



## **BLM'S PROPOSED MOTOR VEHICLE ROUTES** **THREATEN MAYAN PEAK AREA**

The over 5,000-acre Mayan Peak area is a unique and largely unspoiled desert oasis characterized by spectacular mountains, foothills, and valleys, dense Joshua tree forests, and pinyon pines. The area boasts



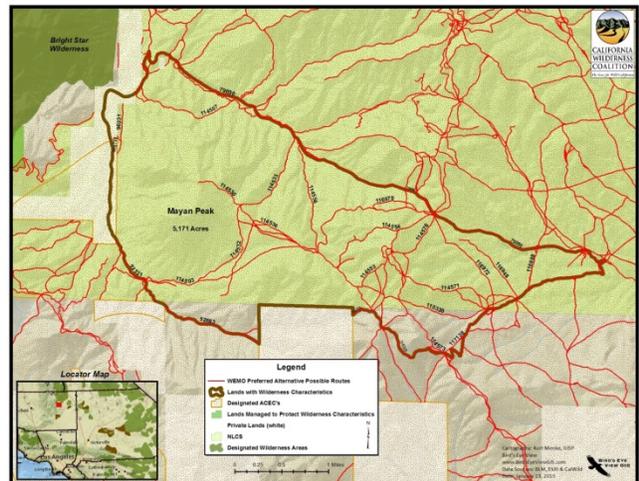
regionally significant ecological and biological diversity – including some of the most productive bird habitat in the California Desert – and numerous prehistoric cultural resources. A section of the world-famous Pacific Crest Trail passes through the landscape.

BLM is proposing to fragment the largely intact Mayan Peak area with over 30 miles of crisscrossing motorized vehicle routes. In addition, many of the proposed routes are

actually foot trails or naturally occurring washes that have been blocked or fenced to encourage revegetation and restoration in the area.

Recognizing the area's distinct qualities, the BLM's proposal under the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) will permanently protect almost all of the Mayan Peak area as part of the National Landscape Conservation System. Much of this land is also designated as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern to protect its important wildlife habitat and rich cultural history.

The proposed routes will undercut BLM's ongoing efforts to restore the Mayan Peak area and protect its unique natural and cultural values. The area is already highly vulnerable to the harmful impacts of motorized recreation due to numerous vehicle routes emanating from two nearby off-highway vehicle play areas. Opening additional motorized routes in the Mayan Peak area could have lasting consequences for important plant and wildlife species and habitat.



### **Facts:**

- Mayan Peak area includes 5,171 acres of BLM-inventoried lands with wilderness characteristics.
- WEMO Plan proposes 30 miles of motorized vehicle routes in the area.
- Mayan Peak is a largely unspoiled landscape, ideal for bird and wildlife populations and those seeking solitude and quiet recreation experiences.
- The area will be permanently protected as a National Conservation Area under the BLM's DRECP planning initiative.

## Findings from the Field:

- Proposed routes through Joshua tree forests that do not exist on the ground (*see left*).



- Most of the proposed routes barricaded and/or closed with signage to encourage revegetation and facilitate restoration efforts (*see below*).

- One proposed route barricaded to prevent access into important riparian habitat in Kelso Creek and trespass into the adjacent Bright Star Wilderness.

- One proposed route overlapping the Pacific Crest Trail, compromising the experience of hikers and equestrians on this scenic section of the world-famous path.

- Over 30 miles of proposed routes in highly-intact habitat for Bakersfield cactus, which the California Department of Fish & Wildlife recommends be protected from motorized vehicle use and other human activities that disturb or fragment habitat for this imperiled species.

