

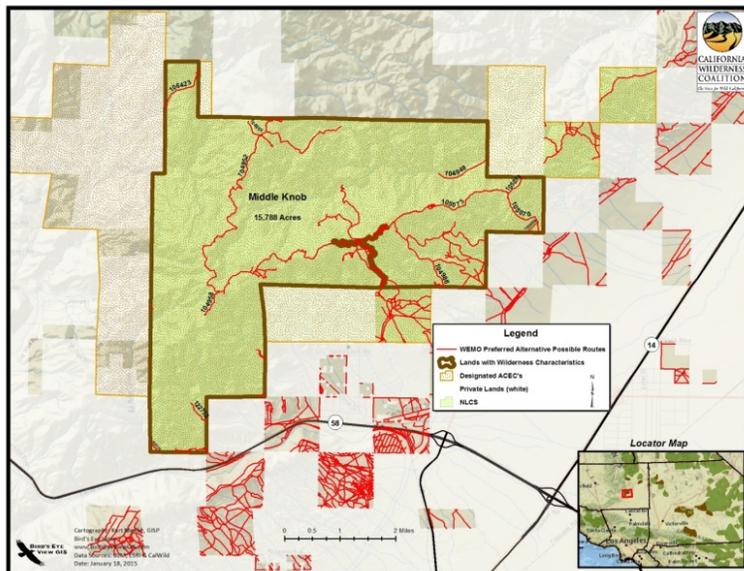


BLM'S PROPOSED MOTOR VEHICLE ROUTES **THREATEN MIDDLE KNOB AREA**

The almost 16,000-acre Middle Knob area is a largely unspoiled landscape in the West Mojave Desert – despite its close proximity to highways and open play areas for off-highway vehicles. Visitors can experience Dakota-like badlands, deep forests, rich wildflower fields, striking cliffs, canyon lands, and cool riparian areas. The area also supports important species, such as mule deer, desert bighorn sheep, Bendire's thrasher, and more. A segment of the world-famous Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail traverses the Middle Knob area, offering hikers and equestrians a glimpse into the unique landscapes that converge in this important ecological transition zone.



In addition to being an Area of Critical Environmental Concern, Middle Knob is will be permanently protected as a National Conservation Area by BLM's proposals under the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP).



The BLM's proposal to designate over 40 miles of motorized vehicle routes in the Middle Knob area, however, will undercut these conservation designations and threaten the resources and values that make the area so special. The proposal will also reward chronic illegal off-route travel by motorized recreationists, exacerbate already severe erosion associated with that use, and threaten irreplaceable cultural resources.

Facts:

- Middle Knob area includes almost 16,000 acres of BLM-inventoried lands with wilderness characteristics.
- WEMO Plan proposes 40.2 miles of motorized vehicle routes in the area.
- Middle Knob currently provides unique opportunities for quiet recreation in a landscape filled with shaded canyons, wildflower fields, and rich cultural history.
- The area will be permanently protected as a National Conservation Area under the BLM's DRECP.

Findings from the Field:

- Numerous illegal user-created routes located on steep highly eroded or unstable terrain that is unsuitable for motorized vehicle use (*see below*).



- Evidence of large vehicles driving around wooden barricade designed to prevent their use of a proposed route, damaging plants and soils (*see left*).

- An almost intact arrowhead between 8,000-9,000 years old in a proposed route in an area sacred to the Kawaiisu people (*see right*).
- Repeated instances of trash disposal and vandalism associated with use of proposed routes.

