

Indian Pass Proposed Wilderness Additions & Buzzard's Peak Proposed Wilderness

Size: Indian Pass Additions 9,000 acres
Buzzard's Peak 12,000 acres

Management Agency:
Bureau of Land Management,
El Centro Office

Location: Imperial County. From
highway 78 between Palo Verde and
Glamis, take Vinagre Wash Road east to
access the areas.

Maps: BLM Desert Access Guide Trigo
Mountains

Photo by John Dittli



Landscape & History:

Located near the Colorado River, the Cibola National Wildlife Refuge to the east and the Chocolate Mountain Range to the west, the Indian Pass additions and adjacent Buzzard's Peak wilderness include landscapes of rich chocolate brown, yellows, reds, and blues within its geologically rich soil. Indian Pass and the Buzzard's Peak area are an important part of the traditional homeland of the Quechan tribe, and the wilderness and proposed additions contain ancient trails, intaglios, rock alignments, sleeping circles, lithic scatter, and other evidence of the tribe's long history in the area. Many of these cultural sites are nearly invisible to the untrained eye but are still used today by members of the tribe.

Wildlife & Plants:

Many desert creatures make their home among the cholla and beavertail cactuses, ocotillos, palo verdes, acacias, ironwood trees and the rare California ditaxis. Desert Tortoise, Yuma king snakes, Colorado River toad, Great Plains toad, tree lizard, burros, mule deer, and mountain lions all thrive in the rocky outcroppings and sandy washes.

Threats:

Despite the protection of much of the area as wilderness in the 1994 California Desert Protection Act, many important areas adjacent to the wilderness were left out due to private ownership. Today, these previously checker-boarded lands have been purchased by private donors and gifted to the Bureau of Land Management for conservation. Although these lands are ready for conservation, without formal wilderness designation, they remain unprotected and are at risk of development and unauthorized OHV degradation.

Activity

Highlight:

With all the deep slanted canyons and jagged peaks, this area provides wonderful opportunities for hiking. Keep your eye out for ancient trails walked by peoples for generations.

For More Information:

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