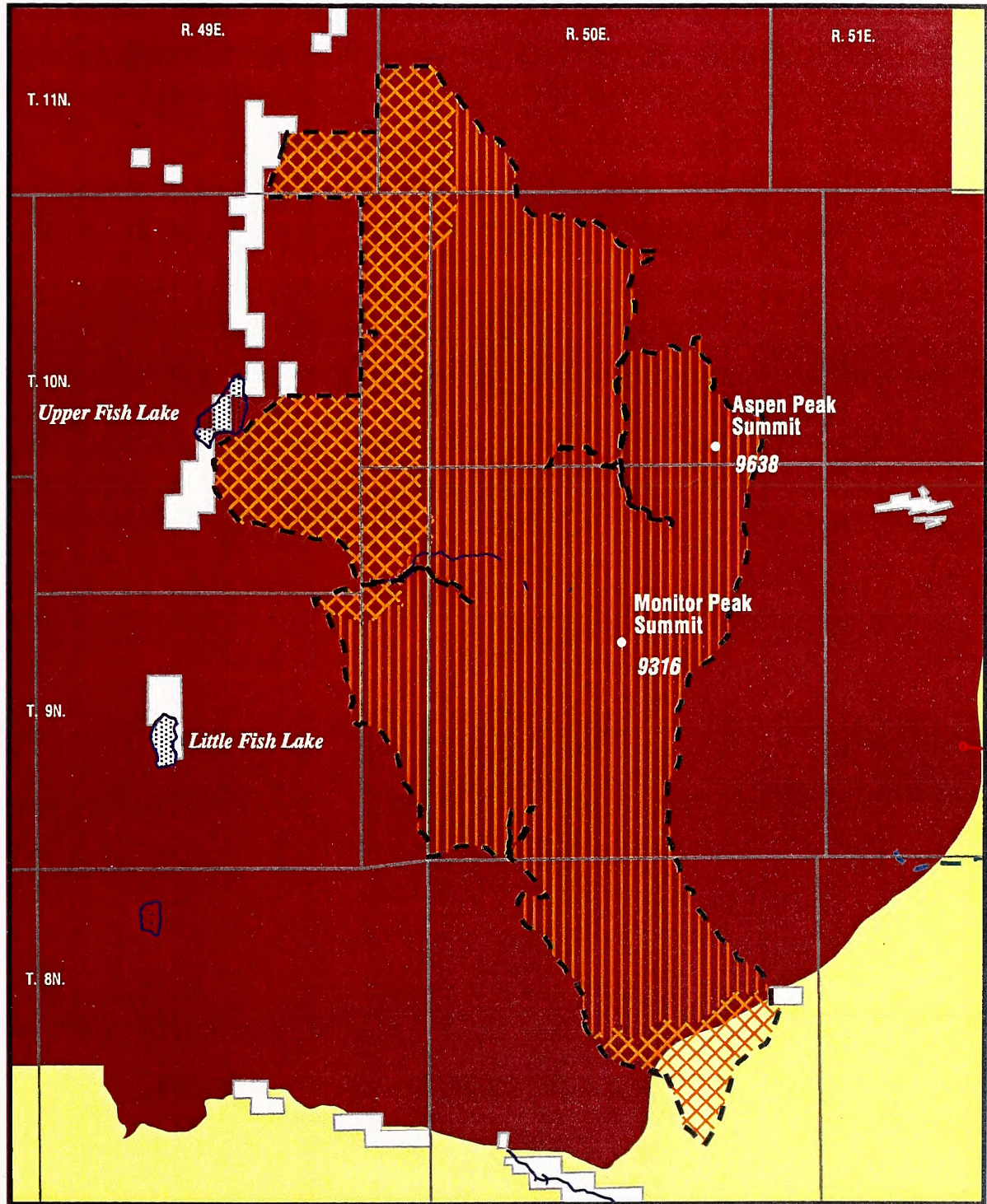
■ BLM
□ Private Land
■ Other Agency

--- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
▨ Recommended Non-Suitable
▨ Recommended Suitable



NV-060-190

Fandango Wilderness Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES





1 0 1 Miles

 Lake
 Alkali Flat

-- Pipeline
— Fence

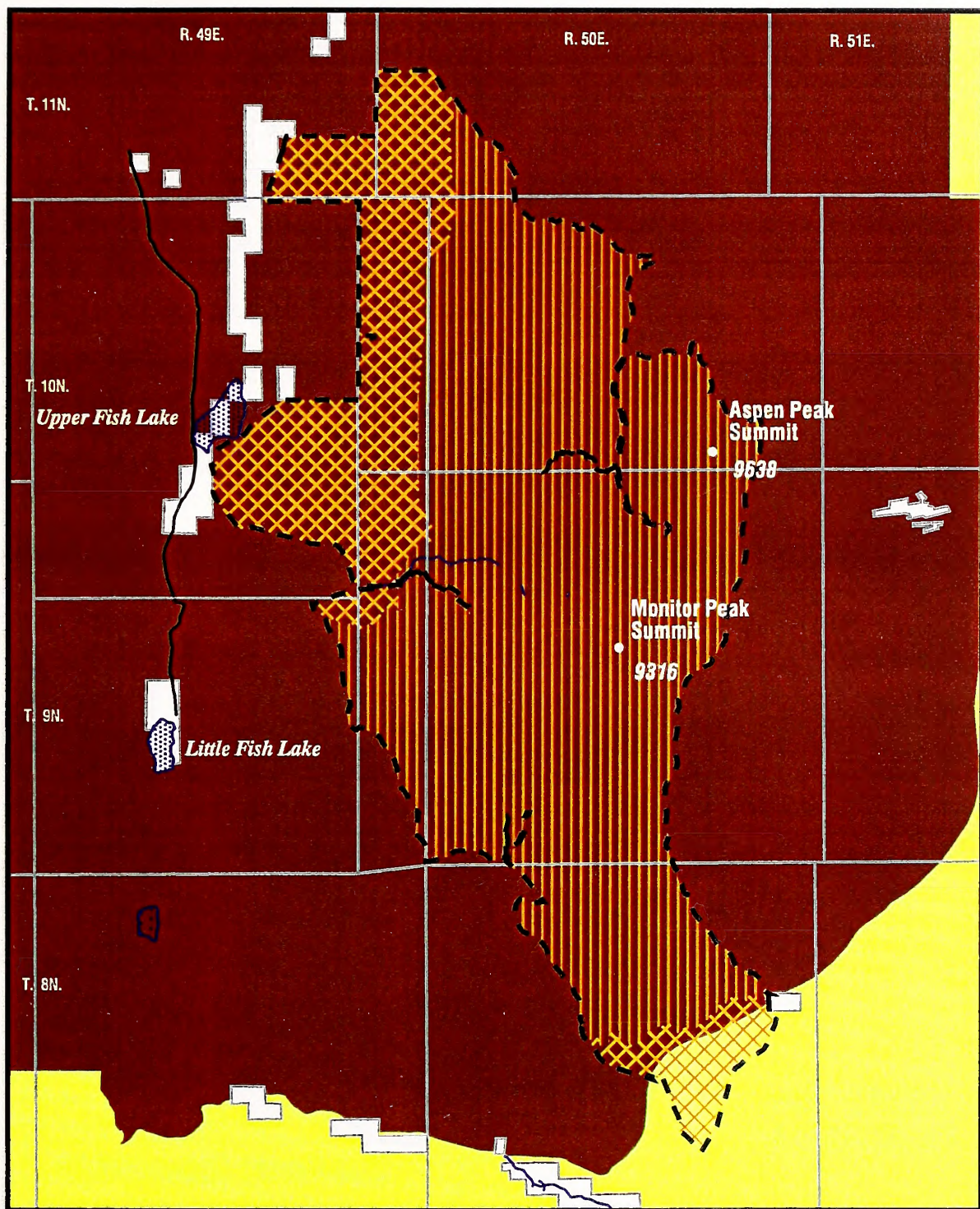
 BLM
 Private Land
 Other Agency

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable
 Recommended Suitable



NV-060-190

Fandango Wilderness Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY






1 0 1 Miles

 Lake
 Alkali Flat

— USFS Easement

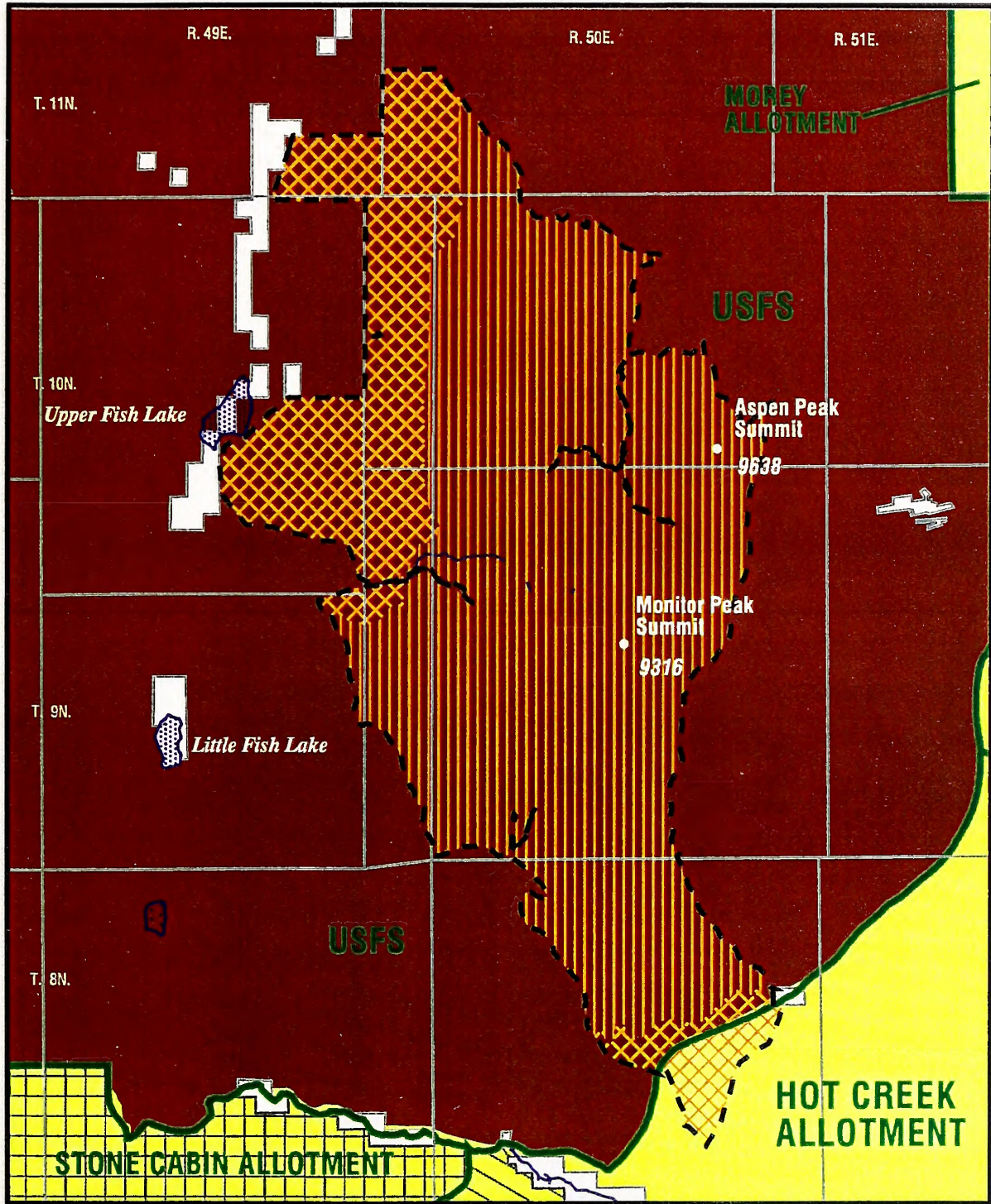
 BLM
 Private Land
 Other Agency

 Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable
 Recommended Suitable



NV-060-190

Fandango Wilderness Study Area ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCES



Federally Listed Threatened and Endangered Species

● Observation Site
NONE ON THIS MAP

1 0 1 Miles

☞ Lake
☞ Alkali Flat

☞ Stone Cabin HMA

☞ Hot Creek HMA

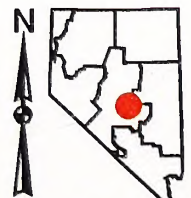
☞ Allotment Boundary

--- Wilderness Study Area Boundary

☞ Recommended Non-Suitable

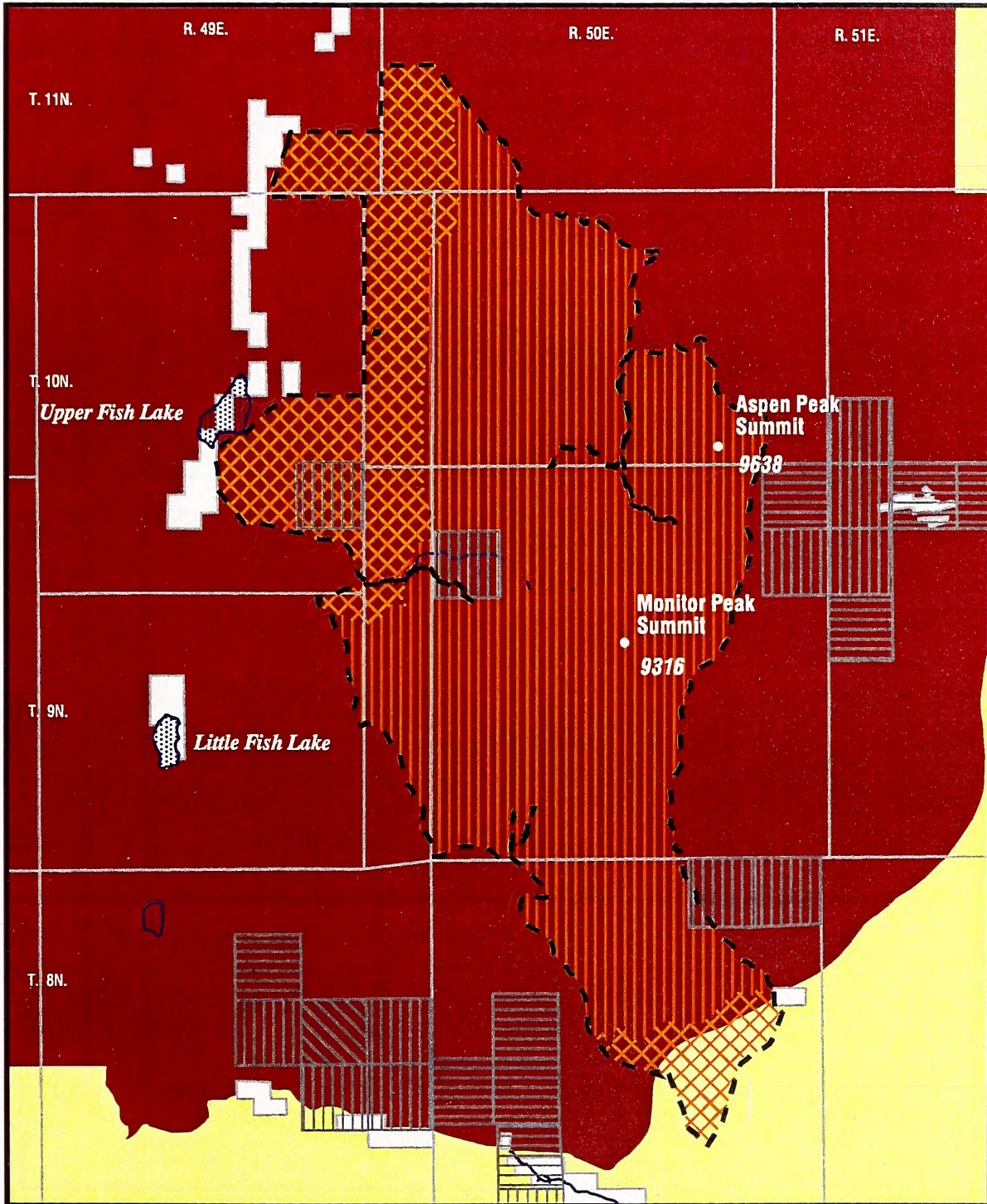
☞ Recommended Suitable

☞ BLM
☞ Private Land
☞ Other Agency





NV-060-190

Fandango Wilderness Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS






1 0 1 Miles




 Lake
 Alkali Flat

NO MINING OPERATIONS ON THIS MAP

Mining Claim Density - 3/97

-  1-5 Claims
-  6-35 Claims
-  36 or more Claims

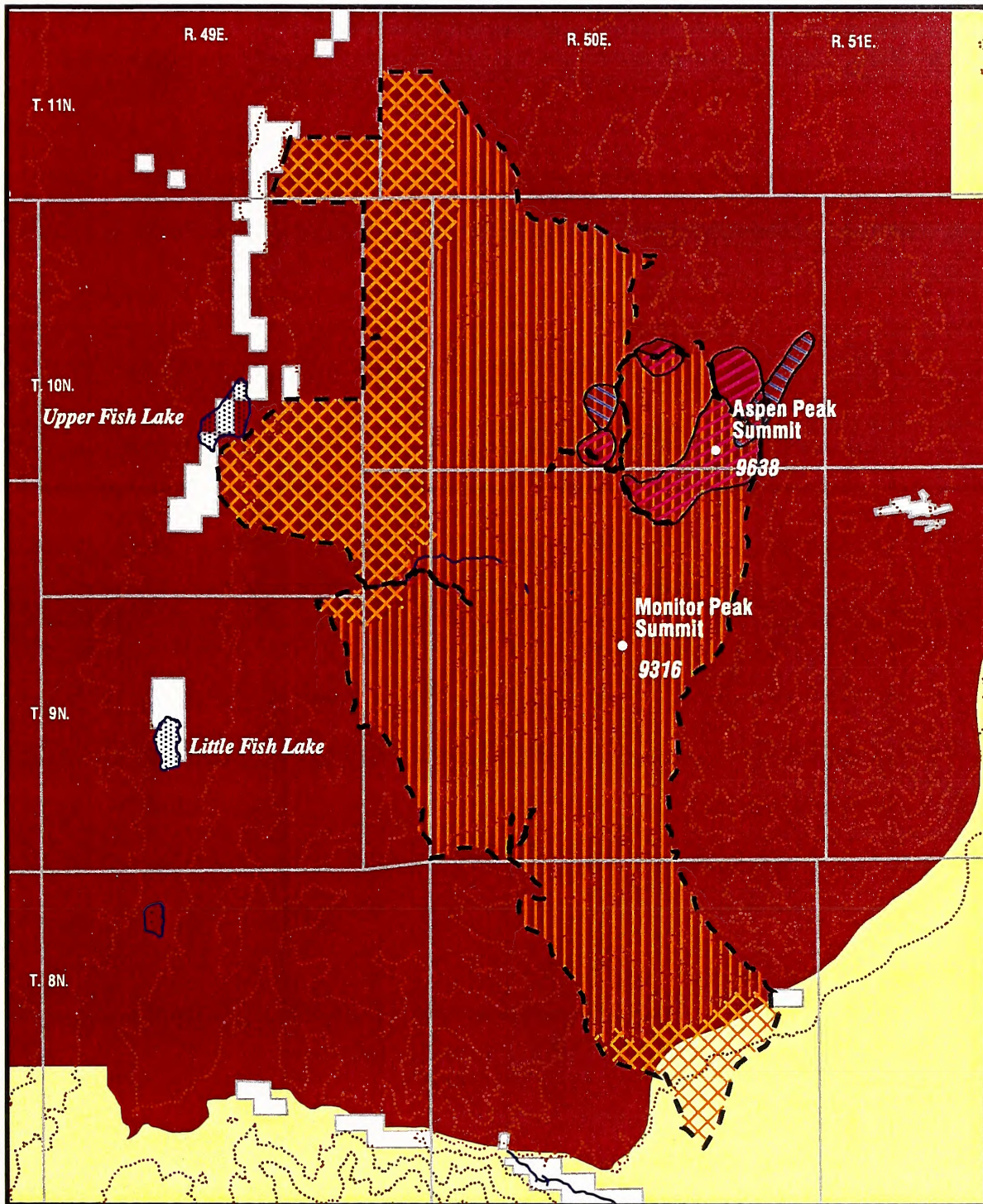
-  BLM
-  Private Land
-  Other Agency

-  Wilderness Study Area Boundary
-  Recommended Non-Suitable
-  Recommended Suitable



NV-060-190

Fandango Wilderness Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL



1 0 1 Miles




CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

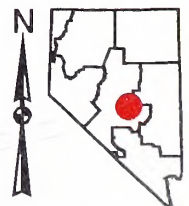
 Lake
 Alkali Flat

Mineral Potential

-  High - Gold
-  Medium - Silver, Lead, Zink

-  BLM
-  Private Land
-  Other Agency

-  Wilderness Study Area Boundary
-  Recommended Non-Suitable
-  Recommended Suitable



NV-060-190

MOREY PEAK WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

I. THE STUDY AREA - 20,120 acres

The Morey Peak WSA (NV-060-191) is located in northeastern Nye County, Nevada approximately 70 miles east of Tonopah. The WSA includes 20,120 acres of public lands. The WSA is bounded on the west by South Sixmile Canyon road. The northern boundary is generally along land net lines. The northeastern boundary is unnamed dirt roads. Most of the eastern boundary follows the fence line until it crosses the Hot Creek Station to Moores Station road, except for the AEC storage site and the Hobble Creek and Hobble Creek aqueduct triangle. The Morey Peak WSA lies in the Hot Creek Range adjacent to the southeastern portion of the Fandango WSA and includes a small portion of Hot Creek Valley. The study area is oblong shaped measuring 12 miles north to south and six miles east to west.

The National Forest and Public Lands of Nevada Enhancement Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-550) transferred administrative jurisdiction of 15,050 acres in the WSA to the Toiyabe National Forest leaving 5,070 acres under BLM management.

There were four alternatives analyzed in the EIS: an all wilderness alternative, a no wilderness alternative, a partial wilderness alternative which is the recommendation of this report where 14,560 acres would be designated as wilderness and 5,560 acres would be released for uses other than wilderness and a second partial wilderness alternative which would involve combining the Morey Peak and Fandango WSAs and designating 46,300 acres as wilderness and releasing 14,760 acres for uses other than wilderness.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 13,950 acres recommended for wilderness 6,170 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation for this WSA is to designate 13,950 acres as wilderness and release 6,170 acres for uses other than wilderness. This recommendation is 610 acres less than proposed in the EIS. An area of high mineral potential (gold) was identified by USGS after the EIS was completed. The all wilderness alternative is considered the environmentally preferable alternative as it would result in the least change from the natural environment over the long-term.

The central point of interest in the WSA is Morey Peak, which rises to over 10,240 feet. The peak is rugged and provides the dominant topographic point from all surrounding valleys. The slopes of Morey Peak are gouged with a myriad of steeply walled canyons capped by rocky spires. The rocky and barren peaks give way to dense stands of pinyon pine, juniper, mountain mahogany, limber pine, and ancient bristlecone pine as the mountain gives way to the valley floors 5,000 feet below. At the southern base of Morey Peak is Hobble Canyon. Several seeps and springs are found within the canyon and, in combination with the dense timber, provide a cool, moist respite from the scorching summer heat in the desert only a few hundred yards away. The steep slopes rapidly give way to broad alluvial benches which skirt the eastern and southern approaches to the mountains.

The WSA provides habitat for a wide array of wildlife and supports the largest populations of big game in the Tonopah Resource Area. The craggy cliffs of Morey peak are home to the nimble desert bighorn sheep. Large populations of mountain lion also inhabit the dense timber of Morey Peak. The WSA is critical winter range to a large population of mule deer. Occasional, yet increasingly more frequent, sightings of elk round out the WSA's big game population. Hot desert winds rising up the steep slopes of the mountain provide excellent soaring conditions for a wide variety of raptors.

The WSA abounds in prehistoric cultural resource sites with animal traps, petroglyphs, and pictographs scattered throughout the area. Historic sites are also common along the edge of the area recommended

for wilderness. The charcoal kilns located in the south Sixmile canyon are of particular interest. Constructed in the 1870s to provide charcoal for smelting furnaces in the adjoining mining districts.

All of the attributes mentioned above, combine to make an exceptional area with high wilderness values, which are believed to outweigh other, competing resource uses and potential uses.

Two areas were not recommended for wilderness designation. The northern portions of the WSA adjoin an old mining district and were found to have high mineral potential. The mining disturbance along the northern boundary serve as physical evidence of the high mineral potential in and around the area. Roads, exploration pits, drill holes, and scrap metal and machinery detract from the feeling of solitude and naturalness. The broad alluvial benches skirting the base of Morey Peak were not recommended for wilderness designation. Portions of the bench were found to have moderate mineral potential and evidence of past exploration are readily evident. Manageability of the area would be more difficult due to the open, easily accessible nature of the terrain where control of off-road vehicles would require more frequent patrols. The 610 acre area surrounding some high potential mineral sites, and the lower alluvial fans that lack the opportunities for solitude, are influenced by vehicle traffic on the nearby roads and lack the special features that attract visitors to the interior of the WSA.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: The recommended portions of the WSA are in a natural condition. The rugged terrain of the upper slopes of Morey Peak have held the activities of man at bay. Forbidding cliffs, deep narrow canyons and areas of dense timber serve to hamper movement and enhance the naturalness of these areas. Morey Peak is one of the least accessible mountains in central Nevada owing to it's precipitous rise from the valley floor. The central core of the WSA is in virtually pristine condition.

Within the boundaries of the WSA are approximately two miles of ways and two miles of pipeline. The recommended area of WSA contains the two miles of ways. These are found primarily in the canyons adjacent to existing boundary roads. The two miles of pipeline are located along the eastern boundary in the area recommended for uses other than wilderness. Numerous areas of mineral exploration exist along the boundaries and the disturbances commonly associated with mining operations are many. The areas surrounding the kilns were once clear cut of all timber. Reforestation of the surrounding slopes has been achieved through the long ago abandonment of using charcoal to fuel the smelters, but the inherent legacy of those clear cut can not be ignored.

The ruggedness of Morey Peak coupled with the dense timber dressing on it's side couple to mask the man made intrusions located at the lower elevations thereby minimizing the negatives associated with those disturbances.

B. Solltude: The opportunities for solitude in the Morey Peak WSA are outstanding. The WSA consists almost entirely of Morey Peak and its surrounding lesser peaks. Topographic screening is provided by the many canyons and the rugged layout of the mountainous terrain. Adding to this is the dense tree cover blanketing all approaches to the peak and the precipitous rise of the mountains from the valley below. Also adding to the solitude is the lack of destination points. The summit of Morey Peak and associated ridges, with their protective vertical rock walls will appeal to only the more intrepid hiker. Complete solitude may be achieved along any peak of rock outcrop along the summit of the ridge. Recreational use would be distributed throughout the WSA, helping their natural carrying capacity of the area absorb a number of users while still ensuing each their solitude.

The alluvial fans skirting the eastern and southern boundaries of the mountains provide little in the way of solitude.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Outstanding opportunities for primitive recreation exist within the Morey Peak WSA. The foremost is the provocative challenge climbing Morey Peak provides. Both technical and non-technical routes may be found throughout the peaks and surrounding ridges. Along the many approaches to the summit, opportunity to observe desert bighorn sheep at close range in an undisturbed setting among the rock and bristlecone pine abound. Large seasonal populations of mule deer may be seen at virtually any location within the WSA. Chance encounters with mountain lion and elk will also add to the recreational values.

Prehistoric sites are also common throughout the WSA. The diversity of the area will appeal to the photographer.

D. Special Features: The Morey Peak WSA has six charcoal kilns. These kilns are an important remanent of the historic past of Nevada and are in excellent condition. This WSA contains one of only two known locations where bristlecone pines are growing in volcanic soils. Bristlecone pines alone are of special interest because they are the oldest living things known and are only found in a few high elevations in the United States.

4. MANAGEABILITY

The 13,950 acres recommended for wilderness designation can reasonably be managed as wilderness to preserve values now present in the area. There are no expected manageability problems.

It is expected that the 6,170 acres not recommended for wilderness designation will have problems preventing adverse impact on naturalness and solitude caused by off-road vehicle use.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

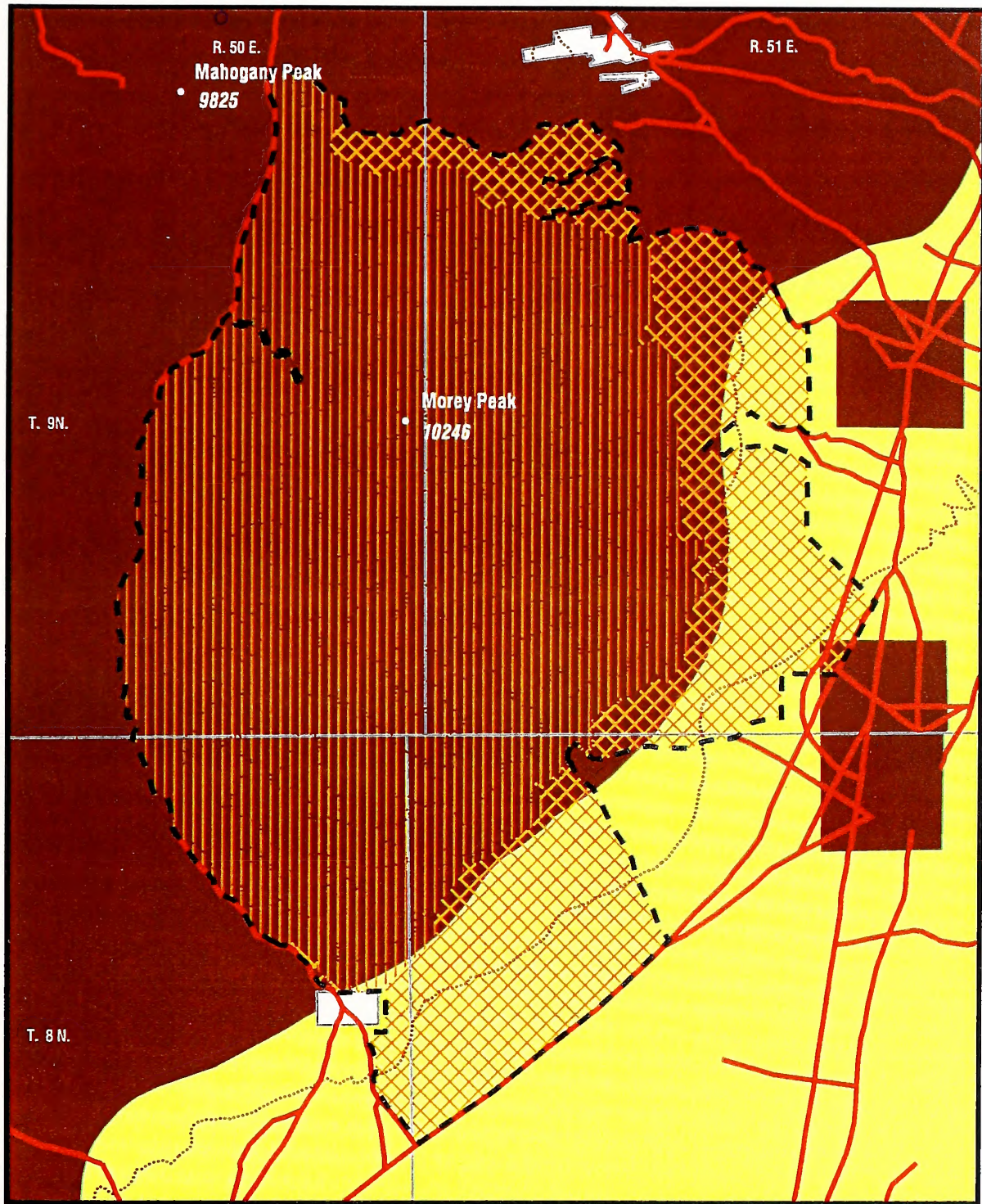
The US Geological Survey and the US Bureau of Mines investigated the Morey Peak WSA. While the area is estimated to have low or no potential for petroleum, gas, uranium, and geothermal energy, two small (less than 200 acres) areas have a high potential for silver, lead, and zinc resources and two areas, one along the north boundary and the other in the Hobble Canyon areas, have a moderate resource potential for silver, lead and zinc. The area along the north boundary was designated as moderate in the EIS. The area along Hobble Canyon was not designated in the EIS.

6. SUMMARY OF WSA-SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

During formal public review of the draft EIS, a total of 21 comments specifically addressing this WSA were received. Six individuals, one environmental organization and two state agencies favored the Morey Peak WSA designation and five individuals, one mining organization, five mining companies and one local government opposed this designation. Reasons supporting designation were: outstanding area, provides challenging terrain, good scenic values. Reasons supporting nondesignation were: enormous mineral and energy potential, mining districts located on all sides, accurate mapping not done to properly assess mineral potential.

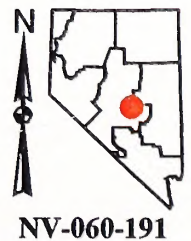
The State, during the consistency review, did not concur with the Preferred Alternative. The State feels that wilderness designation will adversely affect wildlife management by eliminating opportunities to effectively manage habitat. Hunter use would be adversely affected by reduction of access. Mineral values are high and wilderness values are not high enough to outweigh these conflicts.

Morey Peak Wilderness Study Area WSA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP

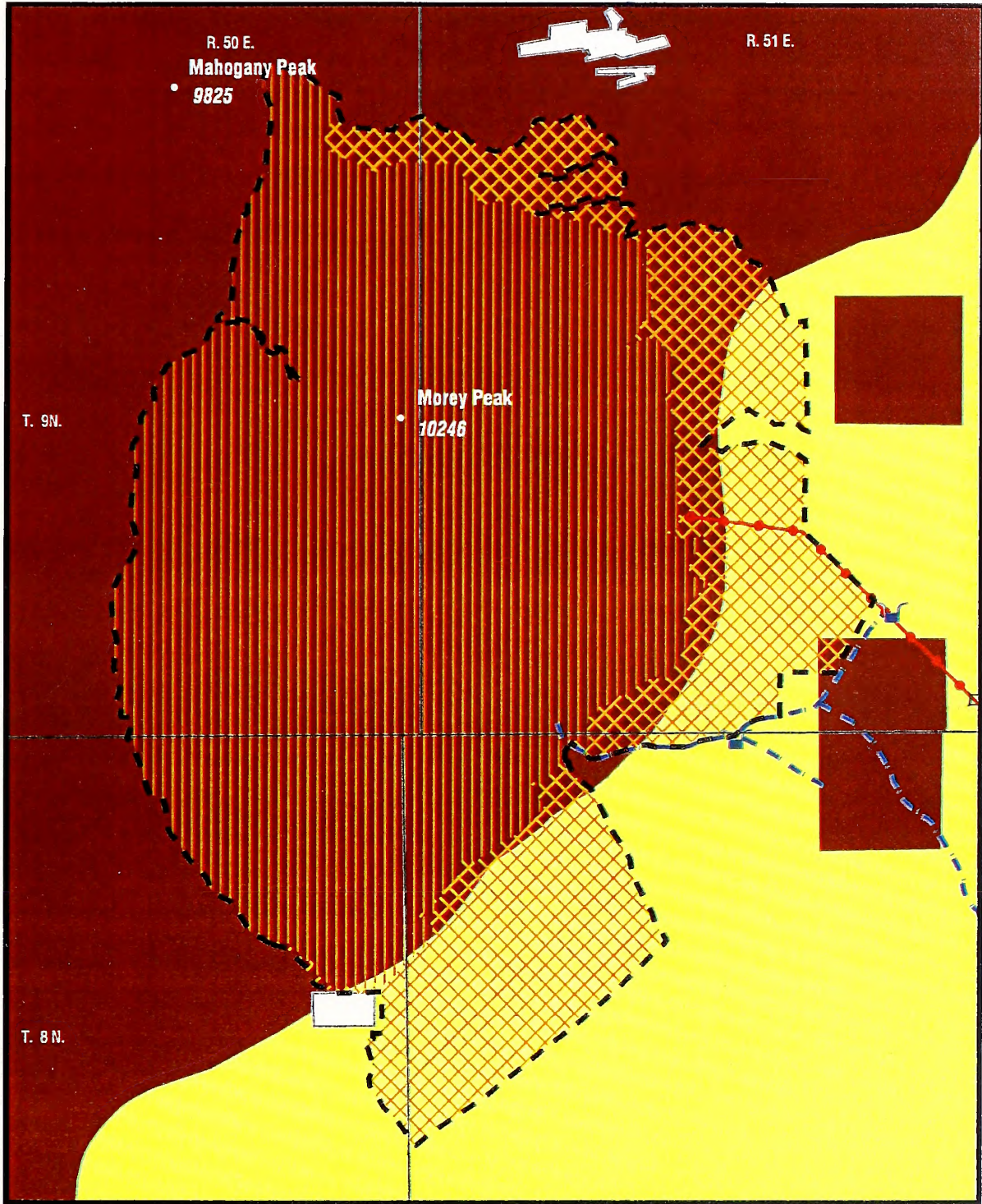


— Road
1 0 1 Miles
CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency
- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable
- Recommended Suitable



Morey Peak Wilderness Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES



- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

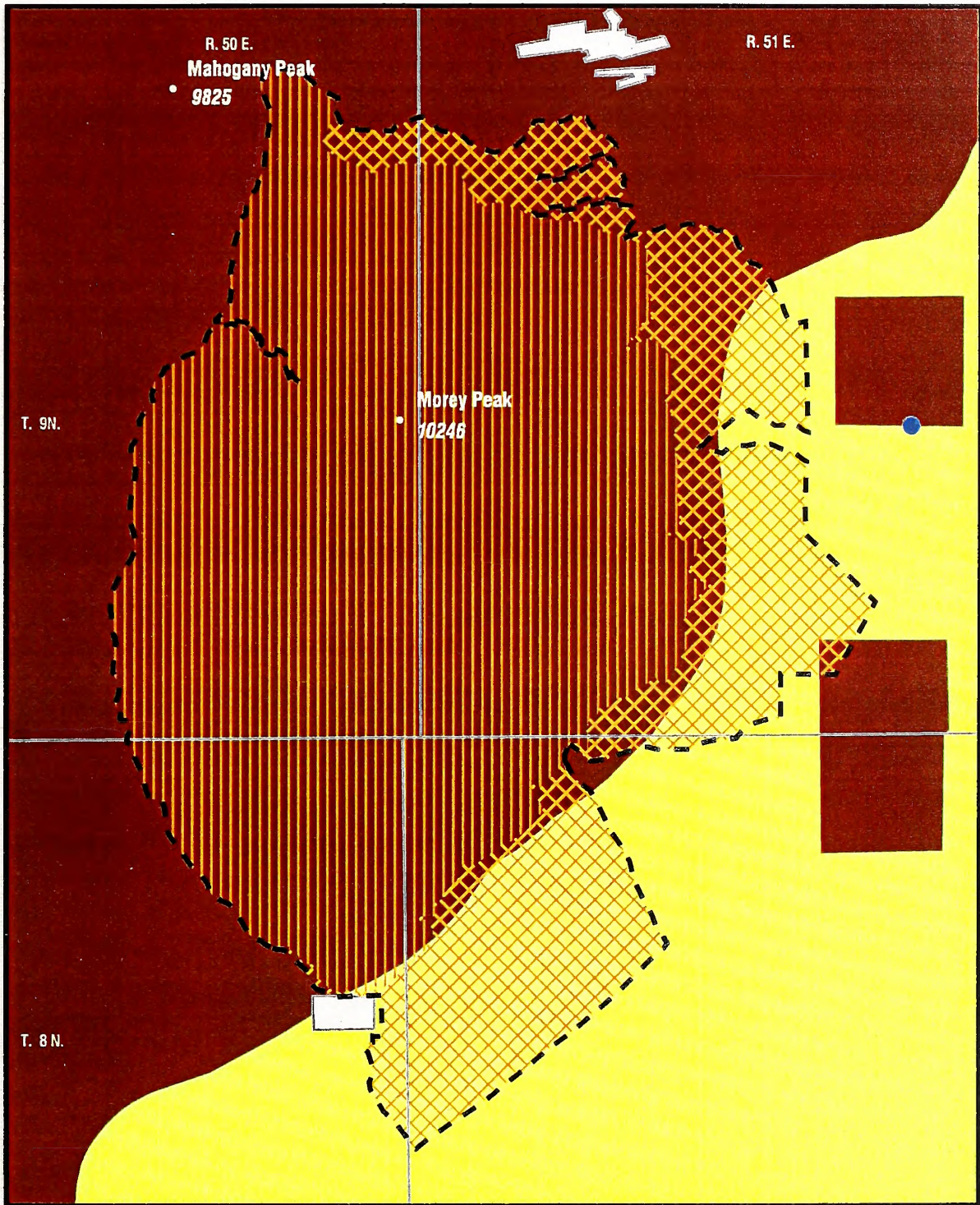
- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable
- Recommended Suitable

- Cattleguard
- Trough
- Pipeline
- Fence



NV-060-191

Morey Peak Wilderness Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY

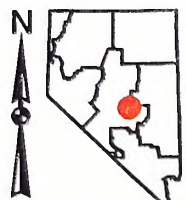


1 0 1 Miles

● Hydro Test Well

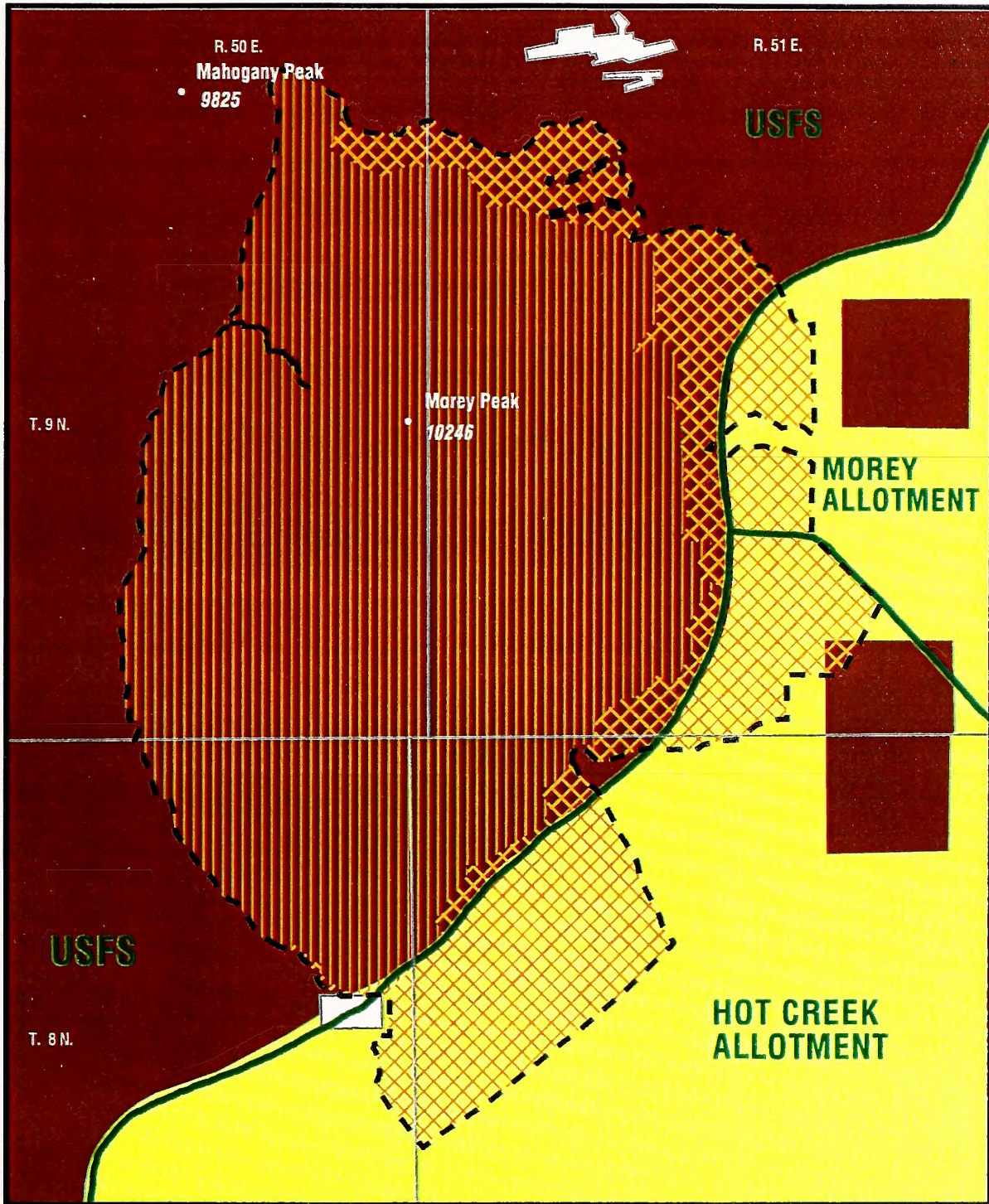
- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable
- Recommended Suitable




NV-060-191

Morey Peak Wilderness Study Area ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCENCES



**Federally Listed
Threatened
and
Endangered
Species**




 **Observation Site**
NONE ON THIS MAP

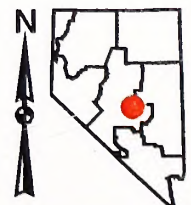
1 0 1 Miles

NO HMA ON THIS MAP

 **Allotment
Boundary**

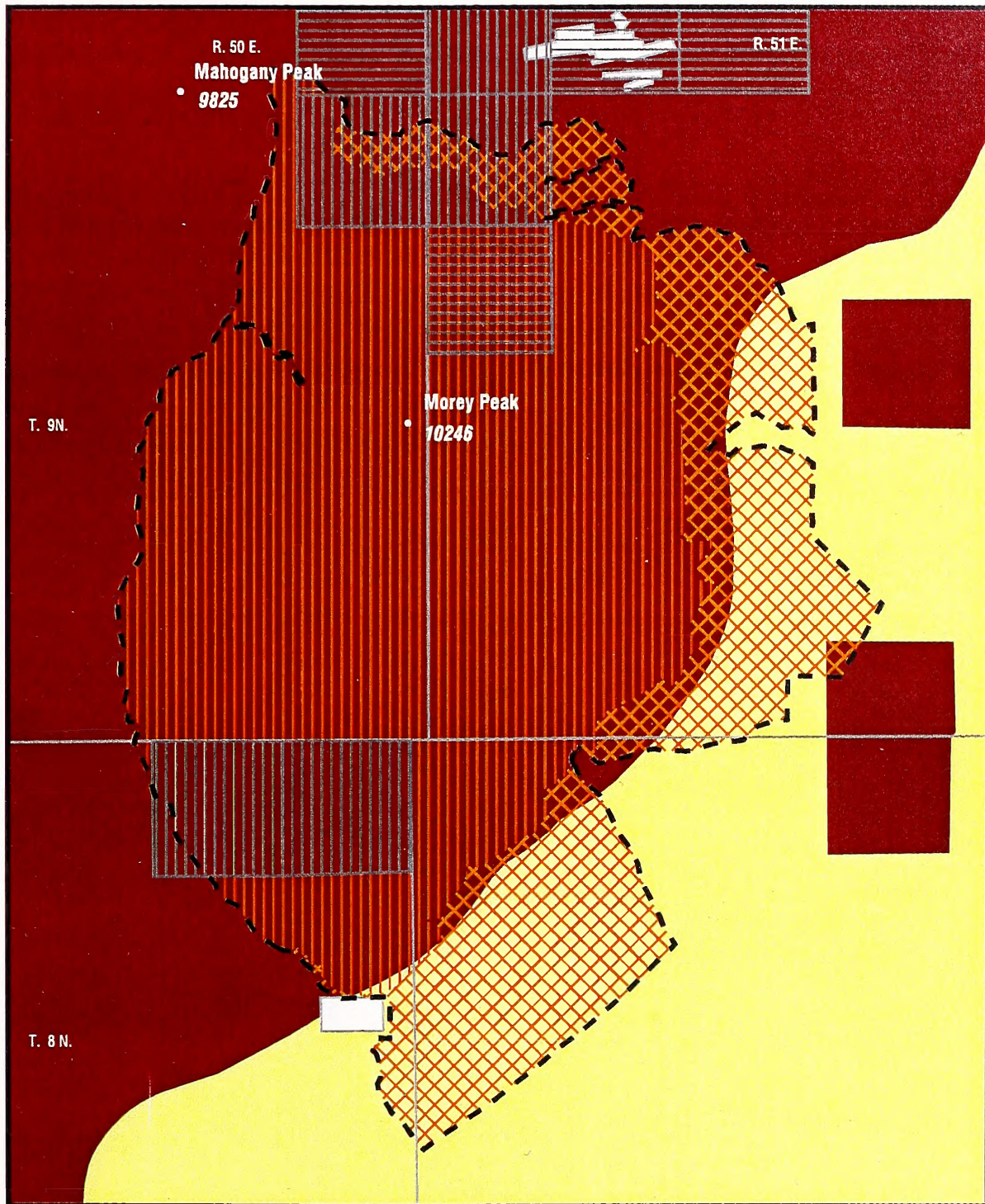
 **BLM**
 **Private Land**
 **Other Agency**

 **Wilderness Study Area Boundary**
 **Recommended Non-Suitable**
 **Recommended Suitable**






NV-060-191

Morey Peak Wilderness Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS






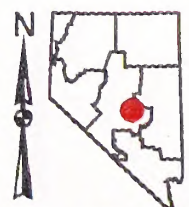
NO MINING OPERATIONS ON THIS MAP

Mining Claim Density - 3/97

-  1-5 Claims
-  6-35 Claims
-  36 or more Claims

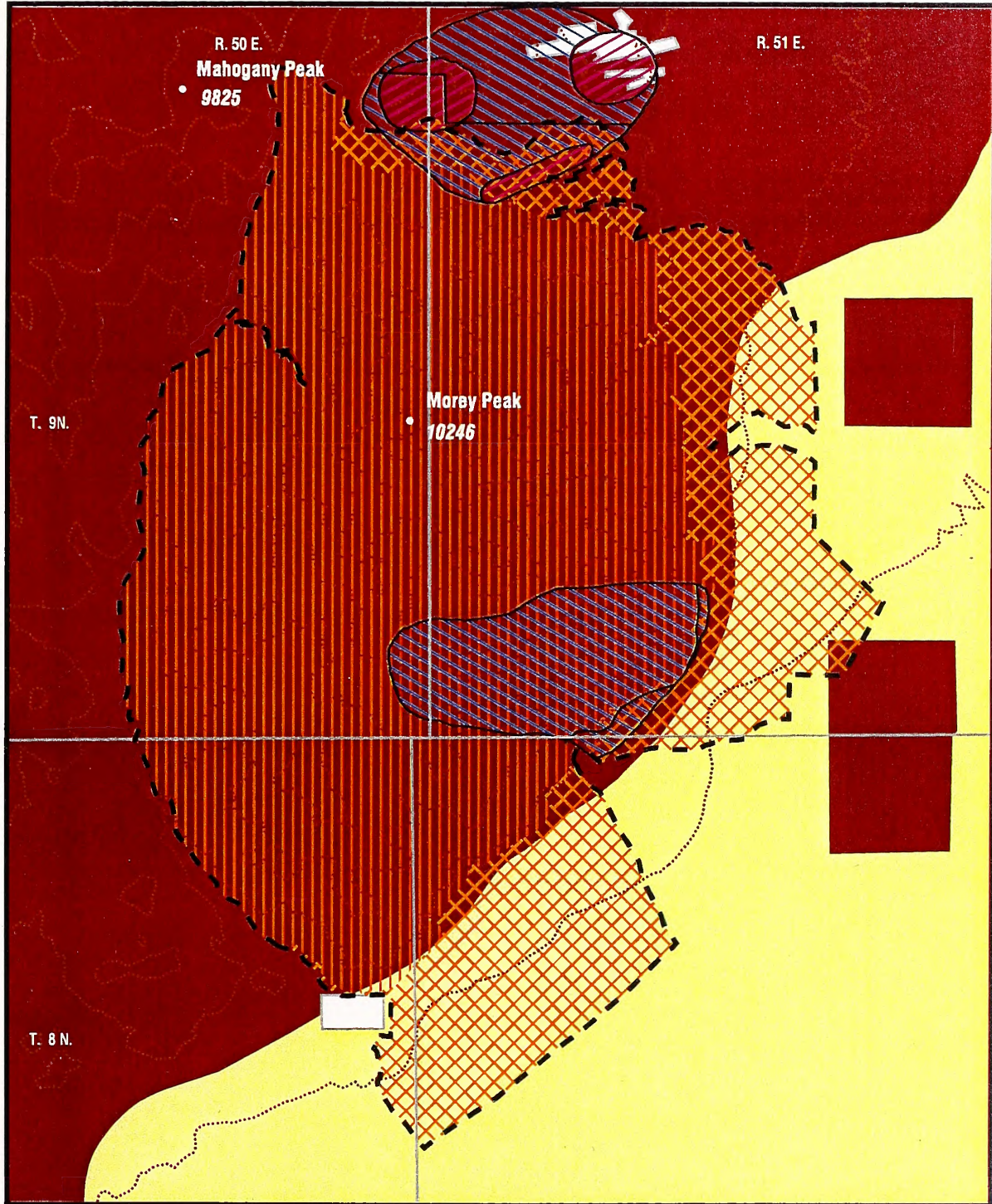
-  BLM
-  Private Land
-  Other Agency

-  Wilderness Study Area Boundary
-  Recommended Non-Suitable
-  Recommended Suitable



NV-060-191



Morey Peak Wilderness Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL






1 0 1 Miles

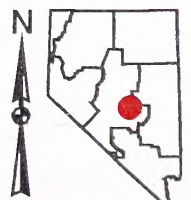
CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

Mineral Potential

-  High - Silver, Lead, Zinc
-  Medium - Silver, Lead, Zinc

-  BLM
-  Private Land
-  Other Agency

-  Wilderness Study Area Boundary
-  Recommended Non-Suitable
-  Recommended Suitable



NV-060-191

ANTELOPE RANGE WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

I. THE STUDY AREA - 87,400 acres

The Antelope Range WSA (NV-060-231/241) is located in northeastern Nye County, Nevada approximately 40 miles south of Eureka. The WSA includes 87,400 acres of public lands.

The WSA is bounded on the northwest by the Little Fish Lake Valley road. A fenceline designates the western boundary through township twelve north. The southwest boundary is generally the 7200' contour line. The southern boundary generally follows the Big Cow Canyon road to the east until it meets with Luther Waddles Wash then follows the wash to the road from Eureka to Moores Station. The boundary follows this road north. The north boundary follows land net lines.

The Antelope Range WSA lies in the southern part of the Antelope Range and the northern end of the Hot Creek Range. The WSA consists of a ridgeline, approximately twenty-five miles long and eight miles wide with an average elevation differential of about two thousand feet. Pinyon pine and juniper cover most of the WSA with scattered areas of aspen and mahogany.

The National Forest And Public Lands of Nevada Enhancement Act of 1988 (P.L. 100-550) transferred administrative jurisdiction of 43,700 acres in the WSA to the Toiyabe National Forest leaving 43,700 acres under BLM management. The Act, while transferring administrative jurisdiction, left unchanged the wilderness review initiated by the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). The wilderness recommendation will be developed by the BLM and submitted to the Secretary of Interior, President and Congress for their consideration.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 80,320 acres recommended for wilderness 7,580 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation of this WSA is to designate 80,320 acres as wilderness and release 7,580 acres for uses other than wilderness. All wilderness is considered to be the environmentally preferable alternative as it would result in the least change from the natural environment over the long-term. The partial wilderness alternative, the recommendation of this report, would be implemented in a manner which would utilize all practical means to avoid or minimize environmental impacts.

Due to the U.S. Geological Service and U.S. Bureau of Mines report identifying areas with higher potential for minerals than those recognized in the DEIS, the area recommended for designation has been reduced by 2,780 acres. The 80,320 acre recommended for designation include a total of 79,820 acres of public land within the Antelope Range WSA and an additional 500 acres of public land adjacent to the northern boundary of the WSA, but not part of the WSA. The addition of this 500 acres will enhance the manageability of the area by making the boundary easier to identify on the ground.

The majority of the Antelope Range WSA is recommended for wilderness because it is a large area in exceptionally pristine condition, with high meadows, rugged topography and scenic beauty, historic and archaeological values, a lack of conflicting resource uses and strong public support for designation.

The WSA is a remote, relatively unknown mountain range 25 miles long and eight miles wide with an abrupt elevation change of 2,000 feet. The core of this mountainous unit has not been penetrated by roads or other evidence of human use. The area's rugged character and apparent lack of mineral potential have helped to preserve the majority of this unit in a natural condition. A number of spring fed meadows occur in the southern part of the WSA. Some of these meadows have been inaccessible to livestock and vehicles and offer a rare opportunity for study of the natural environment. These meadows, with their rich flora,

fauna and water sources, are highly desirable destinations for hikers, backpackers and photographers. Abrupt volcanic cliffs, rock outcrops and deep narrow canyons contribute to the area's outstanding opportunities for solitude and unconfined primitive recreation opportunities. The visual interest of the area is enhanced by occasional eroded outcrops of white silicic ash flow tuff, and patches of aspen, that contrast dramatically with the darker volcanic rocks and juniper-pinyon woodlands that predominate the landscape.

The visitors can easily be carried back into the past when they may come upon a group of Shoshone Indian wickiups or any of the many archaeological site that exist in this WSA, or perhaps the James Wild Horse Trap - rows of pinyon and juniper piled together to form barriers for horses - believed to have been used by Will James (listed on the National Register of Historic Places).

The Antelope Range WSA has received nearly unanimous support for designation. It has high wilderness values, few conflicts, and can easily be managed as wilderness because of the rugged terrain, remoteness, and no private inholdings or known mineral resources.

Conflicts with other resource uses of this WSA are low. Mineral and energy potential are low because of the dense volcanic rock which overlies the majority of the WSA. The extreme southern tip of the WSA has outcrops of Mesozoic-Paleozoic sedimentary rocks which may indicate host rocks for precious metals. Development for minerals or energy is not expected within the part of the WSA recommended for wilderness.

The 7,580 acres not recommended for wilderness lack the quality of wilderness values of naturalness and solitude found in the rest of the WSA. An unnatural crested wheat seeding is located in this area along with two fences, three ways, and five cherrystemmed roads. High mineral potential for silver, zinc, vanadium and other metallics occurs on 2,780 acres.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: The area is generally free from human imprints and is in a natural state. The WSA consists of a ridgeline, approximately twenty-five miles long and eight miles wide with an average elevation differential of about two thousand feet. Pinyon pine and juniper cover most of the WSA with scattered areas of aspen and mahogany. The following imprints are found within the boundary of the wilderness study area: 13 ways, 5 water developments, a small seeding in the northeast portion of the unit near Crested Wheat Ridge, 4 fences which protrude a short way into the unit, and a small enclosure in the southeast portion of the unit.

B. Solltude: The unit contains outstanding opportunities for solitude. Located 20 miles from the nearest paved highway, the area is extremely remote and seldom visited. A mixture of diverse topography and vegetation combine to form excellent screening in the unit. In addition, size and topography combine to form almost unlimited secluded spots. The interior of the unit provides seclusion to almost any degree.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The area offers abundant opportunities for sustained high-elevation hiking and horseback riding, hunting, sightseeing, photography, and historical and archaeological study. These factors, in combination, provide an outstanding opportunity for primitive and unconfined recreation within the wilderness study area.

D. Special Features: The special features include the untrampled spring fed meadows that are very uncommon in Nevada and the James Wild Horse Trap (listed on the National Register of Historic Places). This trap consists of rows of pinyon and juniper piled together to form barriers for horses.

4. MANAGEABILITY

The portion of this WSA recommended for wilderness designation can reasonably be managed as wilderness over the long term. There are no private inholdings or state lands within the unit. The oil and gas leases along the western portion of the unit should not pose a major manageability problem. No rights-of-way are proposed within or near the area. Continued livestock grazing would not be incompatible with wilderness management. Boundaries are generally easily recognizable and offer no problems for wilderness management. An exception is an 2.5-mile portion of the northern boundary which follows a section line. Manageability could be improved by moving the boundary north to coincide with terrain features identifiable on the ground. This boundary revision would encompass an additional 500 acres.

Not recommended part of the WSA for wilderness would improve manageability of the area which is recommended by removing a number of imprints, including ways and cherrystemmed roads, where vehicle use would be a problem for manageability. Other existing ways are not considered a major problem for manageability.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

Originally the Antelope Range WSA was evaluated as having a low potential for all forms of energy and mineral resources. There were no mining claims, however, oil and gas leases along the western portion of the WSA do exist.

The United States Geological Survey and Bureau of Mines prepared a mineral assessment of the Antelope WSA in 1984 and 1985 (U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 1731-E). This report indicates that no identified mineral or energy resources occur within the study area. The southern part of the area has a moderate mineral resource potential for undiscovered gold and silver. One small area (woodruff formation) in the southern part has a high resource potential for undiscovered vanadium, zinc, selenium, molybdenum, and silver. The remainder of the study area has low resource potential for undiscovered gold, silver, lead, zinc, manganese, tin, and molybdenum. The study area also has low resource potential for undiscovered oil and gas resources.

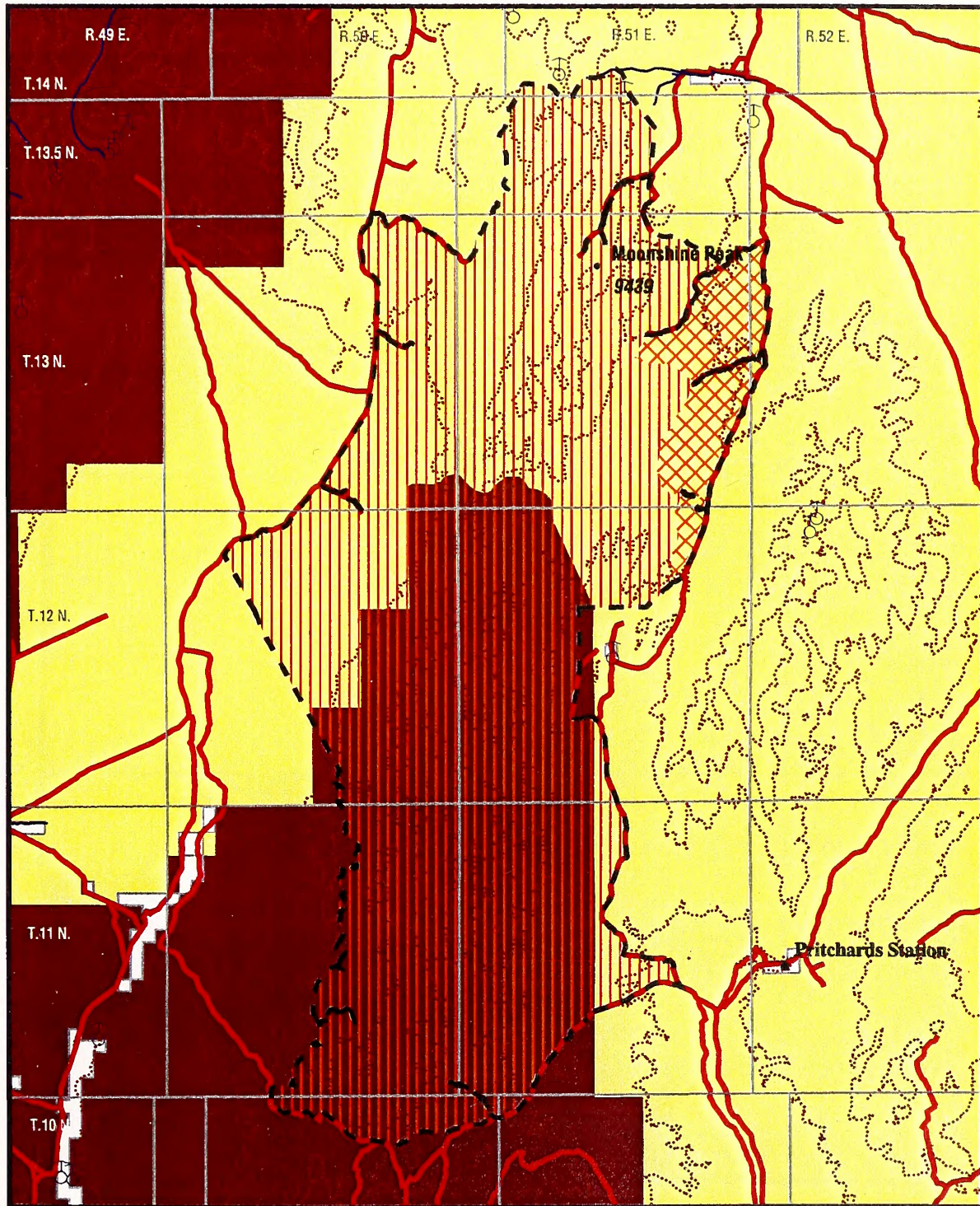
6. SUMMARY OF WSA-SPECIFIC COMMENTS

Public involvement has occurred throughout the wilderness review process. During the formal public review of the draft EIS, a total of 15 comments specifically addressing this WSA were received. Seven individuals and five environmental organizations favored the Antelope Range designation and one individual, one mining company and one mining organization opposed this designation.

Reasons for supporting designation were; outstanding wilderness values, high mountain meadows which have not received substantial grazing, very large, wild, remote, important cultural resources, low mineral potential, no private inholdings. Reasons for supporting nondesignation were; too many man-made improvements, suitable recommendation would preclude future development of mineral potential.

The State of Nevada in its consistency review concurred with the Preferred Alternative.

Antelope Range Wilderness Study Area WSA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP



— Road
○ Spring

1 0 1 Miles

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

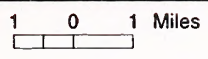
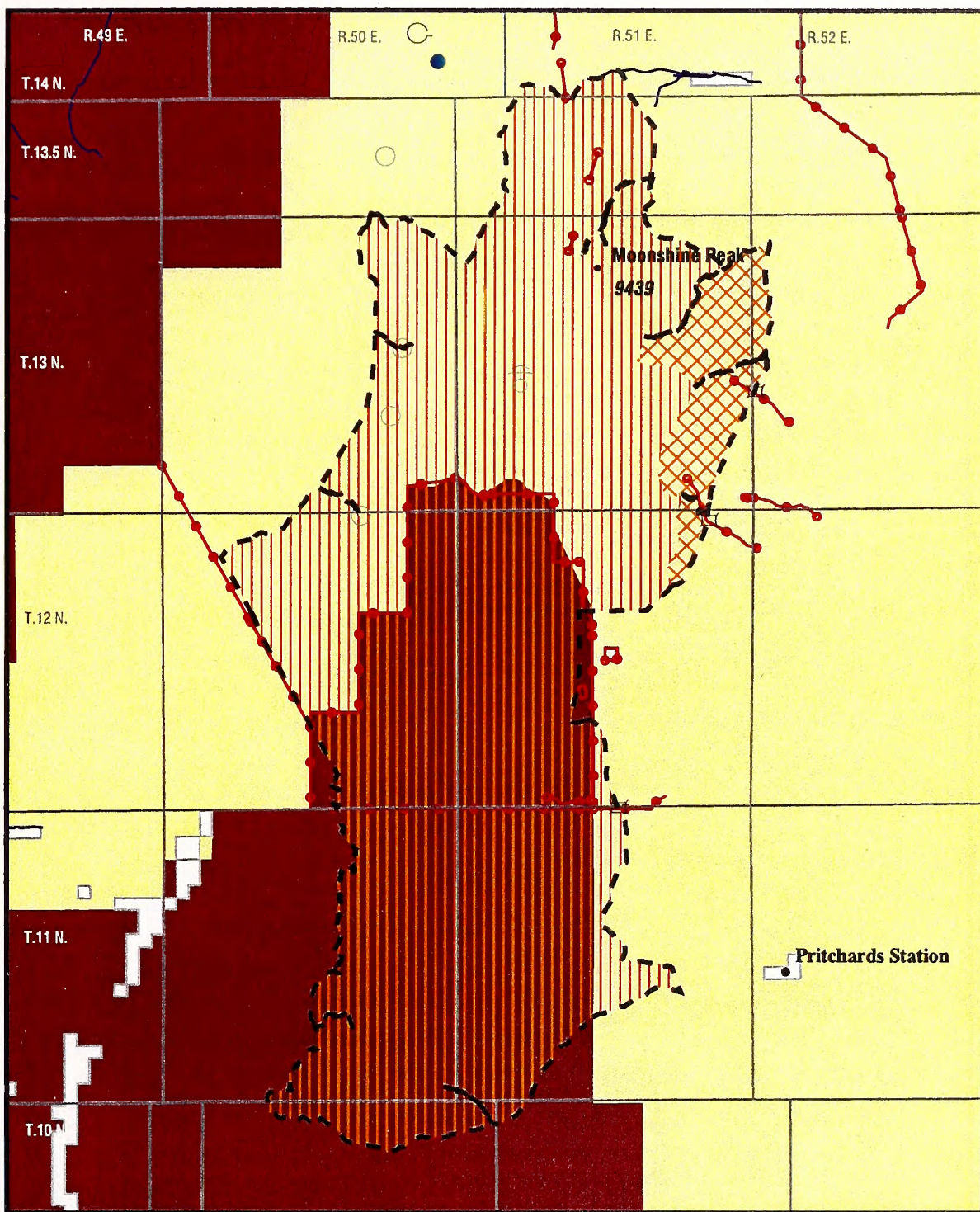
■ BLM
□ Private Land
■ Other Agency

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable
|||| Recommended Suitable



NV-060-231/241

Antelope Range Wilderness Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES



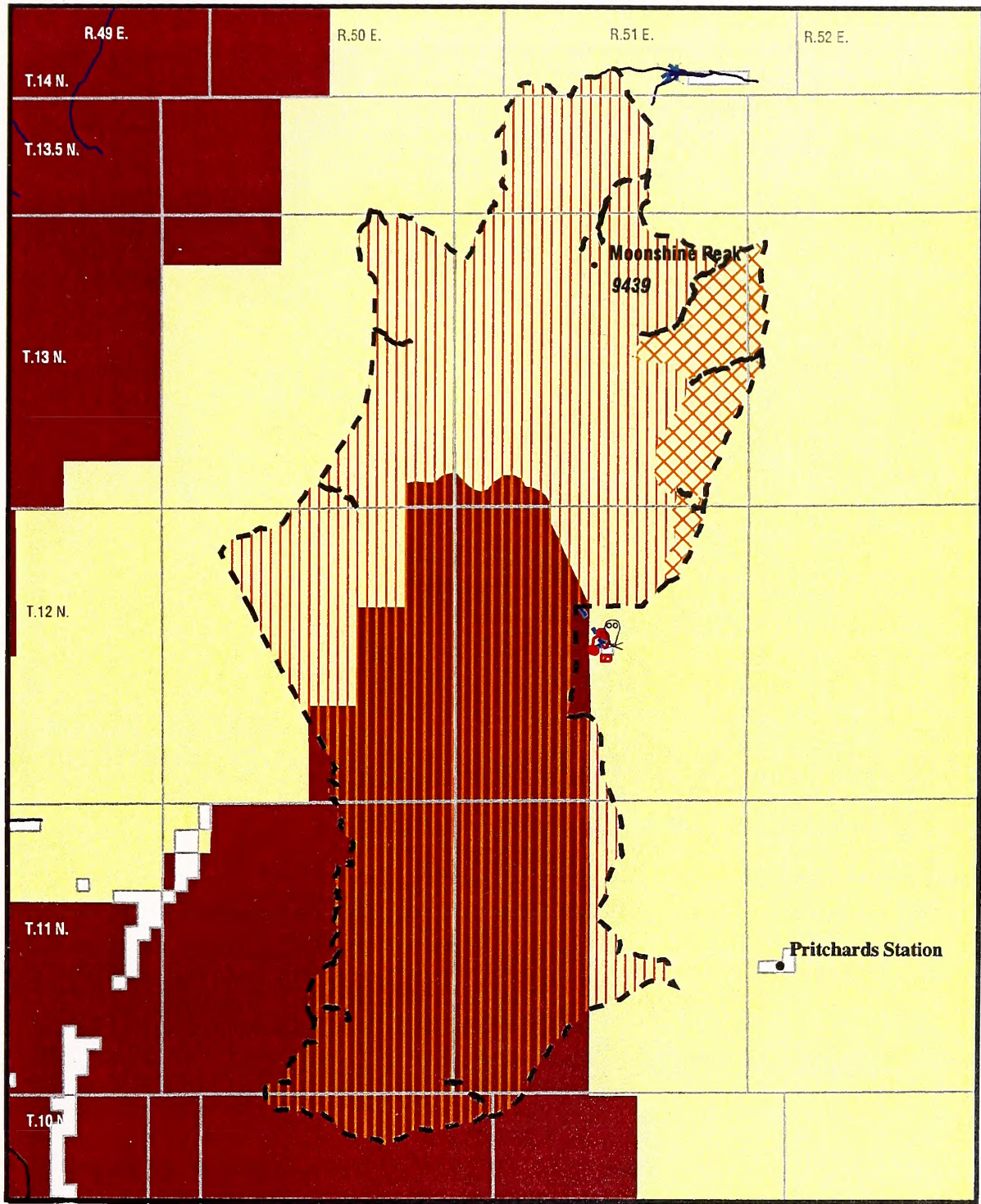
- Well
- Storage Tank
- Corral
- ⊕ Dev. Spring
- ⊠ Cattleguard
- - Pipeline
- Fence

- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

- - Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- ⊗ Recommended Non-Suitable
- ||| Recommended Suitable



Antelope Range Wilderness Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY



- - - Pipeline
- Ditch
- Fence
- Reservoir
- Unauth. Trash Dump
- Unauth. Cult. Field

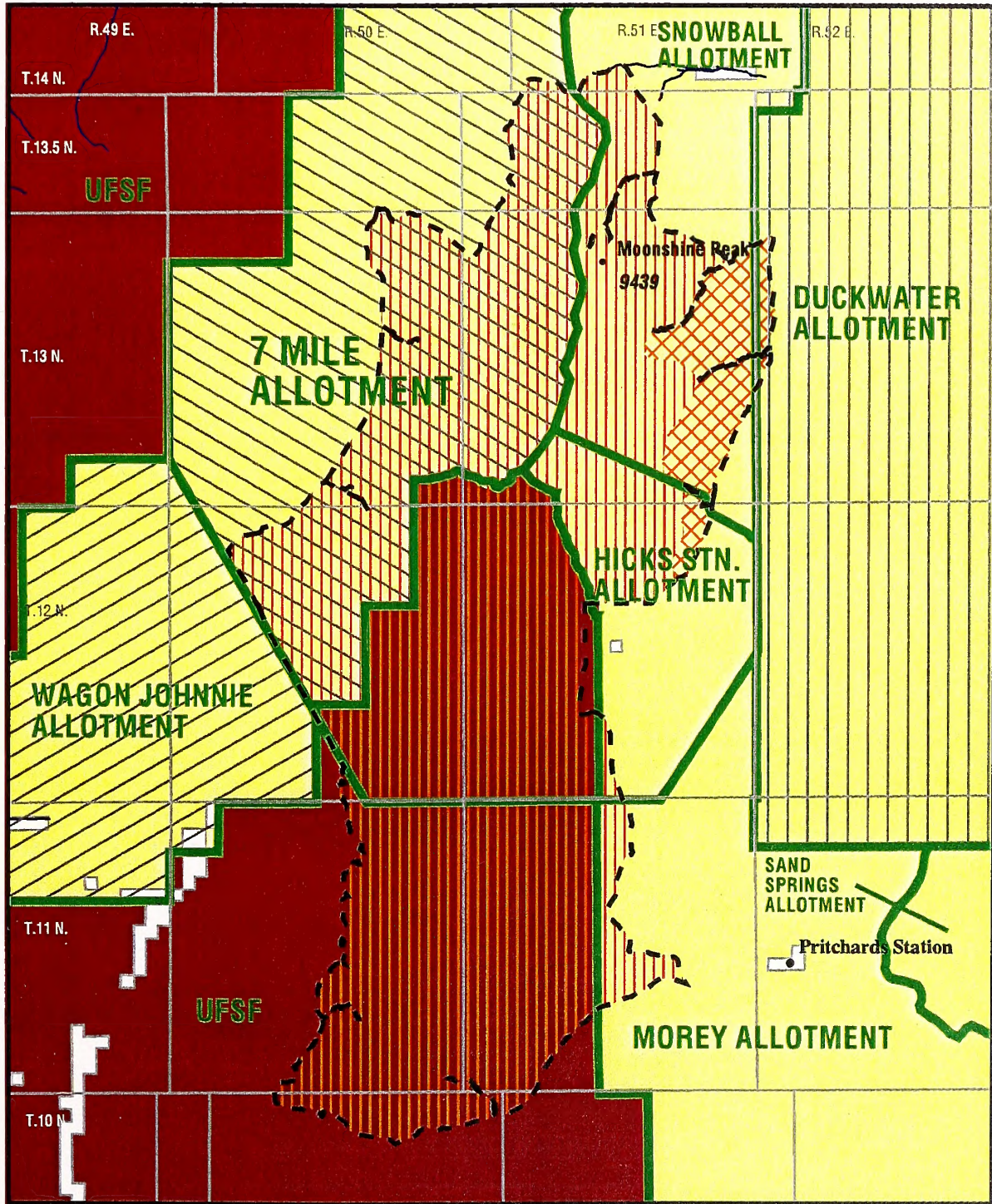
- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

- - Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable
- Recommended Suitable



NV-060-231/241

Antelope Range Wilderness Study Area ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCENCES



Federally Listed
Threatened
and
Endangered
Species
Observation Site
● Observation Site
NONE ON THIS MAP

1 0 1 Miles

- Little Fish Lake HMA
- Sand Springs East HMA
- Seven Mile HMA

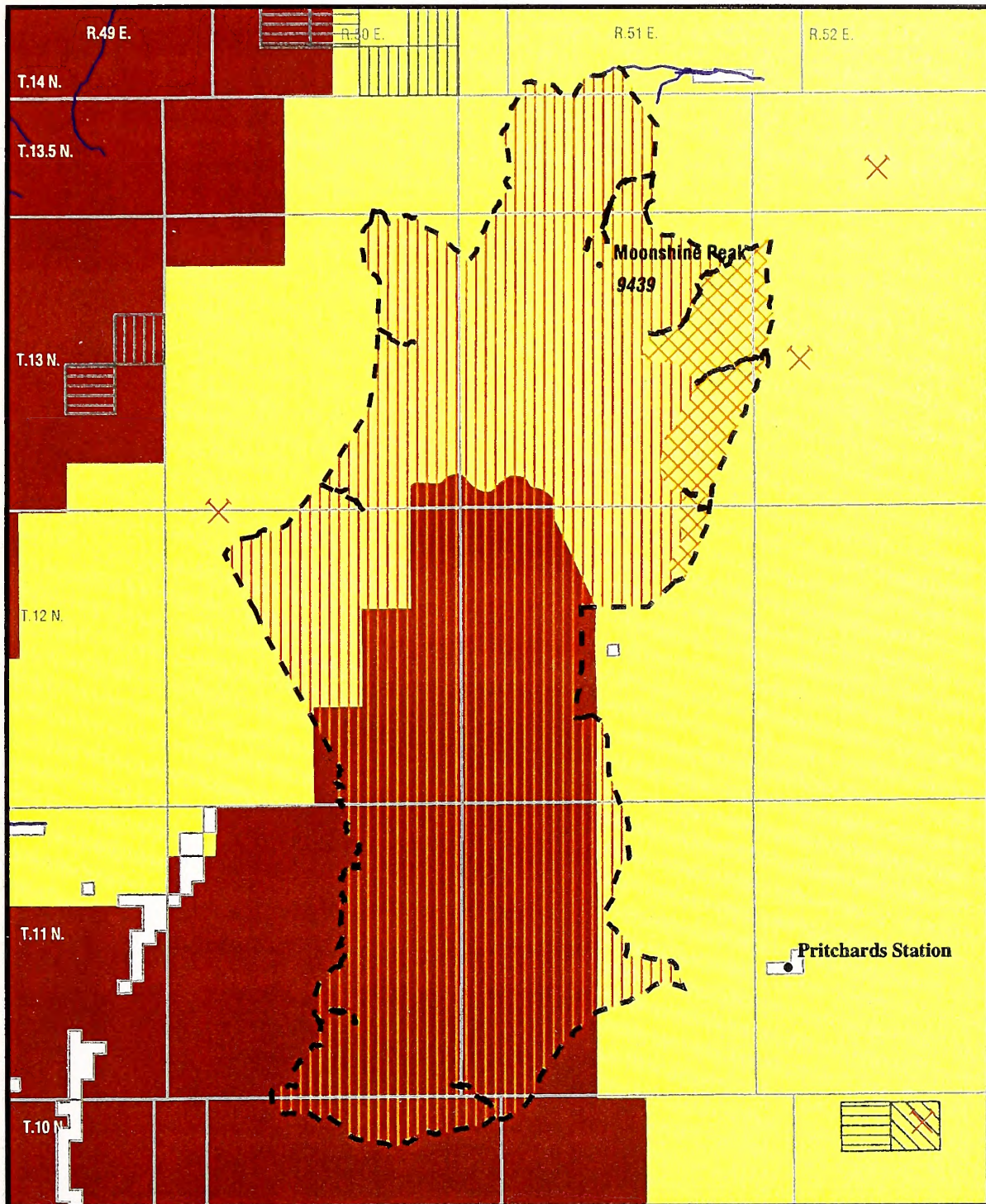
Allotment
Boundary


- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency


- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable
- Recommended Suitable






Antelope Range Wilderness Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS






 Mining Operations

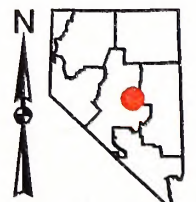
1 0 1 Miles


Mining Claim Density - 3/97

-  1-5 Claims
-  6-35 Claims
-  36 or more Claims

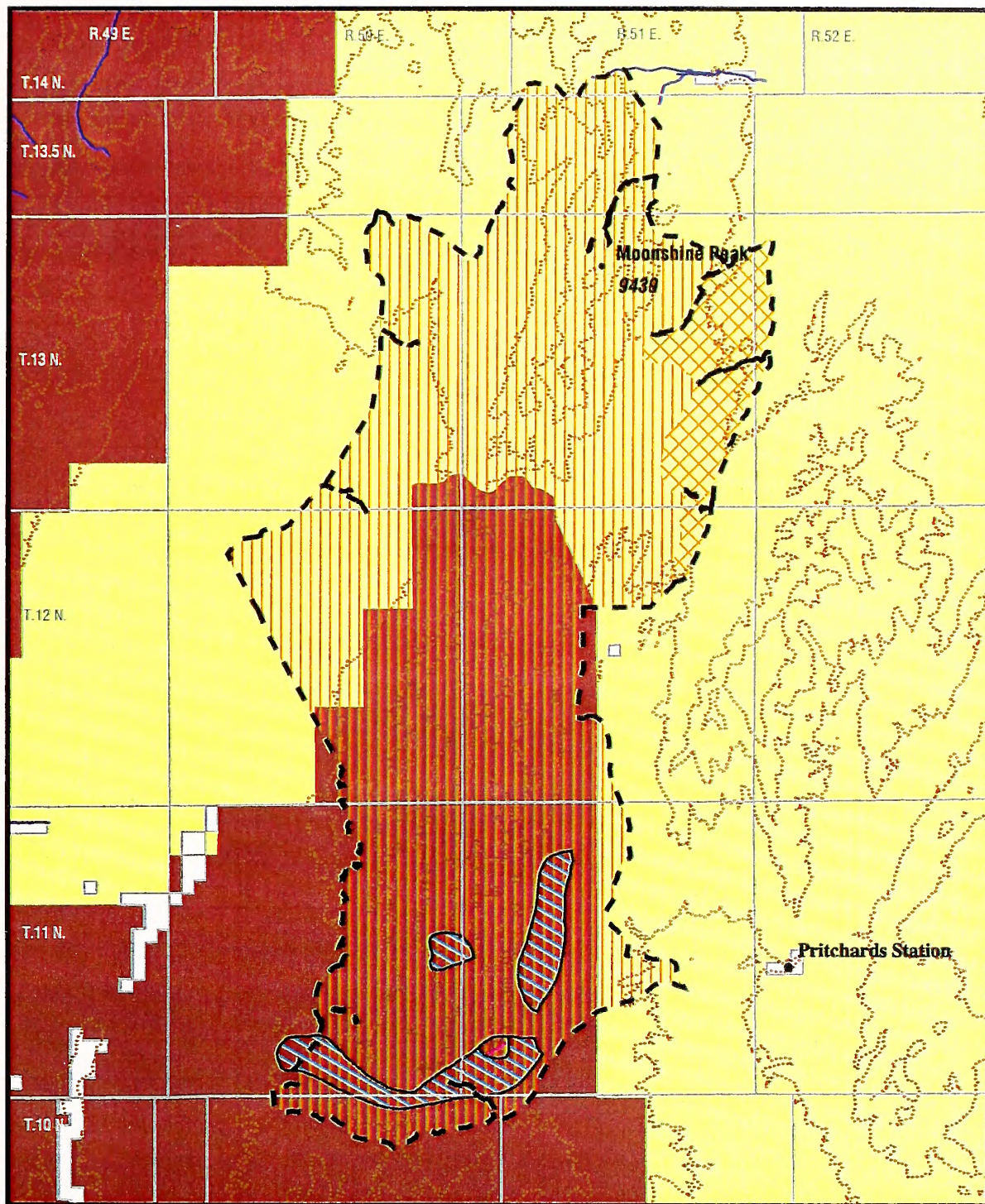
-  BLM
-  Private Land
-  Other Agency

-  Wilderness Study Area Boundary
-  Recommended Non-Suitable
-  Recommended Suitable



NV-060-231/241

Antelope Range Wilderness Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL



1 0 1 Miles

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

Mineral Potential

- High - Vanadium, Zinc, Silver, Selenium, Molybdenum
- Medium - Gold, Silver

- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable
- Recommended Suitable



NV-060-231/241

SILVER PEAK RANGE WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

1. THE STUDY AREA - 33,900 acres

The Silver Peak Range WSA (NV-060-338) is located in Esmeralda County about 10 miles west of the town of Silver Peak and 40 miles southwest of Tonopah. The entire WSA is comprised of public land with no private inholdings. Topographic features form the boundaries of the WSA. The 6,000 foot contour line and a series of drainages comprise the northeast boundary, while peak to peak points form nearly the remainder of the WSA's boundary. The Silver Peak Range WSA is located in the northwest corner of the Silver Peak Range and is roughly 8 miles wide and 6 miles long.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 0 acres recommended for wilderness 33,900 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation for this WSA is to release all 33,900 acres for uses other than wilderness.

This recommendation differs from the Proposed Action (Partial Wilderness alternative), analyzed in the Esmeralda -Southern Nye Resource Area Final Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) where 17,850 acres were recommended as suitable for wilderness and 17,234 acres were recommended as unsuitable for wilderness. The proposed action analyzed in the FEIS relied heavily on the opinion that even if mineral deposits were to occur, at least in the area recommended for wilderness, they would not be developed because of the enormous effort and cost of economically removing minerals from this rugged area. Reported mineral potential analyzed in the FEIS proposed action contributed to 17,234 acres not being recommended for wilderness.

After the FEIS was completed, the U.S. Geological Survey and Bureau of Mines (USGS/BOM) report, U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin 1731-G, was published. This report concluded on page G1 that, "No identified resources are present in the study area. However, two parts of the study area have high and moderate resource potential and the remainder has low resource potential for gold and silver in epithermal veins." Based on the USGS/BOM report and the determinations in the FEIS, the BLM reasoned that wilderness values in this area outweighed the value of potential mineral development, after carving out any portions of the WSA with potentially high mineral values. Consequently, the BLM recommended to the Secretary of the Interior, Manuel Lujan, that the Proposed Action identifying 17,850 acres suitable for wilderness designation and 17,234 acres unsuitable for wilderness designation be adopted.

Upon review of the Bureau's recommendation by the Secretary, the Secretary reversed the Bureau's recommendation from 17,850 acres suitable for designation, to "0" acres suitable for designation as wilderness. The Secretary cited as his rationale a USGS report which assigned a gross value to in-place minerals in WSAs. This report was entitled "Quantitative Assessments of the Energy and Mineral Resources Within Eighteen Wilderness Study Areas in the States of Colorado, Nevada, Oregon, and Utah." In 1993, a select USGS commissioned panel recommended "the USGS discontinue the practice of providing gross in-place values to those making land use decisions." Further, the panel said the report ". . . is not a useful measure of the social value of mineral resources." Accordingly, the report was not useful as a basis for decisions about wilderness designation.

Shortly thereafter, several wilderness groups, represented by the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, filed suit against Secretary Lujan requesting that the Secretary reconsider the decision to drop the WSA from the Department's recommendation to the President of areas deserving permanent protection as wilderness. In 1994, a settlement was reached whereby Secretary Babbitt agreed "to take a fresh look at all BLM candidate wilderness areas as designation bills are taken up by Congress."

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: The Silver Peak Range is remarkably pristine and natural. The WSA contains the northwest corner of the Silver Peak Range. The central feature is a flat-topped, three-mile long summit ridge with Piper Peak, 9,450 feet, its highest point. The rest of the WSA consists of the rugged canyons and ridges that radiate from the summit ridge. Two long drainages, Icehouse and Piper, cut canyons through colorful formations of white, pink and green tufts and other volcanic rocks. Upper elevations are heavily forested with pinyon pine and juniper except for the distinctive sagebrush "meadows" on the summit ridge and other flat-top ridges in the WSA. Below 7,000 feet to the lowest point at 5,500 feet are desert shrub communities of shadscale and rabbit brush. Only two man made improvements are found in the WSA. An area of mining assessment work consisting of two blade cuts and about a half mile of blade road is located just inside the west boundary. The second area, a spring development at Blind Spring, consists of an abandoned trough, broken pieces of pipe and a rock lined pond.

B. Solitude: The Silver Peak Range WSA offers outstanding opportunities for solitude because of a combination of topographic and vegetative screening. The size of the area and the configuration are adequate to offer opportunities for solitude. The exception is the narrow, three mile wide, northern extension. However this extension is divided by a 2,000 foot ridge drained by narrow canyons. Visitors would be screened from each other and the outside in spite of being within a mile or less from the boundary. The rugged canyons and "badlands" topography on the north and west side of the WSA have sufficient topographic screening in spite of the low growing vegetation. Although the southeast and northeast slopes are less rugged, they are forested with pinyon pine and junipers which offers excellent screening. The great number of possible destinations and springs will help disperse wilderness visitors.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: A diversity of high quality recreation opportunities are available and day hiking and backpacking are outstanding. The varied topography, attractive rock formations, diverse plant communities including lush riparian areas, water, bighorn sheep, mule deer, chukar and wild horses, outstanding views and variety of destinations are its best features.

D. Special Features: The Silver Peak Range WSA has outstanding special features. A large herd of 118 desert bighorn sheep. About 50 percent of their critical summer range is within the WSA. The largest herd of wild horses in this vicinity inhabit the Silver Peak Herd Area. The WSA makes up about 15 percent of this herd area. This WSA has excellent examples of volcanic activity. The most significant feature is the Silver Peak caldera. The caldera underlies the northeast portion of the WSA. Obsidian pebbles and petrified wood are common in Icehouse Canyon wash. Only two archaeological sites have been located, but the numerous sources of food and water, a source of obsidian and proximity to Fish Lake indicate a high favorability for prehistoric sites.

4. MANAGEABILITY

The Silver Peak Range WSA is considered to be manageable over the long term. The WSA has numerous steep canyons and rock cliffs along the northern and western perimeters which make for difficult access. There are no roads or ways into the WSA. Control of off-road vehicle use on the approaches to the southern mountains and canyons would require additional patrolling. Icehouse canyon will probably require some form of site specific management due to the restricted accessibility and the area's popularity.

Should mineral development occur along areas adjacent to the WSA, more intensive management would be required. Additional exploration along the edges of the WSA could result in situations requiring more management. On the 17,234 acres recommended for release for other uses, there are 480 acres of mining claims of which 200 acres are pre-FLPMA. Boundaries of this area would need to be accurately located on the ground.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

The U.S. Bureau of Mines and the U.S. Geological Survey prepared a mineral report on the 17,850 acres recommended for designation. The mineral resource potential stated in part: The southern part of the study area has high resource potential for gold and silver in epithermal veins. Stream-sediment samples from this part of the study area contain anomalous concentration of elements that typically occur in gold and silver vein deposits. Geophysical studies indicate the possibility of near-surface alteration concealed by an overlying caprock of unaltered material in this area. One area in the northwestern part of the study area has a moderate potential for gold and silver. Stream-sediment samples from this part of the study area contain anomalous concentration of elements that typically occur in gold and silver vein deposits. Rock units in this area are the same as in the high-potential area, but the area lacks the geophysical and structural evidence found in the high-potential area. The remainder of the area has a low potential for gold and silver in epithermal veins.

An active geothermal system exists in Fish Lake Valley about five miles northwest of the study area and many geothermal energy leases exist near the northwest boundary of the study area. No evidence of active hydrothermal system was found in the study area, but the Fish Lake Valley system may extend into the study area. For this reason, the entire area is classified as having a low potential for geothermal energy resources. The resource potential for oil and (or) gas in the study area is low. The 33,900 acre Silver Peak Range WSA contains 540 acres of mining claims, of which 200 acres are pre-FLPMA. There are no oil and gas or geothermal leases.

6. SUMMARY OF WSA-SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

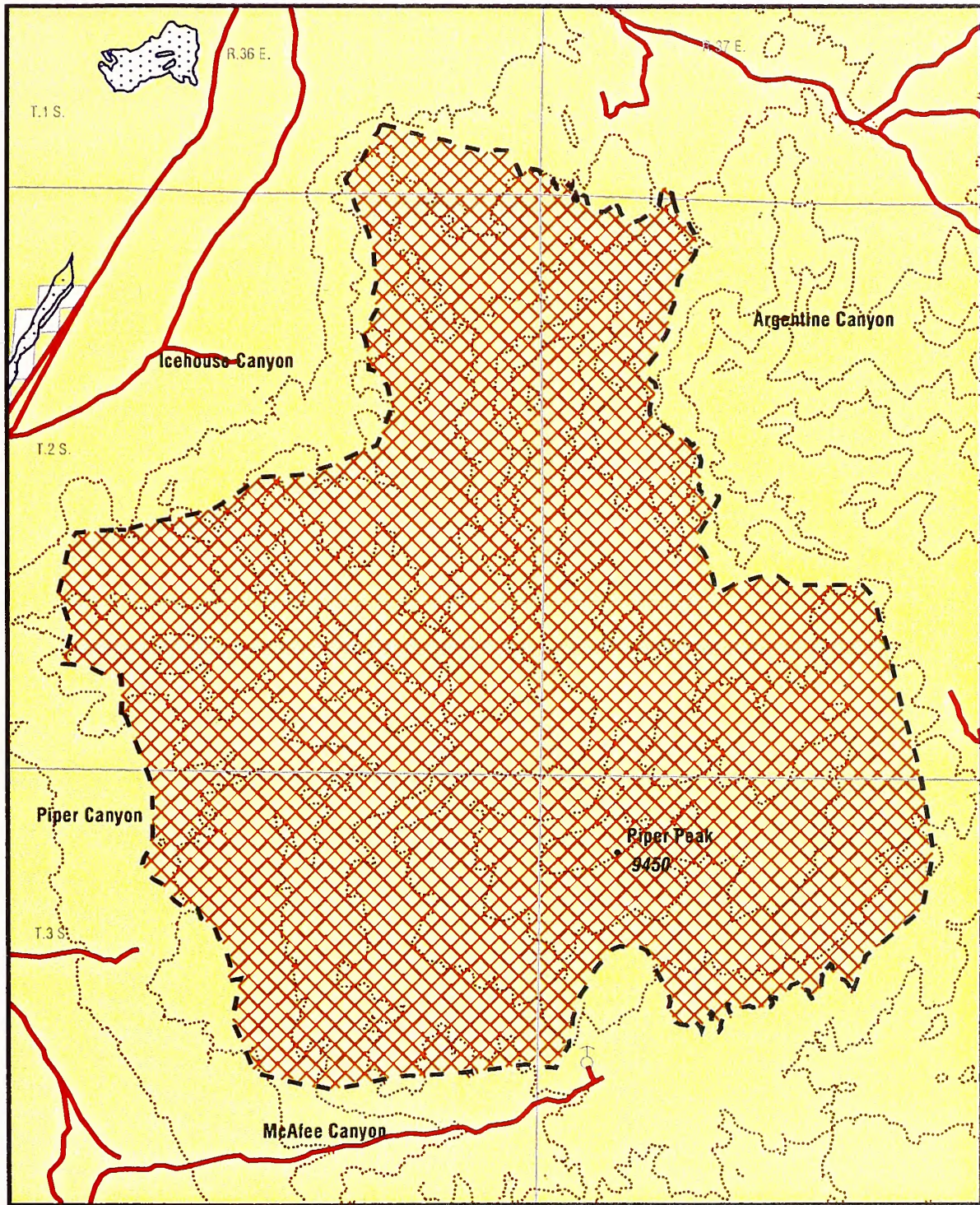
Fifteen comments were received during the initial inventory in 1979. Five agreed with further study of the area and ten disagreed. During the intensive inventory, 37 specific comments and 2,327 general comments stating the WSA met wilderness criteria were received. The majority of the specific comments dealt with outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation and supplemental values including desert bighorn sheep and views of the White Mountains. Eight mining companies commented that the WSA lacked wilderness values and possessed mineral values.

During the issue identification stage for the RMP, four specific comments opposed to wilderness designation were received from individuals connected with the Foote Mineral Company and the Sunshine Mining Company. One local resident supported designation of this WSA.

Public hearings were held in Pahrump, Goldfield, and Las Vegas, Nevada. During the public hearing and comment period, a total of 54 comments were received. Six supported the Proposed Alternative, 38 supported more wilderness than the Proposed Alternative, and 10 supported less wilderness than the Proposed Alternative.

No local government commented on this WSA. The State, during its consistency review, did not concur with the Preferred Alternative. They opposed any suitable recommendation for this WSA stating the wilderness values did not outweigh the mineral values and that designation would further add to desert bighorn conflicts. One Federal agency, the Environmental Protection Agency stated the criteria used for the selection of the Preferred Alternative was unclear. They questioned why the entire manageable portion of this WSA was not preliminarily recommended for wilderness.

Silver Peak Range Wilderness Study Area WSA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP



— Road
○ Spring
1 0 1 Miles
CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)
Wetland

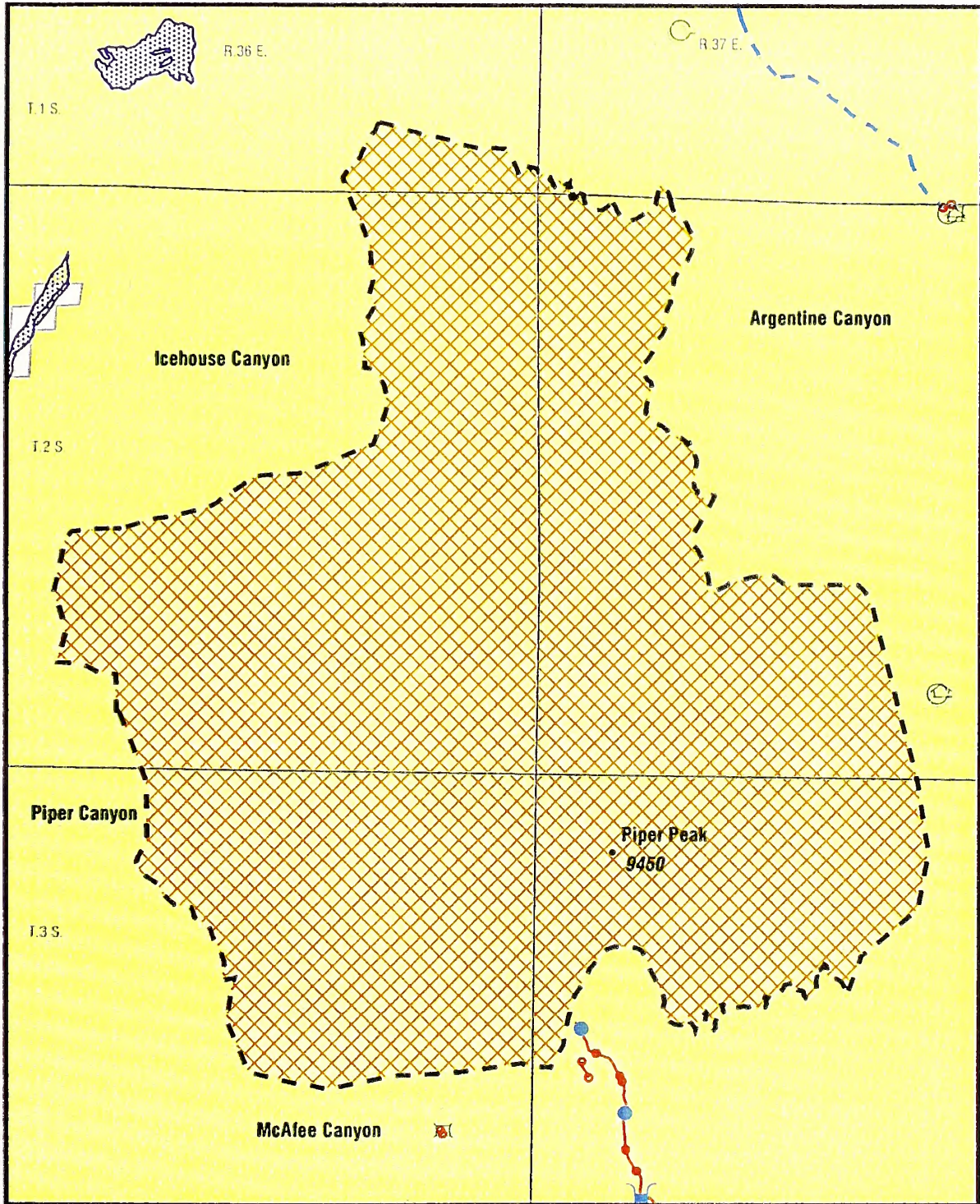
BLM
Private Land

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-338

Silver Peak Range Wilderness Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES



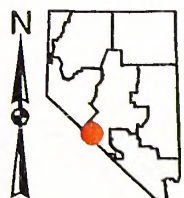
1 0 1 Miles

Wetland

- | | | |
|--------------|-------------|----------|
| Well | Cattleguard | Pipeline |
| Storage Tank | Corral | Fence |
| Structure | Trough | |

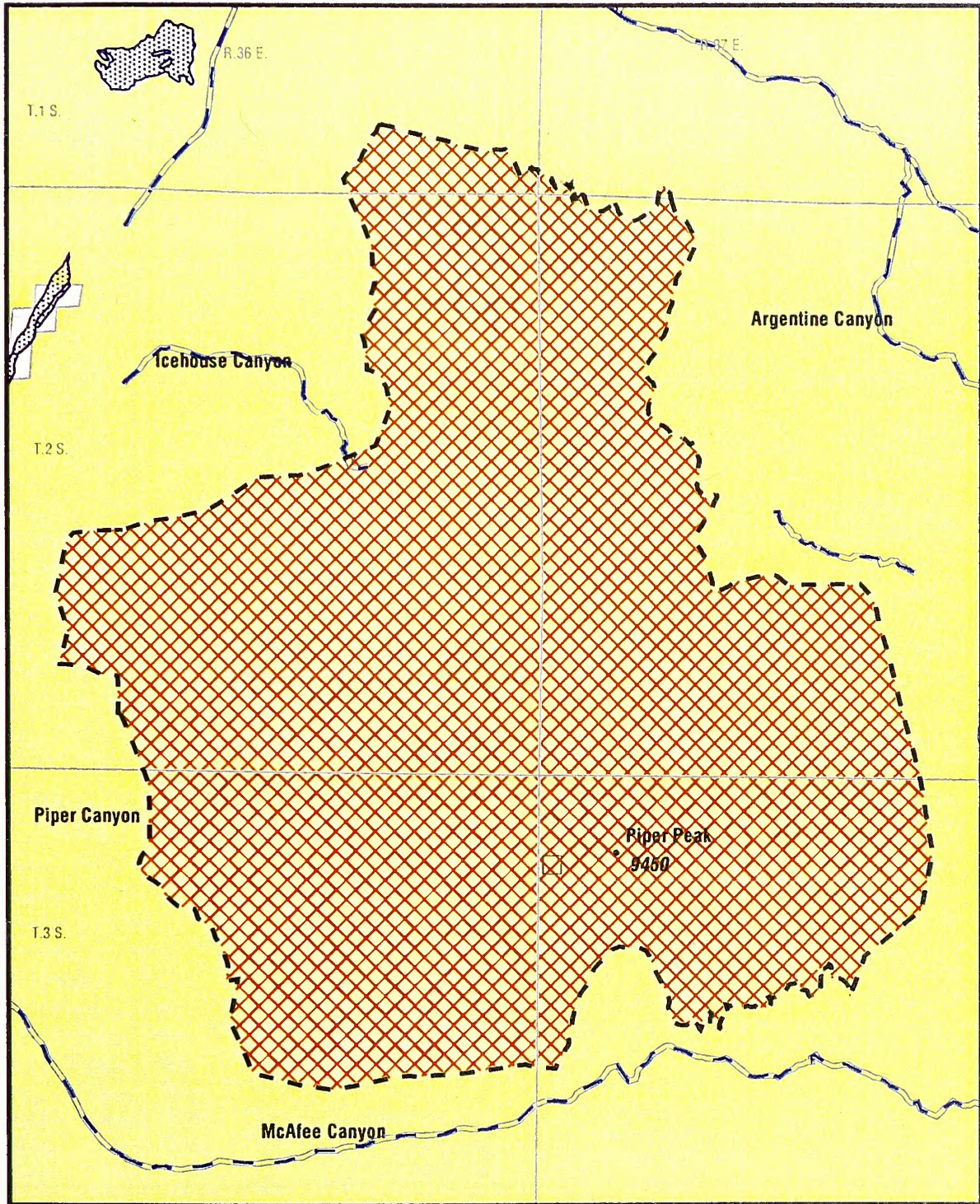
BLM
 Private Land

Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-338

Silver Peak Range Wilderness Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY



1 0 1 Miles

Wetland

Road

Piper Peak Site

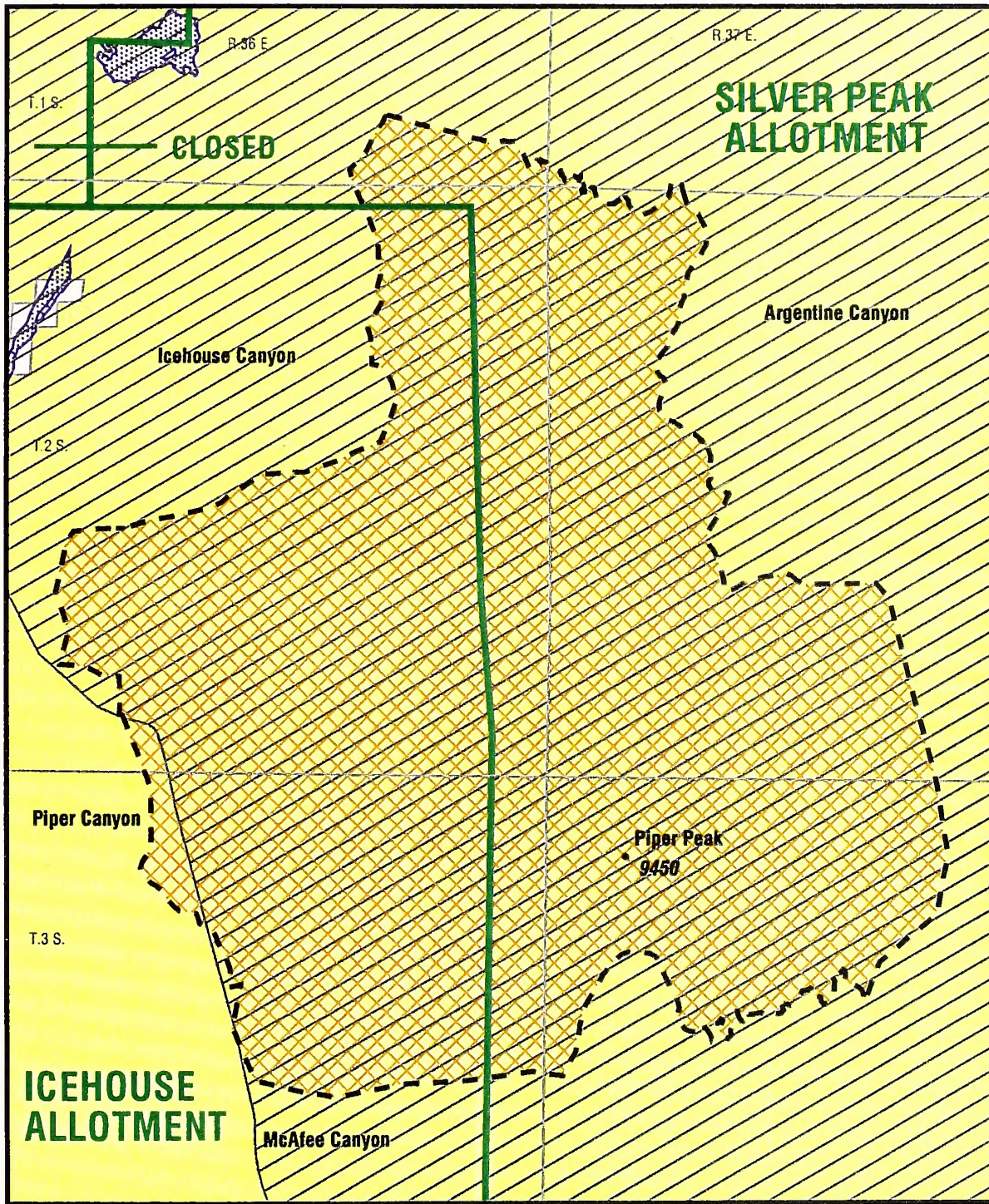
BLM
Private Land

Wilderness Study Area Boundary
Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-338

Silver Peak Range Wilderness Study Area ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCES



**Federally Listed
Threatened
and
Endangered
Species**

● Observation Site
NONE ON THIS MAP

■ BLM
□ Private Land

▨ Silver Peak HMA

↗ Allotment
Boundary

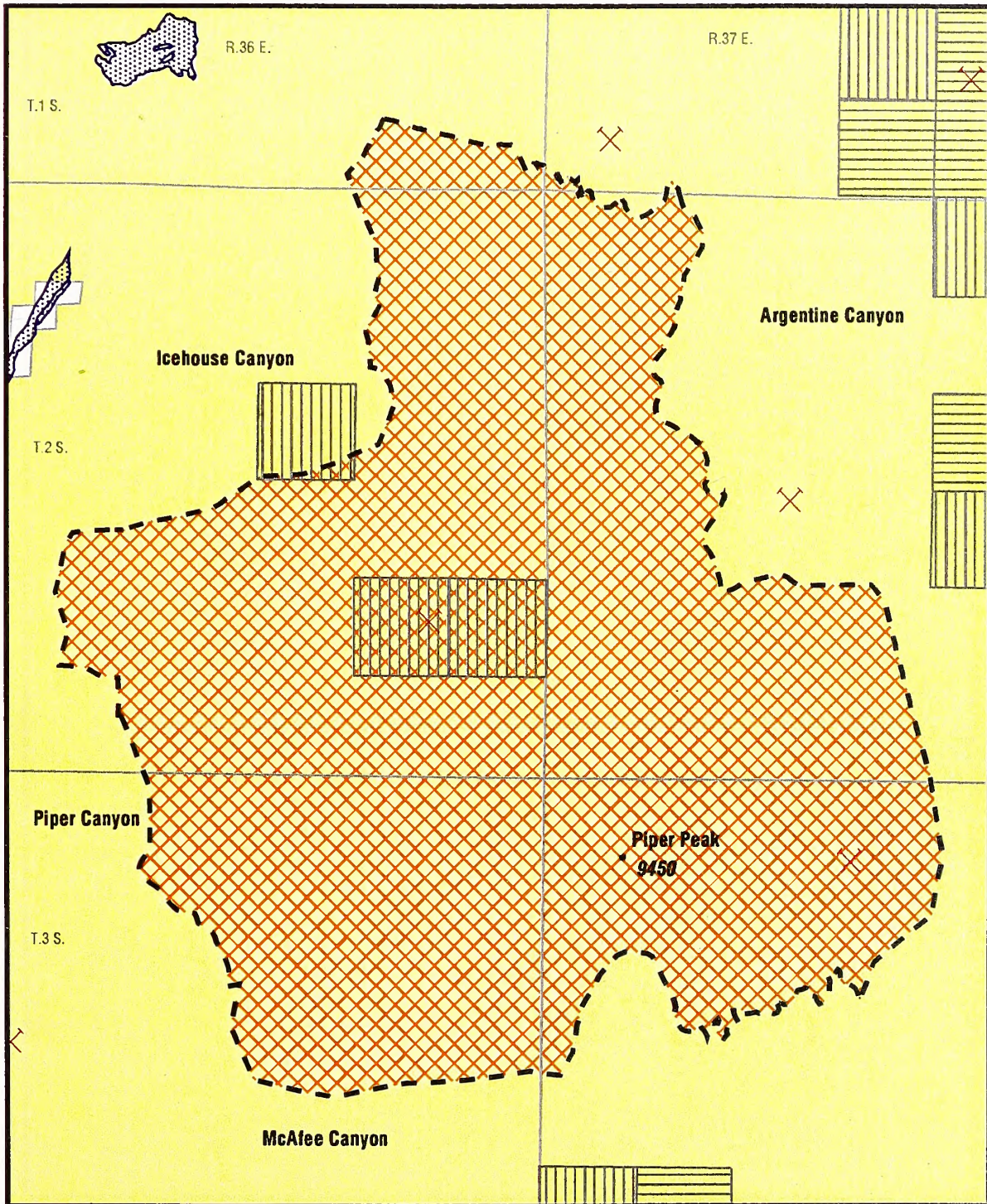
-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable

Wetland




NV-060-338

Silver Peak Range Wilderness Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS






 Mining Operations

1 0 1 Miles

 Wetland

Mining Claim Density - 3/97

-  1-5 Claims
-  6-35 Claims
-  36 or more Claims

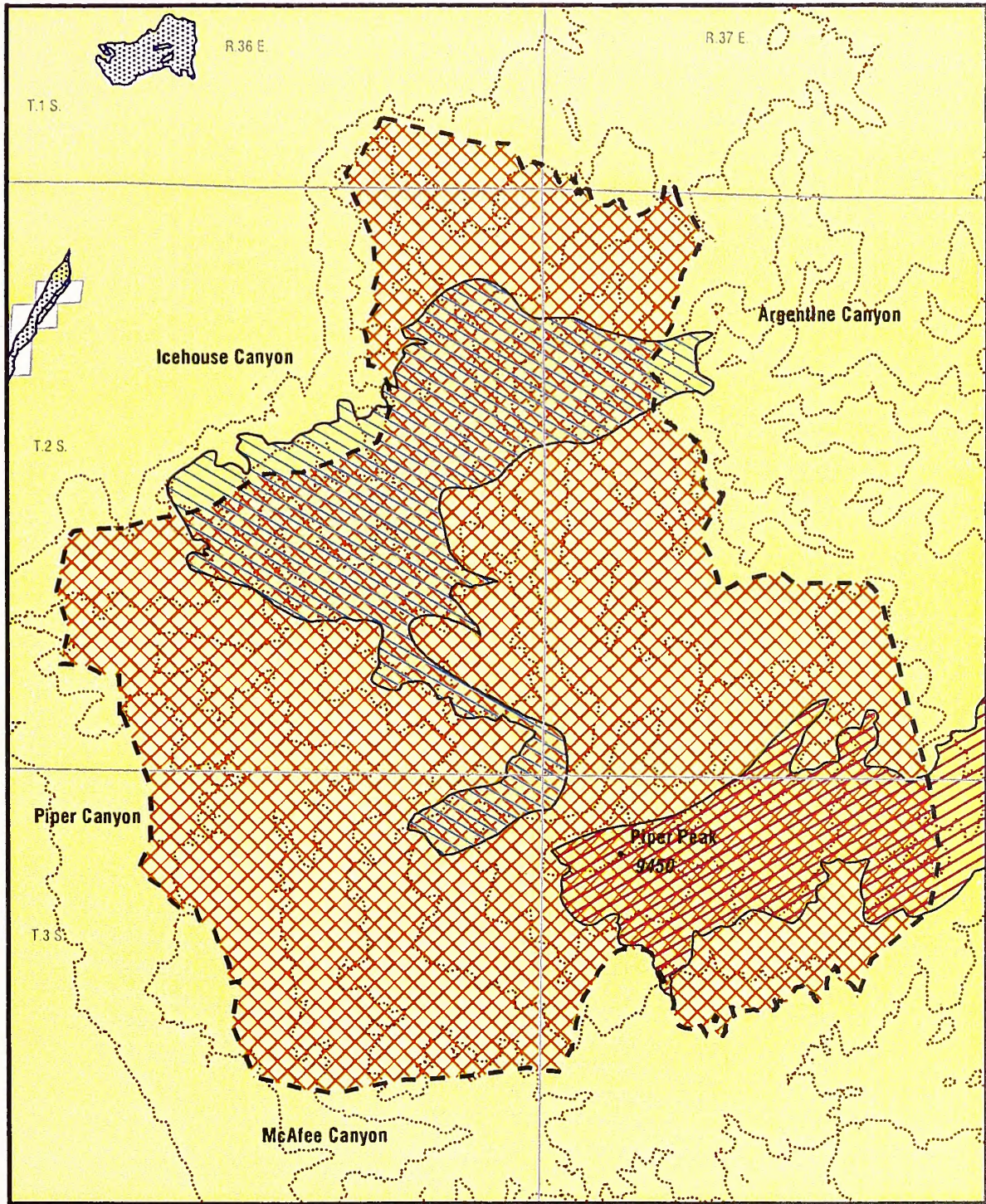
 BLM
 Private Land

 Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-338



Silver Peak Range Wilderness Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL



1 0 1 Miles

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

 Wetland

Mineral Potential
 High - Gold, Silver
 Medium - Gold, Silver

 BLM
 Private Land

 Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-338

PIGEON SPRING WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

1. THE STUDY AREA - 3,575 acres

The Pigeon Spring Wilderness Study Area (WSA) (NV-060-350) lies along the California border about ten miles west of Lida, Nevada. This 3,575 acre WSA is contiguous to the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) WSA, No. 111, Sylvania Mountains. The WSA includes 3,575 acres of public land with no privately owned inholdings.

The boundary of the Pigeon Spring WSA roughly follows the Cucomunga Canyon road and a spur road on the east and southeast, the California border on the west, and roughly parallels the Sylvania Canyon road on the north. The Pigeon Spring WSA is irregularly shaped, measuring approximately two and one-half miles north to south and three and one-half miles east to west at the widest points.

There were two alternatives analyzed in the EIS: An all wilderness alternative and a no wilderness alternative, which is the recommendation of this report.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 0 acres recommended for wilderness 3,575 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation for this WSA is to release all 3,575 acres for uses other than wilderness. All wilderness is considered the environmentally preferable alternative as it would result in the least change from the natural environment over the long-term. Although the recommendation is not the all wilderness alternative, the recommendation for this WSA would be implemented in a manner which would utilize all practical means to avoid or minimize environmental impacts.

The Pigeon Spring WSA was recommended for uses other than wilderness because it does not meet the wilderness criteria for size, solitude, and primitive recreation except when considered in conjunction with the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) WSA, Sylvania Mountains. However, the CDCA plan has recommended that the Sylvania Mountains WSA not be designated as wilderness.

Even if the contiguous Sylvania Mountains WSA had been recommended for wilderness, this WSA would not have been recommended for wilderness due to the high mineral potential. The entire 3,575 acres of the Pigeon Springs WSA have a high potential for metallic minerals such as gold, silver, molybdenum, tungsten, lead and zinc. If this WSA is not designated wilderness, mineral exploration and development will have the greatest adverse impact on wilderness values, in all parts of the WSA, due to the high potential for metallic minerals. The Pigeon Springs WSA has a low potential for nonmetallic minerals and geothermal resources.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: The Pigeon Spring WSA is generally in a natural state. The WSA contains the upper drainages of Cucomunga Canyon in the Sylvania Mountains. The central feature is one and one-half miles of a steep-walled canyon that continues on to the California side. Vegetation consists of a pinyon pine and juniper woodland throughout. There are no springs or streams within the WSA. Elevations vary from 6,400 to 8,160 feet. Naturalness is impaired within one mile of the south and east boundaries by several short ways associated with the mining interest and the accessibility of the relatively level terrain on the periphery of the WSA.

B. Solitude: The Pigeon Spring WSA does not provide an outstanding opportunity for solitude. The Nevada portion of this WSA is too small to offer outstanding opportunities for solitude. Topographic screening is outstanding in the rugged main canyon and along the main ridge which parallels the California-Nevada border. Dense pinyon and juniper stands offer vegetative screening along this ridge. The broader drainages and less steep terrain of the remainder of the WSA do not offer outstanding screening. Although some of the north and east slopes in this area do have dense pinyon and juniper cover, the majority is lightly forested.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The Pigeon Spring WSA does not offer outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The area is too small to be suitable for hiking, backpacking, hunting, horseback riding, mountain or rock climbing, or sightseeing.

D. Special Features: There are no known special features in this WSA.

4. MANAGEABILITY

The easily accessible terrain and close proximity to extensive mining activity would make the Pigeon Spring WSA difficult to manage. The WSA has two types of management problems: mining claims and the potential for indiscriminate vehicle use. Mining claims, covering nearly one sixth of the area, are scattered over the WSA. Since the entire WSA is rated as having a high potential for metallic minerals, some of these claims will probably prove valid and be developed. Because the WSA is so small, any mineral development would affect the wilderness values of the WSA as a whole. Several ways, resulting from mineral exploration or off-road vehicle use, penetrate the Pigeon Spring WSA along the Cucomunga canyon road. There are no natural barriers to vehicle travel in this part of the WSA. Closing these ways and controlling recreational vehicle use will be difficult and require constant patrolling.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL VALUES

The Pigeon Spring WSA contains 720 acres of mining claims. There are no oil and gas or geothermal leases. Leasable mineral potential is low for oil and gas and for geothermal resources.

The entire WSA has a high potential for metallic resources such as gold, silver, molybdenum, tungsten, lead, and zinc. Mineral exploration for metallic minerals is projected to occur within the WSA as metal prices move upward. Exploration of existing mining claims could involve the drilling of up to ten holes per year, disturbing five acres per hole, or 500 acres over a ten year period. A track mounted drill rig would cross one mile of the study area or two acres per hole. Total surface disturbance from exploration would be 700 acres over a ten year period.

6. SUMMARY OF WSA-SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public involvement has occurred throughout the wilderness review process. Eight comments were received during the initial inventory in 1979. Five agreed with further study of the area and three disagreed. Ten specific comments on the WSA and 2,327 general comments, stating the unit meet wilderness criteria, were received during the intensive inventory in 1980.

Several of the specific comments discussed the presents of wilderness values and supplemental values but most cited surrounding roads, intrusions and lack of wilderness characteristics. Four mineral and energy companies stated the WSA was highly mineralized and adjacent to operating mines and known mineral districts.

No specific comments were received on this WSA during the issue identification stage for the RMP. Three general comments were opposed to any wilderness in the Esmeralda-Southern Nye RMP area.

Public hearings were held in Pahrump, Goldfield and Las Vegas, Nevada. During the public hearing and comment period, a total of 17 comments were received, six supported more wilderness than the Preferred Alternative and eleven supported the Preferred Alternative. No local government or Federal agency commented on this WSA. The State, during the consistency review, concurred with the Preferred Alternative.

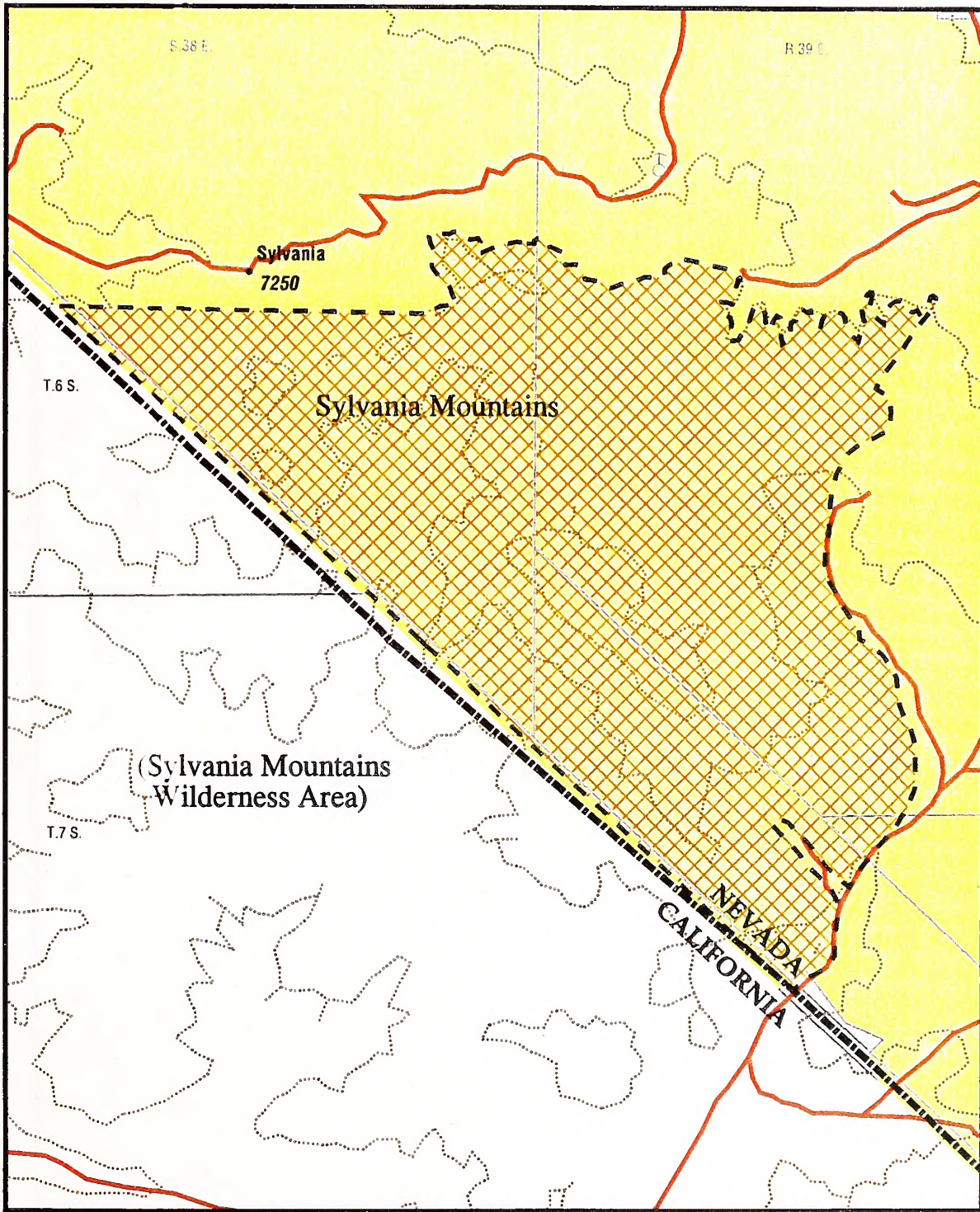


BLM
Private Land

Wilderness Study Area Boundary
Recommended for Study



Pigeon Spring Wilderness Study Area WSA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP



— Road
○ Spring

1 0 1 Miles

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

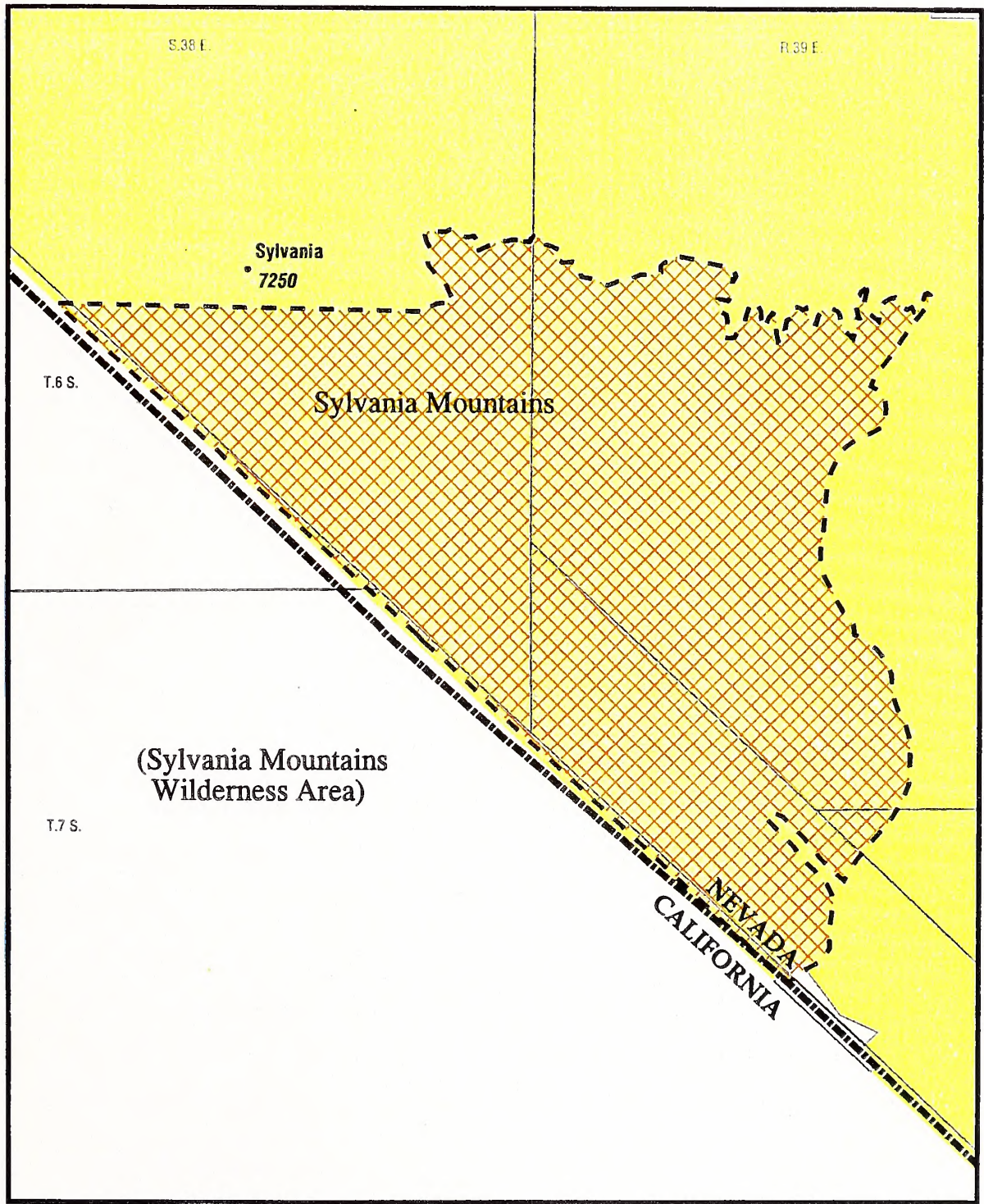
■ BLM
□ Private Land

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable





NV-060-350

Pigeon Spring Wilderness Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES



NO DEVELOPMENTS OR DISTURBANCES ON THIS MAP

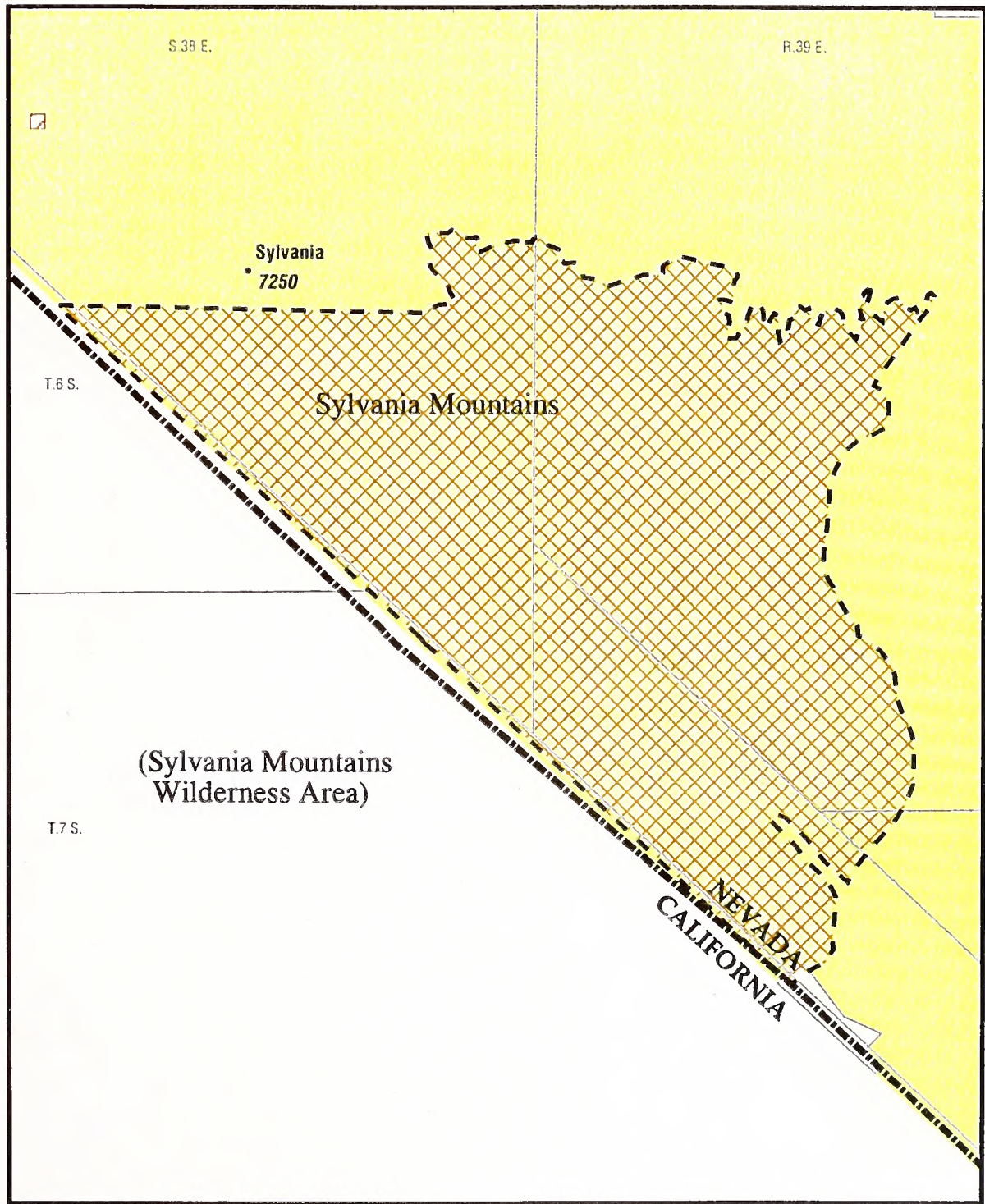
 **BLM**
 **Private Land**

 **Wilderness Study Area Boundary**
 **Recommended Non-Suitable**



NV-060-350

Pigeon Spring Wilderness Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY

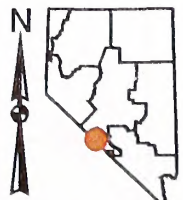


1 0 1 Miles

 Unauth. Occup. Residence

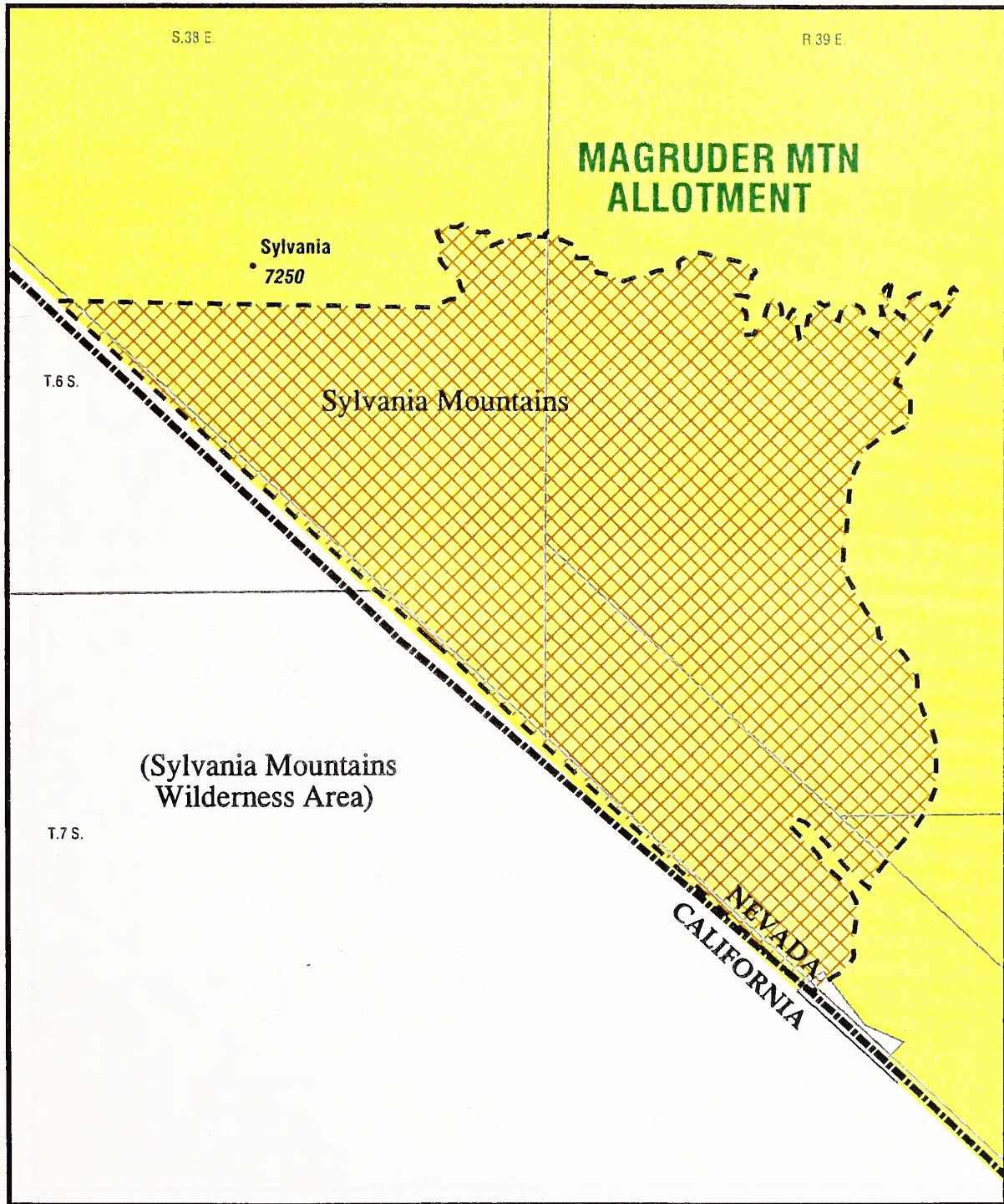
 BLM
 Private Land

 Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-350

Pigeon Spring Wilderness Study Area ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCES



Federally Listed
Threatened
and
Endangered
Species

● Observation Site
NONE ON THIS MAP

NO HMA ON THIS MAP

 Allotment
Boundary

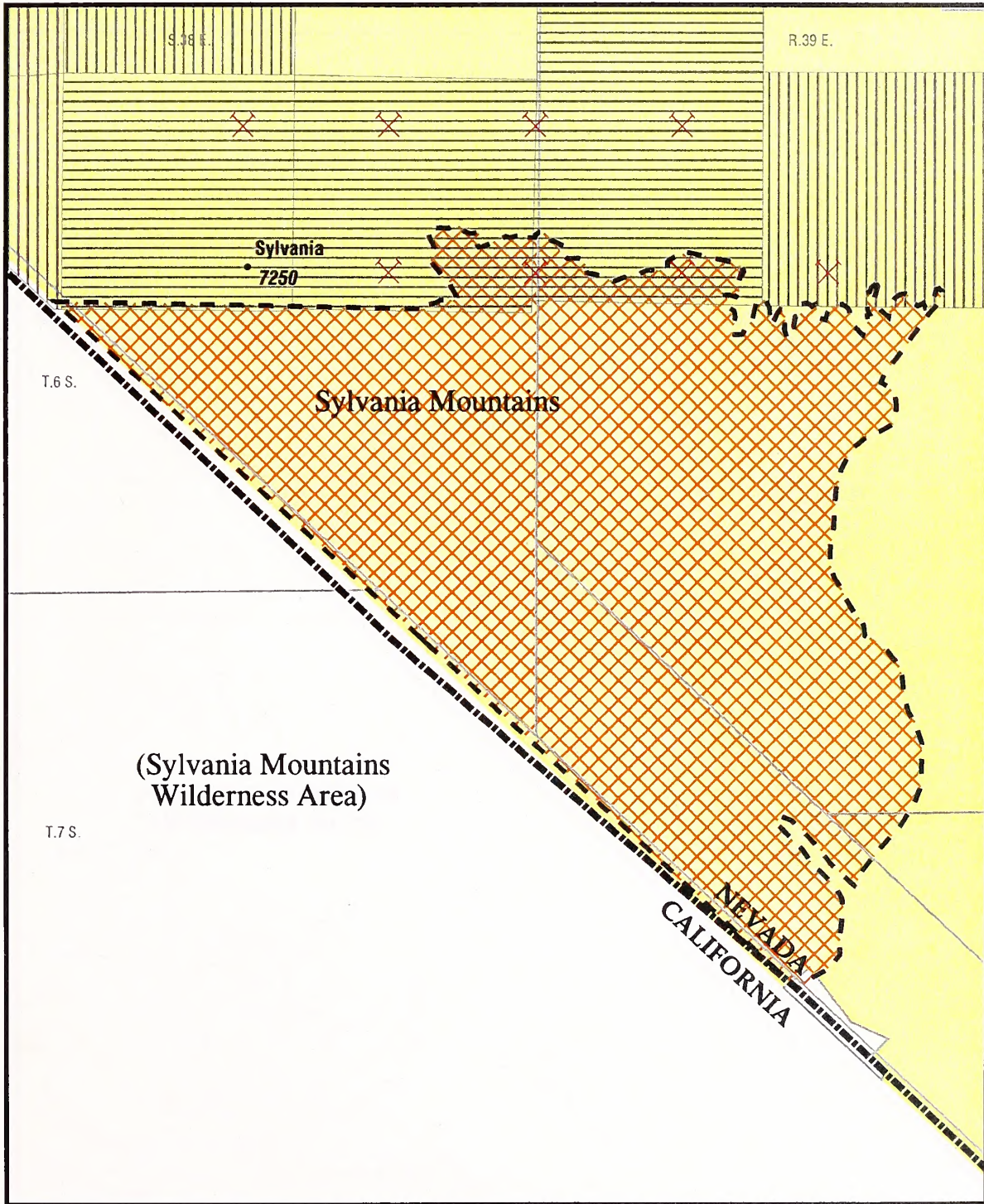
 BLM
 Private Land

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable

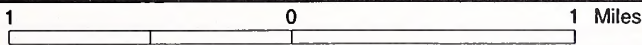


NV-060-350

Pigeon Spring Wilderness Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS



Mining Operations



Mining Claim Density - 3/97

- 1-5 Claims
- 6-35 Claims
- 36 or more Claims

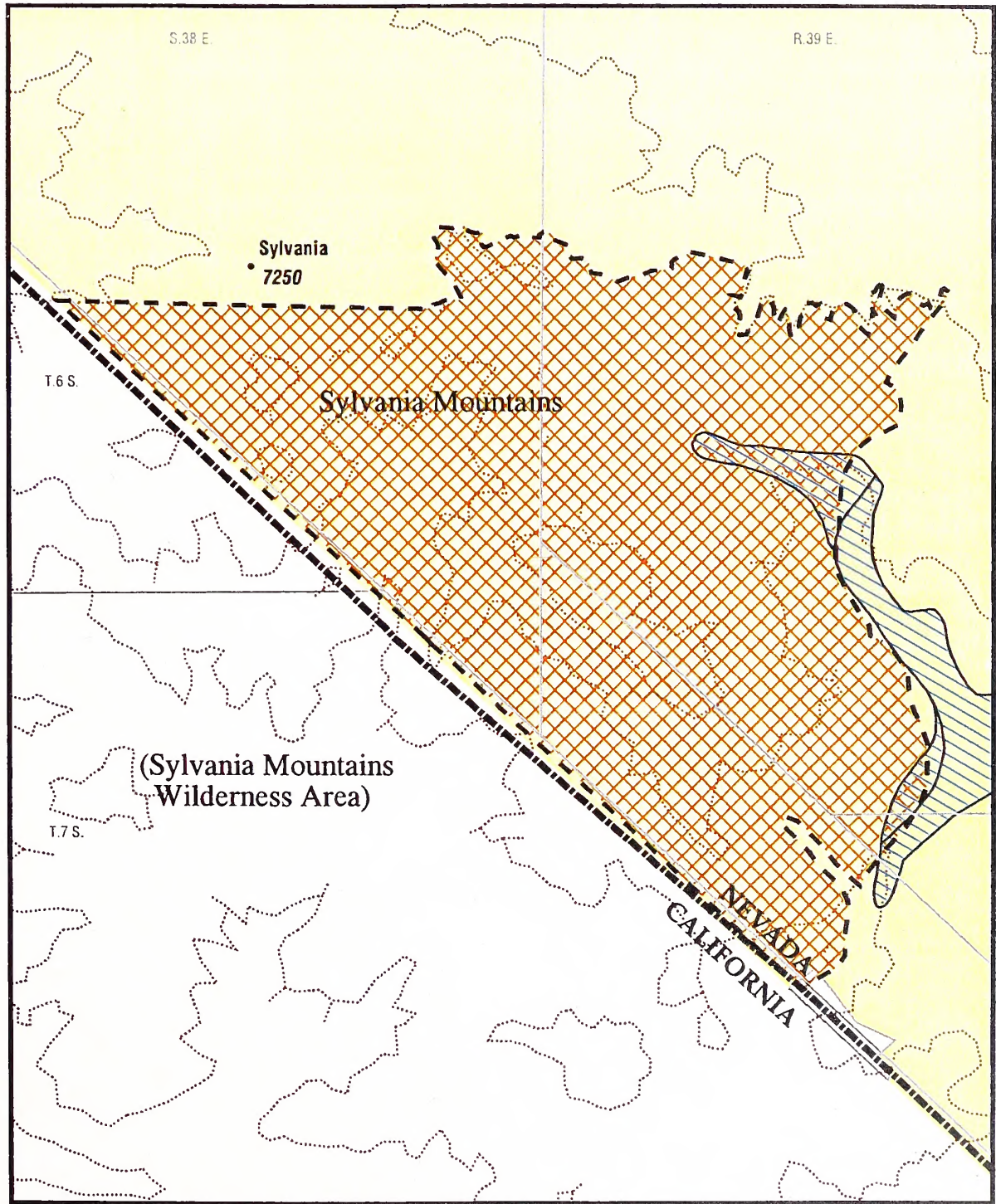
- BLM
- Private Land

- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable



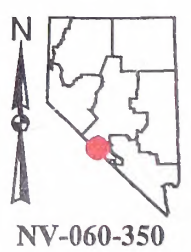
NV-060-350

Pigeon Spring Wilderness Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL



1 0 1 Miles
CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

- BLM
- Private Land
- Mineral Potential Medium - Gold
- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-350

QUEER MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

1. THE STUDY AREA - 81,550 acres

The Queer Mountain Wilderness Study Area (WSA) (NV-060-354) is located in Esmeralda County, Nevada along the California-Nevada border about twenty miles northwest of Beatty, Nevada. This 81,550 acre WSA is contiguous to the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) WSA, Little Sand Springs, and Death Valley National Monument WSA No. 1.

The south boundary of the Queer Mountain WSA roughly parallels State Highway 72. The eastern boundary is formed by Gold Mountain and the Willow Springs roads. The north boundary is formed by Oriental Wash and mining spur roads. The west boundary is the California border. The roughly rectangular Queer Mountain WSA contains an upland of east or northeast trending ridges and valleys surrounded on all sides, except the west, by broad bajadas. No springs or streams occur in the WSA.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 42,650 acres recommended for wilderness 38,900 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation for this WSA is to designate 42,650 acres as wilderness and release 38,900 acres for uses other than wilderness.

The recommendation differs from the proposed action contained in the Final Esmeralda-Southern Nye Wilderness EIS. Additional study of the area, focused in particular on the relationship of the WSA to a California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) BLM WSA and Death Valley National Monument wilderness study area, led to the conclusion that a portion of the WSA should be recommended for wilderness. The portion now recommended was analyzed as a partial wilderness alternative in the EIS. The partial alternative was drawn to avoid the areas of potential mineral resources.

The area represents an ecotone between the hot desert to the south and the cold desert to the north. The resulting area is one of extremes of environment and beauty. The WSA contains an upland of mountain ridges culminating on Gold Mountain. These uplands are typically covered with a sparse scattering of pinyon and juniper trees. Interspersed among the pinyon and juniper trees are big sage, bitterbrush, and cliff rose. The north slopes of the ridge are covered in a dense forest of Joshua trees, cacti and other plants generally associated with the hot desert regions. The area south of the ridge is a mixture of hot and cold desert plants growing on the same sites.

The WSA is predominantly rolling hills and flat benches slowly receding to the west and Death Valley. Although topography is unspectacular, small volcanic outcrops, unusual erosion areas, flash flood washes, and other numerous geologic features provide a mix of interesting visual displays. Along the California border, the flat benches begin to break up into colorful mosaics of volcanic rock.

The WSA presents a harsh environment to the visitor. Temperatures can range from 120 degrees during the summer to -20 degrees in the winter. This is coupled with an annual precipitation rate of less than 4 inches and the total absence of any springs or streams to present an atmosphere to true wilderness.

The harsh environment will limit recreation possibilities to only the more resourceful visitor. There exists excellent opportunity for nature study and observance of wildlife. Mule deer, wild horses, desert bighorn sheep, and a variety of small mammals and reptiles inhabit the variety of habitats provided in the ecotone.

Mining in the adjacent Hornsilver mining district continues at present. Exploration of several existing claims for metallic minerals is projected within the Gold Mountain area.

Manageability of the WSA would require extensive patrolling to minimize off-road travel.

The Queer Mountain WSA is contiguous to the CDCA's Little Sand Springs WSA and Death Valley National Monument WSA No. 1. Both of these area have been recommended for designation as wilderness. The Grapevine WSA is located directly to the south of the Queer Mountain WSA.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: Most of the Queer Mountain WSA is in pristine condition. The harsh environmental conditions have served to ward off the casual intrusions of man. Although several short ways extend into the WSA, the ways have become virtually unusable. The central core and western boundary of the WSA are difficult to access and seldom used. Despite the areas flat appearance, the ground is covered with areas of sharp volcanic rock interspersed with soft sand filled washes. Queer Mountain WSA contains an upland of east or northeast trending ridges and valleys surrounded on all sides, except the west, by broad bajadas. Elevations range from 4,000 feet near Grapevine Canyon to 7,952 foot Gold Mountain. This 4,000 feet elevation change occurs gradually over the 14 mile length of the WSA.

The WSA is located in a transitional vegetative zone. Most of the WSA is vegetated with shrubs and cactus of the saltbush/greasewood plant community, but patches of creosote bush and Joshua trees, more typical of the Las Vegas area, also occur. The lack of perennial waters along the boundary of the WSA and the absence of any springs or streams within the WSA has limited the access of livestock.

Naturalness is impaired on the southern bajada that slopes down to State Highway 72 and the north slope and bajada of Gold Mountain. The highway is easily visible from the southern reaches and presents an undesirable intrusion. Four ways totaling three miles in length enter the WSA along the southern boundary.

Extensive mining activity has occurred on the north slope of Gold Mountain mainly outside the WSA boundary. Five ways totaling about five miles in length enter the WSA from the north and connect outside roads to a cluster of minor diggings on the north side. These intrusions substantially impair naturalness in the immediate area. The rugged canyons and rapid elevation gain in this portion of the WSA screen the visitor and provide a feeling of distance.

B. Solitude: The Queer Mountain WSA provides an outstanding opportunity for solitude. Topographic screening is outstanding in most of the mountainous portion of the WSA because of the numerous ridges, canyons, peaks and other features. Although the area has only a marginal cover of pinyon pine and juniper, the localized draws and canyons combine with the vegetative cover to provide effective screening.

The large valleys, particularly on the south end, are too broad, straight, and uniform in slope to offer outstanding screening. The bajadas on the north and south sides provide minimal topographic and vegetative screening.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The Queer Mountain WSA offer excellent opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The lack of perennial waters anywhere within the WSA will require that those who visit the WSA to be more self reliant, cognizant of desert ecology, and resourceful. The vegetative diversity provides and excellent forum for nature study and observation of small mammals, reptiles, and song birds.

D. Special Features: The primary special feature is the uniqueness of vegetation and the natural condition of the area.

4. MANAGEABILITY

The Queer Mountain WSA is considered to be manageable over the long-term. The Queer Mountain WSA has two types of management problems: mining claims and potential for indiscriminate vehicle use. Any mineral development would affect the wilderness values of the WSA from the main ridge north including Gold Mountain.

The Queer Mountain WSA boundary includes about 4,000 acres of sloping bajada adjacent to Oriental Wash. This easily traveled terrain is already crossed by five ways that go to old prospecting sites. Closing these ways and preventing further vehicle use on these bajadas would require an extensive patrolling effort.

The development of mining activity along the northern boundary of the WSA could result in activities requiring additional management to minimize loss of wilderness qualities.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

The Queer Mountain WSA contains 1,560 acres of mining claims, of which 420 acres are pre-FLPMA. Within the WSA are 33,910 acres with a moderate favorability for metallic mineral resources. Exploration of several existing claims for metallic minerals is projected within the Gold Mountain area. It is projected that an eventual discovery would initiate the development of a small open pit gold mine. A total of 11.2 acres would be physically disturbed from mineral exploration and development activity.

Leasable mineral potential is low for oil and gas and moderate for geothermal resources. There are no oil and gas or geothermal leases. The bajadas have a moderate potential for non-metallics.

6. SUMMARY OF WSA-SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

Eight comments were received during the initial inventory in 1979. Six agreed with further study of the area and two disagreed.

During the intensive inventory of 1980, ten specific comments on the WSA and 2,327 comments were received stating the WSA met wilderness criteria.

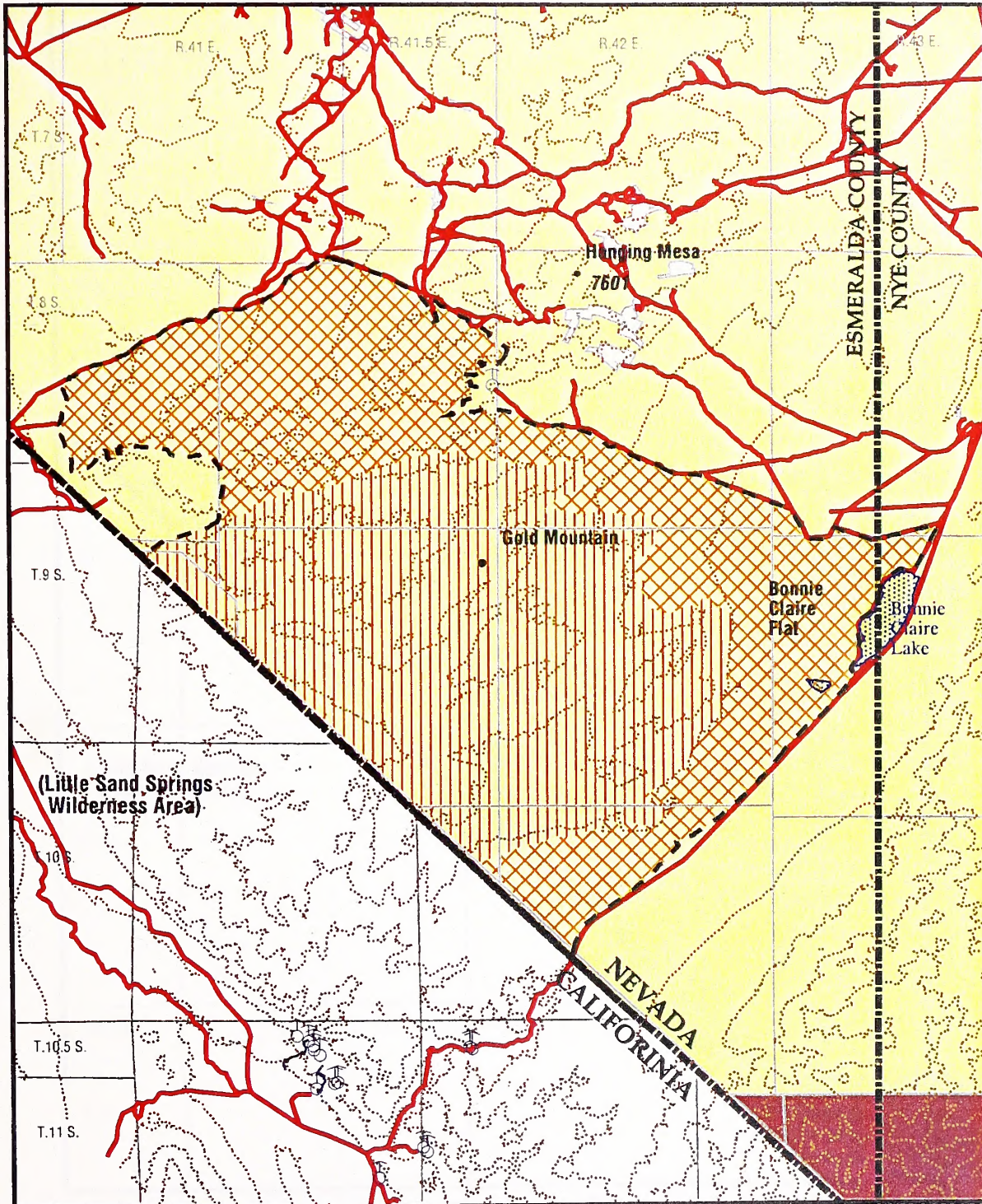
During the issue identification stage for the RMP, four specific comments opposed to wilderness designation of this WSA were received from local residents. All stated the area had mineral value. The owners of the Silver Mountain claims, adjacent to the WSA, were two of those commenting at this and every stage of the wilderness study. Three comments were received opposing any wilderness in Esmeralda County.

Public hearings were held in Pahrump, Goldfield and Las Vegas, Nevada. During the public hearing and comment period, a total of 48 comments were received, eight supported no wilderness and 40 were in favor of wilderness.

No local government commented on this WSA. The State, through its consistency review, concurred with the Preferred Alternative of no wilderness.

The National Park Service recommended the WSA be recommended for wilderness to provide a natural extension of its proposed wilderness area. The Environmental Protection Agency stated that the criteria used on the selection of the Preferred Alternative was unclear.

Queer Mountain Wilderness Study Area WSA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP



— Road
○ Spring

1 0 1 Miles

☪ Lake

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

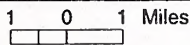
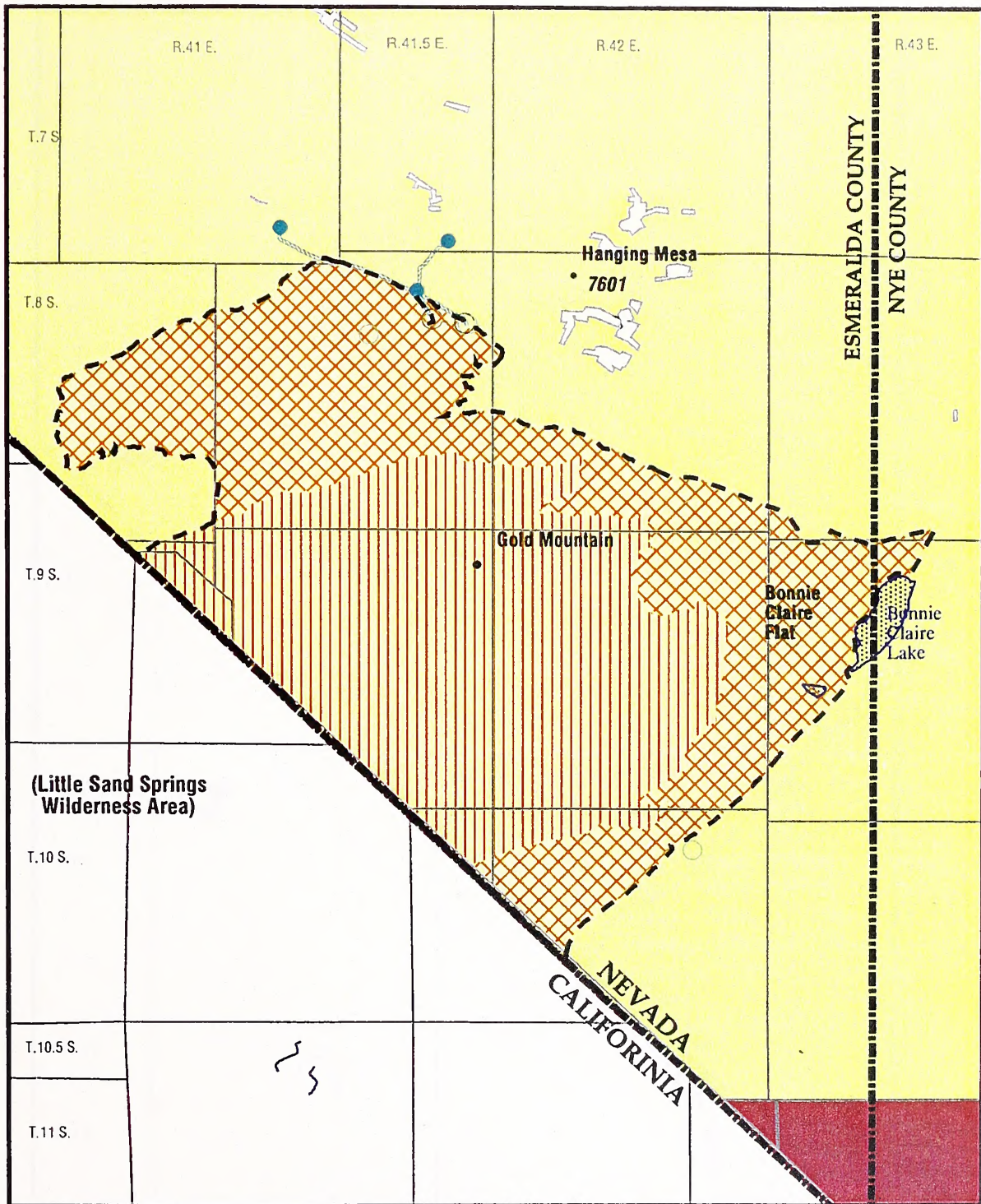
■ BLM
□ Private Land
■ Other Agency

--- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
××× Recommended Non-Suitable
||| Recommended Suitable



NV-060-354

Queer Mountain Wilderness Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES



Lake

- Well
- Storage Tank
- Corral
- Ditch

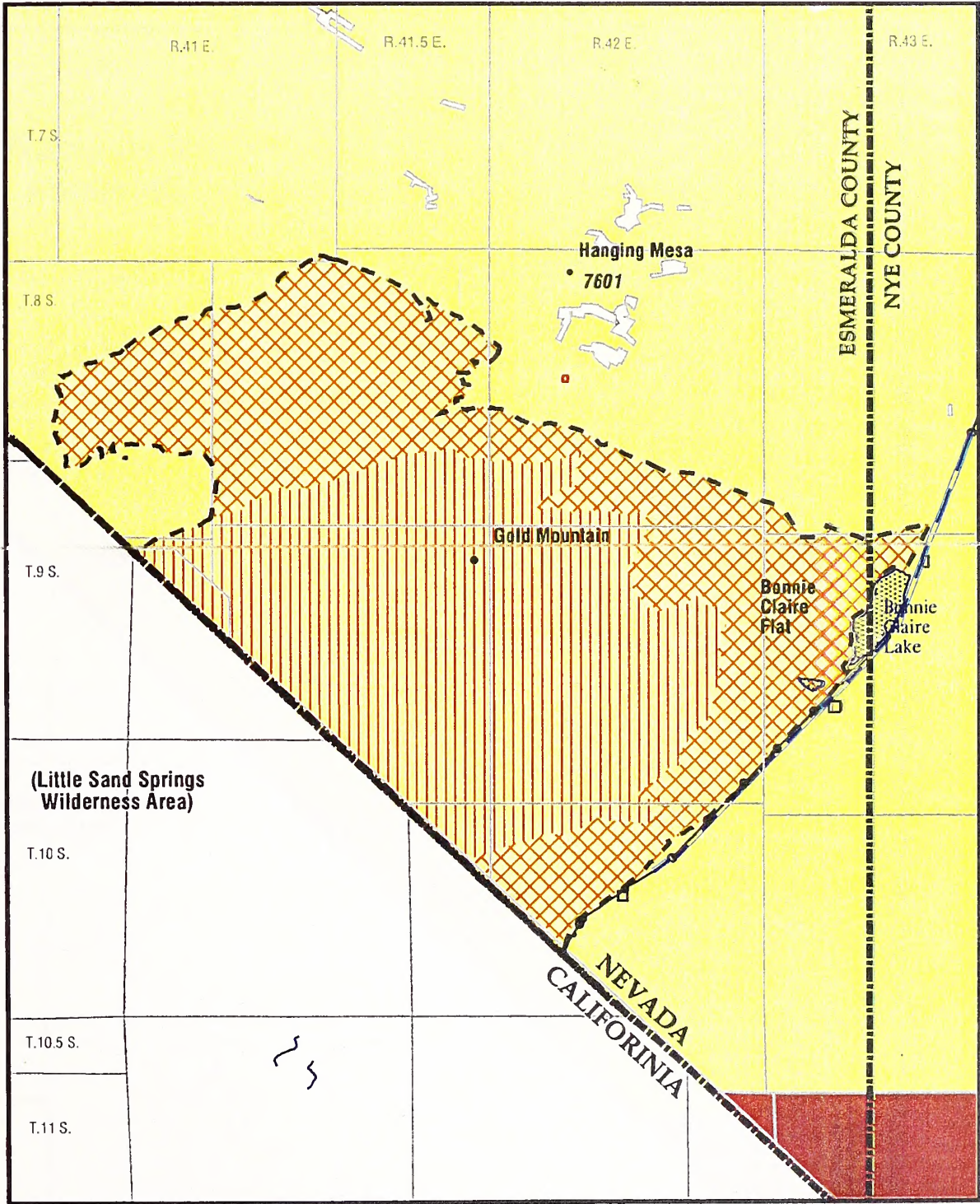
- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable
- Recommended Suitable



NV-060-354

Queer Mountain Wilderness Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY






1 0 1 Miles

Lake

 Powerline  Material Site
 Road  Unauth. Occup. - Mine

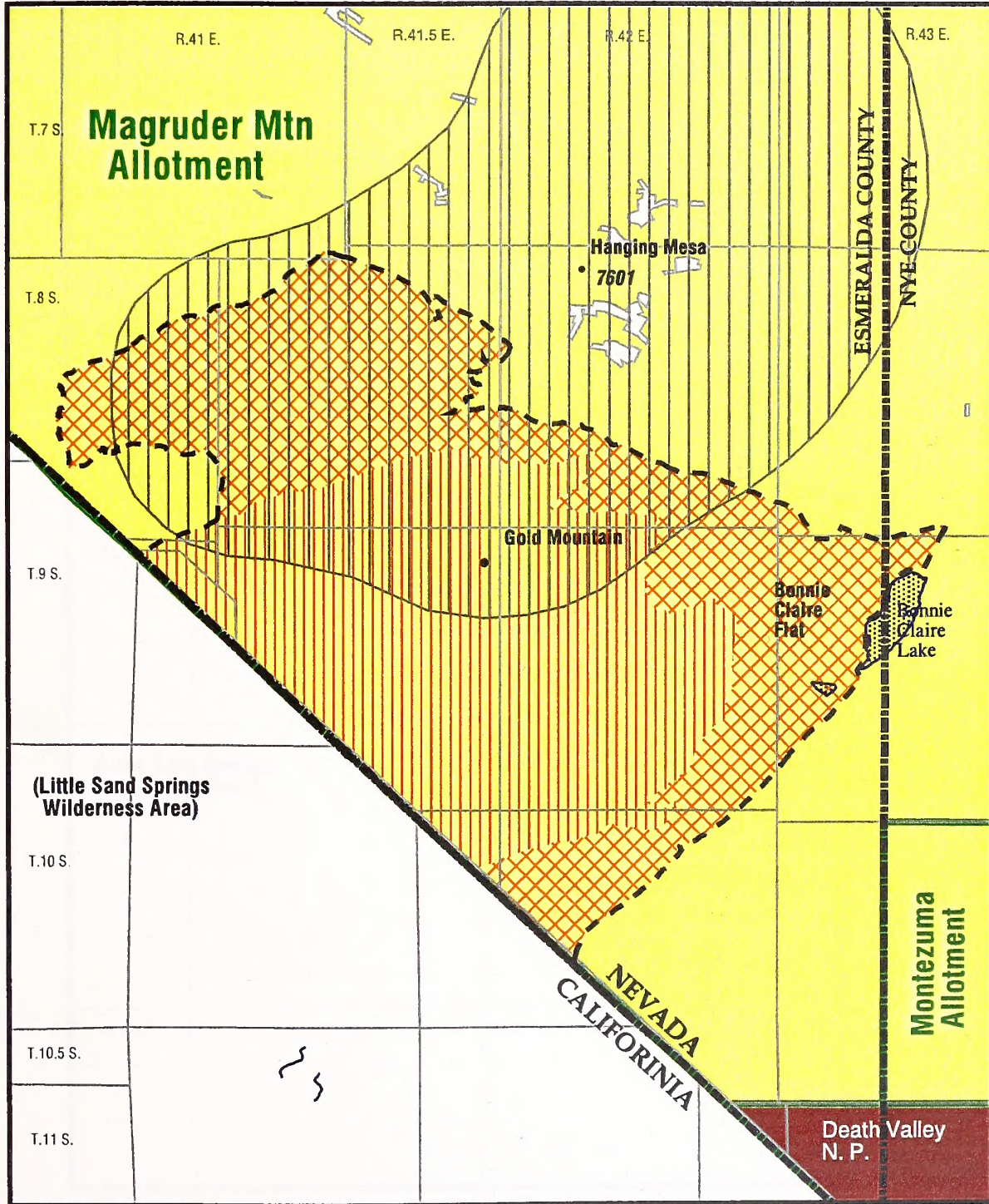
 BLM
 Private Land
 Other Agency

 - - Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable
 Recommended Suitable



NV-060-354

Queer Mountain Wilderness Study Area ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCES



**Federally Listed
Threatened
and
Endangered
Species**

Observation Site
NONE ON THIS MAP

1 0 1 Miles

Lake

Gold Mountain HMA

**Allotment
Boundary**

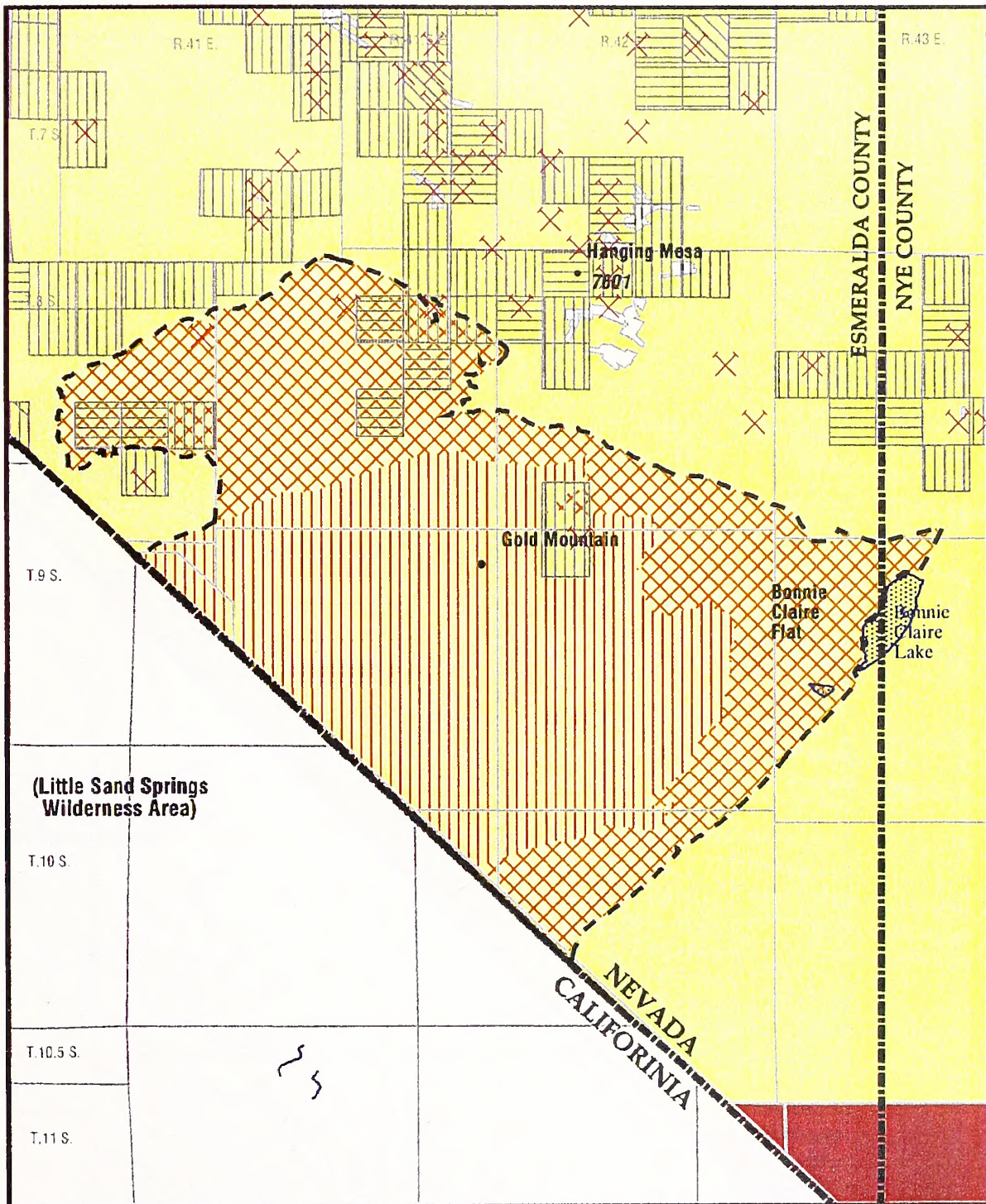
BLM
 Private Land
 Other Agency

Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable
 Recommended Suitable



NV-060-354

Queer Mountain Wilderness Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS






 Mining Operations




1 0 1 Miles

 Lake

Mining Claim Density - 3/97

-  1-5 Claims
-  6-35 Claims
-  36 or more Claims

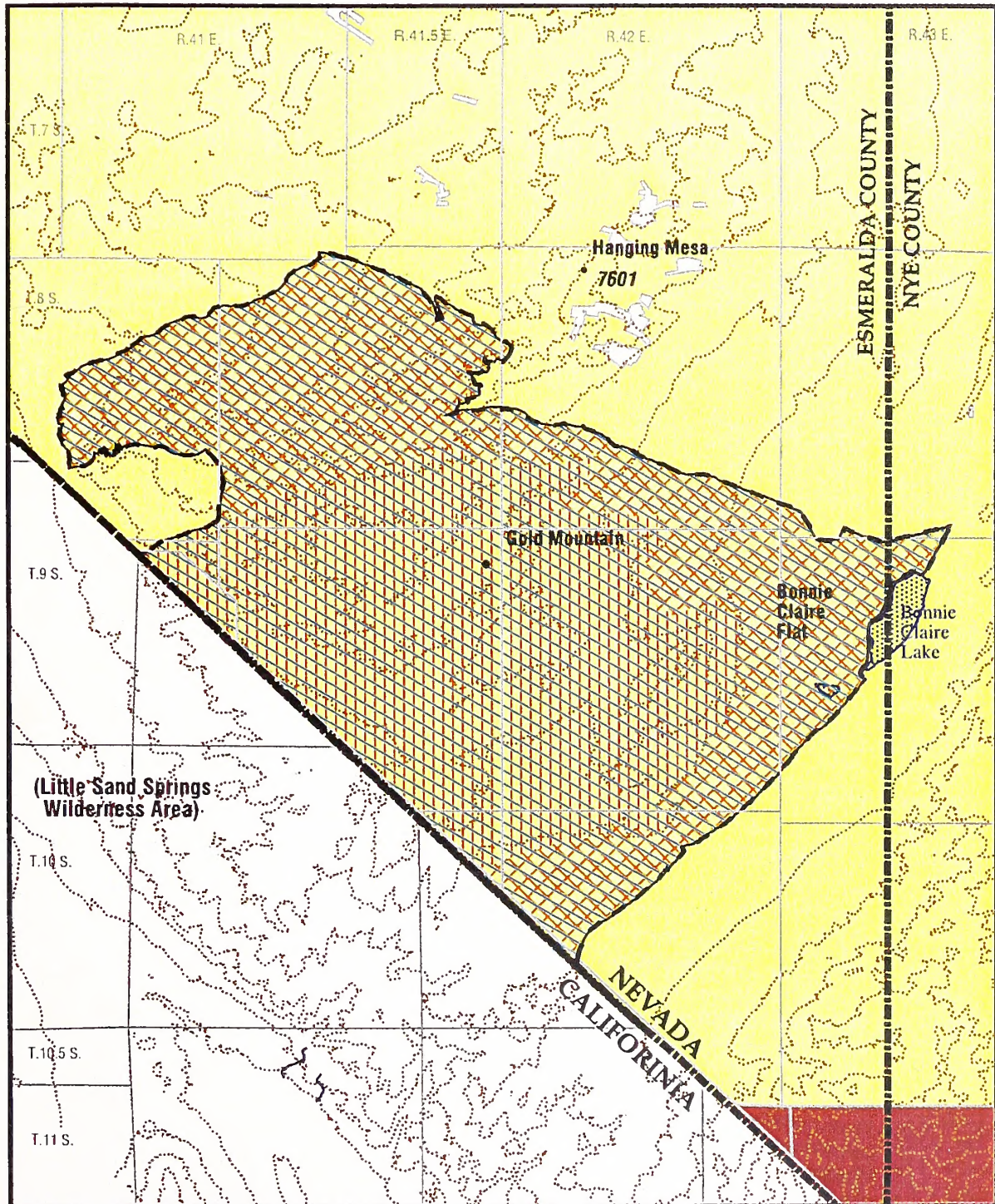
-  BLM
-  Private Land
-  Other Agency

-  Wilderness Study Area Boundary
-  Recommended Non-Suitable
-  Recommended Suitable



NV-060-354

Queer Mountain Wilderness Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL



1 0 1 Miles

Lake

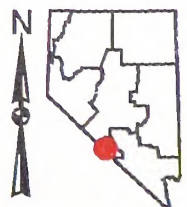
CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

Mineral Potential

Medium - Gold

- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable
- Recommended Suitable



NV-060-354

GRAPEVINE MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

1. THE STUDY AREA - 66,800 acres

The Grapevine Mountains Wilderness Study Area (WSA) (NV-060-355) is located in Esmeralda and Nye Counties, Nevada along the California-Nevada border about twenty miles northwest of Beatty Nevada. This WSA contains 66,800 acres of public land with no private inholdings.

The northwestern boundary of the Grapevine Mountains WSA roughly parallels State Highway 72. The northeastern boundary is the Bullfrog Hills-Bonnie Clair Road. The southeastern boundary is the Willow Springs Road. The southwestern boundary is the Death Valley National Monument.

There were three alternatives analyzed in the EIS: an all wilderness alternative, a no wilderness alternative and a partial wilderness alternative where 23,150 acres would be designated as wilderness and 43,650 acres would be released for uses other than wilderness and is the recommendation of this report.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 23,150 acres recommended for wilderness 43,650 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation for this WSA is to designate 23,150 acres as wilderness and release 43,650 acres for uses other than wilderness. The recommendation differs from the proposed action contained in the Final Esmeralda-Southern Nye Wilderness EIS. Additional study of the area, focused on the relationship of the WSA to the Death Valley National Monument wilderness study area, led to the conclusion that a portion of the WSA should be recommended for wilderness. The portion now recommended was analyzed as a partial wilderness alternative in the EIS.

The area's ruggedness has been primarily responsible for the perpetuation of its naturalness, and also contributes to its excellent scenic quality, especially along the southwest side where deep flood drainages knife deep into the center of the area. Along that same side are numerous examples of unique erosion patterns brought about by torrential rains which infrequently grace the area. The view from the top is even more impressive. To the south the Death Valley National Monument with its salt covered valley falls rapidly to the lowest elevation in the United States. The vast perspective created by the vertical fall of nearly 8,000 feet emphasizes the vastness of the country. To the west, north and east, the view stretches over the Queer Mountain WSA, and Sarcobatus flat with its dry lake bed covering over thirty square miles. Rocky outcrops colored in hues of deep red, brilliant yellow, and gray-green fill the canyons. A large alluvial bench skirts the western, northern, and eastern approaches to the mountains.

The Grapevine WSA is in a vegetation transition zone. However, unlike the Queer Mountain WSA, The Grapevine WSA's hot desert/cold desert vegetation zones do not intermix. A distinctive line separates the hot and cold desert vegetation. The alluvial benches are vegetated with creosote bush and Joshua trees common to hot desert environments. Once ascending into the foothills, populations of cold desert species including big sage and saltbush immediately replace the hot desert species. The higher elevations are covered with thinly populated groves of pinyon pine and juniper trees interspersed with small meadows covered with big sage.

The area is characterized by extremes in temperature and precipitation. During the summer months, temperatures soar into the 120 degree range along the alluvial fans. Winter brings extreme cold temperatures to the mountain peaks while the valleys below remain moderate. Precipitation is sparse (3.5 inches per year), and generally comes in torrents of rain during the summer creating flash floods. Willow Spring, located on the southeast side of the WSA provides the only yearlong, open water. Populations of desert bighorn sheep, mule deer, and wild horses and burros are common near Willow Spring.

The wild, untrammled setting provides many outstanding opportunities for recreation. Hiking, camping, and backpacking are demanding because of the difficult terrain, harsh climatic conditions, and lack of water. The challenge presented to adventurers will test backcountry skills and resourcefulness. Many hidden places still exist and the exhilaration of discovery will reward those willing to accept the challenge.

The Grapevine Mountains WSA has a moderate potential for metallic minerals in the southern mountainous terrain. The Esmeralda/ Southern Nye Wilderness EIS suggested that some of the existing claims are expected to prove valid and be developed.

The flat, wide open alluvial benches would create manageability problems with off-road vehicle use. There are over 40,000 acres of open country that would require extensive patrolling. There are no physical barriers to ORV use within one to four miles of the boundary on both sides of the range. The broad washes, that drain the east side of the WSA, are open terrain allowing vehicle access one to two miles up into the mountains. The open terrain would make closure of the various ways and washes extremely difficult.

The Grapevine Mountains WSA is contiguous to Death Valley National Monument WSA No. 4 and across a highway from the Queer Mountain WSA.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: The mountainous section of the Grapevine WSA is in a nearly pristine condition. Deep canyons and steep mountains with sweeping views of the surrounding valleys all enhance the primitive feeling of the WSA. The lack of perennial water sources has served to discourage livestock grazing. Vegetation has been undisturbed and combined with the combination of hot and cold desert vegetation the unique nature lends to the area's naturalness.

Unnatural features are restricted to the lower elevations. A sand and gravel pit is located just inside the northwest boundary. Three miles of way and three short sections of cat work are inside the western edge of the northwestern bajada. Along the eastern edge of the WSA an unauthorized mining placer operation was discovered. Although reclaimed, the activity created a way and the site is noticeable. Reconstruction of the spring development at willow spring created disturbances to the vegetation around the spring.

The Grapevine Mountains WSA consists of the northern end of the Grapevine Mountain range and its foothills. It has numerous peaks over 7,000 feet with the highest at 7,694. The WSA also includes two broad bajadas which drain the range towards Sarcobatus Flat on the northeast and Bonnie Clair Flat on the northwest. The lowest point on the bajadas is 4,000 feet.

B. Solitude: The Grapevine Mountains WSA provides outstanding opportunity for solitude. Topographic screening is provided by the many canyons and rugged layout of the mountain high country. The scattered groves of pinyon pine and juniper trees provides screening at the higher elevations. The lack of destination points and the many peaks in the area also serve to disperse recreation use. The perception of solitude is enhanced by vertical fall of 8,000 feet from the top of the Grapevine mountains to the bottom of Death Valley. The alluvial benches skirting the mountains and foothills provide less suitable opportunity for solitude. The close proximity to State Highway 72 along the western side of the WSA would also preclude solitude.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The wild, untrammled setting provides many outstanding opportunities for recreation. Hiking, camping, and backpacking are demanding because of the difficult terrain, harsh climatic conditions, and lack of water. The challenge presented to adventurers will test backcountry skills and resourcefulness heightening the wilderness experience. Many hidden places still exist and the exhilaration of discovery will reward those willing to accept the challenge. The spectacular

views of Death Valley provide excellent opportunities for photography.

D. Special Features: From the top of the Grapevine WSA, one is able to view all of Death Valley from a single vantage point while in the solitude of a pristine environment. Other areas allowing views of the Monument have active mining programs in the immediate vicinity which distract from the experience.

4. MANAGEABILITY

The Grapevine Mountains WSA is considered to be manageable over the long-term. The Grapevine Mountains WSA has two types of management problems: mining claims and the potential for indiscriminate vehicle use. Random vehicle use will be difficult to control. Over 40,000 acres of the Grapevine Mountains WSA are broad bajadas, alluvial fans, that slope from the mountains to the boundary roads. There are no physical barriers to ORV use within one to four miles of the boundary on both sides of the range. These areas cannot be closed to vehicles without a major enforcement effort.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

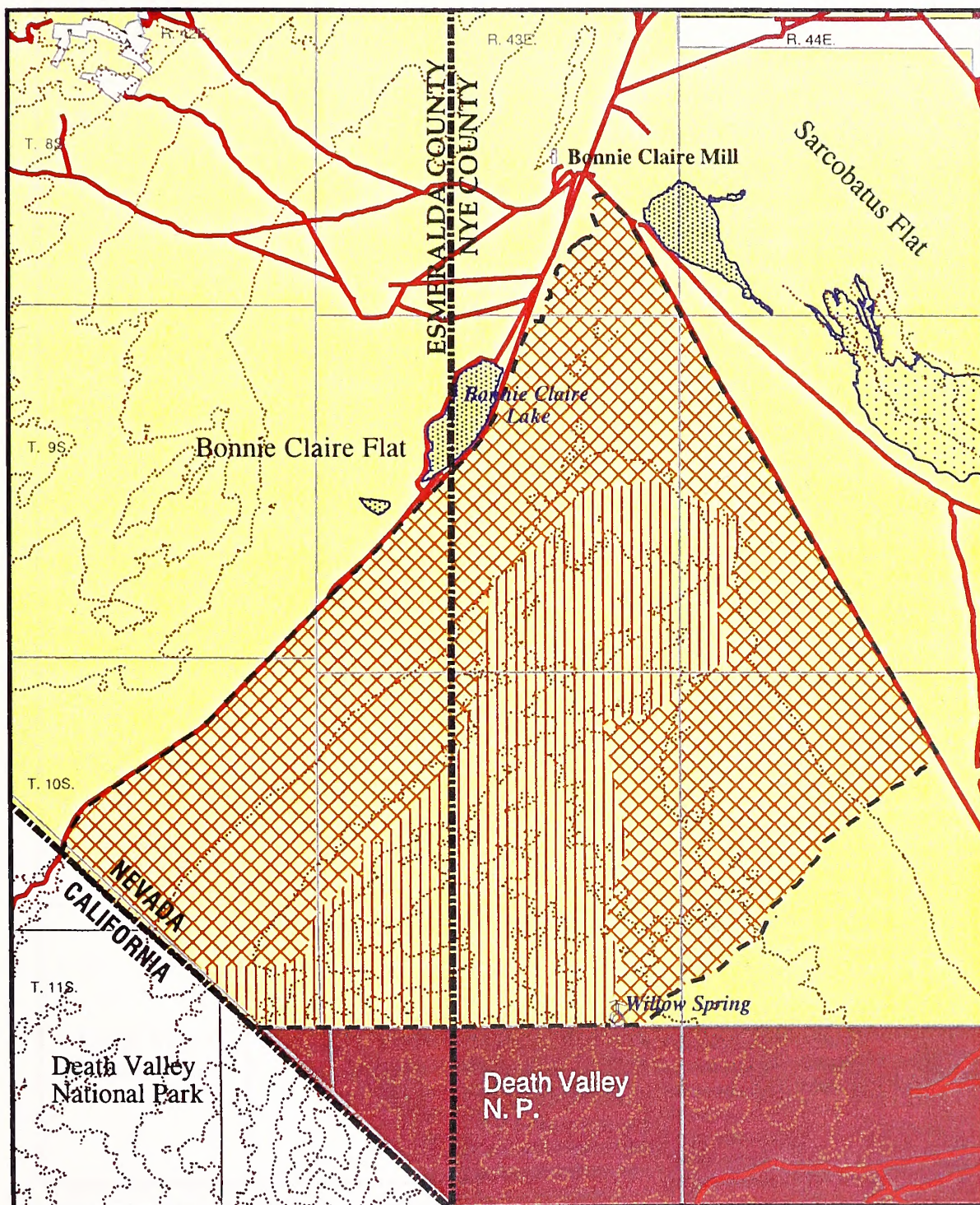
The Grapevine Mountains WSA has a moderate potential for metallic minerals in the southern mountains, about 30 percent of the WSA. The WSA contains sixty acres of pre-FLPMA claims, located on the west flank of the range, and 1,500 acre of post-FLPMA claims, covering Helmet Mountain and the large canyon to the south of it. Some of the existing claims are expected to prove valid and be developed. Five miles of road would be developed along routes previously used for exploration. A total of 19.5 acres would be physically disturbed from mineral exploration and development activity. There are no oil and gas or geothermal leases. Within the WSA are 19,420 acres with a moderate potential for metallic mineral resources. Leasable mineral potential is low for oil and gas and moderate for geothermal resources. The bajadas have a moderate potential for non-metallics.

6. SUMMARY OF WSA-SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

Eight comments were received during the initial inventory in 1979. Six agreed with further study of the area and two disagreed. Ten specific comments on the WSA and 2,327 general comments, stating the unit met the wilderness criteria, during the intensive inventory in 1980. Of the specific comments, several noted intrusions, a lack of wilderness values and other conflicting resource values. A few discussed the area's naturalness, outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation. Two specific comments were received on this WSA during the issue identification process for the RMP. Both were opposed to wilderness designation. Three general comments were opposed to any wilderness in the planning area. Public meetings were held in Pahrump, Goldfield, and Las Vegas, Nevada. During the public hearing and comment period, a total of 49 comments addressing this WSA were received. Forty one supported more wilderness than the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Preferred Alternative and eight supported the DEIS Preferred Alternative.

No local government commented on this WSA. The State, during the consistency review, concurred with the Preferred Alternative of no wilderness. The National Park Service recommended the WSA be recommended for wilderness. The Environmental Protection Agency stated the Criteria used in the selection of the Preferred Alternative was unclear.

Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Study Area WSA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP



— Road
○ Spring

1 0 1 Miles

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

☐ Dry Lake
☐ Alkali Flat

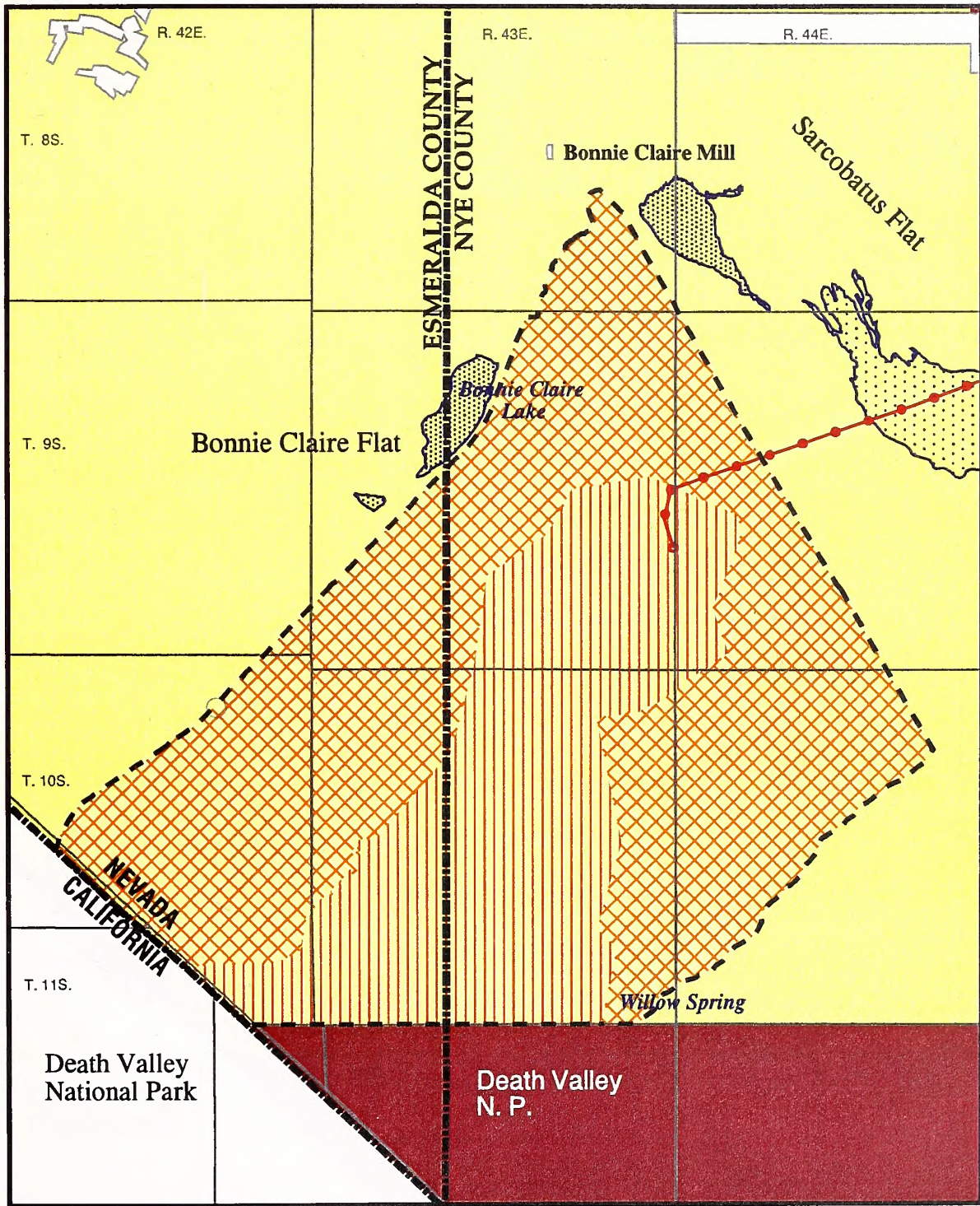
☐ BLM
☐ Private Land
☐ Other Agency

--- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable
|||| Recommended Suitable



NV-060-355

Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES



1 0 1 Miles

Dry Lake
 Alkali Flat

Well
 Fence

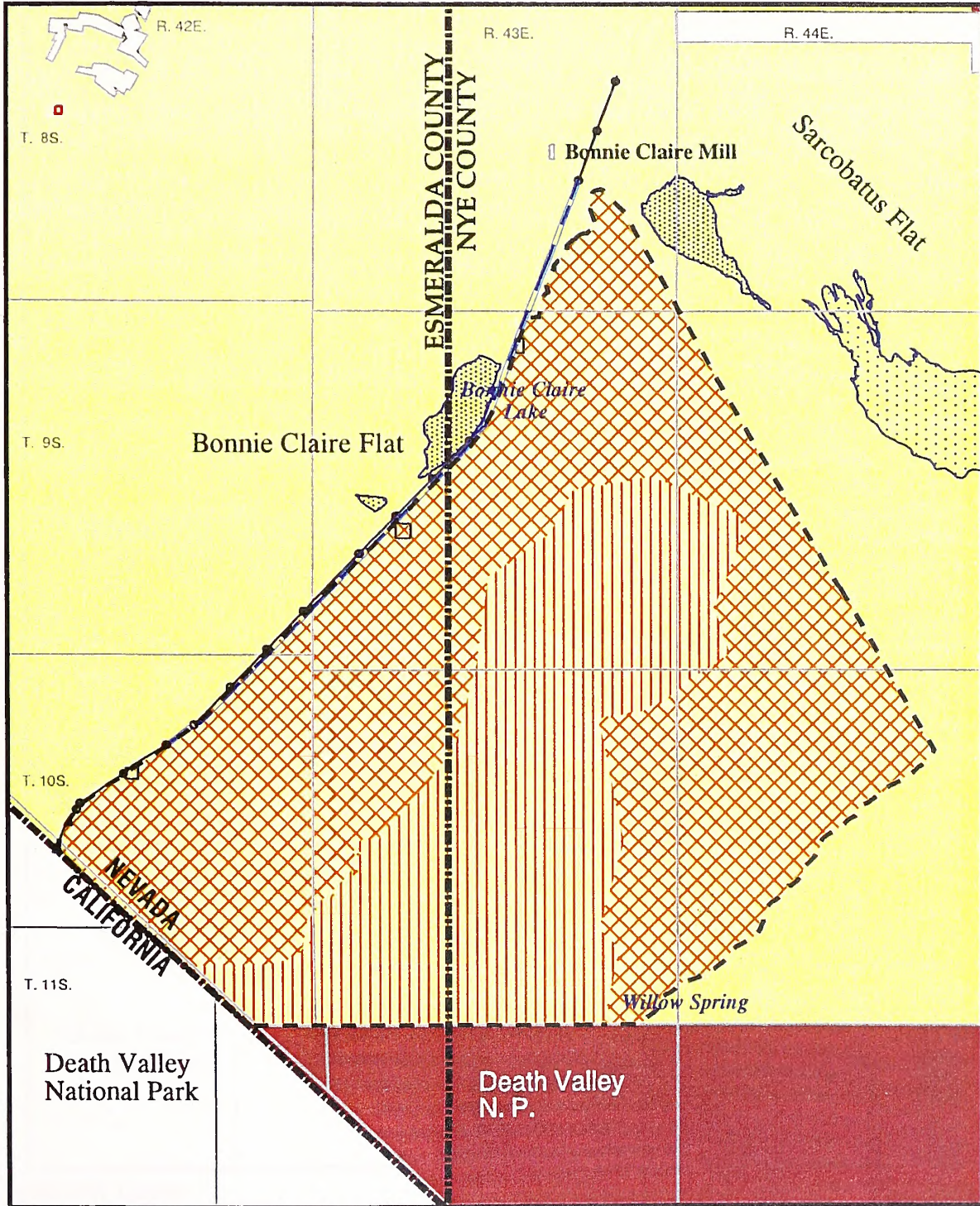
BLM
 Private Land
 Other Agency

Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable
 Recommended Suitable



NV-060-355

Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY






1 0 1 Miles

 Dry Lake
 Alkali Flat

 Unauth. Occup. - Mine  Road
 Material Site  Powerline

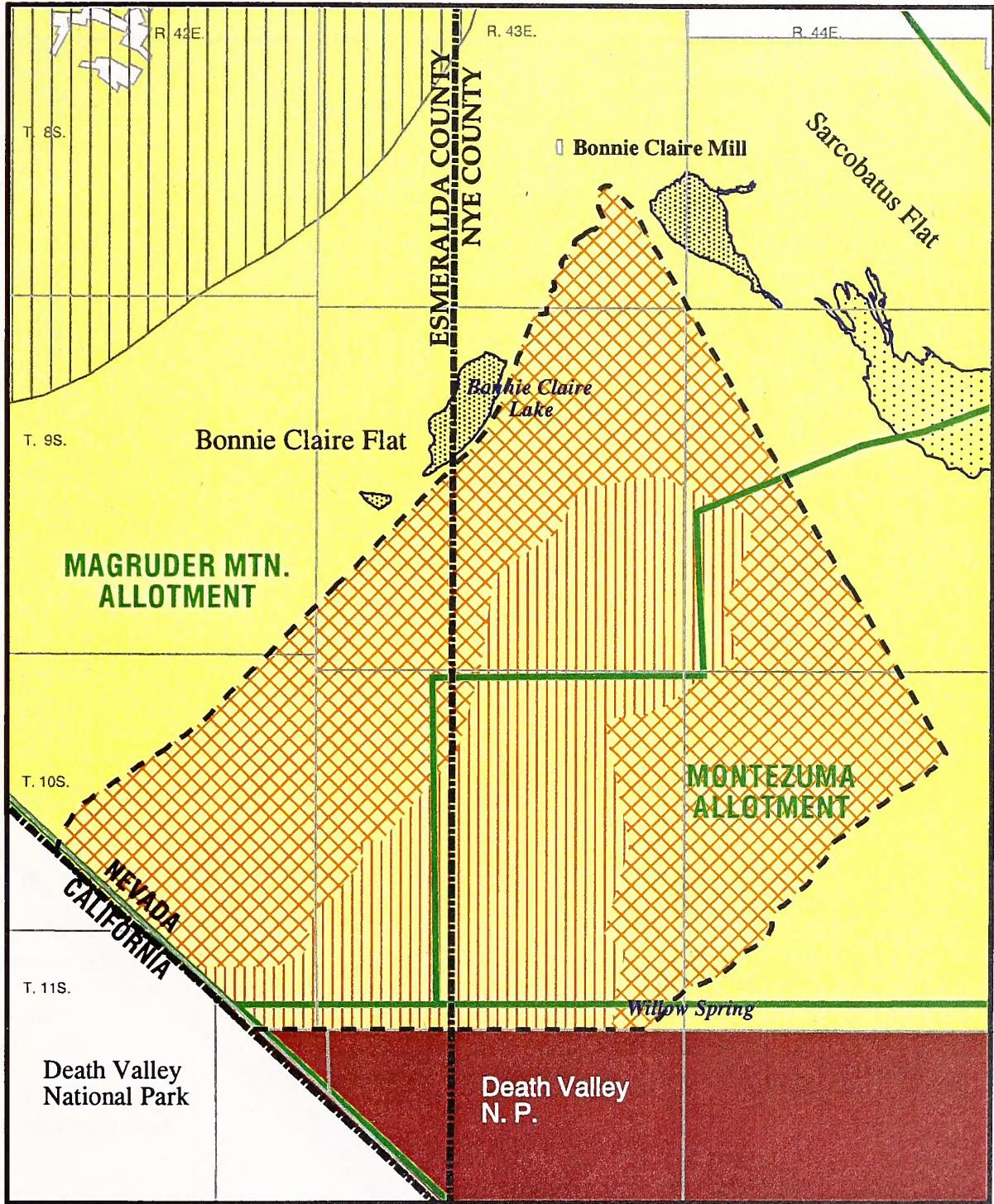
 BLM
 Private Land
 Other Agency

 Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable
 Recommended Suitable



NV-060-355

Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Study Area ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCES






**Federally Listed
Threatened
and
Endangered
Species**


 **Observation Site**
NONE ON THIS MAP

 **BLM**
 **Private Land**
 **Other Agency**

 **Gold Mountain HMA**

 **Allotment
Boundary**

 **Wilderness Study Area Boundary**
 **Recommended Non-Suitable**
 **Recommended Suitable**

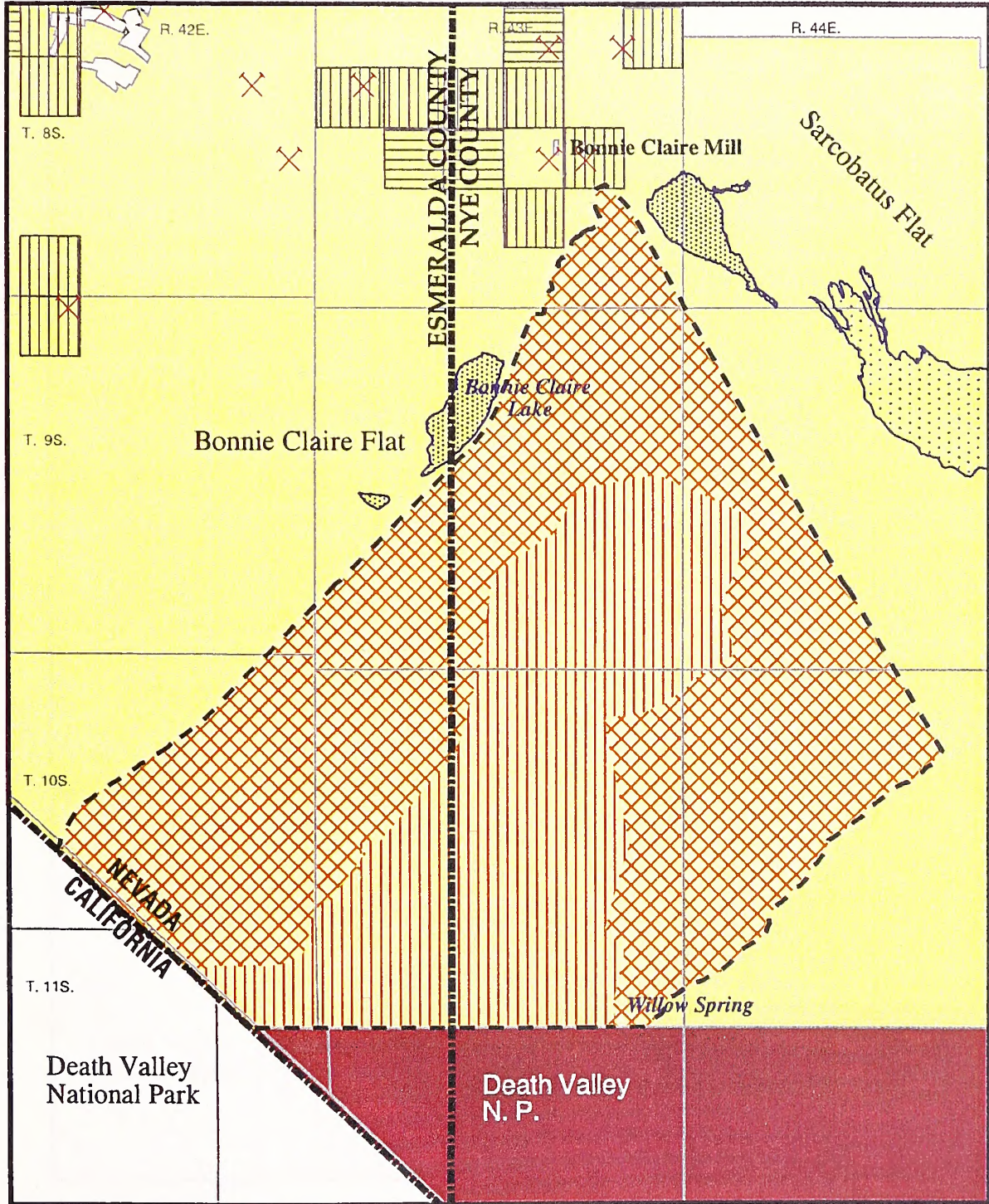
1 0 1 Miles


 **Dry Lake**
 **Alkali Flat**



NV-060-355

Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS



Mining Operations

1 0 1 Miles

Dry Lake
 Alkali Flat

Mining Claim Density - 3/97

- 1-5 Claims
- 6-35 Claims
- 36 or more Claims

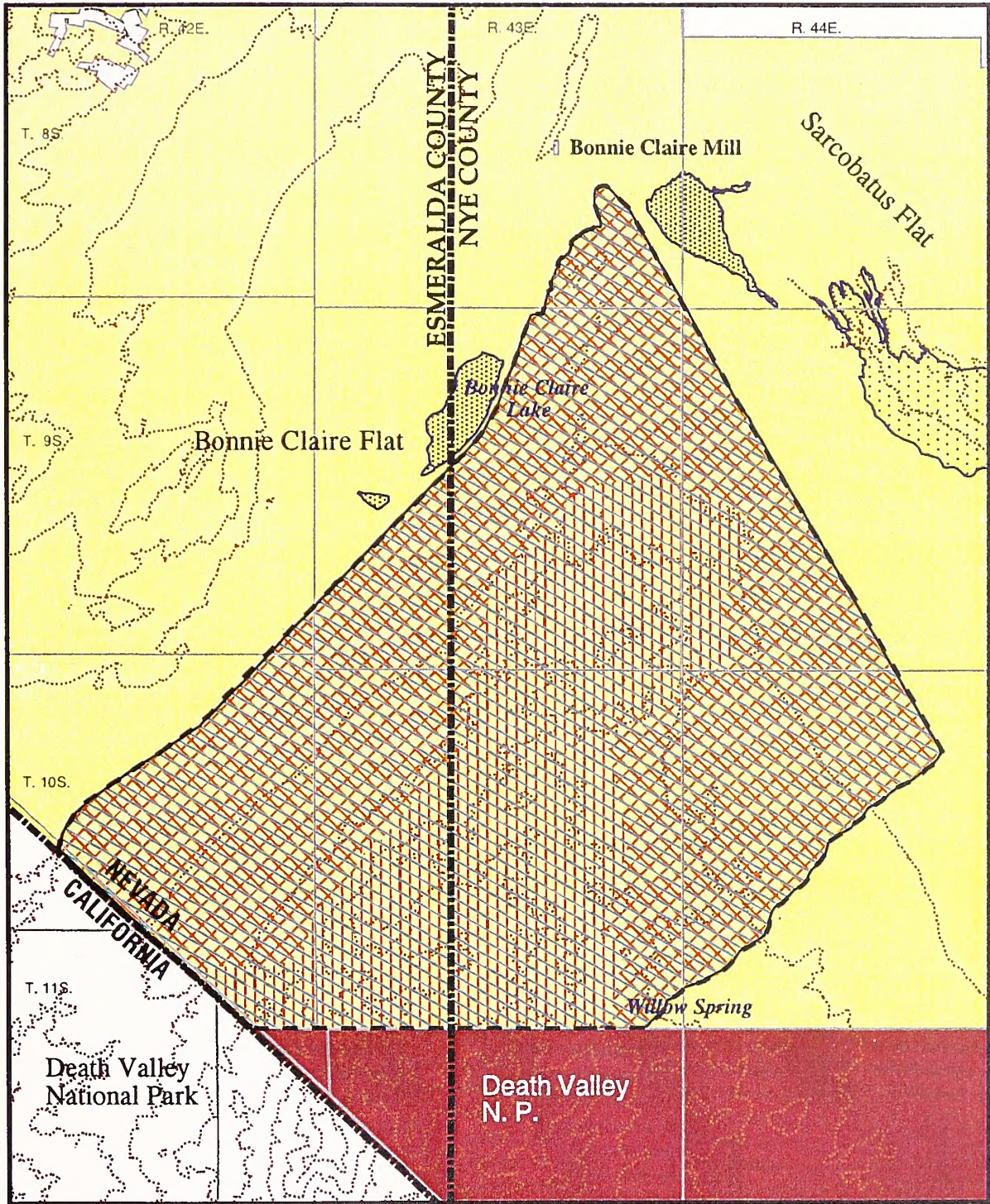
- BLM
- Private Land
- Other Agency

- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- Recommended Non-Suitable
- Recommended Suitable



NV-060-355

Grapevine Mountain Wilderness Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL



1 0 1 Miles




CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

 Dry Lake
 Alkali Flat

Mineral Potential

 Medium - Gold

 BLM
 Private Land
 Other Agency

 Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable
 Recommended Suitable



NV-060-355

SIMPSON PARK WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

1. THE STUDY AREA - 49,670 acres

The Simpson Park Wilderness Study Area (WSA) (NV-060-428) is located in the Simpson Park Mountain Range in Lander and Eureka Counties approximately 50 miles northwest of Eureka, Nevada. The WSA includes 49,670 acres of public land and surrounds two privately owned inholdings totaling 80 acres.

Except for a short section in the north and south portion of the area, the boundary follows a 7,000-foot topographic line around the majority of the wilderness study area. The remainder of the boundary follows roads and drainages. The Simpson Park WSA consists of mountainous country with scattered stands of aspen and mountain mahogany. It is approximately 17 miles long and five miles wide.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 0 acres recommended for wilderness 49,670 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation for this WSA is to release all 49,670 acres for uses other than wilderness (Maps 1 & 2). All wilderness is considered to be the environmentally preferable alternative as it would result in the least change from the natural environment over the long-term. Although the recommendation is not the all wilderness alternative, the recommendation for this WSA would be implemented in a manner which would utilize all practical means to avoid or minimize environmental impacts.

The Simpson Park WSA was recommended for uses other than wilderness because of known barite deposits and a high potential for other minerals in the northern portion. There are three mining plans of operation on record for this area. Upon release from wilderness interim management, further exploration and the extraction of locatable minerals is expected. Because of the presence of numerous ways, private inholdings, spring developments, and unfenced private land located on the periphery of the WSA, the unit would be difficult to manage as wilderness.

The recommendation was made in consideration of the substantial number of human imprints, the known barite deposits and high mineral potential in the northern part, the private inholdings, and potential management problems with ORV use.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: The Simpson Park WSA consists of a portion of the Simpson Park Range, a long but narrow range that trends to the northeast. The northern and eastern portions of the WSA is covered with a desert shrub vegetation with scattered stands of pinyon juniper on the west facing slopes and scattered stands of aspen and cottonwood in the wet areas and mountain mahogany on the rocky ridges. The southern and southwestern portion of the WSA has a good cover of pinyon and juniper. The southern portion of the unit is generally free from human imprints and is in a natural state. The WSA contains a substantial number of human imprints. There are a total of 16 ways that cover a total of 18 miles inside the WSA. This has a negative affect on the wilderness character of the northern part of the area. The northern portion also contains five water developments and two 40 acre private inholdings. Shagnasty Basin was identified during the wilderness inventory as unnatural.

B. Solltude: Opportunities for solitude are limited in the northern portion but there are good opportunities for solitude in the southern portion. Sights and sounds outside the boundary of the Simpson Park WSA would have little effect on the quality of a wilderness experience within the unit. Lack of development and the remoteness of the area are the primary reasons for this. The area is long and narrow with private land protruding into the mountain range at various places. Private land borders the unit at five places: The

Gund Ranch in the northeast portion, the Indian Ranch in the southwest portion, two places at the Ackerman Ranch, and at Grubbs Canyon in the southeast portion of the unit.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The diversity of opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, and hunting contribute to an overall outstanding opportunity for recreation.

D. Special Features: No special features of geological, ecological, scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value are known to exist in the Simpson Park WSA.

4. MANAGEABILITY

It would be possible to manage the Simpson Park WSA in order to preserve its wilderness character. However, there would be some difficulties in doing so. Unfenced private inholdings of large acreage protrude into the unit at five places. Two private inholdings of forty acres each exist within the unit. There are a large number of post-FLPMA mining claims and mineral leases in the northern portion of the unit. The development potential of the area for mining is high. The large number of roads and ways associated with the unit would make it almost impossible to prevent unauthorized vehicle use. Closure of all these road and ways would not be feasible and motorized vehicle traffic would be difficult to control. Continued livestock grazing would be compatible with wilderness management.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

The northern part of the Simpson Park WSA has known deposits of barite and has a high potential for mineral resources. Leasable mineral potential is low for oil and gas. The potential for geothermal is moderate with the greatest potential along the range front fault on the west side of the WSA. There are no geothermal leases but 150 mining claims and five oil and gas leases covering 8,640 acres do occur in the WSA.

It is anticipated that there would be an acceleration of exploration for geothermal, barite and precious metal resources in the future following a final wilderness decision.

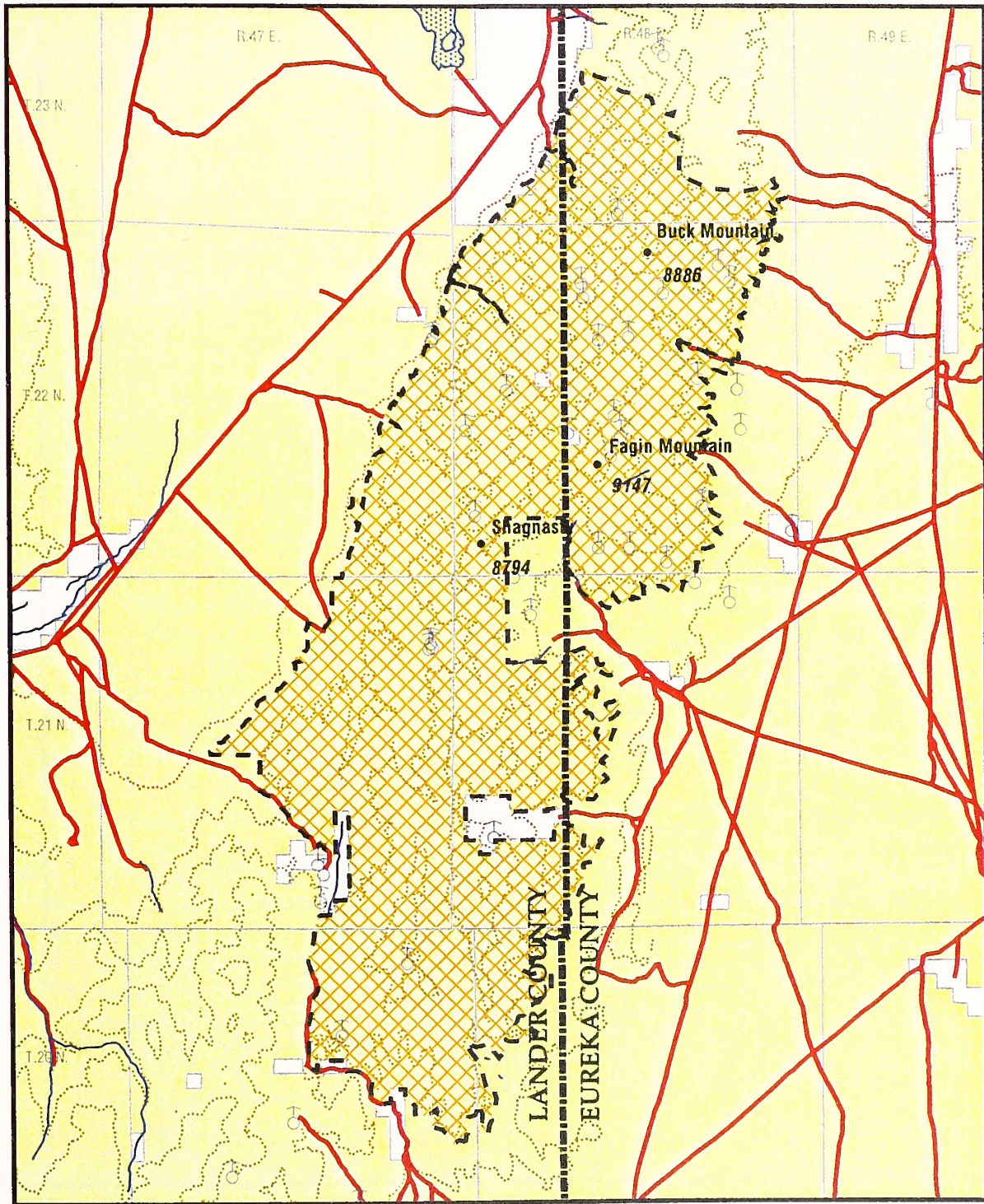
6. SUMMARY OF WSA-SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

Public involvement has occurred throughout the wilderness review process. During formal public review of the draft EIS, a total of 13 comments specifically addressing this WSA were received. Five individuals and five environmental organizations favored the Simpson Park designation, indicating naturalness, large size, and rugged and scenic as reasons for supporting this recommendation. One individual, one mining organization and one local government opposed this designation, indicating manageability, human imprints, and private inholdings as reasons for supporting this recommendation.

Reasons for supporting the all wilderness alternative were; outstanding wilderness values, minimal conflicts, most spectacular area, all the stuff of a classic wilderness. Reasons for supporting the no wilderness alternative were; key to economic mineralization in Nevada, one site in the whole state that has one of the best exposures of strata for barite deposits.

The State, during its consistency review, concurred with the Preferred Alternative.

Simpson Park Wilderness Study Area WSA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP



— Road
○ Spring

1 0 1 Miles

☁ Dry Lake

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

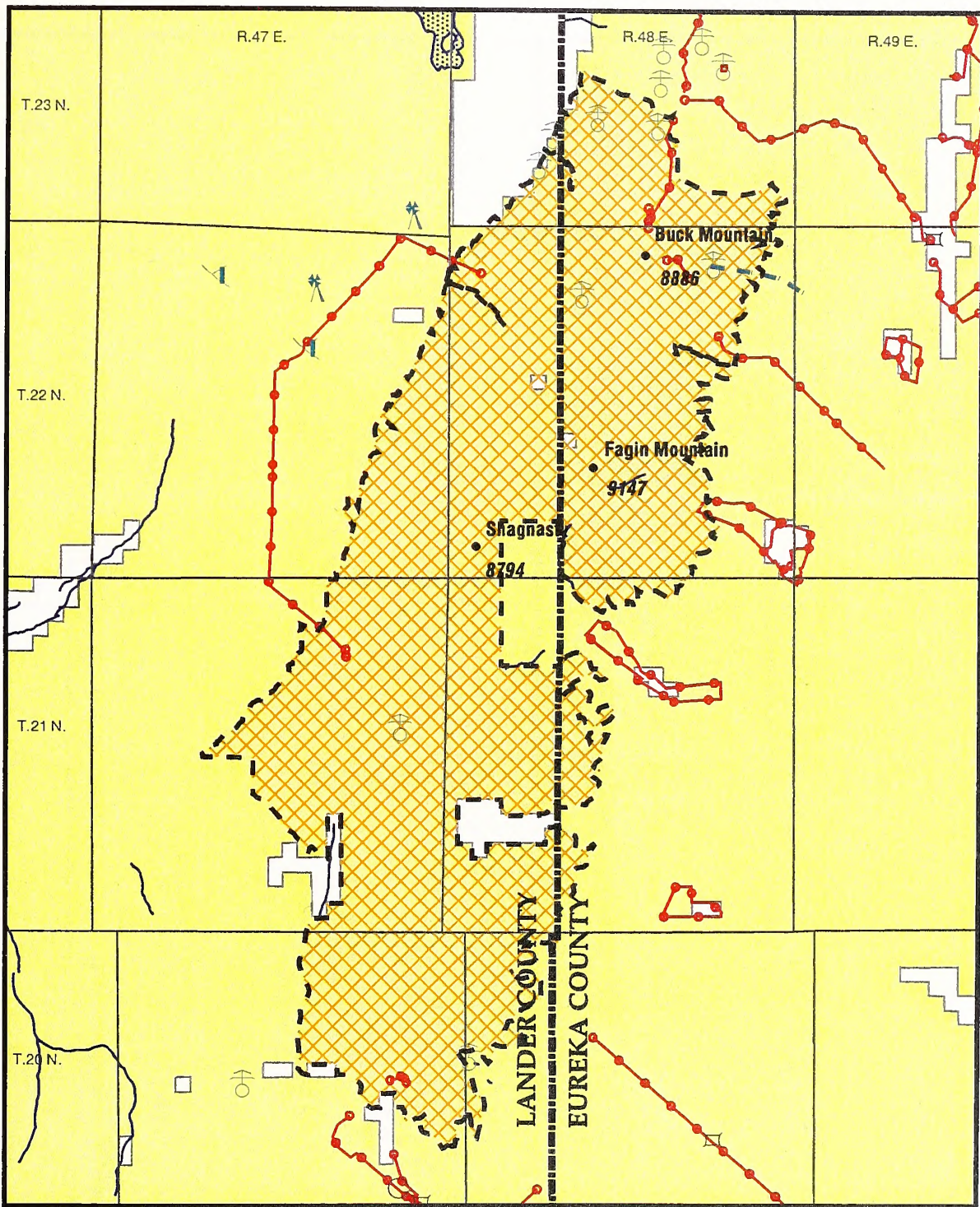
■ BLM
□ Private Land

- - Wilderness Study Area Boundary
XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-428

Simpson Park Wilderness Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES











 Dry Lake

1 0 1 Miles

 BLM
 Private Land

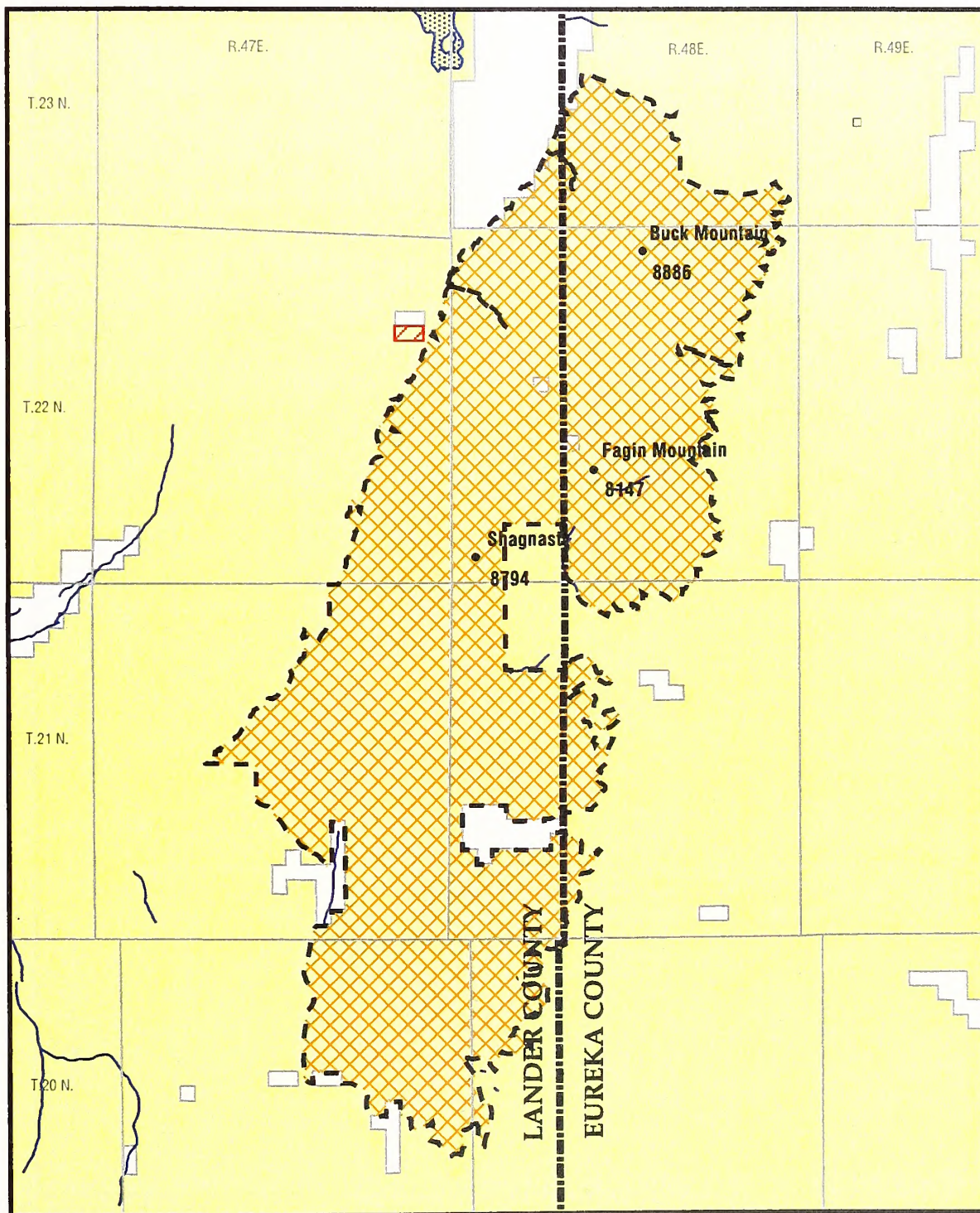
 Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable

-  Dev. Spring
-  Windmill
-  Corral
-  Cattleguard
-  Well
-  Reservoir
-  Pipeline
-  Fence



NV-060-428

Simpson Park Wilderness Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY



 Dry Lake

 **Trespass**

 **Comm. Site**

 **BLM**
 **Private Land**

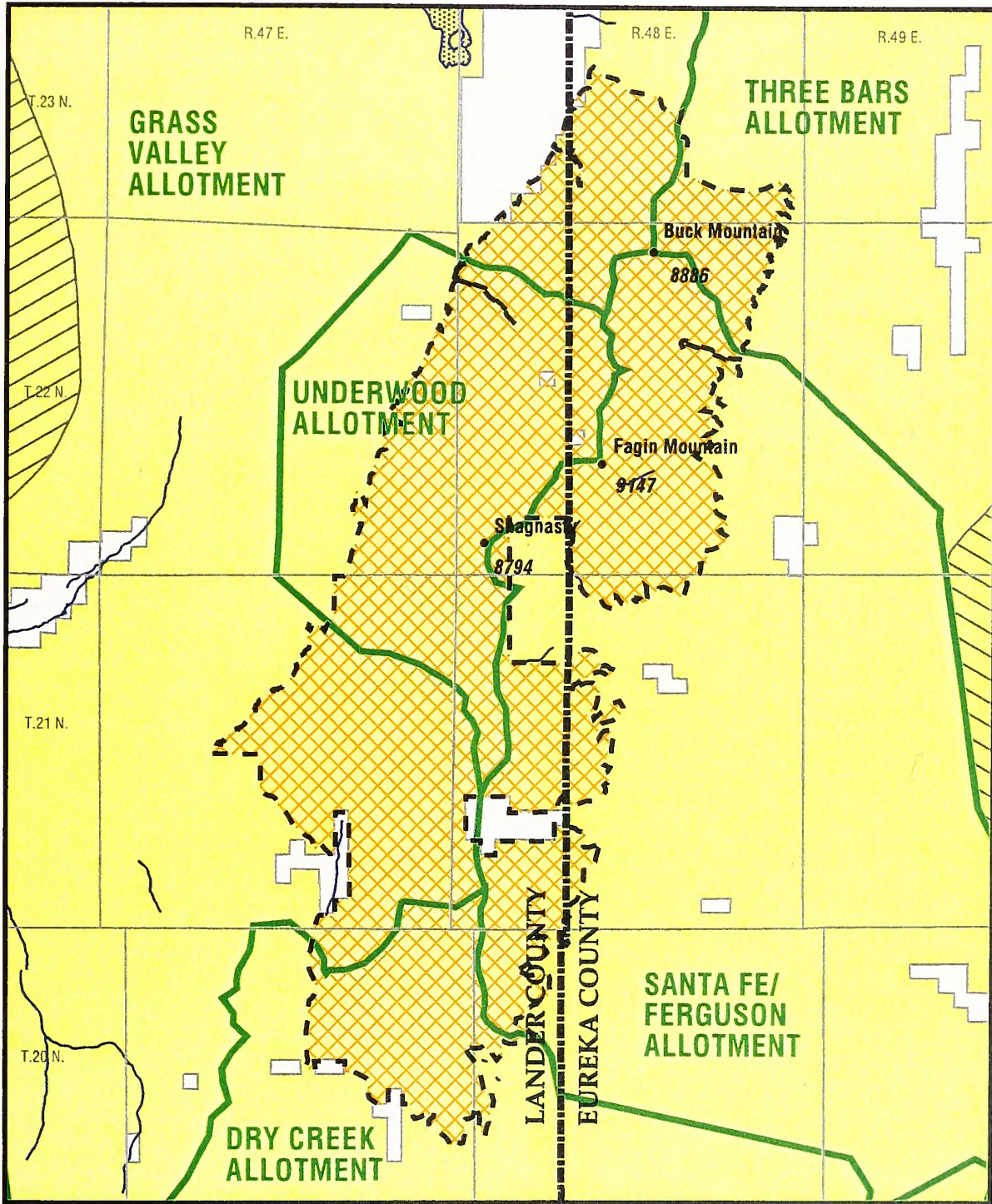
 **Wilderness Study Area Boundary**
 **Recommended Non-Suitable**



NV-060-428

Simpson Park Wilderness Study Area

ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCES



**Federally Listed
Threatened
and
Endangered
Species**

Observation Site
NONE ON THIS MAP

BLM
 Private Land

1 0 1 Miles

Dry Lake

Callahan HMA
 Roberts Mountain HMA

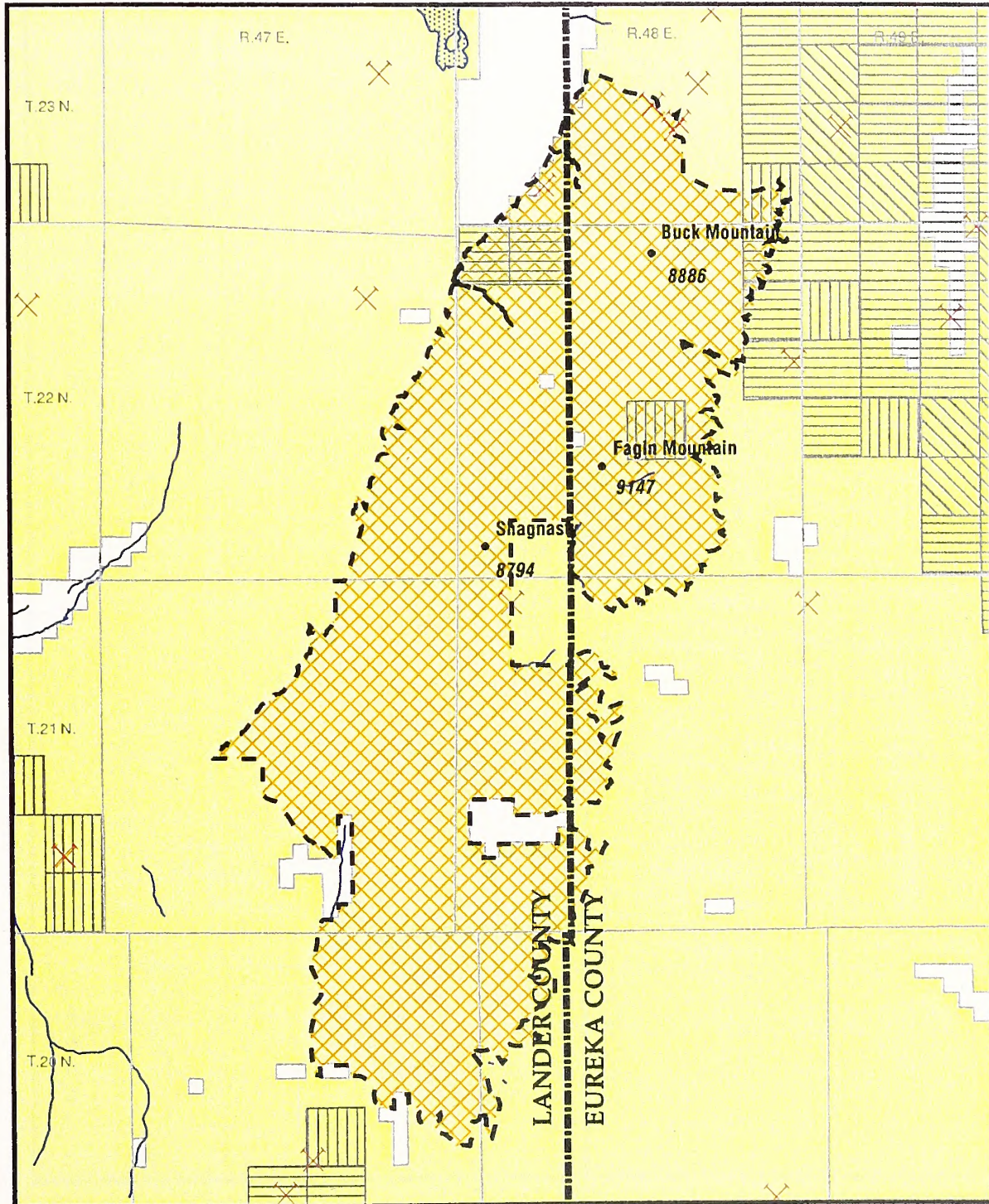
**Allotment
Boundary**

Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-428

Simpson Park Wilderness Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS



Mining Operations

1 0 1 Miles

Dry Lake

Mining Claim Density - 3/97

- 1-5 Claims
- 6-35 Claims
- 36 or more Claims

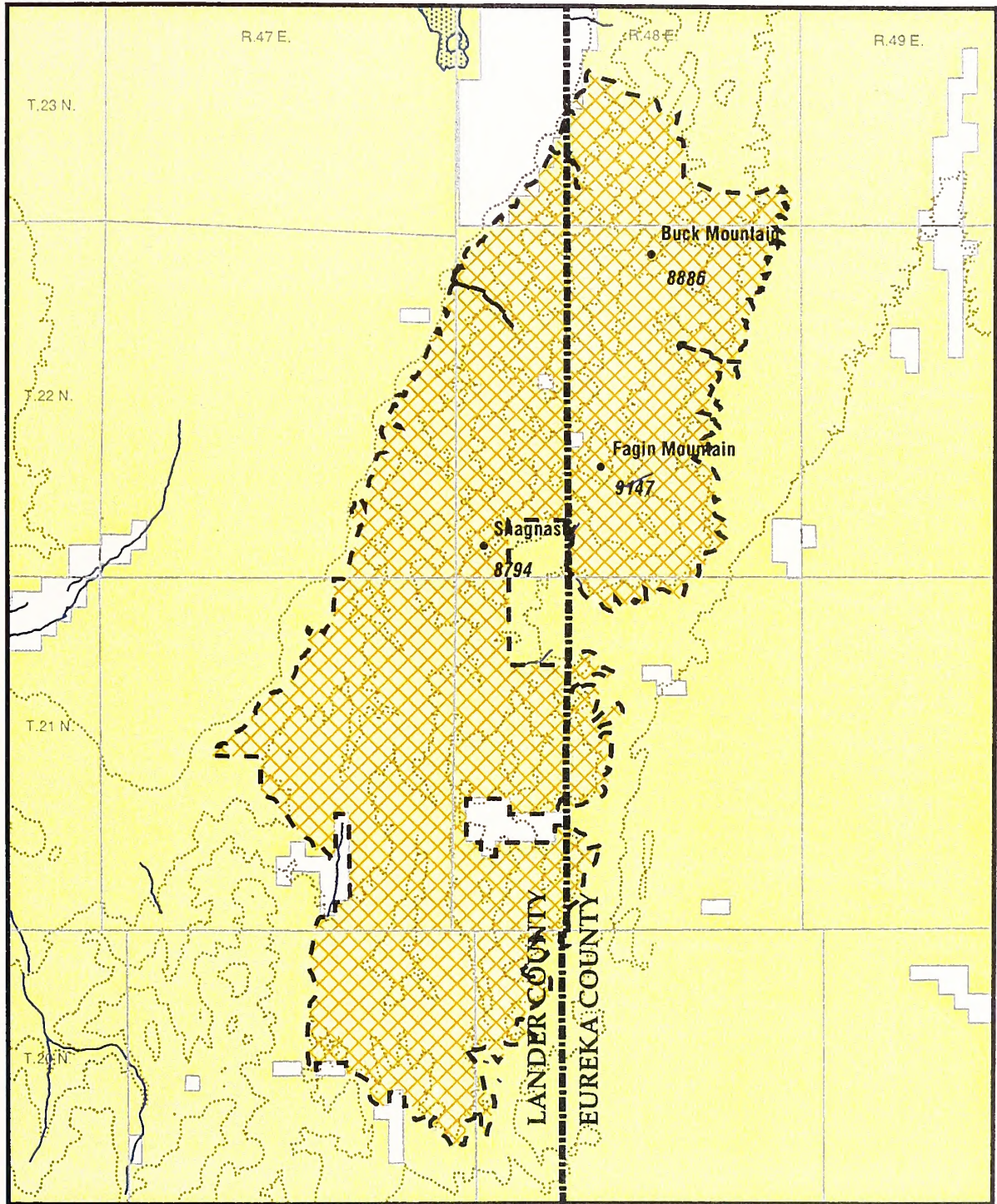
BLM
 Private Land

Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-428

Simpson Park Wilderness Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL



1 0 1 Miles

☁ Dry Lake

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

NO HIGH OR MEDIUM MINERAL POTENTIAL IS IDENTIFIED ON THIS MAP.

■ BLM
□ Private Land

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-428

ROBERTS MOUNTAIN WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

1. THE STUDY AREA - 15,090 acres

The Roberts Mountain Wilderness Study Area (WSA) (NV-060-541) is located in the Roberts Mountains in Lander and Eureka Counties approximately 40 miles northwest of Eureka, Nevada. The WSA includes 15,090 acres of public land with no privately owned inholdings.

The Roberts Mountain WSA is irregularly shaped and surrounded on three sides by major valley systems. The western boundary is formed by various topographic lines and cherrystem roads. The south and southeast boundaries are formed by roads and trails. The rest of the eastern boundary follows ridgelines, roads and drainages. The northern boundary is formed by topographic lines. The Roberts Mountain WSA consists of the rugged mountainous area of the Roberts Mountains and contains three prominent peaks. Vegetation consists of willow, cottonwood, aspen, birch, and dogwood trees in the deep narrow canyons. Mountain mahogany trees and limber pine are found in isolated stands on the barren rock ridges.

The Roberts Mountains are the geologic model or Type Locality of the Roberts Mountains Thrust, a major geologic fault structure in North America. The area has been referred to as "the Window of the World" because of the unique view it gives of the complex geologic structure of the region. This special feature is used not only by professional geologists as a model but by students, amateurs and rockhounds to learn about geologic resources. Because of its rare qualities and geologic importance, university students and well known geologists from Kansas, California, other universities and other nations have studied this area for many years.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 0 acres recommended for wilderness 15,090 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation for this WSA is to release all 15,090 for uses other than wilderness.

This recommendation differs from the Proposed Action (All Wilderness Alternative) analyzed in the Shoshone-Eureka Resource Area Final Wilderness Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) where all 15,090 acres were recommended as suitable for wilderness.

Before the FEIS was completed, the U.S. Geologic Survey and Bureau of Mines (USGS/BOM) report, U.S. Geologic Survey Bulletin 1731-K, was published. This report assigned a high resource potential rating (gold and silver) to three small areas in the southeast corner of the WSA. The area around the WSA has received significant interest from the minerals industry and test drilling has occurred up to the boundary of the WSA.

Based on the USGS/BOM report and the determinations in the FEIS, the BLM reasoned that wilderness values in this area outweighed the value of potential mineral development, after carving out any portions of the WSA with potentially high mineral values. Consequently, the BLM recommended to the Secretary of the Interior, Manuel Lujan, that the Proposed Action identifying 15,090 acres suitable for wilderness designation be adopted.

Upon review of the Bureau's recommendation by the Secretary, the Secretary reversed the Bureau's recommendation from 15,090 acres suitable for designation to "0" acres suitable for designation as wilderness. The Secretary cited as his rationale a USGS report which assigned a gross value to in-place minerals in WSAs. This report was entitled "Quantitative Assessments of the Energy and Mineral Resources Within Eighteen Wilderness Study Areas in the States of Colorado, Nevada, Oregon, and Utah." In 1993, a select USGS commissioned panel recommended "the USGS discontinue the practice of providing gross in-place values to those making land use decisions." Further, the panel said the report ". . . is not a useful measure of the social value of mineral resources." Accordingly, the report was not useful as a basis for decisions about wilderness designation.

Shortly thereafter, several wilderness groups, represented by the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, filed suit against Secretary Lujan requesting that the Secretary reconsider the decision to drop the WSA from the Department's recommendation to the President of areas deserving permanent protection as wilderness. In 1994, a settlement was reached whereby Secretary Babbitt agreed "to take a fresh look at all BLM candidate wilderness areas as designation bills are taken up by Congress.

When a "fresh look" is taken, the Roberts Mountain WSA could be recommended for wilderness because it offers outstanding wilderness values not common in central Nevada. The outstanding wilderness values of naturalness; the unusual variety of vegetative communities; the spring fed ponds; the outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation; the natural arches and small caves; along with the prominence of geologic features in the Roberts Mountain Thrust, and one of a kind paleontological probability would make the Roberts Mountain WSA an outstanding addition to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: The Roberts Mountain WSA is generally in a natural state. The Roberts Mountain WSA consists of the rugged mountainous area of the Roberts Mountains and contains three prominent peaks. The Roberts Mountain WSA is irregularly shaped and surrounded on three sides by major valley systems. Vegetation consists of willow, cottonwood, aspen, birch, and dogwood trees in the deep narrow canyons. Mountain mahogany trees and limber pine are found in isolated stands on the barren rock ridges. Within the boundaries of the WSA are approximately 2.5 miles of vehicle ways and three fences. A small mining prospect was found on the western side of the unit, but is substantially unnoticeable in the unit as a whole. The nature of these intrusions does not warrant their exclusion.

B. Solitude: The Roberts Mountain WSA provides an outstanding opportunity for solitude. Spread over an extremely jagged and varied topography, the unit is characterized by narrow, deep canyons forested with willow, cottonwood, aspen, birch, and dogwood trees. Barren rock ridges and isolated stands of mountain mahogany and limber pine combine with the canyons to offer abundant natural screening and offer many opportunities for the user to find a secluded spot. The Roberts Mountain WSA offers a wide diversity of terrain, vegetation, and scenery. The massif consists of a series of rugged peaks forming a broken ridge. Numerous canyons and valleys surround the ridge breaking the unit into several areas.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The Roberts Mountain WSA offers outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. The Roberts Creek/Vinini Creek, Willow Creek and Dry Creek areas offer slopes of varying degrees and a variety of scenic attractions for cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Suitable snow depths usually occur throughout this area.

Horseback riding is fairly easy on the eastern portion of this area and access to the bowl just below the peak of Roberts Mountain is not difficult. For extended travel, one can climb out of the bowl and drop into the Pete Hansen or Dry Creek drainages.

There are a number of small caves above Roberts Creek. Most are located on cliff faces and may require some degree of rock climbing ability. The rocks are Devonian sedimentaries with numerous fossils and may be crumbly.

The Roberts Mountain WSA exhibits an unusual variety of vegetative communities in proximity to one another. Because of the rapid change in elevation, a visitor can find a sub-alpine herbaceous sage community, a northern desert shrub community, a pinyon/juniper tree forest, and a scattered boreal forest of limber pine all within this 15,000 acre WSA. Hiking, rock climbing, backpacking, nature study, hunting, and photography are all activities that can be enjoyed in this WSA.

D. Special Features: The Roberts thrust, responsible for the mountain's existence, is one of the great structural features of the intermountain west. This provides for excellent geological study. Universities as far away as Ohio and Nebraska, and students from England and China have participated in geologic field trips and mapping exercises during the summer months. The main scientific values of the area are its "window on the mantle" characteristic, a geological formation associated with the Roberts Mountain Thrust Fault, and the ecological island aspect of the higher elevations.

4. MANAGEABILITY

The Roberts Mountain WSA is considered to be manageable over the long-term. This WSA has two types of management problems: mining claims and the potential off-road-vehicle use. Post-FLPMA mining claims covering 2800 acres are located along the south and eastern boundaries. All but 140 acres were filed in 1983 and 1984. Mineral exploration is high and some of these claims could be developed. Closure of one way may present a problem because it will be difficult to prevent ORV use of this way.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

The US Geological Survey and the US Bureau of Mines investigated the Roberts Mountain WSA and published the USGS Survey Bulletin 1731-K.

There are three areas of high mineral resource potential for gold and silver with gradational areas of moderate and low resource potential in silicified dolomite beneath the Roberts Mountains thrust along part of the eastern edge of the wilderness study area. Silicified and altered dolomite in an area about 2 ½ miles west of Roberts Creek Mountain has moderate to low resource potential for gold and silver; and an area along the southwest edge of the study area about 3 ½ miles west of Roberts Creek Mountain has moderate resource potential for gold and silver in the same geologic setting. Gold and silver mineralization in altered dolomite and limestone associated with faulting that is younger than the Roberts Mountains thrust is found in the central part of the wilderness study area and near several large faults in the western part of the study area. These areas have moderate potential for gold and silver resources. No known energy mineral deposits exist in the wilderness study area and there is little or no likelihood of hydrocarbon resources in or beneath the study area.

6. SUMMARY OF WSA - SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

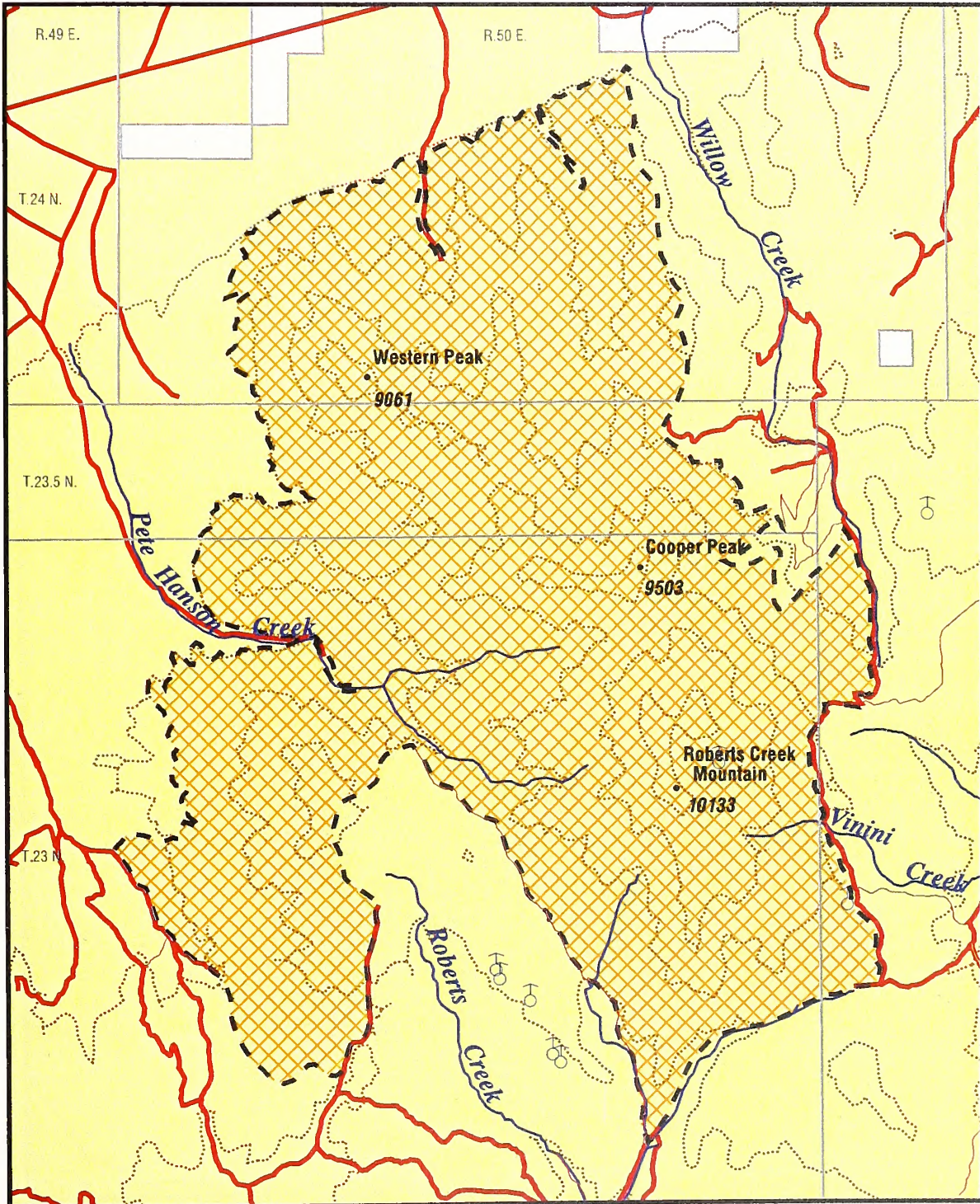
Public involvement has occurred throughout the wilderness review process. During formal public review of the draft EIS, a total of 16 comments specifically addressing this WSA were received. Seven individuals and five environmental organizations favored the Roberts designation and one mining organization, two mining companies and the local county commission opposed this designation.

Reasons for supporting a wilderness designation were; outstanding wilderness values, minimal conflicts, most spectacular area, all the stuff of a classic wilderness, North America's finest marine fossil beds.

Reasons for supporting nonwilderness were; key to economic mineralization in Nevada, one site in the whole state that has one of the best exposures of strata form gold deposits, strong association with nearby Mount Hope mineralization.

The State during its consistency review commented: "...we remain concerned about the impacts of wilderness designation of the Roberts Area. We acknowledge the unique geological, paleontological and scenic values of the area and feel strongly that they should be protected. However, the mineral potential of this area could be extremely valuable to the State in the future. We, therefore, have suggested that the Bureau seek other means of protection for the area, short of wilderness designation".

Roberts Mountain Wilderness Study Area WSA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP



— Road
○ Spring

1 0 1 Miles
CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

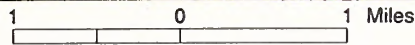
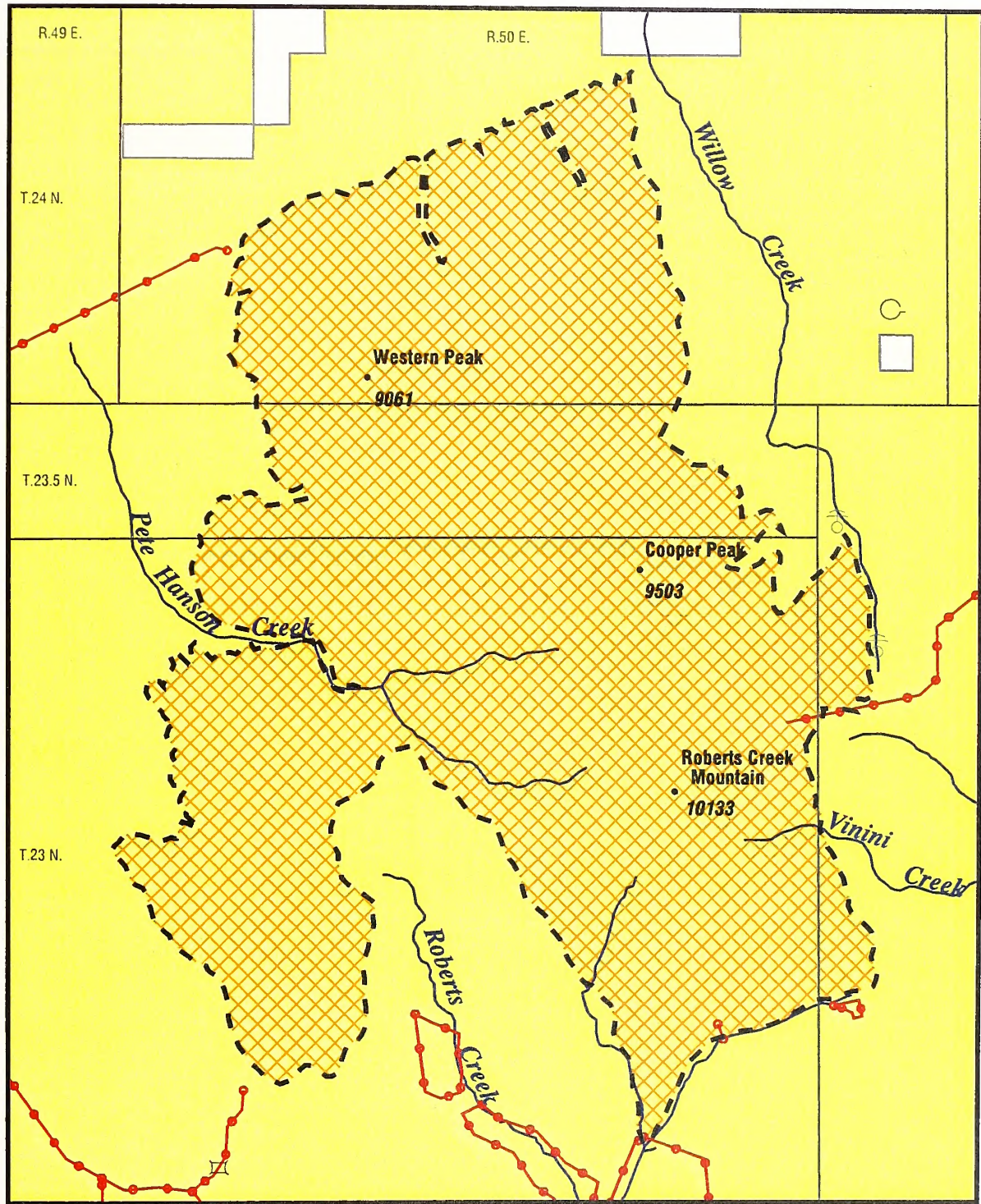
■ BLM
□ Private Land

- - Wilderness Study Area Boundary
XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-541

Roberts Mountain Wilderness Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES



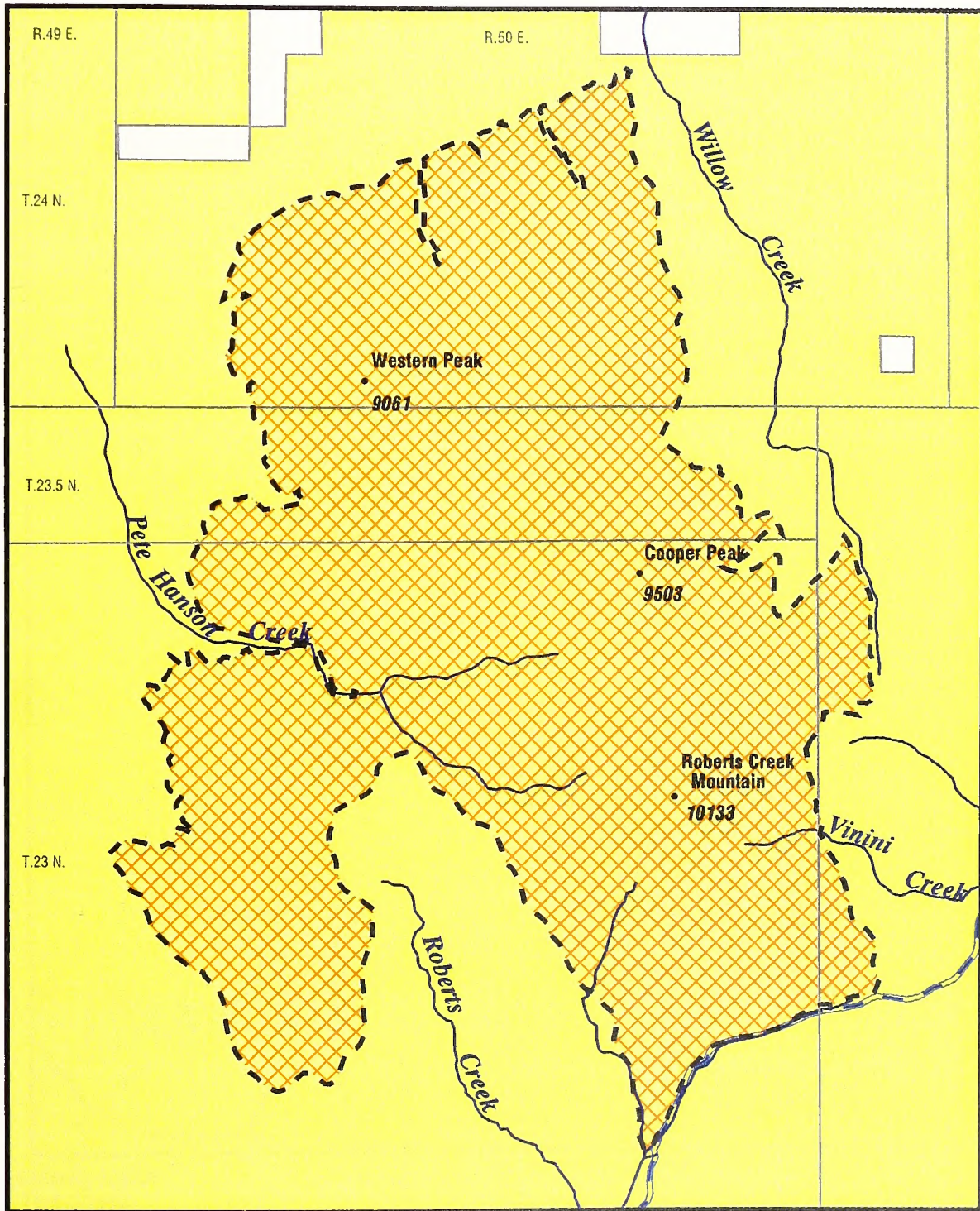
- Dev. Spring
- Corral
- Cattleguard
- Fence

- BLM
- Private Land

- - Wilderness Study Area Boundary
- XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable





Roberts Mountain Wilderness Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY



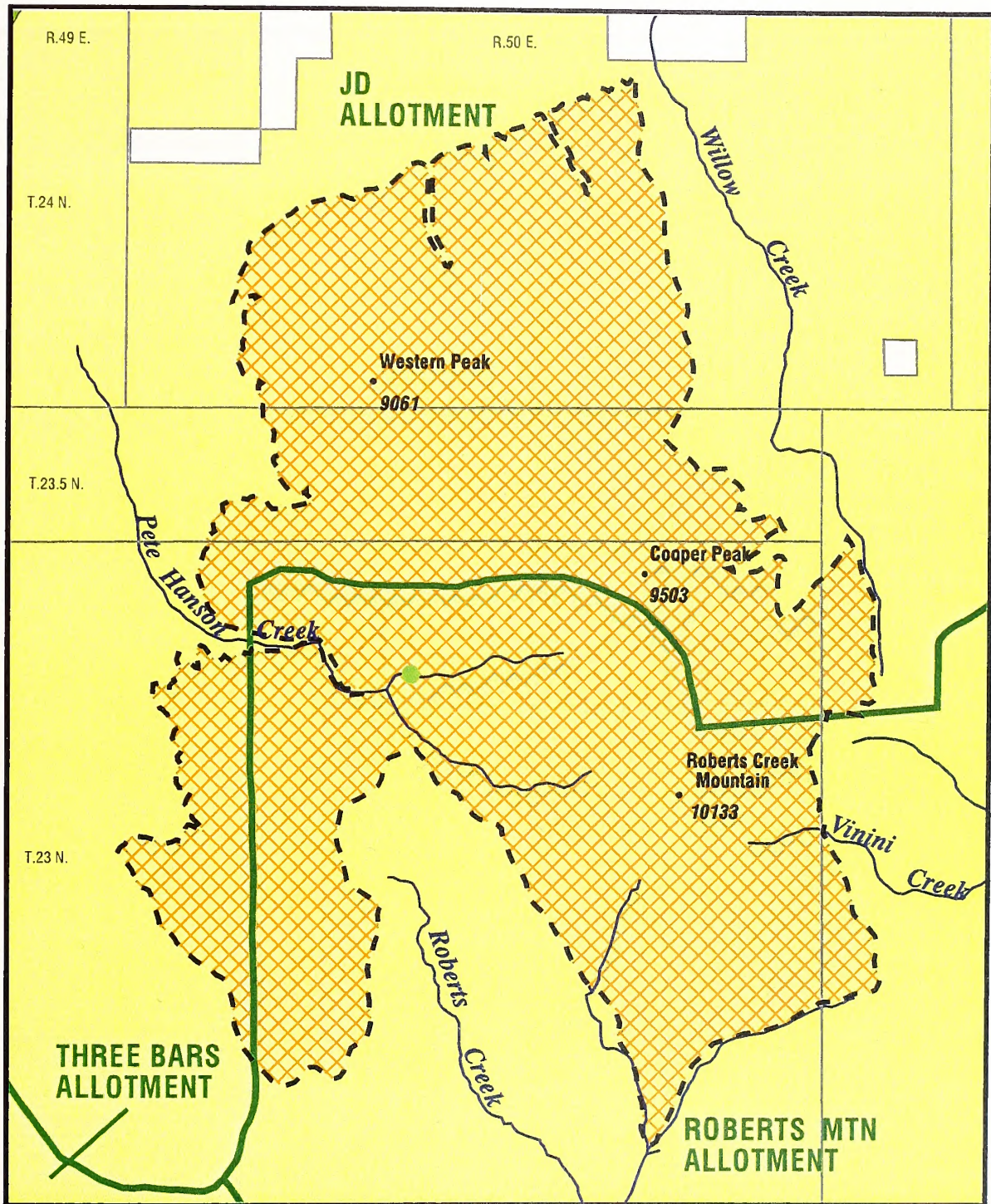
— Road

 **BLM**
 **Private Land**

 **Wilderness Study Area Boundary**
 **Recommended Non-Suitable**



Roberts Mountain Wilderness Study Area ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCES



Federally Listed
Threatened
and
Endangered
Species

● Observation Site

- Lahontan Cutthroat Trout

1 0 1 Miles

NO HMA ON THIS MAP

Allotment
Boundary

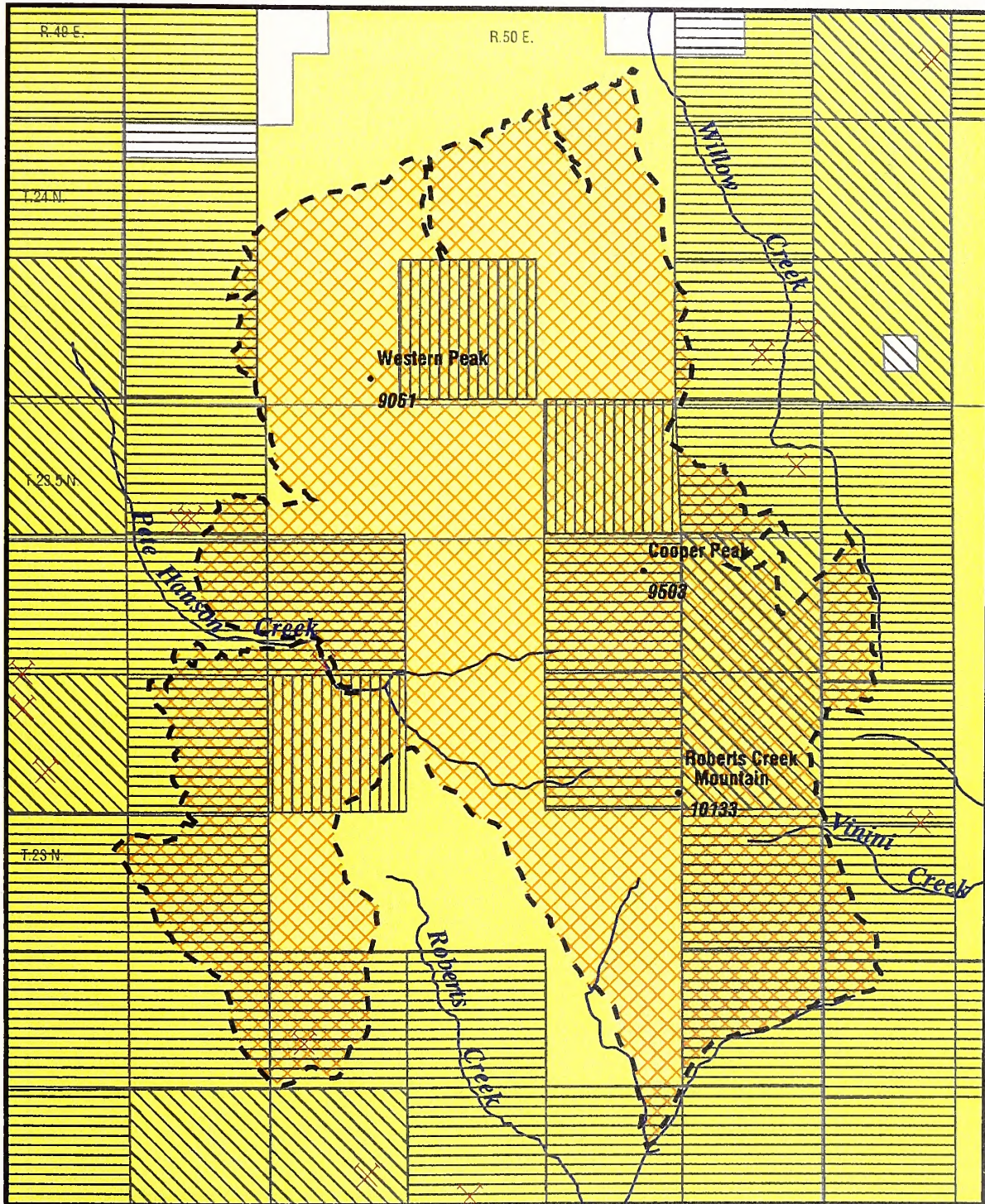
BLM
 Private Land

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-541

Roberts Mountain Wilderness Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS



X Mining Operations

1 0 1 Miles

Mining Claim Density - 3/97

- 1-5 Claims
- 6-35 Claims
- 36 or more Claims

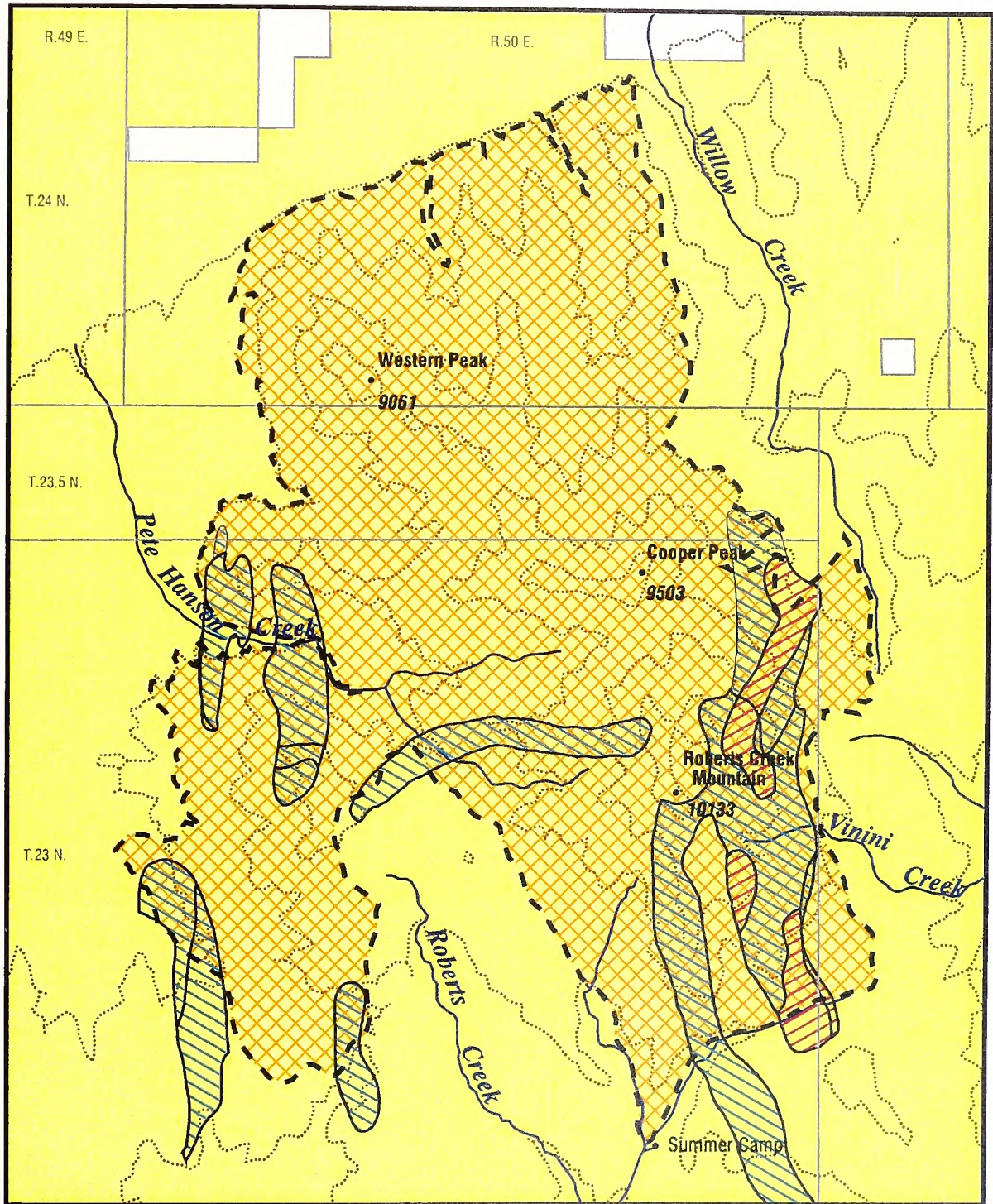
BLM
Private Land

-- Wilderness Study Area Boundary
XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-541

Roberts Mountain Wilderness Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL



1 0 1 Miles

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

Mineral Potential

-  High - Gold, Silver
-  Medium - Gold, Silver

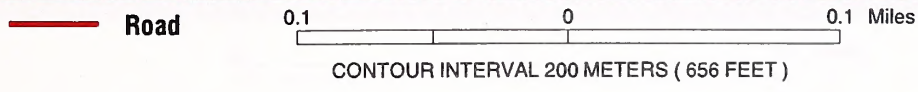
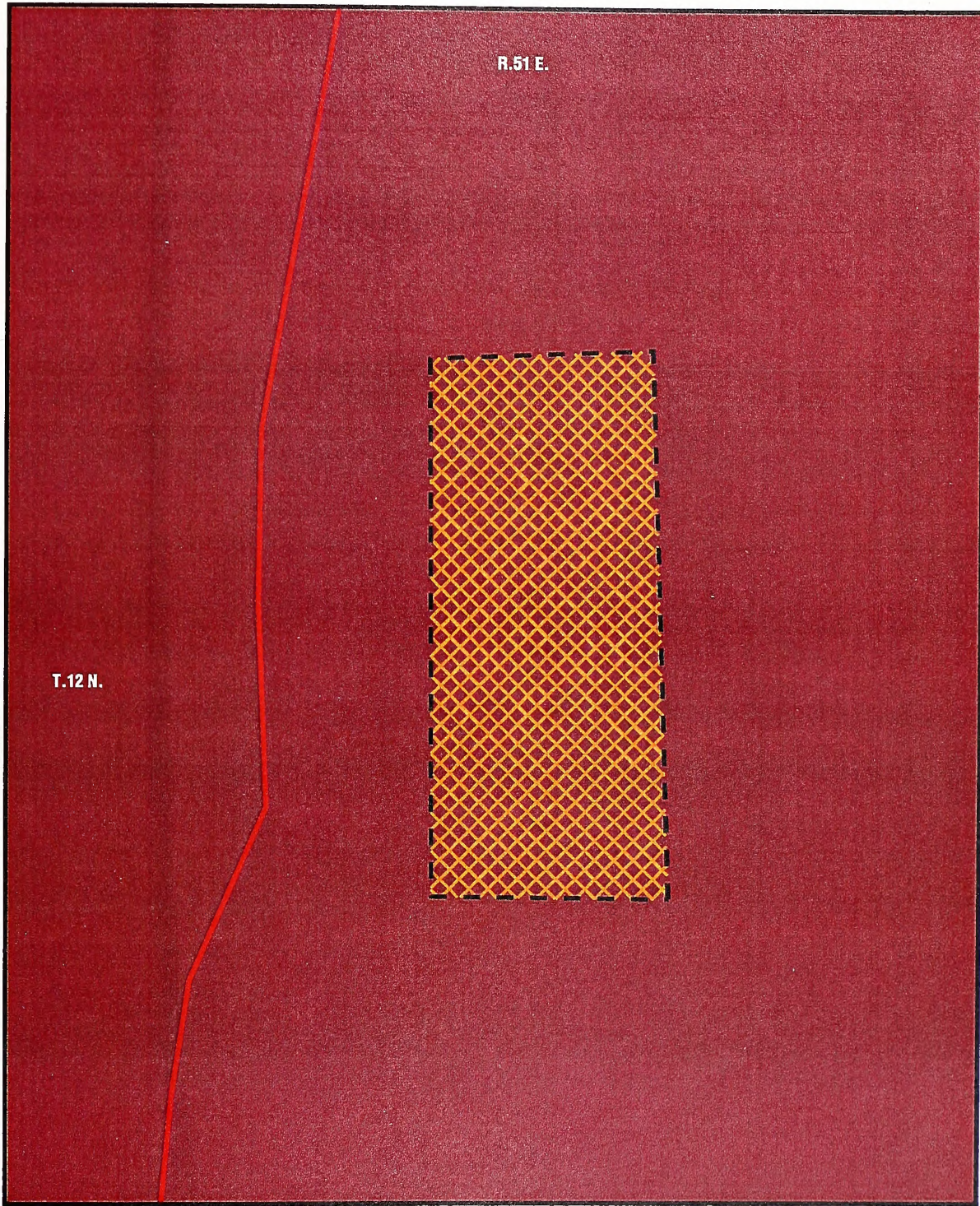
-  BLM
-  Private Land

-  Wilderness Study Area Boundary
-  Recommended Non-Suitable



NV-060-541

Mountain Meadow Instant Study Area ISA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP



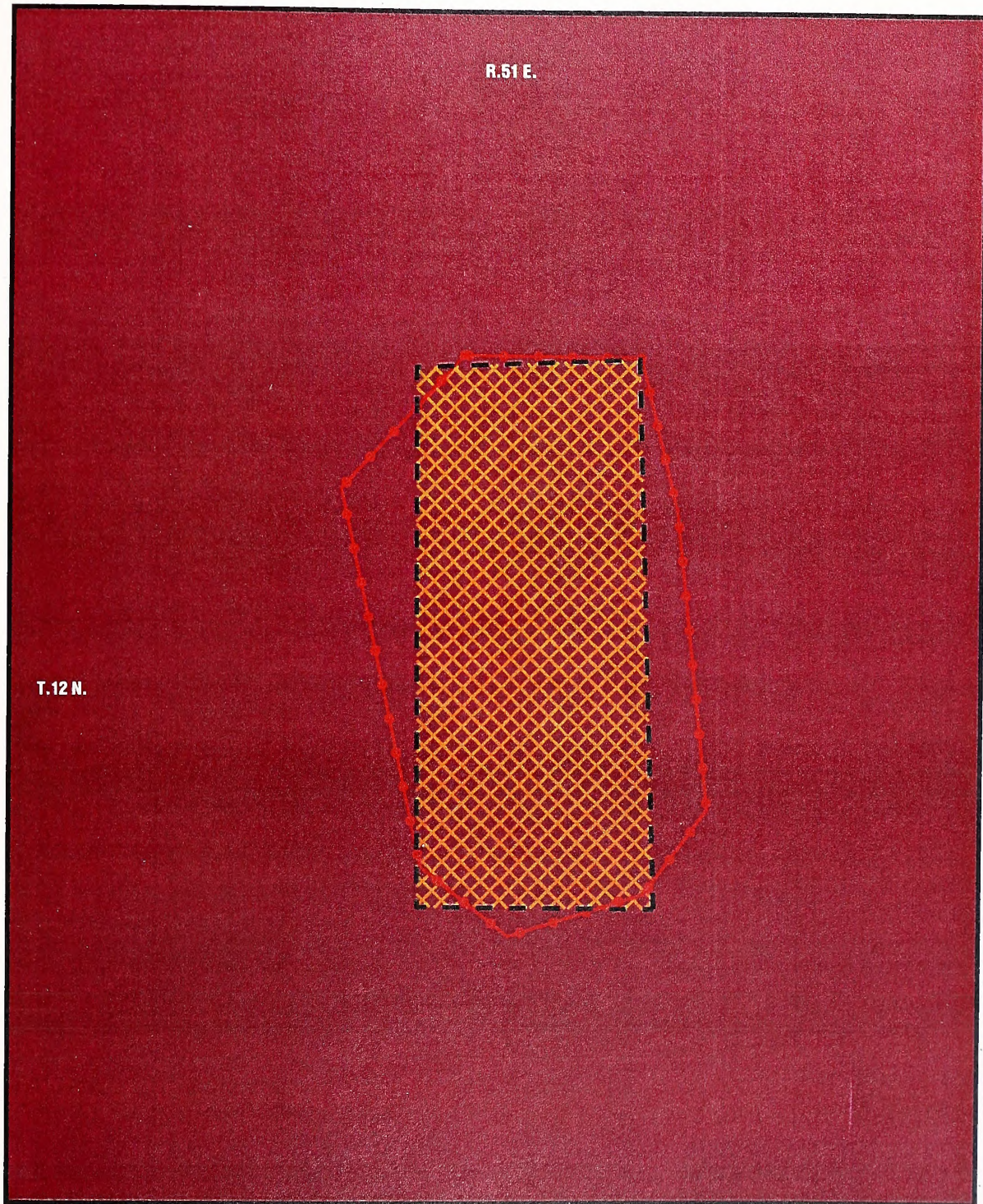
 **Other Agency**

 **Instant Study Area Boundary**
 **Recommended Non-Suitable**



Mountain Meadow ISA

Mountain Meadow Instant Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES



0.1 0 0.1 Miles

—○— Fence

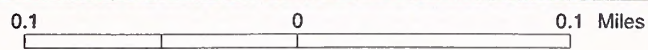
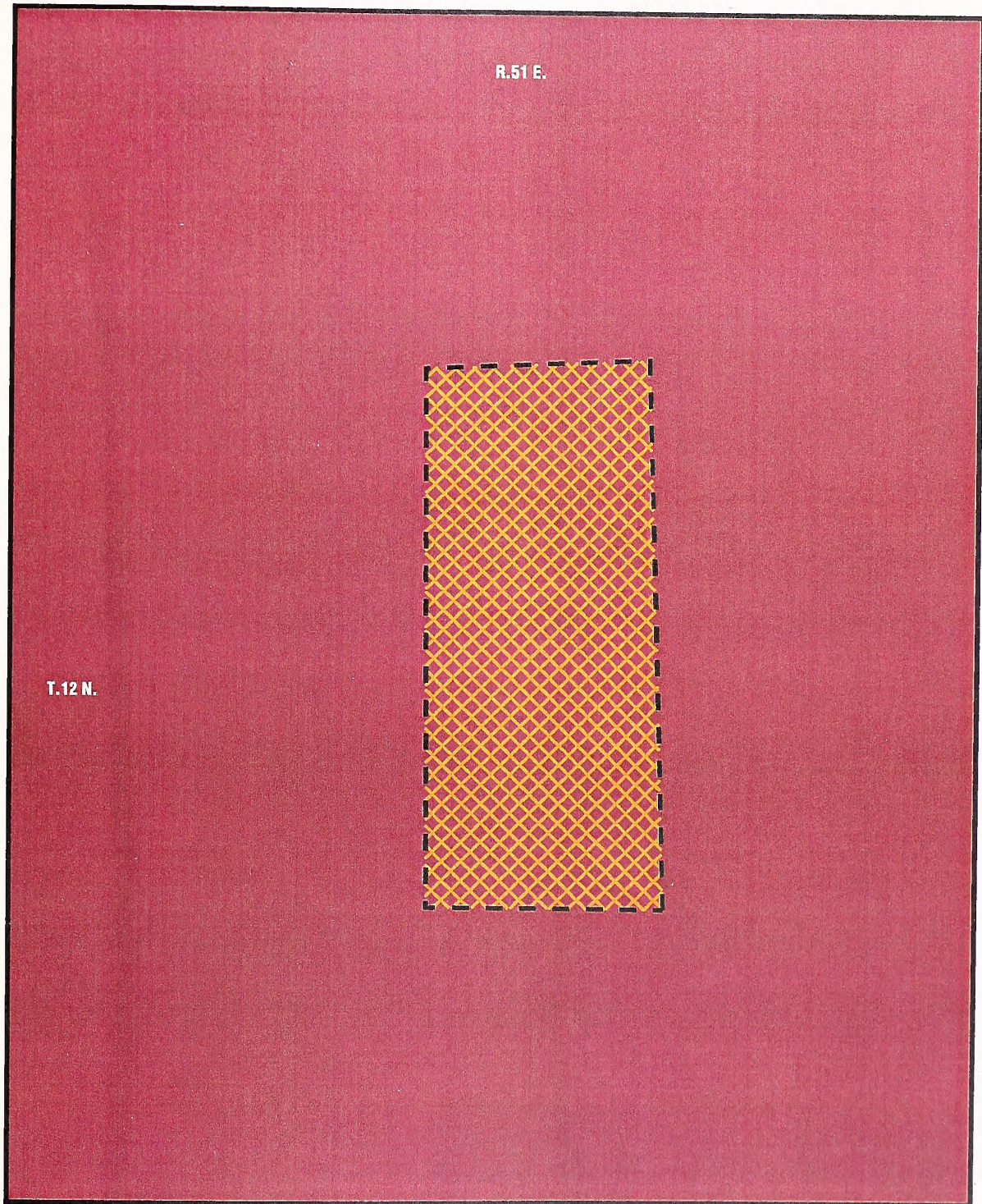
■ Other Agency

--- Instant Study Area Boundary
XXXX Recommended Non-Suitable




Mountain Meadow ISA

Mountain Meadow Instant Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY



NO RIGHTS-OF-WAY ON THIS MAP

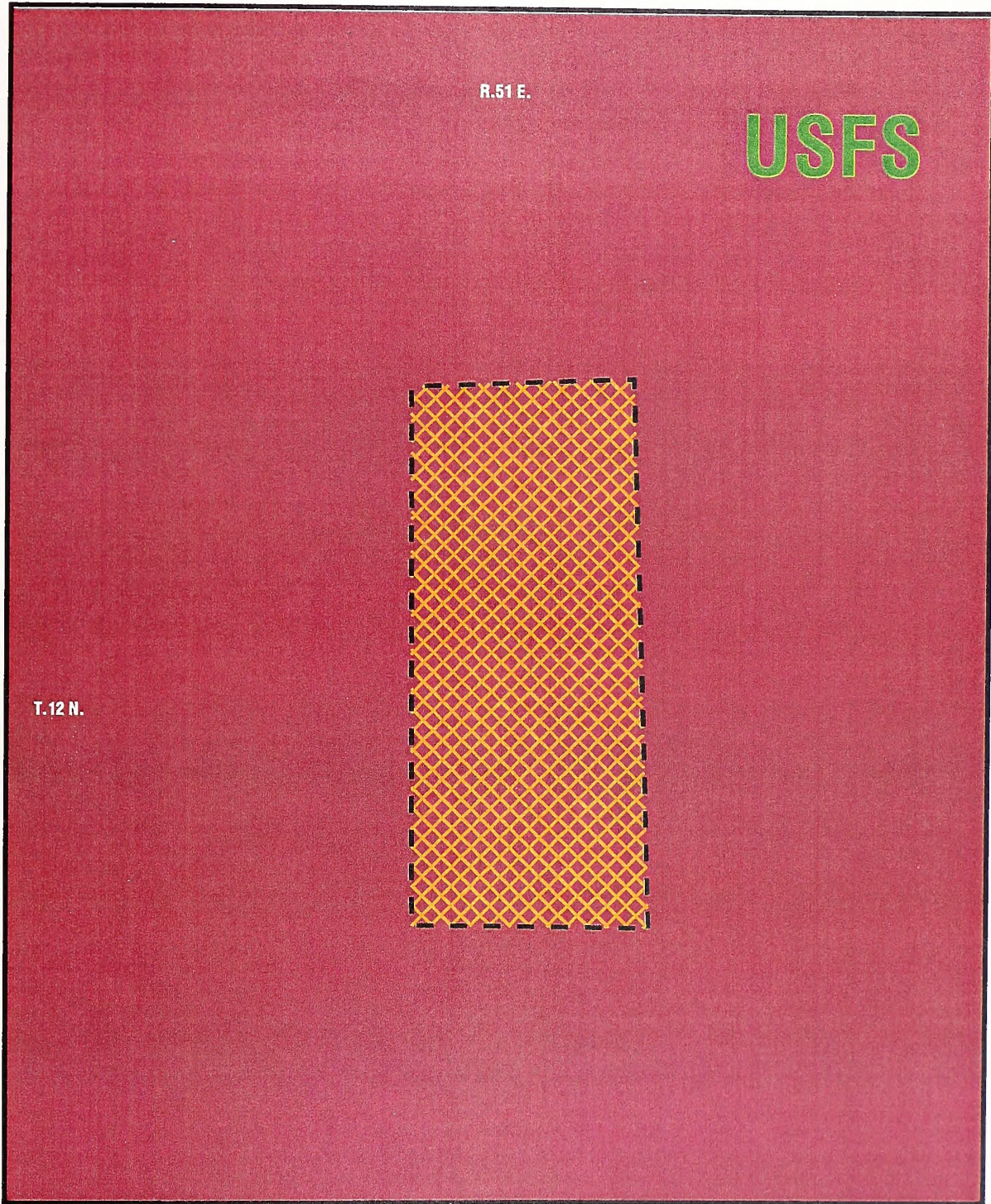
 Other Agency

-- Instant Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable



Mountain Meadow ISA

Mountain Meadow Instant Study Area ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCES



**Federally Listed
Threatened
and
Endangered
Species**


● **Observation Site**
NONE ON THIS MAP

0.1 0 0.1 Miles

NO HMA ON THIS MAP

 **Allotment
Boundary**

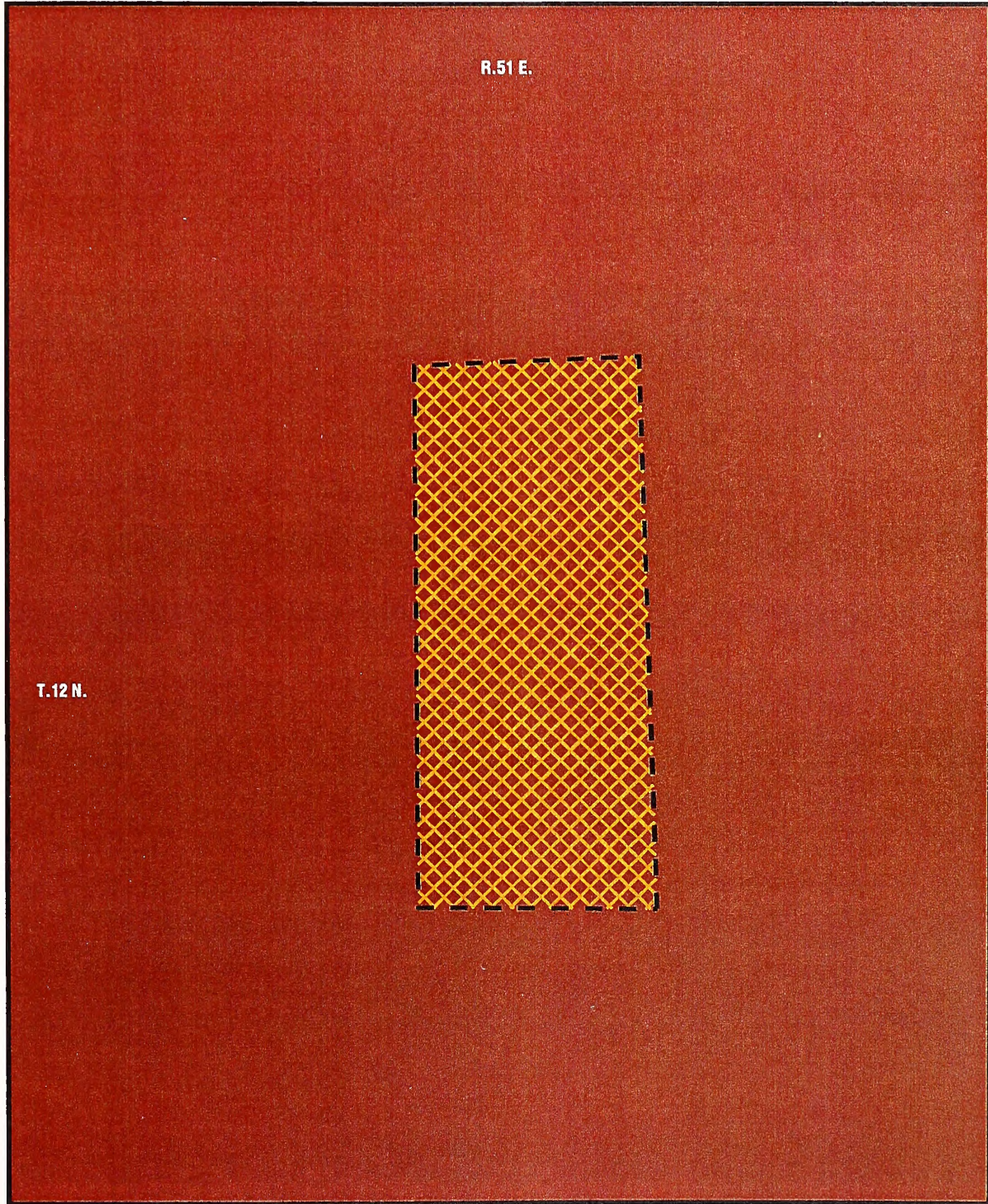
-- **Instant Study Area Boundary**
XX **Recommended Non-Suitable**

 **Other Agency**





Mountain Meadow ISA

Mountain Meadow Instant Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS



NO MINING CLAIMS OR OPERATIONS ON THIS MAP

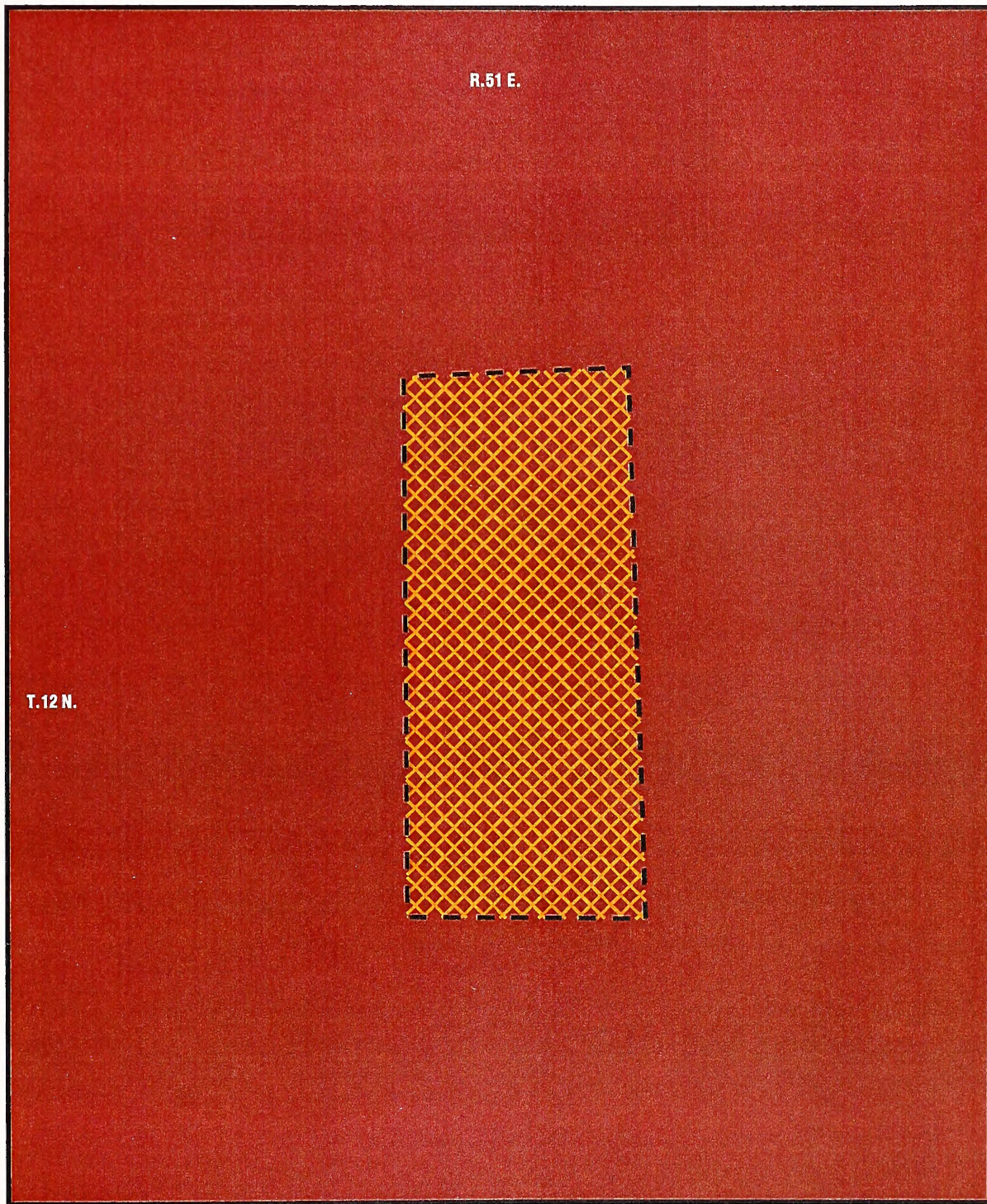
 **Other Agency**

 **Instant Study Area Boundary**
 **Recommended Non-Suitable**



Mountain Meadow ISA

Mountain Meadow Instant Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL



0.1 0 0.1 Miles

CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

NO HIGH OR MEDIUM MINERAL POTENTIAL IS IDENTIFIED ON THIS MAP.

 Other Agency

-- Instant Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable



Mountain Meadow ISA

PINYON JOSHUA INSTANT STUDY AREA

1. THE STUDY AREA - 560 acres

The Natural Area is located approximately 12 miles south west of the town of Silver Peak, Nevada in Esmeralda county. Its legal description is: T. 3S., R. 38E., N1/2, SW1/4, S1/2SE1/4 Section 32. The Natural Area contains 560 acres of public land, and was designated in 1965 (PLO 3530) because it represented the northern extreme of the Joshua Tree. An 80 acre parcel of private land extends into the section from the eastern side. The remainder of the Natural Area boundary conforms to the boundary of Section 32. The Natural Area was evaluated along with its contiguous roadless area, inventory units NV-050-0338A and NV-050-337. These units were found to lack wilderness character during the Statewide/Intensive Wilderness Inventory.

NV-050-0338A/NV-050-0337 - Silver Peak Range South/Company Springs : The unit contains a portion of the Silver Peak Range and a vast spreading bajada sweeping to the south and east away from the mountains. The Pinyon Joshua Transition Research Natural Area, 560 acres, lies in the southwest edge of the unit NV-050-0337, which contains 25,206 acres, and the northeast edge of unit NV-050-0338A, containing 54,845 acres. The combined total of the two units and the natural area is 80,611 acres.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 0 acres recommended for wilderness 560 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The Pinyon Joshua Transition Research Natural Area and its contiguous roadless acreage lacks wilderness character and should be dropped from further wilderness consideration.

The long and short term efforts of releasing Pinyon Joshua Transitional Research Natural Area from the interim management protection provided to lands under wilderness review and returning it to its previous management as a Natural Area would be that all uses and developments which previously were compatible with management would continue to be permitted.

The recommendation of Pinyon Joshua Transition Research natural Area as suitable for wilderness is the only option foregone by the adoption of the present recommendation. Because the evidence of man's activities in this area are beyond rehabilitation by hand labor or natural means, the Natural Area does not now, nor will it ever, meet the natural criteria for wilderness suitability. Therefore, the adoption of the present recommendation will not affect any options considered in the future for management of the area.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: Both of the two units have been extensively impacted by roads, ways, range improvements, buildings, mines, and related mining activities. The Silver Peak Mining District impacts both units which also include the natural area. The above mentioned intrusions are numerous and can be found throughout the units. Due to the size of the units, both areas have natural areas larger than 5,000 acres but neither were determined to possess wilderness character. The Natural Area itself is impacted with mining activities, a spring development, several roads, a water tank, and a corral.

B. Solitude: The topography from small canyons and draws, to broad sweeping bajadas with scattered low growing desert shrubs and small stands of pinyon/juniper provide areas of solitude but were not of an outstanding quality. The moderate natural screening and the three well-traveled roads through the Natural Area limit the opportunity for solitude to a very few secluded spots in the center of the section. By itself, the Natural Area does not offer an outstanding opportunity for solitude.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: Recreational opportunities available are chukar hunting, hiking, camping, and horseback riding. There are several primitive recreational activities available in the Natural Area, however, neither their diversity nor their quality was found to be outstanding. By itself, the Natural Area does not offer an outstanding opportunity for primitive and confined recreation.

D. Special Features: The total area has been known to be inhabited by wild horses. No other supplemental values are known to exist other than the Natural Area designation.

4. MANAGEABILITY

The Natural Area is not manageable for wilderness characteristics. Three roads divide the Natural Area into four small pieces. The road crossing the SW corner, an access road to Mohawk Mine 10 miles further north, is the most developed and heavily used. A spring development at Big Spring is also served by this road, and contains several additional roads, a water tank and pipeline system, a post and wire corral, and loading chute of heavy construction. The access roads are used frequently, and apparently primarily by recreationists. Campfire rings were observed in the area of the spring.

The road to Upper and Lower Cowcamp Springs cut across the southern portion of the Natural Area, running northward into the private parcel and east into Clayton Valley. The patented land is a Stock Raising and Homestead entry of 1933. At the western edge of the parcel is the remains of an abandoned house. There were several small tailing piles on the hill across the road from the old house and a barely noticeable trail leading to a possible old mineshaft.

A third road crosses the northeast corner of the Area, from the Cowcamp Springs road to Cone Spring and a mining development just north of it. All roads within the Natural Area are well maintained with road equipment and easily accessible by passenger car.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

A minerals report from the U.S. Bureau of Mines and the U.S. Geological Survey was not present in the 1980 Intensive Wilderness Inventory report.

6. SUMMARY OF SPECIFIC PUBLIC COMMENTS

An accelerated Intensive Wilderness Inventory was conducted on the designated Natural Area. A 30-day public comment period on the results of the inventory was announced in the Federal Register and held from January 1 to January 30, 1980. A workshop on the inventory results was held in Las Vegas on January 9, 1980.

The Statewide Intensive Inventory was the final phase of the inventory process to determine an areas wilderness potential. The Pinyon Joshua Transitional Research Natural Area was a part of two of these areas inventoried. The public comment period began on April 1, 1980 and ended June 30, 1980.

During the 90-day comment period a news release and Federal Register notice were used to inform the various publics of the review period, opportunity for comment, and locations of meetings. The story was carried widely in Southern Nevada newspapers, radio stations, and tv stations. The Lincoln and Esmeralda County Commissioners, Lincoln County Conservation District Board, Southern Nevada Conservation Council, Nevada Public Land Users Association, and the Sierra Club were briefed.

Comments cited roads, mines, rock-hounding areas, and the mining district as detracting from naturalness and preventing outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation.

Concern was expressed that further study of the area would conflict with potential mineral resource values

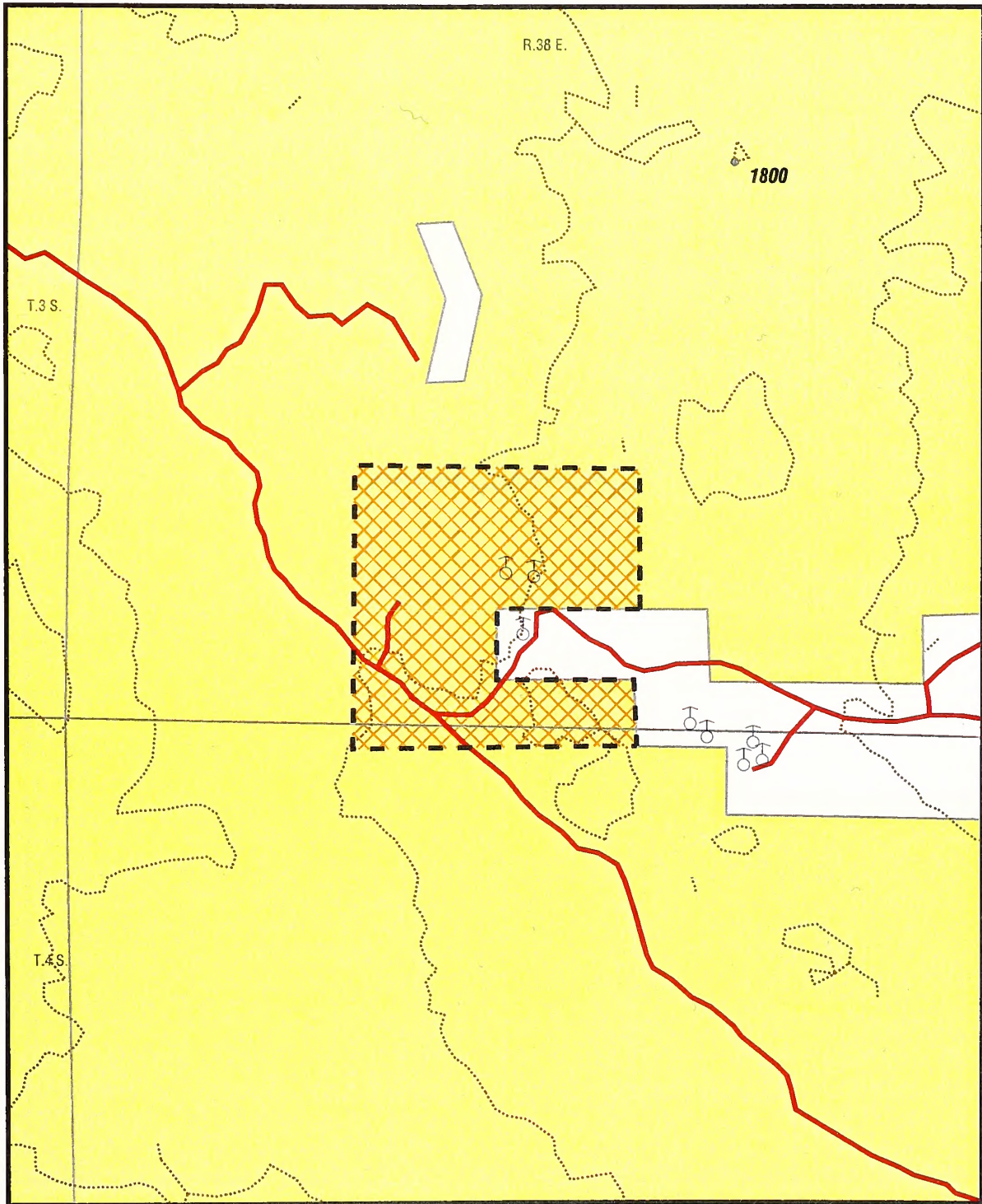
by restricting exploration, development, and expansion. The resulting fuel shortage would discourage travel and tourism.

Comments supported wilderness consideration of the unit because it contains the Pinyon Joshua Transition Research Natural Area, diverse topography, and because of the strict criteria which was used for wilderness evaluation.

Only two comments were received during the public review period. One comment supported wilderness designation and the other noted a lack of wilderness characteristics.

The Bureau of Land Management believes that both the Pinyon Joshua Transitional Research Natural Area and its contiguous roadless acreage, units NV-050-0338A and NV-050-0337, clearly lack wilderness character. Evidence of man's activities in portions of the area are substantially noticeable, and the remainder of the units were determined to lack outstanding opportunities for both solitude and primitive and unconfined types of recreation.

Pinyon Joshua Instant Study Area ISA BOUNDARIES AND LAND OWNERSHIP



— Road
○ Spring

0.5 0 0.5 Miles
CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

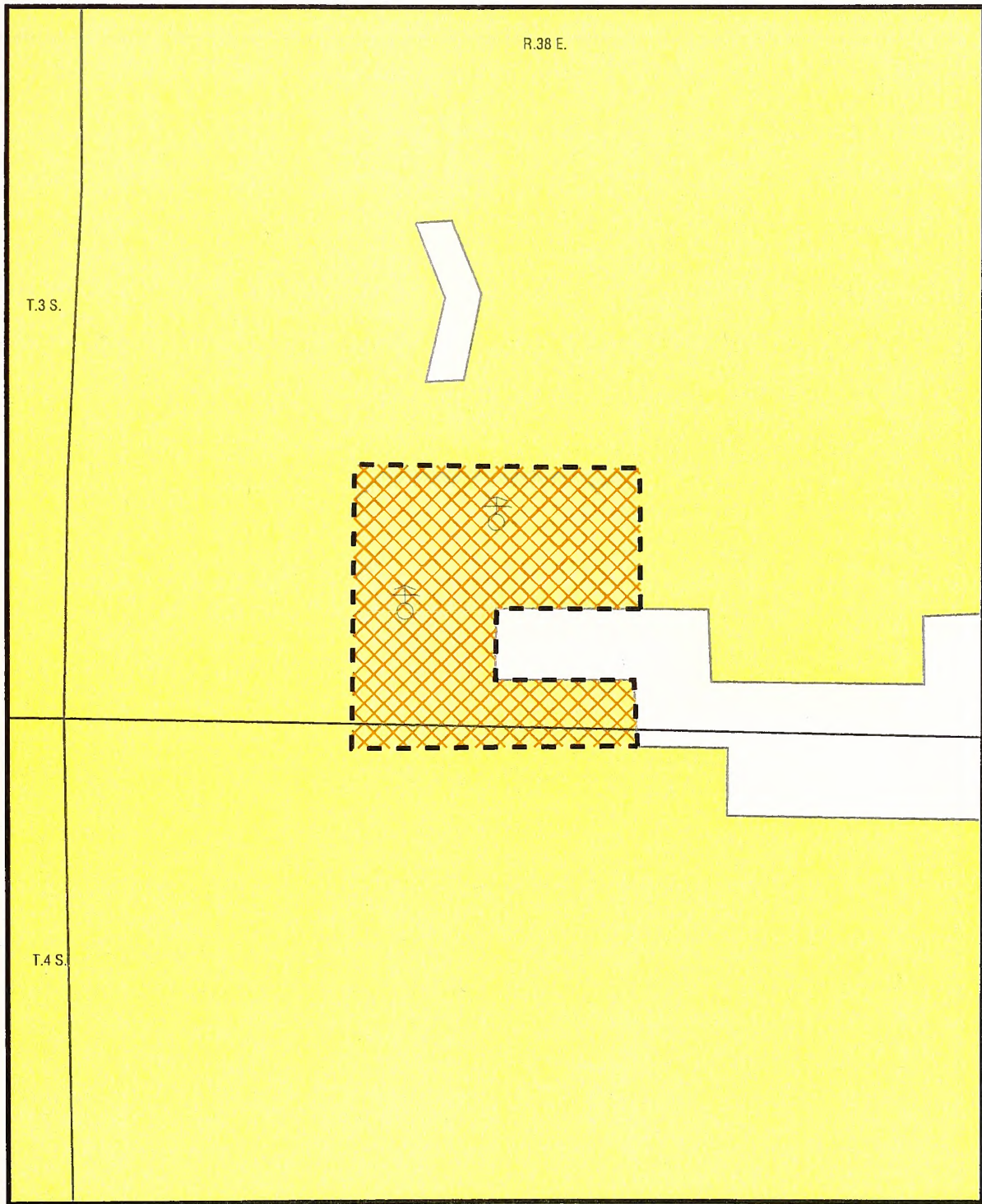
■ BLM
□ Private Land

- - Instant Study Area Boundary
⊗ Recommended Non-Suitable



Pinyon Joshua ISA

Pinyon Joshua Instant Study Area DEVELOPMENTS AND DISTURBANCES



0.5 0 0.5 Miles

 Dev. Spring

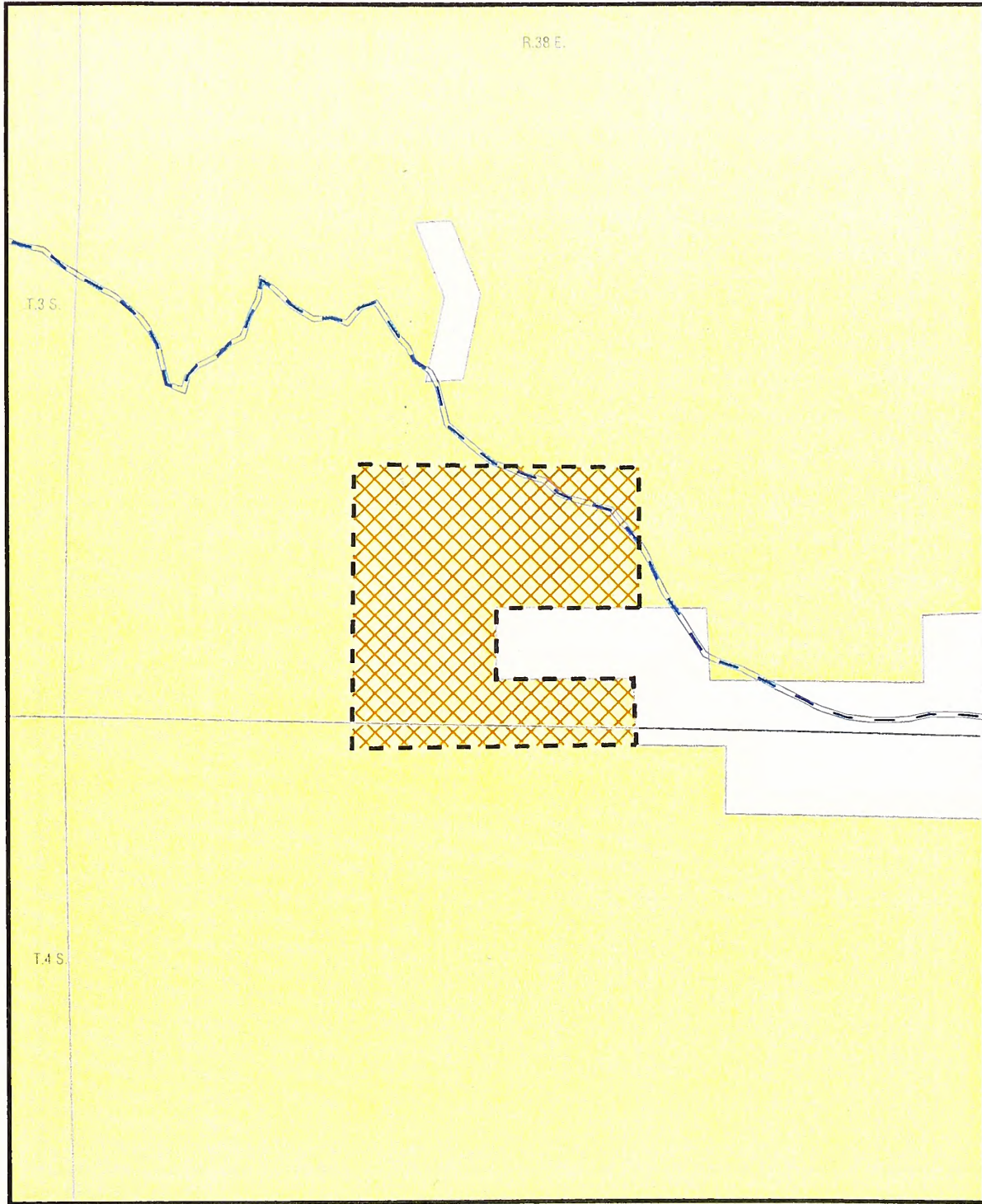
 BLM
 Private Land

- - Instant Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable



Pinyon Joshua ISA



Pinyon Joshua Instant Study Area RIGHTS-OF-WAY



0.5 0 0.5 Miles

— Road

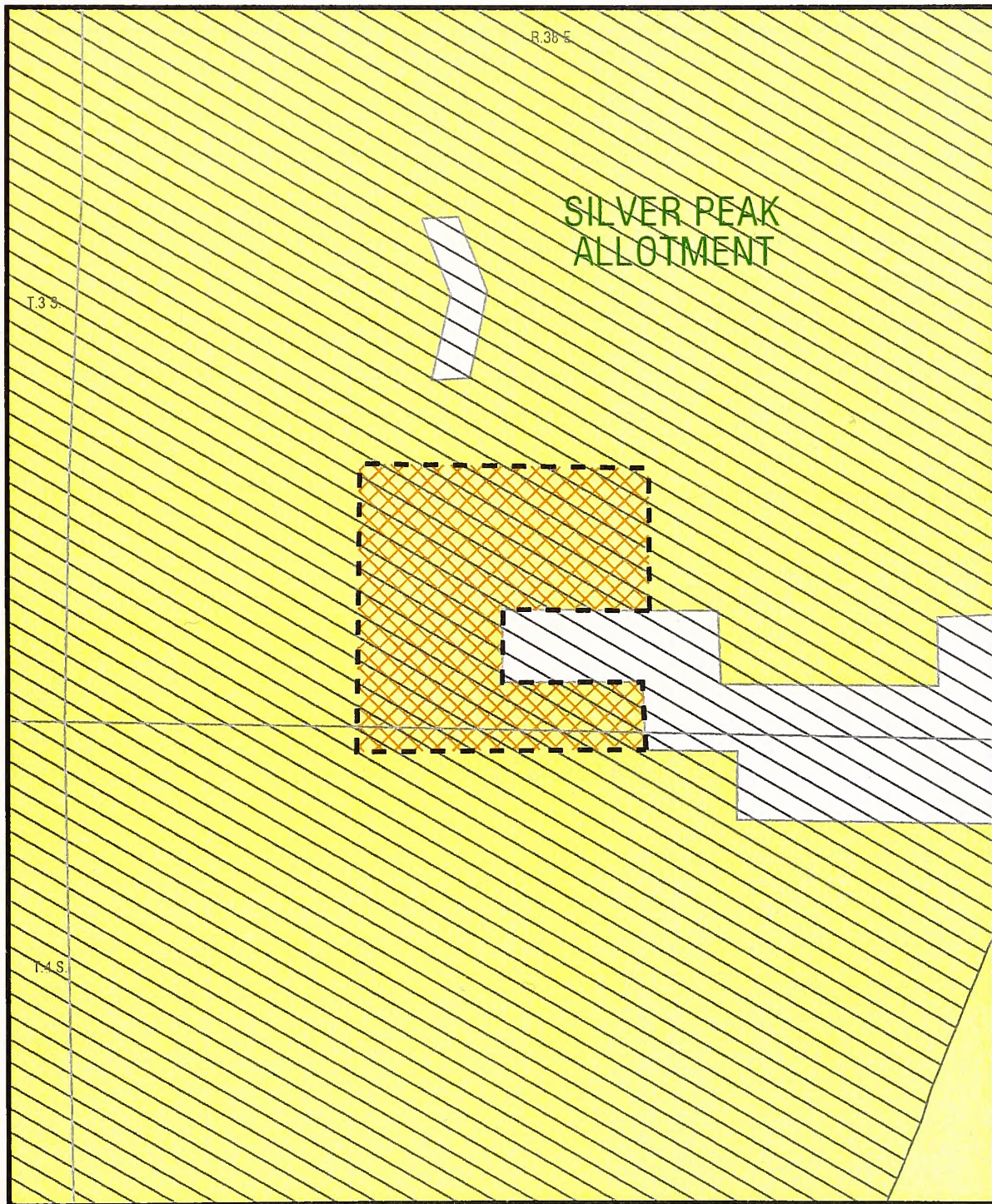
 BLM
 Private Land

 Instant Study Area Boundary
 Recommended Non-Suitable



Pinyon Joshua ISA

Pinyon Joshua Instant Study Area ALLOTMENT AND HMA BOUNDARIES, T&E OCCURRENCES



**Federally Listed
Threatened
and
Endangered
Species**

● **Observation Site**
NONE ON THIS MAP

■ **BLM**
□ **Private Land**

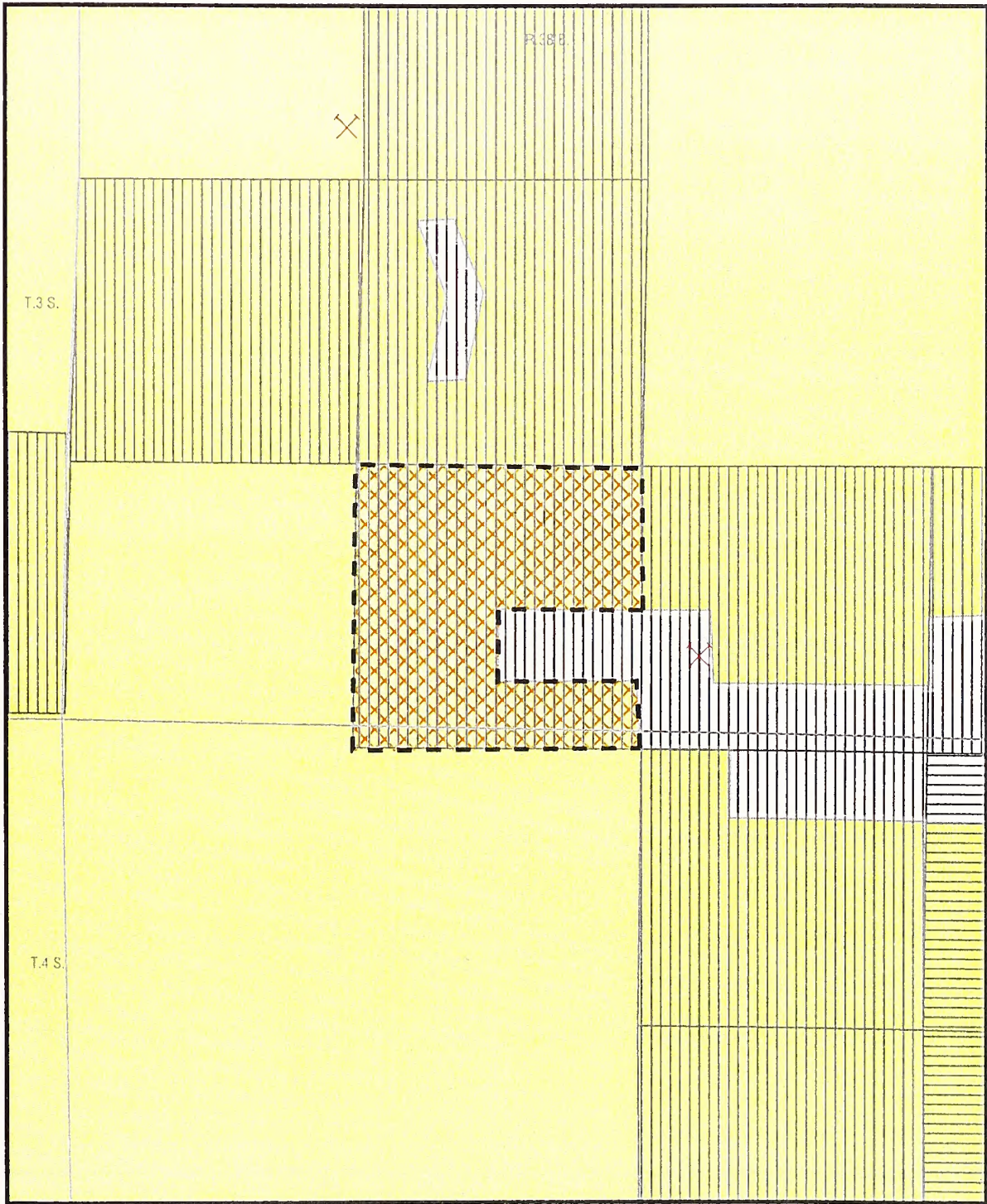
--- **Instant Study Area Boundary**
XX **Recommended Non-Suitable**

▭ **Silver Peak HMA**



Pinyon Joshua ISA




Pinyon Joshua Instant Study Area MINING CLAIM DENSITY AND OPERATIONS



 Mining Operations

0.5 0 0.5 Miles

Mining Claim Density - 3/97

-  1-5 Claims
-  6-35 Claims
-  36 or more Claims

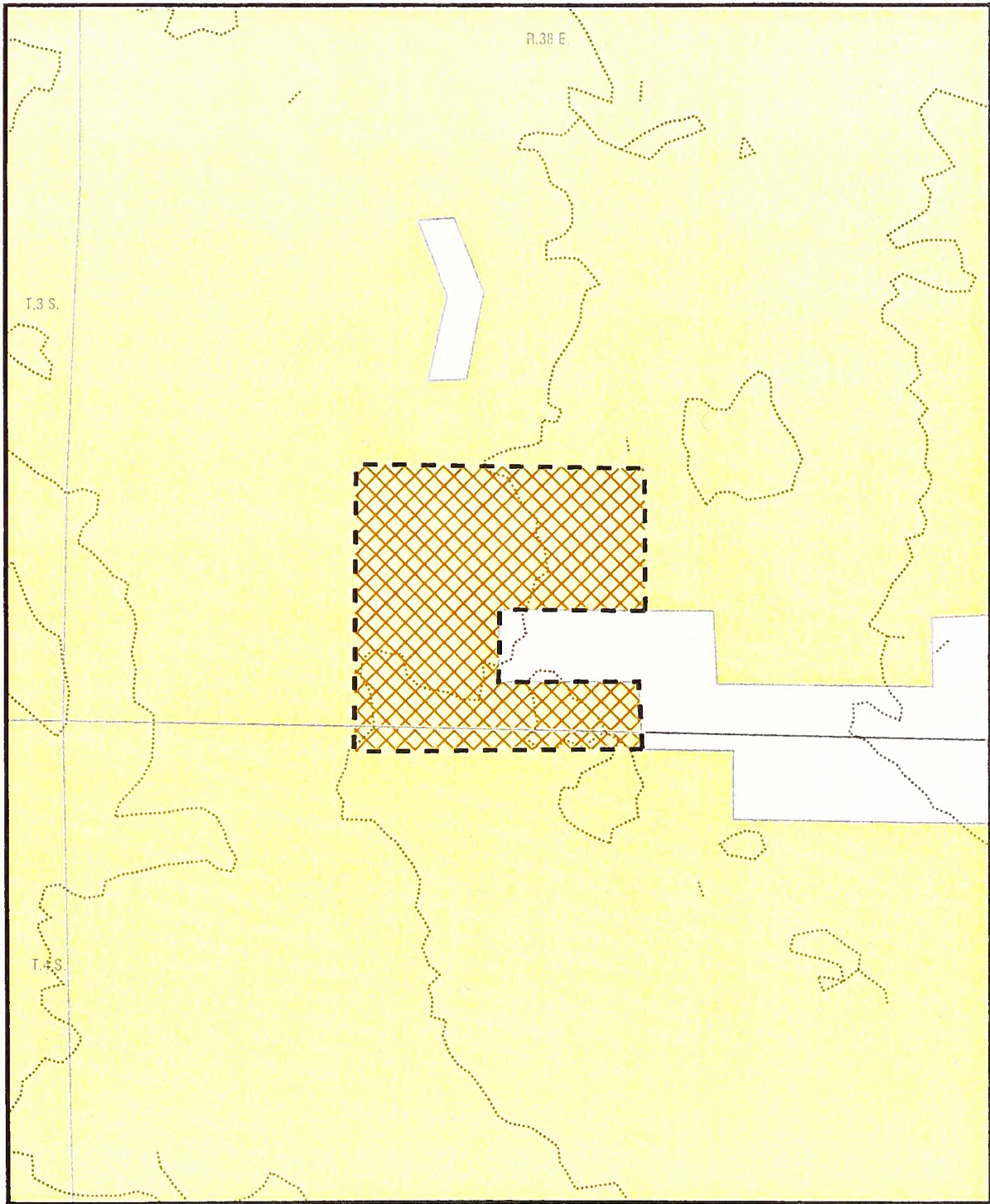
-  BLM
-  Private Land

-  Instant Study Area Boundary
-  Recommended Non-Suitable



Pinyon Joshua ISA

Pinyon Joshua Instant Study Area MINERAL POTENTIAL

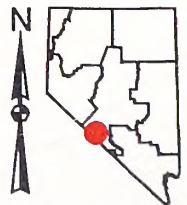


0.5 0 0.5 Miles
CONTOUR INTERVAL 200 METERS (656 FEET)

NO HIGH OR MEDIUM MINERAL POTENTIAL IS IDENTIFIED ON THIS MAP.

 **BLM**
 **Private Land**

 **Instant Study Area Boundary**
 **Recommended Non-Suitable**



Pinyon Joshua ISA

