



## **BLM'S PROPOSED MOTOR VEHICLE ROUTES THREATEN EL PASO MOUNTAINS AREA**



In addition to the El Paso Mountains Wilderness area, BLM manages over 7,000 acres of wilderness-quality lands within the El Paso Mountain range. These wild lands provide important habitat and climate refugia for a rich array of wildlife species, including desert bighorn sheep, burrowing owl, desert kit fox, at least four special status bat species, and Mohave ground squirrel. These wild lands are also important nesting and migratory bird habitat, and provide critical ecological connectivity

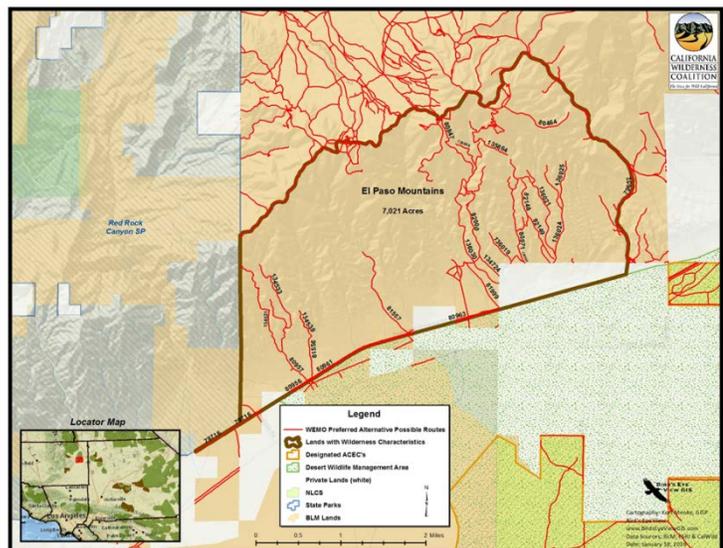
between the El Paso Mountains, the Western Rand Mountains, and the Golden Valley Wilderness. In addition, the El Paso Mountains region supports outstanding recreation opportunities such hiking, horseback riding, camping, and sightseeing.

Recognizing the area's ecological importance as a wildlife corridor, the BLM's planning initiatives under the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) will designate it as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern designed to maintain habitat connectivity and a healthy desert ecosystem.

BLM is proposing to fragment this important ecological area with 42 miles of motor vehicle routes. If designated, these routes would jeopardize the area's high-quality plant and wildlife habitat and wilderness character.

### **Facts:**

- El Paso Mountains span over 7,000 acres of wilderness-quality lands.
- WEMO Plan proposes 42 miles of motorized vehicle routes in the area.
- The area will be designated as part of the El Paso to Golden Valley Wildlife Corridor Area of Critical Environmental Concern under BLM's DRECP.



## Findings from the Field:

- An abandoned vehicle and overflowing City of Pasadena trash can along proposed routes (*see below*).



- Illegal off-route travel associated with several proposed routes.
- Multiple proposed routes impassible due to steep, eroded, or washed-out terrain (*see below*).



- Multiple proposed routes with no signs of recent use, significant revegetation, and largely indistinguishable from the surrounding desert.
- Numerous routes that appear to serve no purpose and are duplicative with other routes.