Christmas Canyon

Description/Location: Located at the southern end of Searles Valley in the northwestern corner of San Bernardino County. The ACEC is named for the canyon which forms part of its eastern boundary.

Nationally Significant Values:
Cultural: Researchers and avocational collectors are using the data from the sites within Christmas Canyon to identify early Holocene occupation of the Searles Dry Lake shore, a research topic currently being explored throughout the Great Basin and Mojave Desert. The results of such research may be applicable to similar environments where current land use patterns conflict with archaeological preservation. The Navy continues to do scientific research in the areas adjoining the current ACEC boundary. The scientific and cultural resource potential remains high. Resources within this locality have been identified as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Continued research may identify a definitive National Register District Boundary.

Special Designations/Management Plan/Date: Designated ACEC, CDCA Plan, 1980, Christmas Canyon ACEC Management Plan, 11/14/1988 (CA-060-ACEC-23)

Relevance and Importance Criteria: Relevant cultural resources. This area was designated to protect archaeological resources associated with prehistoric reduction of lithic resources, a large chert quarry, and the collection and processing of local edible plants. Eighteen cultural properties were identified when the area was originally designated an ACEC in the CDCA Plan; approximately 72 have been identified since then, with ongoing research and survey work anticipated in this area by the Navy. Researchers and avocational collectors have attempted to identify early Holocene occupation of the Searles Dry Lake shore with sites within Christmas Canyon This area was withdrawn specifically from the surrounding Spangler Hills Off-Highway Vehicle Open Area to protect it from further degradation by vehicles. A portion of the southern edge of the ACEC is included in the Mojave Ground Squirrel Conservation Area.

Goals: Protect cultural resources that are present within the Canyon and surrounding area. These deposits are particularly susceptible to damage from surface disturbance.

For NLCS Lands -- Where this ruleset differs from the plan-wide NLCS rulesets, the more restrictive rules will apply.

Designation and Acreage by Alternative:

Alternative	BLM Acres of NLCS within ACEC or Wildlife Allocation	BLM Acres within ACEC	BLM Acres within Wildlife Allocation	ACEC Disturbance Cap
No Action	0	3,400	0	NA
Preferred Alternative	3,400	3,400	0	1%
1	3,400	3,400	0	1%
2	3,400	3,400	0	1%
3	3,400	3,400	0	1%
4	3,400	3,400	0	1%

*** Acreage values are for BLM managed lands**

Alternatives :

All Action Alternatives – Remove ACEC from the Open Area. Reclassify ACEC as Limited Use Land. Designate routes within this new Limited Use area.

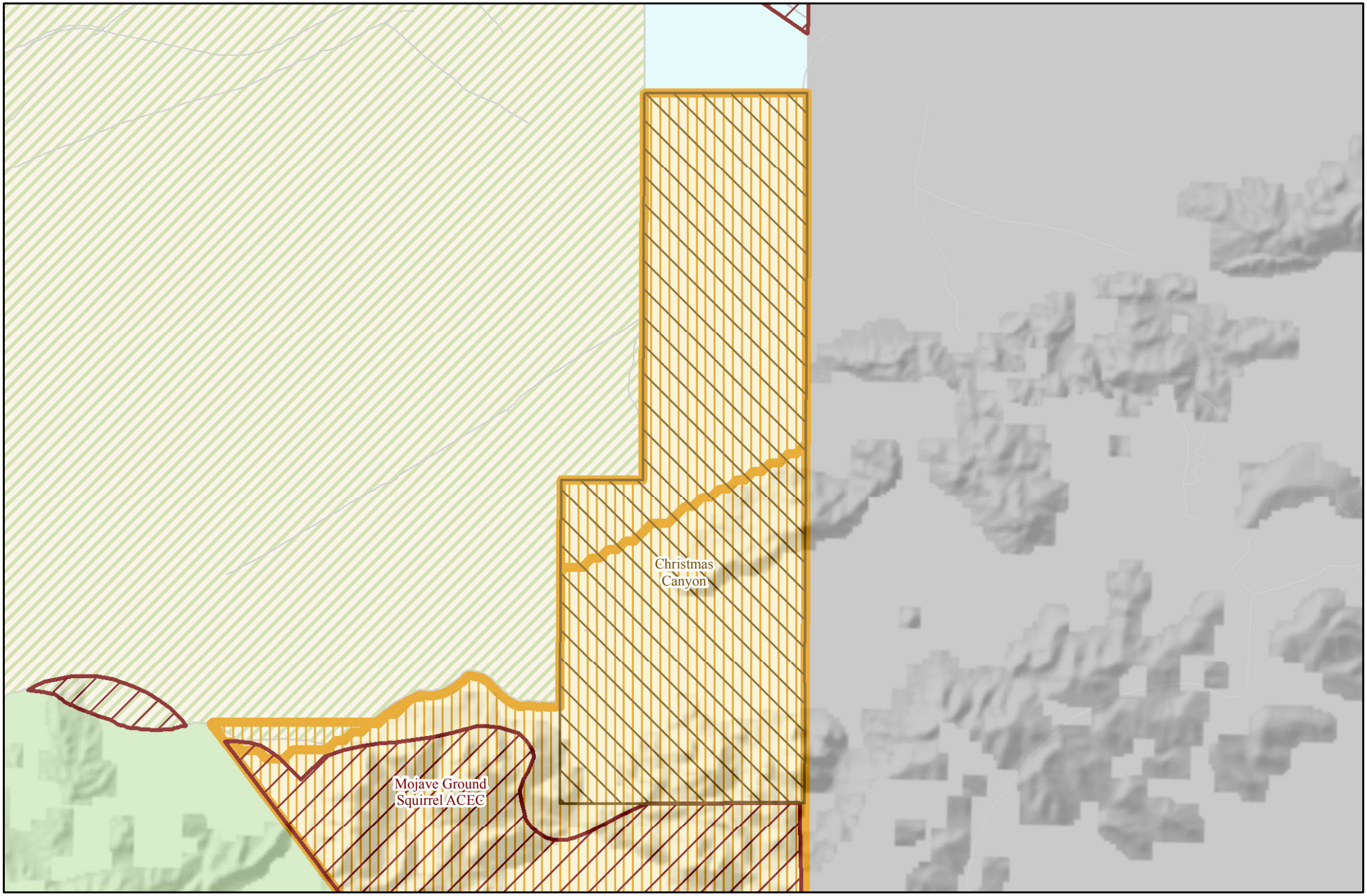
No Action Alternative –This area would be managed as it is currently managed. Most of the ACEC is within a recreational vehicle Open Area. Under the No Action Alternative, open use by vehicles would continue.

Objectives (desired future conditions)/Allowable Uses/Management Actions	**Resource**
Objective: Soils exhibit functional biological and physical characteristics that are appropriate to soil type, climate, and land form. Allowable Uses: Restrict construction and recreation activities when soils are susceptible to heightened risk of erosion. Management Actions: Ensure soils meet or exceed the Soil Standard of Rangeland Health, as indicated by ground or plant cover, diversity of plant species, minimal evidence of accelerated wind and water erosion and the presence of biological soil crusts where appropriate.	Soil, water, air
Objective: Protect and enhance habitat to maintain stable or increasing population trends of special status species to ensure persistence: Management Action: Designate Species below as priority species for management and protection. Le Conte's Thrasher *(Toxostoma lecontei)* State Species of Special Concern Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus)* BLM Sensitive American Badger (*Taxidea taxus)* State Special Animal Desert Tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii)* Federally and State threatened Mohave ground squirrel (*Spermophilus mohavensis*) State threatened Townsend's big-eared bat (*Corynorhinus townsendii) BLM sensitive* Pallid bat (*Antrozous pallidus)* BLM sensitive Spotted bat (*Euderma maculatum)* BLM sensitive Western Mastiff bat (*Eumops perotis californicus)* BLM sensitive Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) BLM sensitive, Bald and Golden Eagle P. Act Prairie Falcon (*Falco mexicanus)* USFWS Bird of Conservation Concern Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) BLM Sensitive Long-eared owl (*Asio otus*) State Species of Special Concern	Fish and Wildlife (incl. special status species)
Maintain objectives and management actions of existing ACEC Management Plan. See programmatic ACEC cultural resources objective and action items in	Cultural Resources

general cultural resources rules. Objective: Conserve archaeological resources, decrease vandalism, and minimize and mitigate impacts from Off Highway Vehicle Use Allowable Uses: Impose travel and camping restrictions within sensitive cultural resources, allow for continued scientific research by qualified and permitted archaeological professionals Management Actions: Identify and designate all routes within ACEC that will minimize impacts by OHV use. All open and restricted routes which will be posted with appropriate signage and fencing if necessary. Prohibit camping in sensitive areas near rock art, rock shelters, and middens. Conduct salvage excavation at damaged resources Develop collaborative monitoring and research strategies with NAWS China Lake Cultural Resources staff as appropriate	
Objective: Designate the area within the boundary as Limited Use. Limit motorized vehicle impacts. Allowable Uses: Motorized, non-motorized, non-mechanized, etc Management Actions: Identify and designate routes within the new Limited Use Area. Identify access routes which minimize impact to resources Limit vehicles to open designated routes by signing, fencing, and barriers Rehabilitate and restore closed and translinear disturbance routes	Trails and Travel Management
Under the No Action Alternative: Within the Spangler Hills Open Area, non-competitive motorized vehicles have full access of the area. Require competitive events to be held on existing routes Under All Action Alternatives: Objective: Provide recreation opportunities that are compatible with cultural resource preservation by providing dispersed opportunities for enjoyment of the ACEC attributes Allowable Uses: All forms of recreational use are allowed including but not limited to dispersed camping, hunting, photography, picnicking, climbing, rock hounding, astronomy/ star gazing, nature study and viewing as long as these activities due not degrade the relevant and important values that the ACEC is being established for.	Recreation

Restricted Special Recreation Permits for motorized events Management Actions: No competitive motorized events within ACEC. Non-competitive motorized events limited to open designated routes.	
Not an allowable use. Renewable energy development is not compatible with NLCS and ACEC unit values and criteria Geothermal: Area is closed to geothermal leasing and development	Renewable Energy
Lode and placer mining claims are currently on file. Objective: Support the national need for reliable and sustainable domestic minerals while protecting sensitive resources in the area. Allowable Use: Casual Use mining allowed with approved plan of operations. Management Action: New proposals will need to be analyzed at on a case-by-case basis and cumulatively, to assess whether they can be accommodated within the ACEC and its management goals	Minerals (Locatable, Leasable, Mineral Materials)
Area falls within the Spangler Hills Grazing Allotment. Objective: Provide for livestock grazing opportunities in a manner that limits impacts on other resources Allowable Uses: Adjust livestock use where monitoring data indicate changes are necessary to meet resource objectives. Management Actions: Manage grazing authorizations to meet or exceed the Standards for Rangeland Health.	Livestock grazing

Christmas Canyon



1 Miles

1.5 Kilometers

N

Preferred Alternative ACECs

Date Printed: 5/29/2013

Prepared by BLM California State Office

ACEC Layers

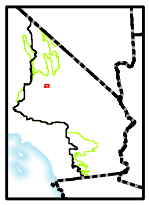
- Existing ACEC
- Proposed ACEC
- Proposed NLCS
- Design Focus Areas
- Legislatively and Legally Protected
- Cities
- OHV Areas
- CDCA Boundary
- DRECP Boundary
- BLM Field Office

Land Status

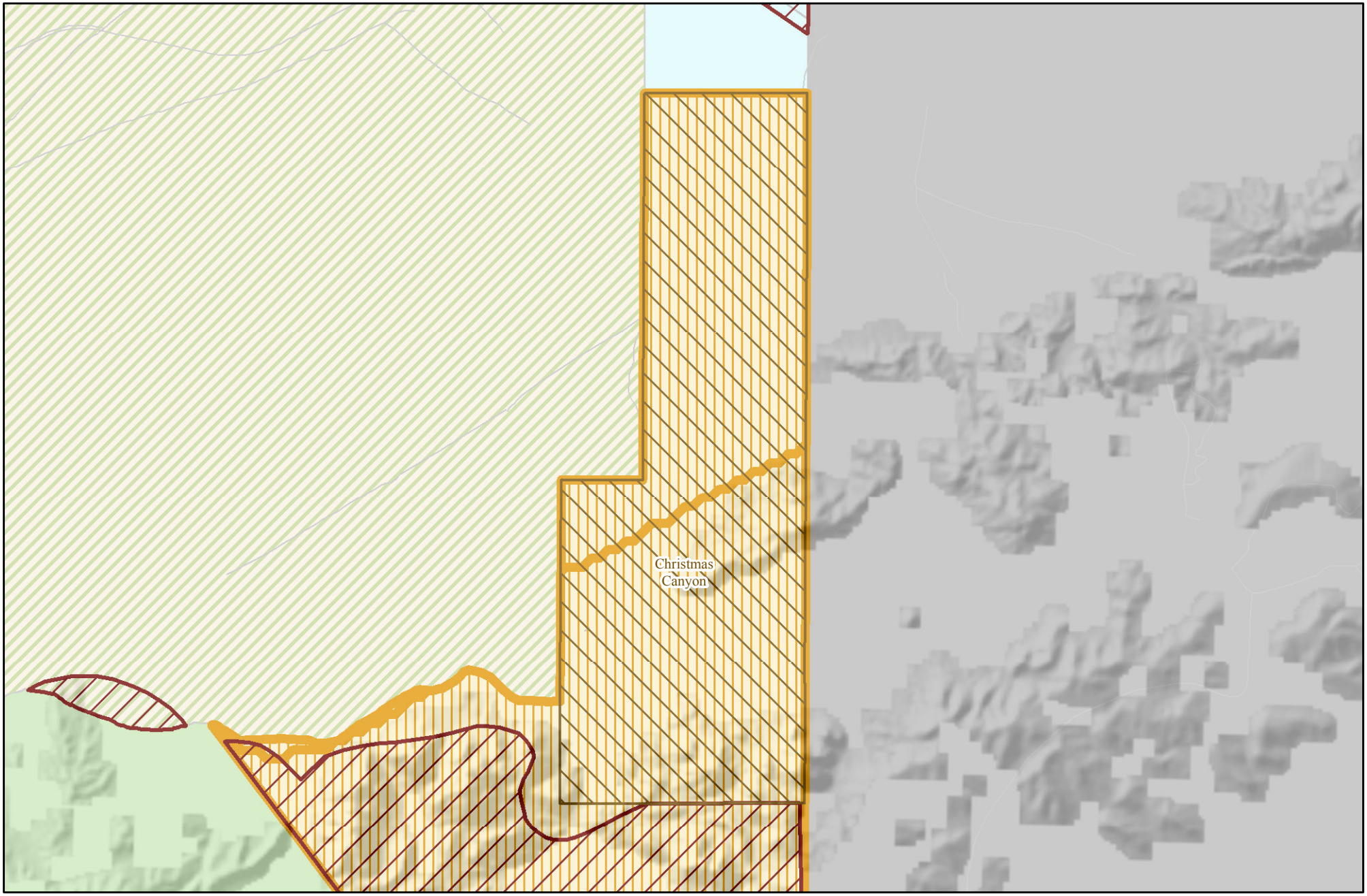
- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- Other Federal
- Military
- Private

GTLF

- Interstate
- US Hwy
- CA Hwy
- County Hwy



Christmas Canyon



1 Miles

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Alternative 1 ACECs

Date Printed: 5/29/2013

Prepared by BLM California State Office

ACEC Layers

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GTLF

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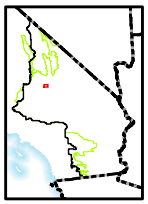
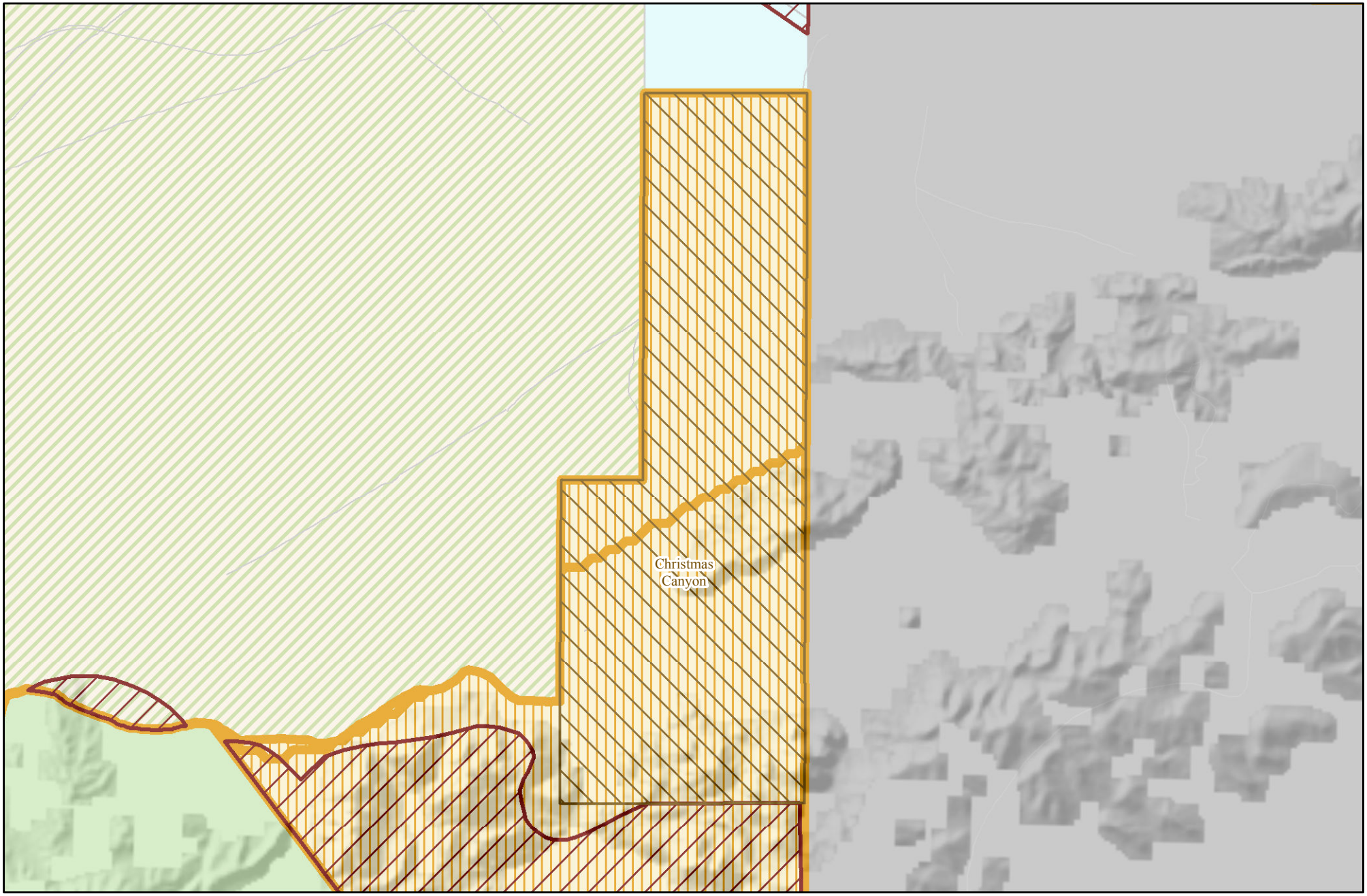


Christmas Canyon



1 Miles

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Alternative 2 ACECs

Date Printed: 5/29/2013

Prepared by BLM California State Office

ACEC Layers

- Existing ACEC
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- Design Focus Areas
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GTLF

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- CA Hwy
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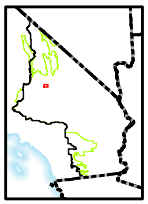

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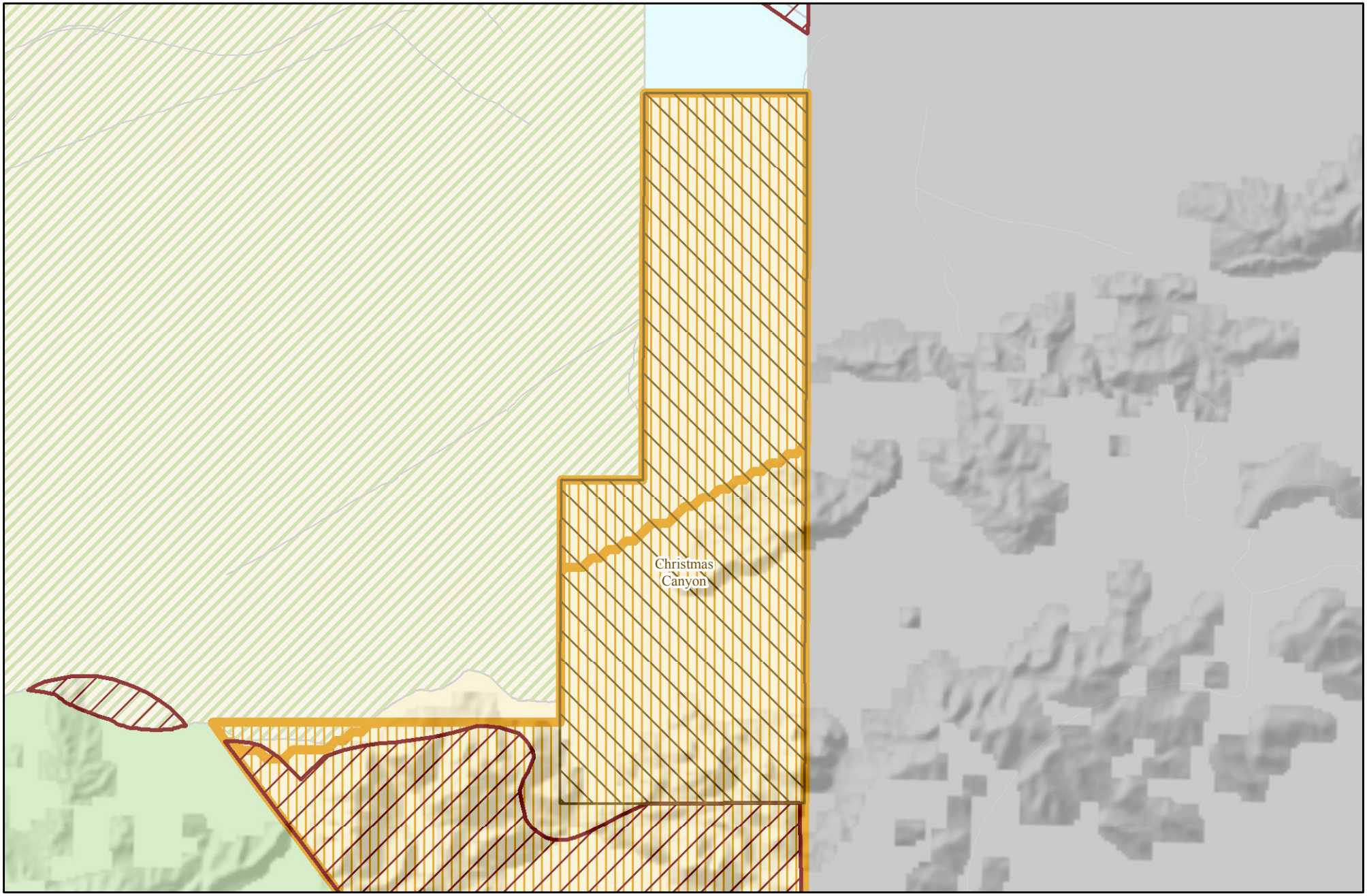

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1.5 Kilometers

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Alternative 3 ACECs

Date Printed: 5/29/2013

Prepared by BLM California State Office

ACEC Layers

- Existing ACEC
- Proposed ACEC
- Proposed NLCS
- Design Focus Areas
- Legislatively and Legally Protected
- Cities
- OHV Areas
- CDCA Boundary
- DRECP Boundary
- BLM Field Office

Land Status

- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- Other Federal
- Military
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GTLF

- Interstate
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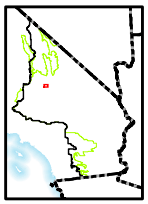

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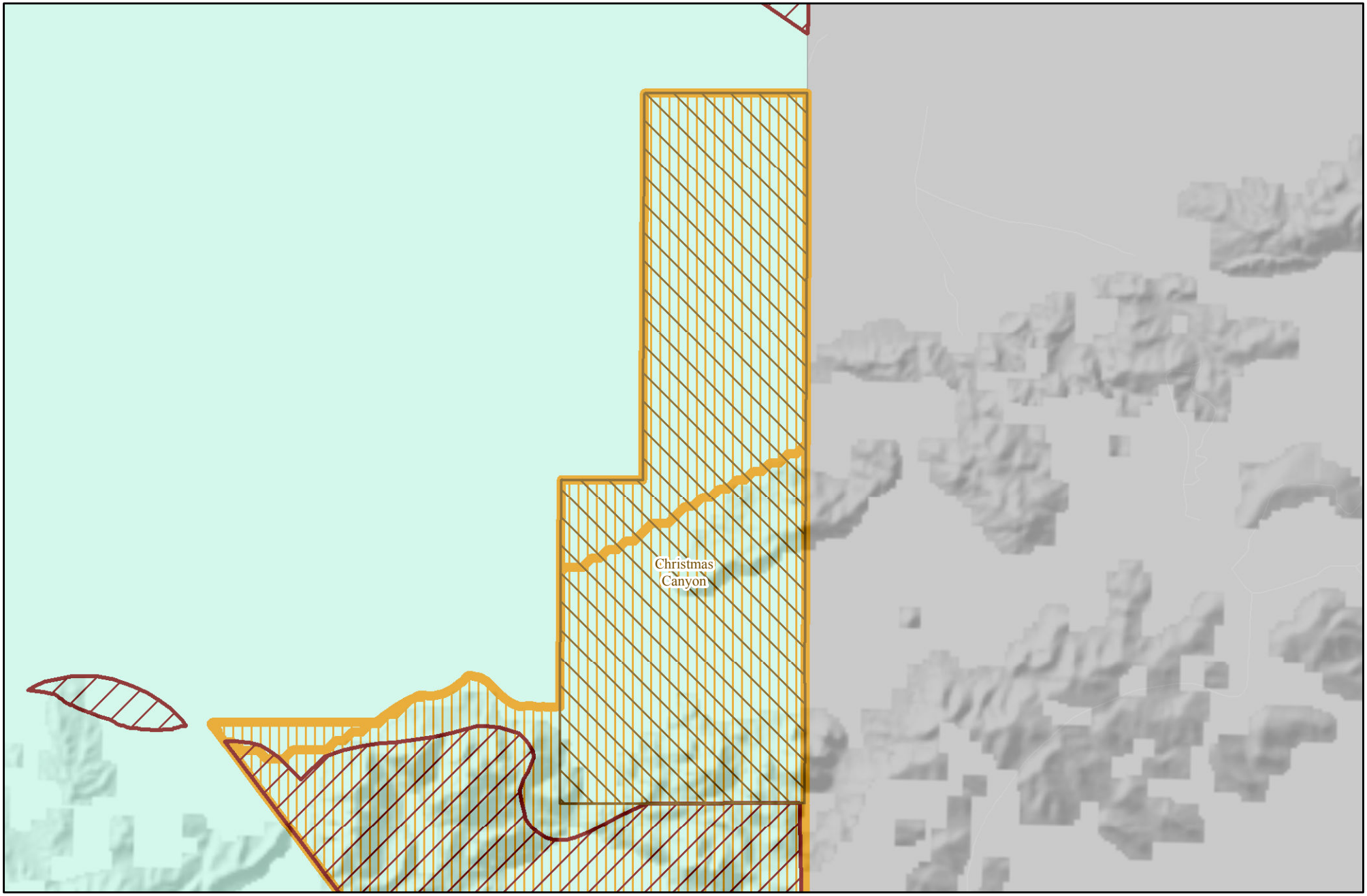

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Alternative 4 ACECs

Date Printed: 5/29/2013

Prepared by BLM California State Office

ACEC Layers

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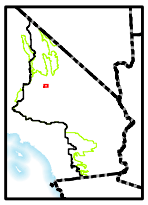

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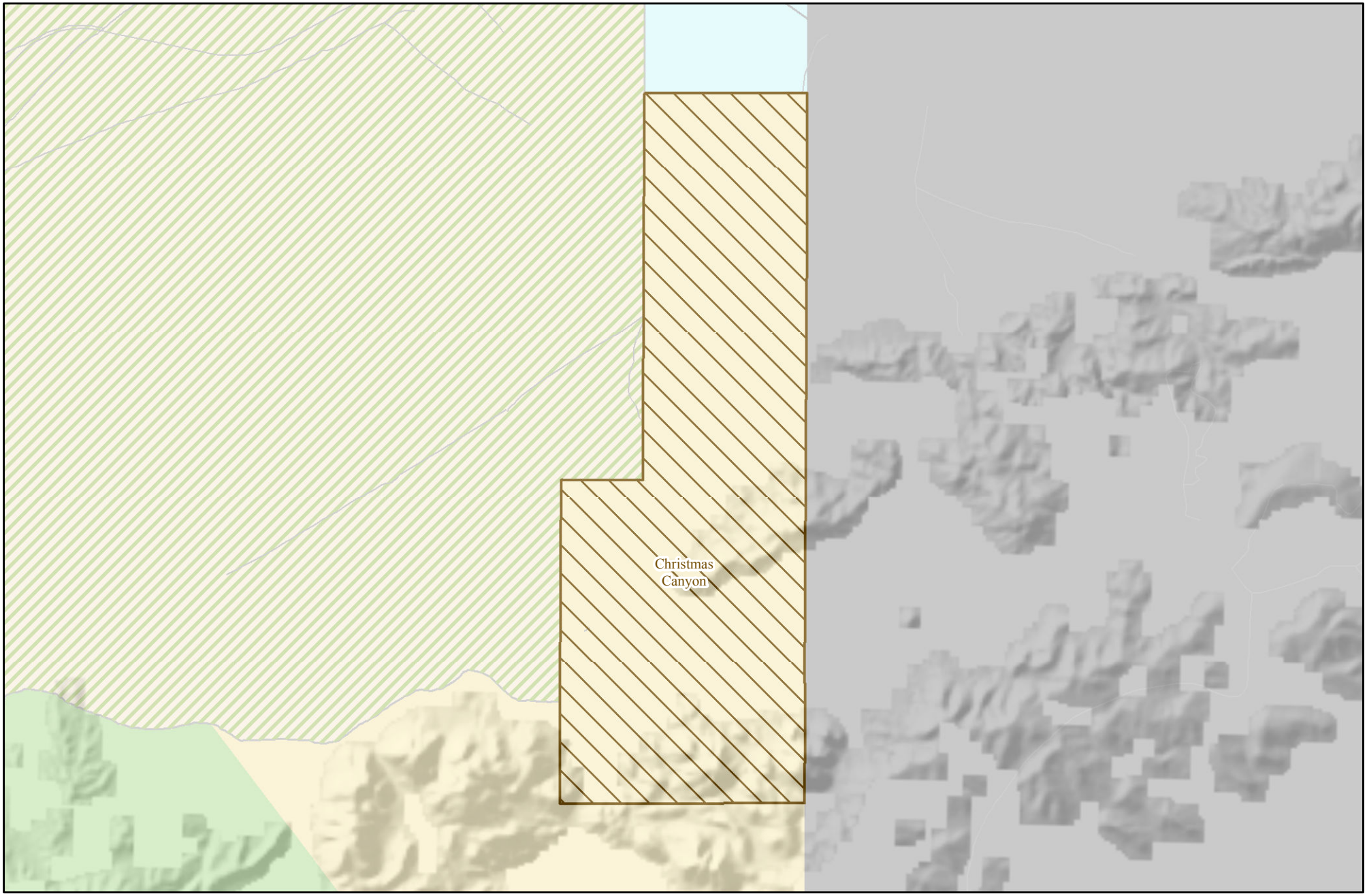

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No Action ACECs

Date Printed: 5/29/2013

Prepared by BLM California State Office

ACEC Layers

- Existing ACEC
- OHV Areas
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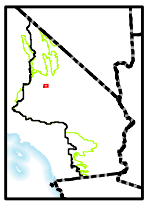
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