JUMBO SPRINGS WILDERNESS STUDY AREA

1. THE STUDY AREA - 3,466 acres

Jumbo Springs Wilderness Study Area (WSA) (NV-050-236) is located in eastern Clark County, near the Lake Mead National Recreation Area (LMNRA), approximately 50 miles east of Las Vegas, Nevada and encompasses approximately 3,466 acres of public lands. The WSA boundary is defined by physical features and common boundaries with the LMNRA to the east and Bureau of Reclamation withdrawn lands to the south. The western and northern boundary is defined by a progression of peak to peak lines and ridgelines. Section lines common with the LMNRA define the east boundary. A section line common with Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) withdrawn land, immediately south of the WSA, is the southern boundary. Jumbo Springs WSA is approximately 3.5 miles long in a north-south direction and 1.5 miles in an east-west direction.

2. RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE - 0 acres recommended for wilderness
3,466 acres recommended for nonwilderness

The recommendation for this WSA is to release all 3,466 acres for uses other than wilderness. Lack of wilderness values and small size of the WSA were key considerations in the recommendation. The WSA generally appears natural, but outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation are lacking. The area's small size limits opportunities for solitude as there are few secluded locales or isolated spots. Visitors would frequently encounter one another due to the area's restrictive size and limited screening. Outstanding opportunities for primitive types of recreation are unavailable as interesting destinations and focal points of interest are absent.

The WSA would retain its natural qualities without wilderness designation as no surface disturbing activities are proposed for the area.

3. WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS

A. Naturalness: The WSA is predominantly natural. It is in a pristine condition with no man-made features. The study area consists of the upper canyons of three major washes which drain from the edge of a plateau east toward Lake Mead. The canyons are rugged. Elevations range form 2,700 feet along the southeastern boundary to the 4,700 foot ridge on the northern end. Vegetation consists of low mountain brush species.

B. Solitude: Less than outstanding opportunities for solitude exist within the WSA. There is no vegetative screening present. Canyons are subdivided into several tributary drainages with intervening ridges and rocky outcrops that provide limited locales for seclusion.

C. Primitive and Unconfined Recreation: The area contains recreation opportunities similar to other rugged mountain ranges in the region. There are no particularly unusual recreation draws, attractions or desirable destinations within the study area. There are limited opportunities for hiking and backpacking. Visitors would be able to gain scenic views of portions of the LMNRA, such as Iceberg Canyon, and the lower reaches of the Grand Canyon. They can also pass through the area on their way to LMNRA.

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

4. MANAGEABILITY

The entire study area can reasonably be managed as wilderness to preserve wilderness values now present. The area is a solid block of public land with no private inholdings, State lands or rights-of-way. The perimeter

is easily identifiable on all sides, except for the southeastern boundary which is common with BOR withdrawn lands, or is contiguous to the LMNRA.

5. ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCE VALUES

The study area is rated as having moderate potential for the occurrence of nonmetallic minerals (titanium) in 25 percent of the area (866 acres). The remainder of the WSA is rated as low for both metallic and nonmetallic minerals. Exploration or development of potential minerals is not expected to occur due to lack of interest and poor marketable location. The WSA is considered to have low favorability for the occurrences of energy resources. Exploration or development of potential energy resources is not projected to occur as the rock structure of the WSA is not suitable for the accumulation of hydrocarbons. There is no known mineralization within the WSA.

There are no known pre-FLPMA or post-FLPMA mining claims, oil and gas or geothermal leases within the WSA.

6. SUMMARY OF WSA SPECIFIC COMMENTS

In 1986, the area was reinstated in the wilderness study process as a result of an April 1985 decision in Sierra Club vs Watt concerning certain lands that were deleted from wilderness review in 1982 and 1983. As a result of the court case, the area was reinventoried to document wilderness characteristics.

Comments to the initial inventory cited roads, mining activity, spring developments, a communication site, and a lack of opportunity for solitude or recreation as disqualifying the unit from further study. Concern was expressed that further study would conflict with oil and gas exploration, exploration for sheet mica and gold, recreational rockhounding, and other potential mineral resource values. Opposition was expressed to WSA designation of any area contiguous to the National Park Service (NPS) wilderness proposal if the BLM area did not meet the wilderness criteria when evaluated by itself. Other comments supported further wilderness consideration of the unit because it is natural and contiguous to the NPS proposal and because excessively strict criteria were used to evaluate it. These comments were about the original 35,936 acre study unit, of which Jumbo Springs WSA is only a small part.

Two public hearings were held during the public review period on the Draft EIS. The first was in Las Vegas, Nevada, on August 3, 1988. Oral statements were presented by 22 people. Six oral statements were presented at the second hearing at Reno, Nevada on August 4, 1988. One of the oral comments supported all wilderness and one supported the Preferred Alternative (no wilderness).

Of the written comments, two supported the all wilderness recommendation and four supported no wilderness. Subjects of the comments were the mineral resources, race courses, wildlife habitat, and protection of the watershed.

In a letter from the Clearinghouse of the State of Nevada, dated September 7, 1988, the Director of the Clearinghouse said, "...the State concurs with the recommendation presented in the document." The document referred to is the Draft Nevada Contiguous Lands Wilderness EIS.

No comments were received from Clark County.