

Yuha Basin

Description/Location: This unit is located in southwestern Imperial County approximately 13 miles west of El Centro, bordered by the US-Mexico International Border to the south, the Jacumba Mountains to the west, Interstate 8 to the north, and agricultural lands to the east. The community of Ocotillo lies just west of this ACEC.

Nationally Significant Values:

Ecological: The ACEC contains important habitat for the Flat-tailed horned lizard and several unique vegetation communities. Proposed conservation lands would create a contiguous protected landscape linking the Yuha Basin with the Jacumba Wilderness, the proposed Ocotillo Conservation Lands, and Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. These lands would preserve one of the most intact and diverse landscapes in the Sonoran/Colorado Desert.

Cultural: National conservation lands and the ACEC contain cultural resources ranging from Paleoindian sites to campsites of ancestors of living Kumeyaay, Quechan, and Cocopah Indians (i.e., intaglios, temporary camps, lithic scatters, cremation loci, pottery loci, wells, trails, and shrines). The shoreline of ancient Lake Cahuilla, which includes habitation sites, is also located in the basin. The area also contains historic sites such as those related to mining, the Old Stage Road, and a historic railroad. The basin includes a portion of the Juan Batista de Anza National Historic Trail and one of the Anza campsites (Yuha Well). The ACEC currently contains the Yuha Basin Discontiguous District that is listed in the National Register of Historic Place (NRHP), and contains additional prehistoric archaeological resources eligible for listing in the NRHP. A Traditional Cultural Property is being proposed within this ACEC. The Southern Immigrant/Butterfield Overland Stage Route passes through the Yuha Basin, and the route is being studied by the NPS for designation as a National Historic Trail.

Scientific: Prehistoric archaeological sites with scientific information potential that make them eligible for listing in the NRHP are located within this ACEC. Paleontological localities, including the Oyster Shell Beads and other sensitive fossil localities, such as relatively undisturbed Lake Cahuilla sediments and the Palm Springs Group, are located within the ACEC.

Special Designations/Management Plan/Date: ACEC/Yuha Desert Management Plan No. 64/ March 1985

Relevance and Importance Criteria: Relevant biological and cultural resources. The construction of transmission lines, the Imperial Valley Substation, and other undertakings has opened up much of the interior of the Yuha Basin. The 1985 Yuha Desert Management Plan emphasized the need to protect archaeological and wilderness values that were deteriorating in the Yuha Basin as a result of project development and improved access from such projects. The ACEC contains and is within proximity to landforms that contain important visual and spiritual significance to local Indian tribes.

The Yuha Basin ACEC contains unique vegetation communities, which include the Crucifixion Thorn Natural Area. The Mt. Signal Research Natural Area is also located within this ACEC. Major washes, such as Pinto Wash, resulting from mountain runoff of flash flooding from monsoons support important plant communities and wildlife habitats. Mesquite dunes or hummocks are common throughout the ACEC and also provide a unique environment that supports a number of plant communities and wildlife species. Vegetation communities highly adapted to the hyper-arid environment of the Yuha Desert include creosote (*Larrea tridentata*), Saltbush (*Atriplex sp.*), and mesquite (*Prosopis glandulosa*), which support a diversity of wildlife species. Sensitive plant species within the ACEC include cholla cactus (*Opuntia wigginsii*) and milkvetch (*Astagalus crotalatae*). The ACEC is also home to a number of sensitive wildlife species, including

the magic gecko, the loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), and game species such as Gambel’s quail (*Callipepla gambelii*) and coyote (*Canus latrans*).

Common recreational activities within the ACEC include OHV riding, hunting, hiking, rock and mineral collecting, and camping; as well as site-seeing in areas of interest such as at the Yuha Well, Yuha Shell Beds, and the Crucifixion Thorn Natural Area. The potential for locatable mineral development within the ACEC is very low except for in the extreme southwest corner where several mining claims exist. Sand and gravel is the only in-demand mineral commodity within the ACEC. The Yuha Basin ACEC contains deposits of material suitable for use as tailing sand, road base aggregate and concrete aggregate.

Goals: Protect cultural and ecological, and recreational values while providing for other compatible uses.

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	68,300	0	1%
Preferred Alternative	60,800	74,900	0	1%
1	0	74,900	0	1%
2	75,400**	75,400	0	1%
3	71,000	74,900	0	1%
4	46,300	74,900	0	1%

* Acreage values are for BLM managed lands

**Includes overlap of existing designated Wilderness

Alternatives:

All Action Alternatives –For all action alternatives, this unit is expanded northward to the Even Hewes Highway (Old 80) to protect significant cultural resources.

No Action – this existing ACEC would continue to be managed as it currently is, there would be no expansion.

Objectives (desired future conditions)/Allowable Uses/Management Actions	Resource
Objective: Protect air quality and visibility standards in accordance with the Southeast Desert Air Basin nonattainment. Management Action: Coordinate with the California Environmental Protection Agency Air Resources Board.	Soil, water, air
Objective: Manage the ACEC with the standards, visibility-reducing particles,	

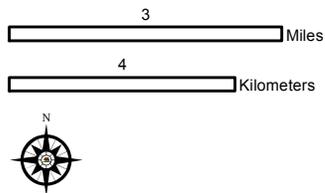
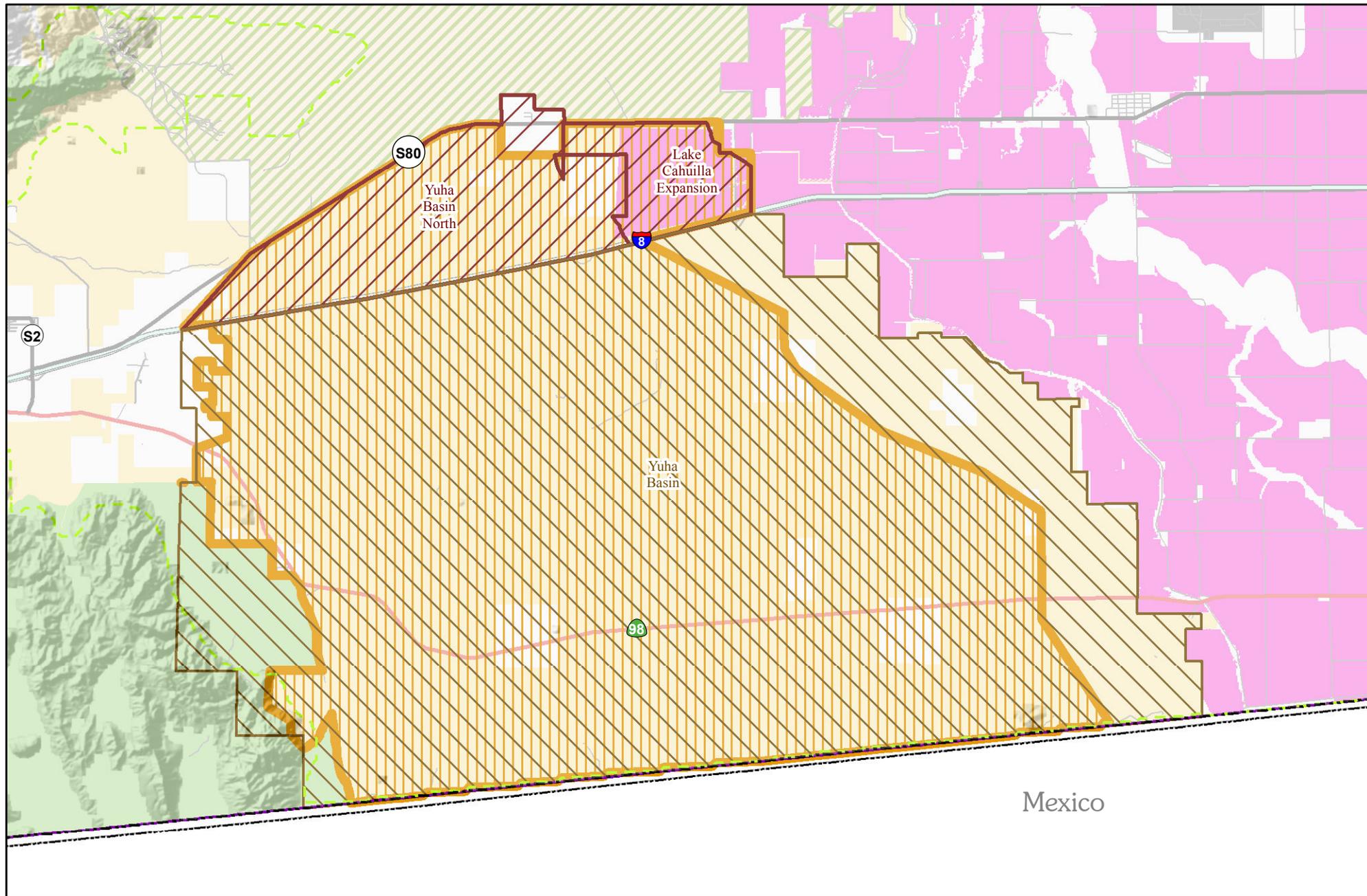
<p>and attainment for other criteria in accordance with the standards set by the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District. Management Action: Coordinate with the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District.</p>	
<p>Objective: Protect and enhance habitat for Emory’s Crucifixion Thorn woodland Management Action: Withdraw the Crucifixion Thorn Natural Area from mineral entry.</p> <p>Objective: Protect desert wetland plant communities at seeps and springs; and Sonoran Desert wash woodland. Management Action: Arrange with partner agencies and developers or ROW applicants to inventory flora of the ACEC after a significant rainfall.</p> <p>Objective: Maintain habitat that potentially supports the presence of Special Status plant species. Management Action: Control the introduction of invasive plant species.</p> <p>Objective: Control noxious plants, improve habitat, and eliminate introduced plant species, such as tamarisk, from riparian areas. Management Action: Develop strategies, such as vegetation manipulation.</p> <p>Objective: Protect and enhance robust populations of both rare and common native plants. Management Action: Manage vehicular traffic to stay on designated OHV routes. Management Action: Place signs, kiosks and interpretive information at key recreational sites to better inform the public about the important plant resources.</p> <p>Objective: Update a baseline of plant species to track environmental changes. Management Action: Inventory vascular and non-vascular plants, include soil crust species, in the ACEC.</p>	<p>Vegetation (incl. special status species)</p>
<p>Objective: Maintain wildlife habitat that supports native species including that of special status species. Management Action: Monitor wildlife for habitat and population change.</p> <p>Objective: Manage habitat for the Flat-tailed horned lizard (<i>Phrynosoma mcallii</i>) according to the 2003 Flat-tailed <i>Horned Lizard Rangewide Management Strategy</i>, or follow most recent. Management Action: Maintain the 1% cap for ground disturbance for this ACEC.</p> <p>Objective: Rehabilitate and improve habitat quality for burrowing owl (<i>Athene cunicularia</i>) and American badger (<i>Taxidea americana</i>) Management Action:</p>	<p>Fish and Wildlife (incl. special status species)</p>

<p>Objective: Protect and enhance habitat for desert bird species such as Le Conte's thrasher (<i>Toxostoma lecontei</i>).</p> <p>Management Action: Inventory the ACEC for invertebrate species to determine the prevalence of species endemic to the hyperarid conditions.</p> <p>Management Action: Enhance shrub vegetation damaged from unauthorized OHV traffic.</p> <p>Objective: Determine the effects of pesticide spraying on the Flat-tailed horned lizard.</p> <p>Management Action: Conduct study to assess effects of pesticides on the Flat-tailed horned lizard.</p>	
<p>See programmatic ACEC cultural resources objective and action items in general cultural resources rules.</p> <p>Objective: Protect and preserve cultural resources within and visible from the ACEC.</p> <p>Management Action: Develop interpretive programs and brochures that explain Lake Cahuilla cultural resources.</p> <p>Management Action: Prohibit OHV activities except on designated routes of travel.</p> <p>Management Action: Perform route restoration to erase illegal routes.</p> <p>Management Action: Prohibit camping within one mile of the 40' contour of ancient Lake Cahuilla.</p> <p>Management Action: Increase ranger patrols and BLM presence in the area.</p> <p>Management Action: Nominate the Lake Cahuilla district to the NRHP.</p> <p>Management Action: Install informative signage and kiosks to ensure the public is aware of restrictions as well as provide interpretation about the ancient lake.</p> <p>Objective: Expand our understanding of the nature, variety, and complexity of cultural resources within the Lake Cahuilla ACEC.</p> <p>Management Action: Consult with local Indian tribes and knowledgeable traditional practitioners regarding the cultural resource values present within the ACEC.</p> <p>Management Action: Work with local archaeological organizations and institutions to develop partnerships to enable proactive survey and recordation.</p> <p>Management Action: Apply for grant or other funding to pay for contracting.</p>	Cultural Resources
<p>Objective: Administer and manage trail resources in accordance with Juan Bautista De Anza Trail Comprehensive Management Plan, NTSA, FLMPA, local RMPs, and agency policy and direction.</p> <p>Allowable Uses: Research, interpretation, recreation.</p> <p>Management Action: Designate Trail Management Corridor</p> <p>Management Action: Preserve historic and scenic value of the trail</p>	National Historic Trails
<p>Objective: Provide for maximum protection of significant paleontological resources.</p> <p>Management Action: Designate protection areas for significant paleontological localities.</p>	Paleontology

<p>Management Action: Prohibit casual collection of vertebrate fossils without a permit.</p> <p>Management Action: Increase ranger patrols in areas with highly sensitive fossils that are located near areas with highest public visitation, such as along hiking and OHV trails, and campsites.</p> <p>Objective: Increase public awareness of the paleontological values in ACEC.</p> <p>Management Action: Install informative signage and kiosks to ensure the public is aware of restrictions as well as provide general education about the unique and important resources</p> <p>Management Action: Promote organized hikes and site-seeing events to non-sensitive paleontological resource areas.</p> <p>Management Action: Develop interpretive programs and brochures that explain Lake Cahuilla paleontology.</p>	
<p>Objective: Protect the characteristic landscapes of the Yuha Basin, including the cultural/historic landscape crossed by the Anza NHT and proposed Butterfield Overland Trail.</p> <p>Management Actions: Minimize and mitigate visual impacts through prescriptions of applicable VRM class.</p>	Visual Resources
<p>Objective: To maintain trails and routes of travel to ensure the protection of cultural, ecological, and recreational values.</p> <p>Management Action: Mark the margins of BLM-designated OHV trails.</p> <p>Management Action: Provide signage and maps to the public to inform them of route locations and regulations.</p> <p>Management Action: Increase Ranger visits in areas sensitive resource areas.</p> <p>Management Action: Perform route restoration to erase illegal routes</p> <p>Allocation: OHV limited (designated routes and vehicle type) as per the WECO plan.</p>	Trails and Travel Management
<p>Objective: Reverse trend of resource degradation due to OHV and casual ORV use.</p> <p>Management Action: Prohibit competitive motorized vehicle recreation events within the ACEC.</p> <p>Action: Increase Ranger visits in areas sensitive resource areas.</p> <p>Objective: Promote dispersed recreation within the ACEC, including sight-seeing, camping, hunting, target shooting, hiking, and 4x4 touring.</p> <p>Management Action: Promote organized non-vehicular events (e.g., hiking and site-seeing tours)</p> <p>Allocation: OHV limited (designated routes and vehicle type) as per the WECO plan.</p>	Recreation
<p>Objective: Process ROW applications.</p> <p>Management Action: Review all ROW applications on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Management Action: Allow transmission line ROWs only within designated utility corridors.</p>	Rights of Way
<p>Objective: Retain federally owned lands and purchase inholdings.</p> <p>Management Action: Obtain inholdings through purchase or exchange.</p>	Land Tenure

<p>Objective: Minimize impacts resulting from geothermal energy development within the ACEC.</p> <p>Management Action: Review lease applications on case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Management Action: Prohibit solar and wind energy projects within the ACEC.</p> <p>Management Action: Prohibit additional energy transmission corridors inside the ACEC.</p> <p>Management Action: Encourage transmission lines to share infrastructure, reduce redundant poles and access roads in the transmission corridor.</p>	<p>Renewable Energy</p>
<p>Objective: Develop management guidelines for material sales.</p> <p>Management Action: Develop Sand and Gravel Activity Management Plan.</p> <p>Management Action: Permit geothermal leasing with stipulations as per Yuha Basin Proposed Geothermal Leasing Environmental Assessment.</p>	<p>Locatable Minerals Mineral Materials Non-Energy Leasable</p>
<p>The following plans apply to the management of the Yuha Basin:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Yuha Desert Management Framework Plan 2) Final EAR Yuha Basin/Mt. Signal Non-competitive Leases for Geothermal Exploration/Development 3) The California Desert Conservation Area Plan 4) Yuha Basin ACEC Management Plan 5) Oil and Gas Checklists 6) California Desert Plan Route Approval Process 7) Yuha Desert Wildlife Habitat Management Plan 8) WECO Route of Travel Plan 	<p>Other Management Plans</p>

Yuha Basin



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

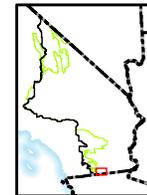
- Cities
- OHV Areas
- CDCA Boundary
- DRECP Boundary
- BLM Field Office

Land Status

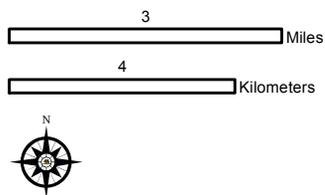
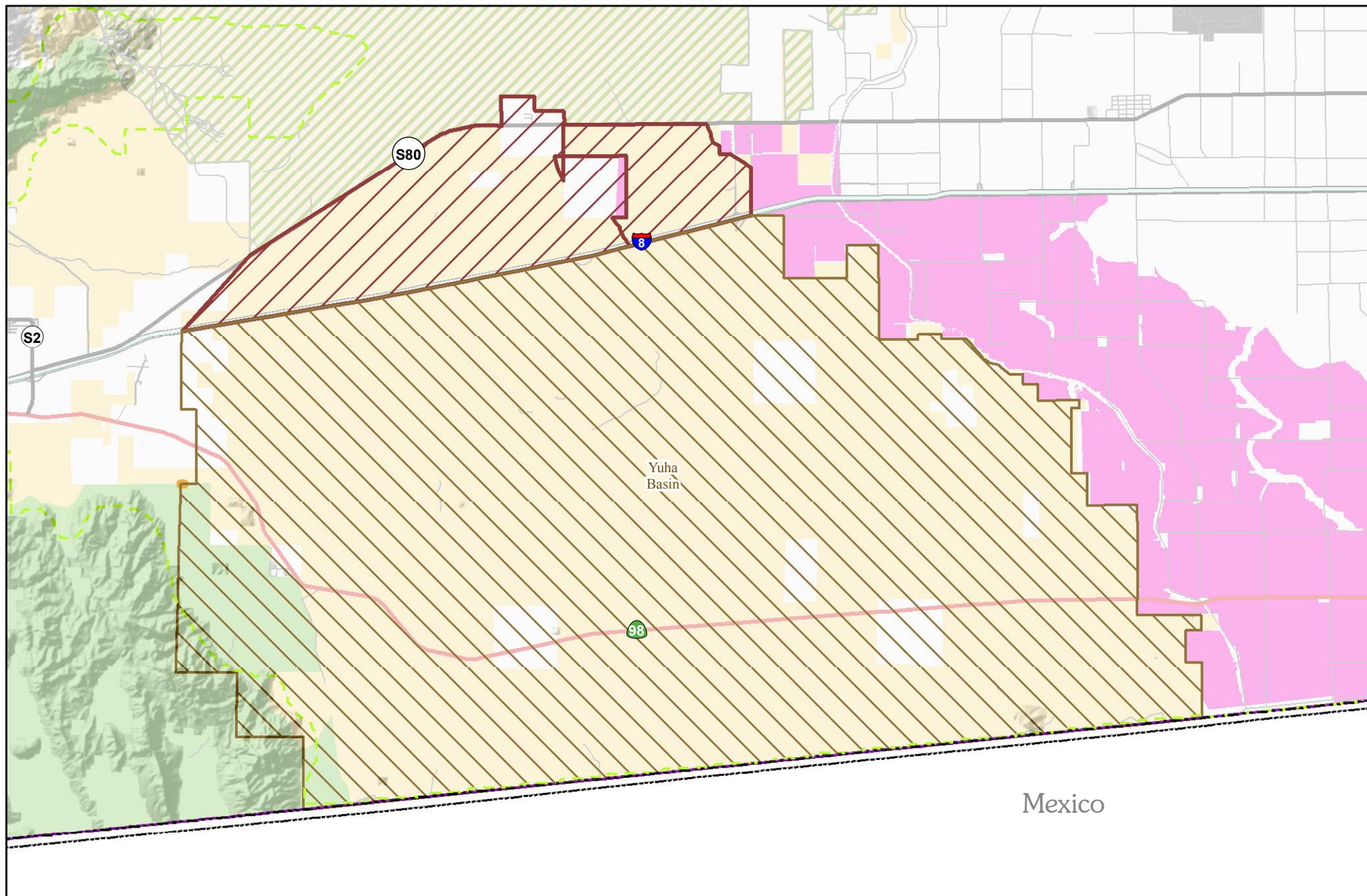
- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- Other Federal
- Military
- Private

GTLF

- Interstate
- US Hwy
- CA Hwy
- County Hwy



Yuha Basin



Alternative 1 ACECs

Date Printed: 5/29/2013
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ACEC Layers

- Existing ACEC
- Proposed ACEC
- Proposed NLCS
- Design Focus Areas
- Legislatively and Legally Protected

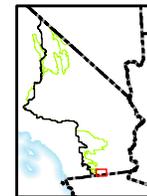
- Cities
- OHV Areas
- CDCA Boundary
- DRECP Boundary
- BLM Field Office

Land Status

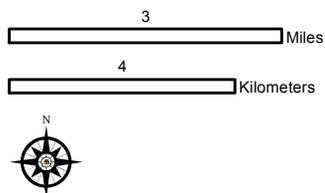
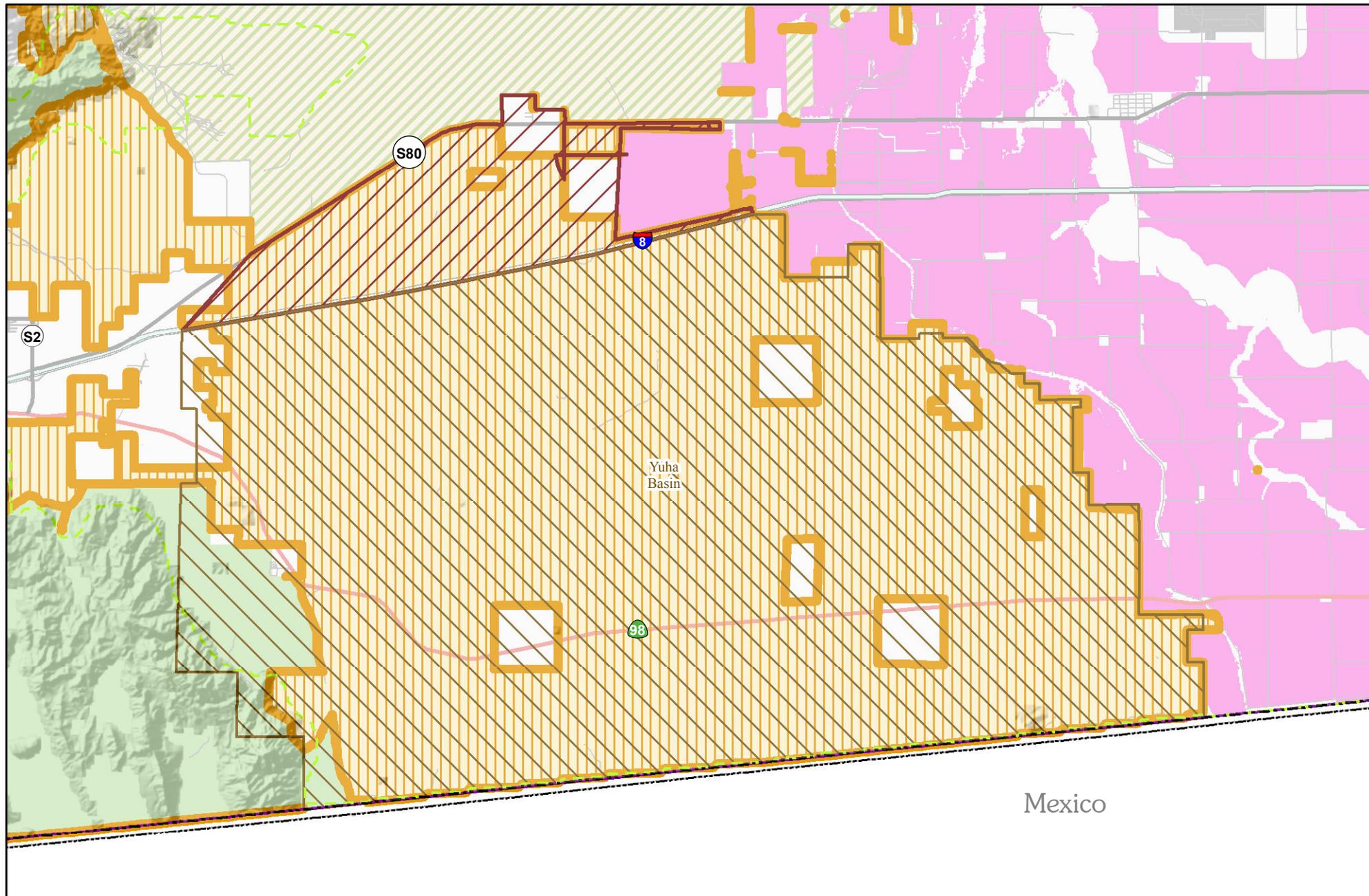
- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- Other Federal
- Military
- Private

GTLF

- Interstate
- US Hwy
- CA Hwy
- County Hwy



Yuha Basin



Alternative 2 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

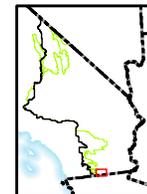
- Cities
- OHV Areas
- CDCA Boundary
- DRECP Boundary
- BLM Field Office

Land Status

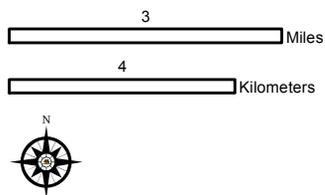
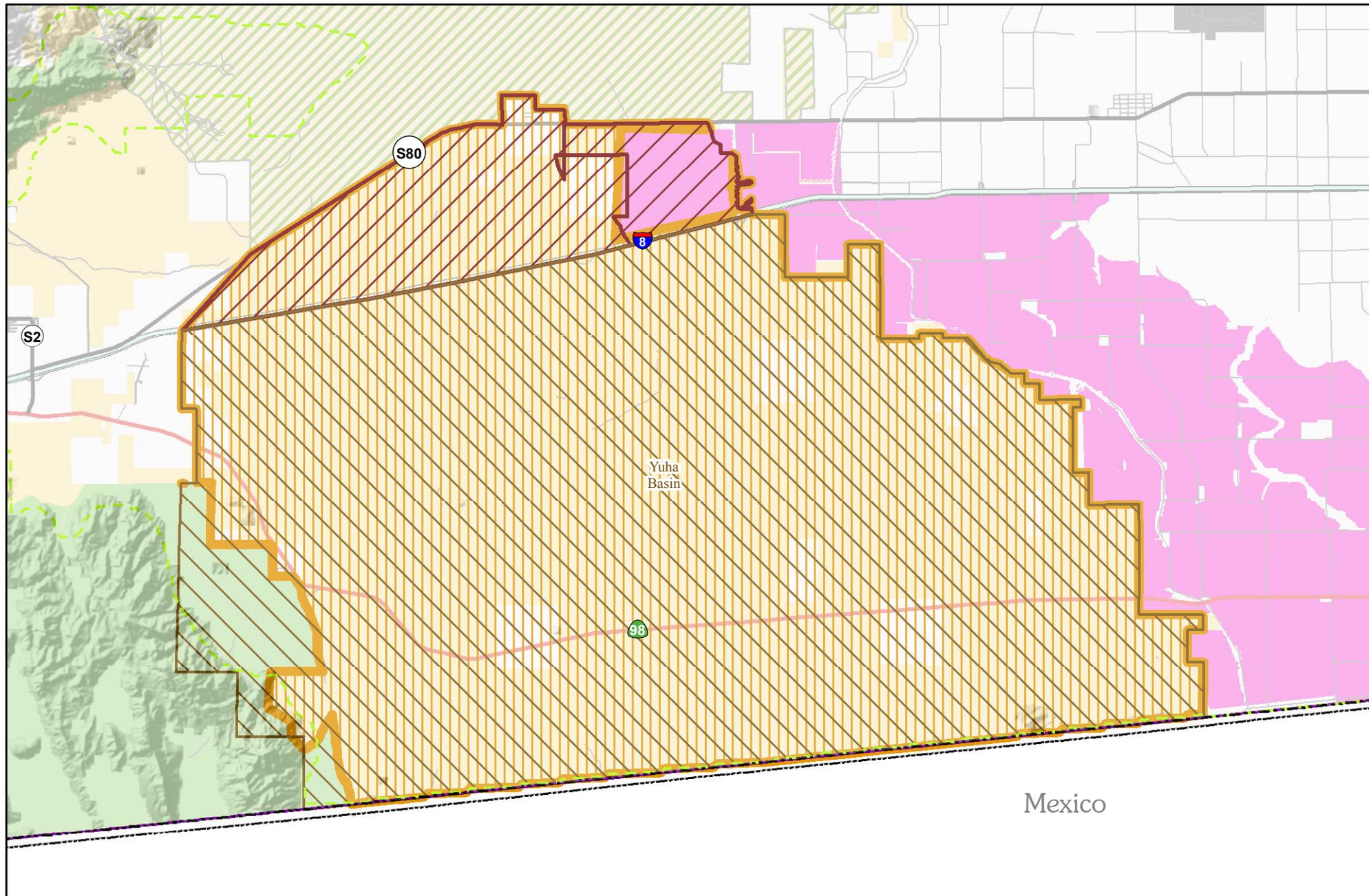
- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- Other Federal
- Military
- Private

GTLF

- Interstate
- US Hwy
- CA Hwy
- County Hwy



Yuha Basin



Alternative 3 ACECs
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 Prepared by BLM California State Office



ACEC Layers

- Existing ACEC
- Proposed ACEC
- Proposed NLCS
- Design Focus Areas
- Legislatively and Legally Protected

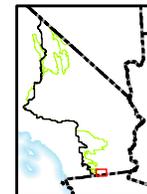
- Cities
- OHV Areas
- CDCA Boundary
- DRECP Boundary
- BLM Field Office

Land Status

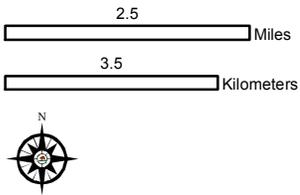
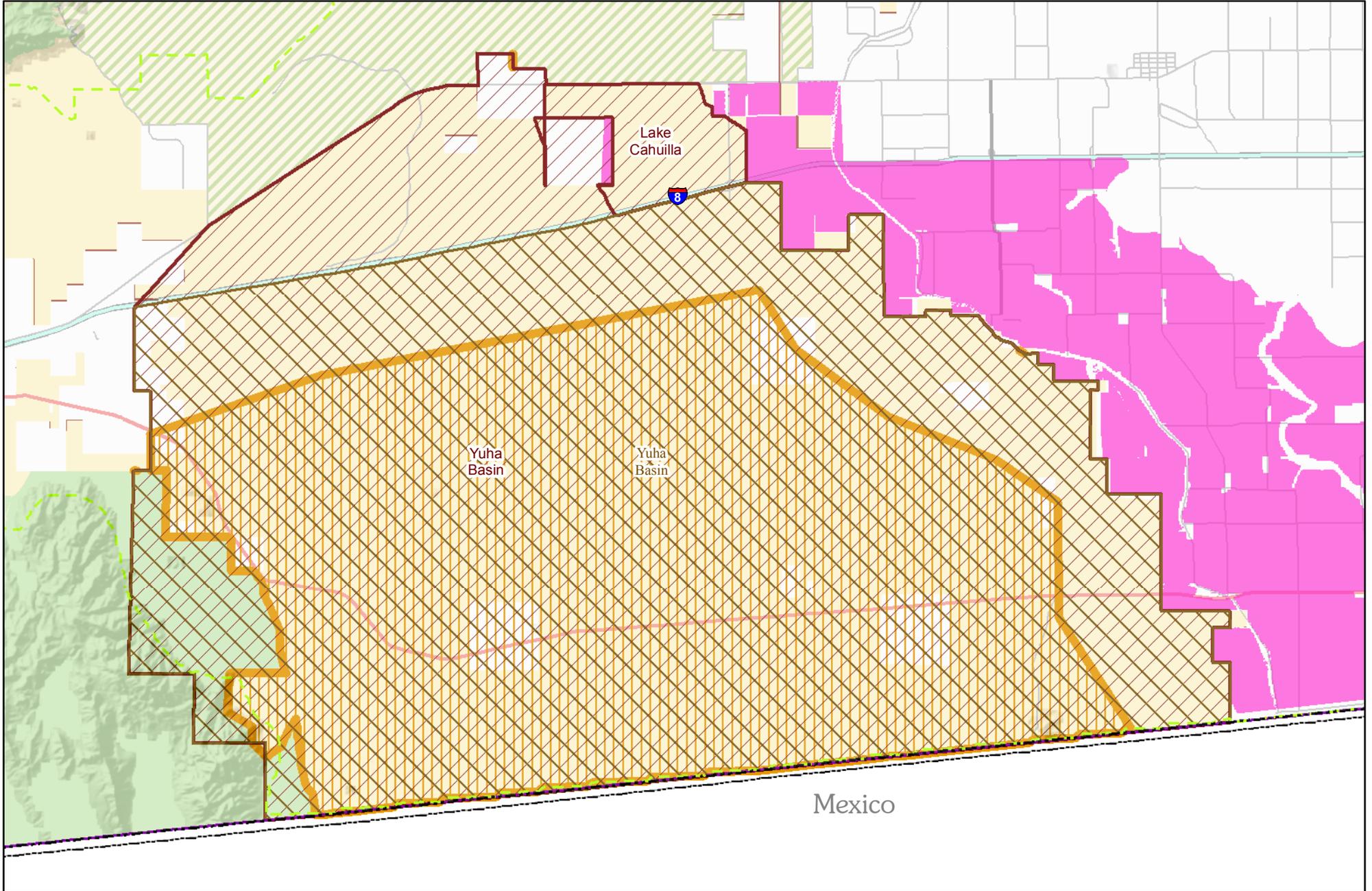
- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- Other Federal
- Military
- Private

GTLF

- Interstate
- US Hwy
- CA Hwy
- County Hwy



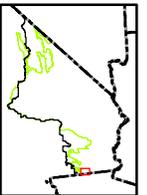
Yuha Basin



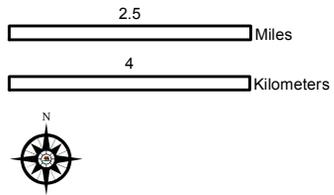
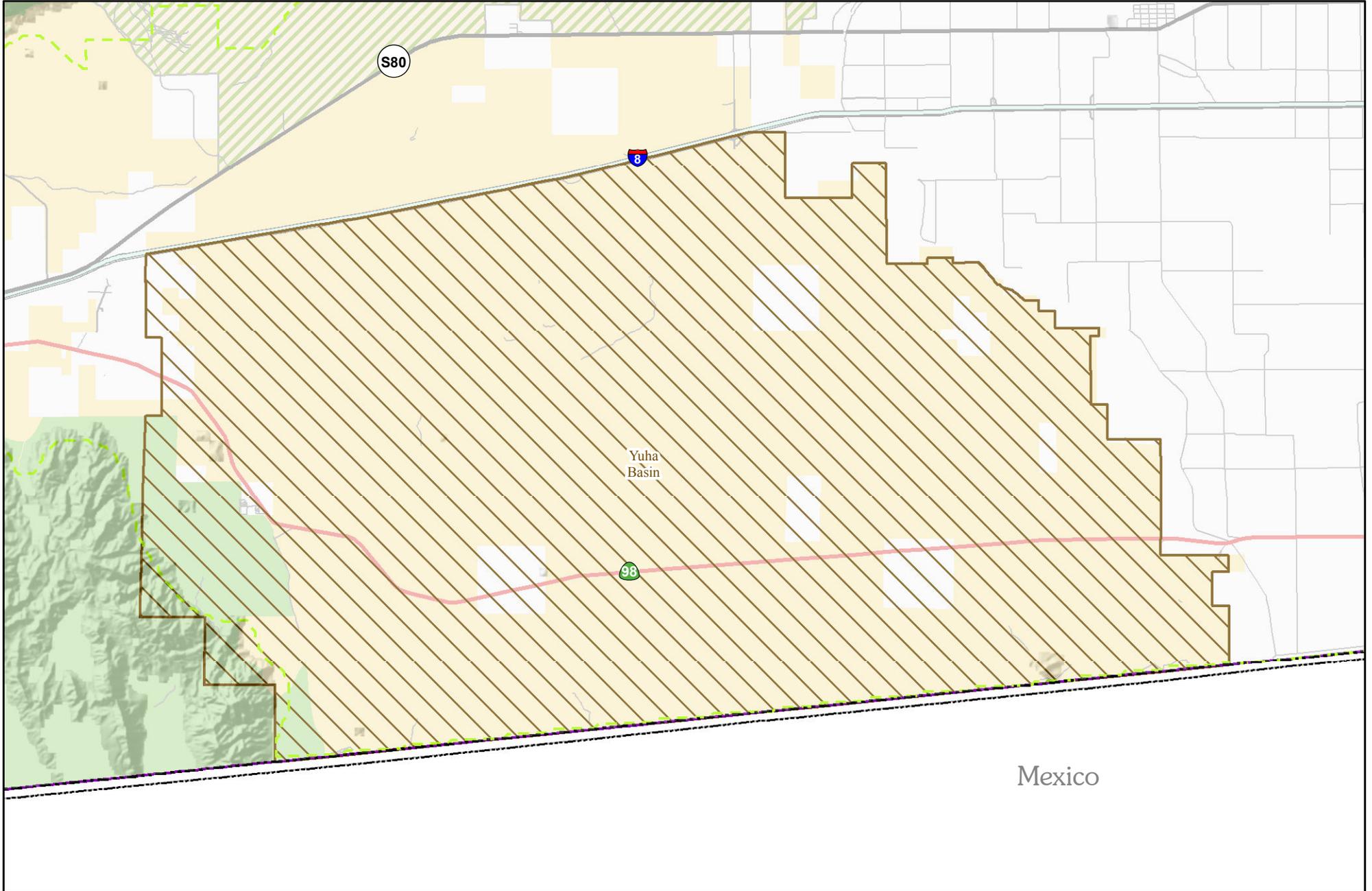
Alternative 4 ACECs
 Date Printed: 8/6/2014
 Prepared by BLM California State Office



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|-------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| ACEC Layers | Design Focus Areas | Land Status | GTLF |
| Existing ACEC | Variance Lands | Bureau of Land Management | Interstate |
| Proposed NLCS | OHV Areas | State | US Hwy |
| Proposed ACEC | CDCA Boundary | Other Federal | CA Hwy |
| Proposed Wildlife Allocation | DRECP Boundary | Military | County Hwy |
| Legislatively and Legally Protected | BLM Field Office | Private | |



Yuha Basin



No Action ACECs
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ACEC Layers

- Existing ACEC
- OHV Areas
- Legislatively and Legally Protected

- Cities
- 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

