

Table Mountain Proposed Wilderness

Size: Approximately 1,018 acres

Management Agency:

Bureau of Land Management, El Centro Field Office

Location: San Diego County. About three miles north of Interstate 8, 60 miles east of San Diego and 45 miles west of El Centro. Maps: BLM Desert Access Guide El Cajon.

Photo courtesy of Larry Hogue



Landscape

and History: Surrounded on three sides by Anza Borrego Desert State Park, Table Mountain occupies a bench on the eastern slope of the Peninsular Range at an average elevation of 3,500 feet. At the eastern edge the land falls abruptly away to the desert below—a plunge of more than a thousand feet per mile. Views from the summits extend out across the desert and the Imperial Valley to Arizona, north beyond the Salton Sea and south into Mexico. The area is extremely rugged, with countless golden-tan granitic rock outcrops. One of the few peaks of volcanic origin in the region, Table Mountain is made up of four separate mesas ranging from 3,600 to over 4,000 feet. The red and orange shades of rock are distinctive, and the flat expanses of the summits support a high-desert grassland. In a landscape of granite spires and sawtooth ridges, there's something special about this high, table-flat "island in the sky," something recognized by the Kumeyaay Indians, to whom the mountain is sacred. There is evidence of Kumeyaay tool-making, a documented village site and several pictograph sites within the proposed wilderness area.

Wildlife: Peninsular bighorn sheep, San Diego coast horned lizard, magic gecko and loggerhead shrike.

Vegetation: The area supports a lush growth of agave, cholla, barrel cactus, Mormon tea, brittlebush, saltbush, yucca, bunch grass, desert apricot, jojoba, sage, desert holly, and creosote bush. In addition to these common plants, the area is home to several species listed as rare by the California Native Plant Society, including Jacumba milkvetch, Mountain Springs bush lupine, sticky geranium, slender-leaved tenuifolia, desert beauty, hairy stickleaf, San Jacinto beardtongue, slender-lobed four o'clock, intermediate larkspur, and pride-of-California.

For More Information:

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