

Death Valley National Park

Proposed Wilderness Additions

Size: Approximately 22,000 acres

Management Agency:

Bureau of Land Management,
Ridgecrest Field Office

Location: San Bernardino County. From Los Angeles take I-15 North toward Barstow. Take the US 395 North exit. Continue on US 395 to Red Mountain. Just past Red Mountain, turn right onto Red Mountain-Trona Road. Turn East on the Steam Wells/ Granite Wells.

Maps: BLM Desert Access Guide
Soda Mountains

Photo by John Dittli



Landscape & History:

On the extreme southern boundary of Death Valley National Park, there is a narrow strip of land between the Park and Fort Irwin, known as the "Bowling Alley". This remote area features rugged mountains and deep canyons, separated by open valleys, bajadas, and pristine dry lake beds. The geological history of the Bowling Alley dates back nearly two billion years, and the earliest human inhabitants appeared about 1,000 years ago.

Wildlife & Plants:

For the patient visitor, this desert reveals her charm slowly. The one permanent spring, Quail Spring, exists at an elevation of 4,000 feet creating a rich riparian area that attracts a wide variety of birds. Owl Hole Spring provides intermittent water for an array of animals and a green oasis for visitors. Sparse rainfall may drain into Owl Lake or Lost Lake--dry lakes that see water just a few days a year, or not at all. These ephemeral lakes offer a changing landscape based on the season and the year's rainfall. The diverse topography and vegetation support a variety of wildlife, including two protected species, the desert tortoise and the desert bighorn sheep.

Activity Highlight:

This area's vast, rugged terrain offers outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive recreation, including backpacking and hiking. Its pristine and isolated nature offers unique opportunities for geological, archaeological and ecological research.

For More Information:

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