

Owens Lake

Description/Location: This unit is located approximately 10 miles southeast of Lone Pine, CA and encompasses all BLM-administered lands within the following described boundaries: U.S. Highway 395 on the west, State Highway 136 on the northeast, and State Highway 190 on the southwest.

Special Designations/Management Plan/Date: new proposal

Relevance and Importance Criteria: Relevant cultural and biological resources. Significant historic and cultural values, including sensitive archaeological and cultural resources that are important to Native Americans and vulnerable to adverse change; and relevant wildlife and plant resources including bird habitat of recognized national importance, sensitive species habitat and rare plant communities.

Cultural relevance and importance

The Southern Owens Valley Mortuary Complex contains enigmatic artifact and rock mound features. In addition to the numerous features comprised of artifacts, the presence of human remains at most of these sites is most intriguing. It has become apparent that these features had an important role in burial ceremonies late in prehistory. The importance of these sites and their protection is paramount to the extant Native Americans in the region and these sites have been determined to be eligible by the BLM, but have not been formally nominated. In addition to these mortuary sites other prehistoric sites and historic sites occur within the proposed unit.

Biological relevance and importance

Owens Lake is a nationally significant Important Bird Area (IBA) as designated by the National Audubon Society. The lake is an important corridor for shorebirds and waterfowl, with brine flies supporting thousands of shorebirds in the spring and fall, and wetlands along the edges of the lake supporting thousands of ducks. Snowy Plover are known to breed on the lake as do many alkali marsh birds. Snow geese overwinter in the IBA. In addition to the birds drawn to the area for the water, several raptors that prey on these species have been documented in the unit, including Golden Eagle, Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, and Prairie Falcon.

The southeastern edge of the unit contains greasewood, an unusual plant assemblage as described in the California Desert Conservation Area plan (1980). The unit also contains an alkali meadow community, designated by California Department of Fish and Wildlife as a rare plant community. Both of these communities are associated with BLM sensitive plants and alkali meadows are associated with the Owens Valley vole, also a BLM sensitive species.

The Keeler dunes, on the northeastern edge of the unit, support the Owens sand dune snout beetle, a rare beetle.

Goals: Protect cultural resources in the unit. Protect biological resources in the unit.

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	0	0	NA
Preferred Alternative	0	10,600	0	0.10%
1	0	10,600	0	0.10%
2	0	9,200	0	0.10%
3	0	10,600	0	0.10%
4	0	1000	0	0.10%

* Acreage values are for BLM managed lands

Alternatives:

Alternatives Preferred, 1, and 3: The area would be identified as an ACEC.

Alternative 2: The area identified as an ACEC is reduced so those acres can be identified as a Development Focus Area.

Alternative 4: The area identified as ACEC is reduced. The variance lands identified in the Solar PEIS remain and are open to evaluation for renewable energy development.

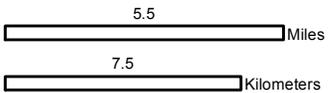
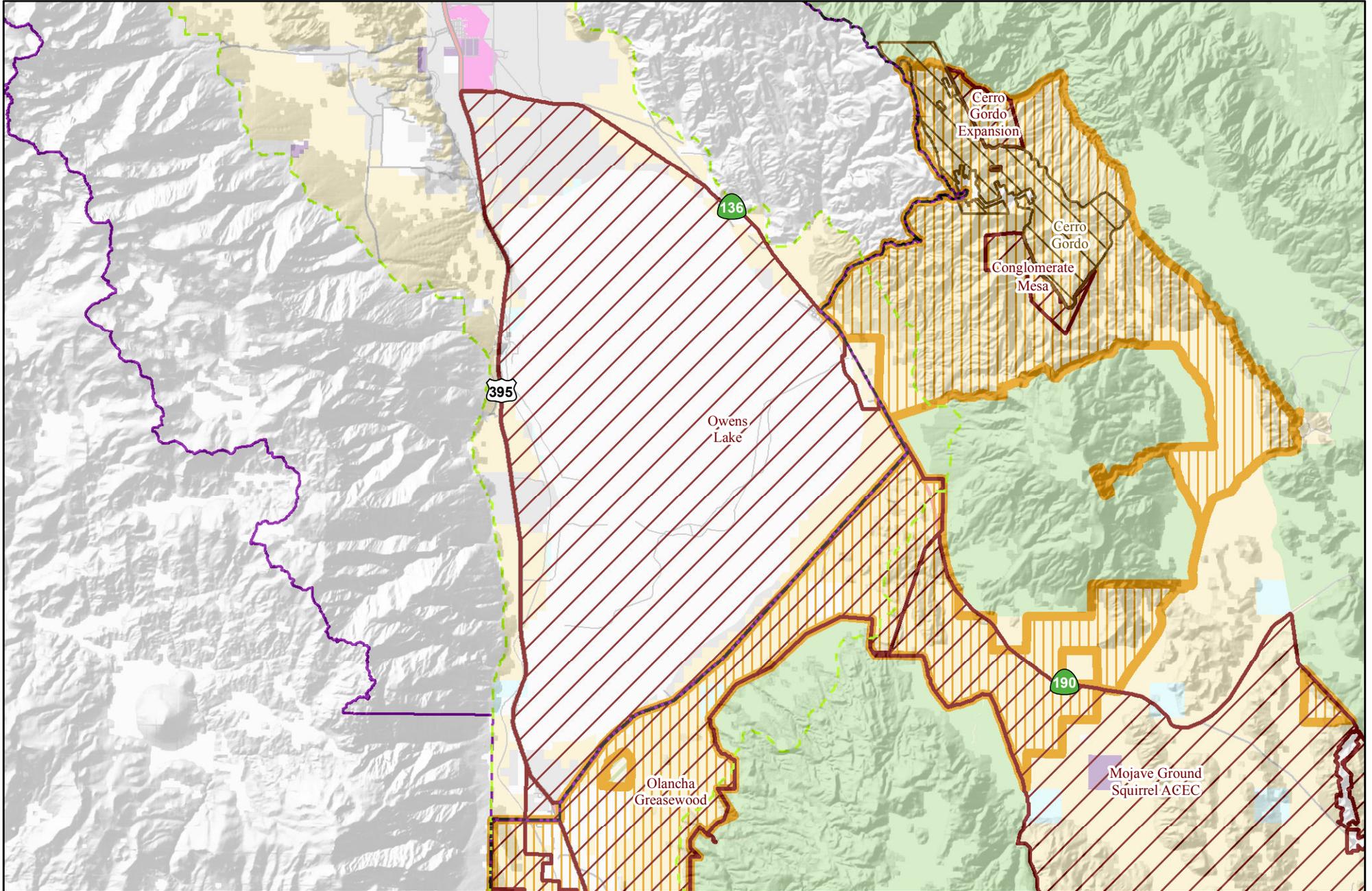
No Action: This area would not have any special management direction.

Objectives (desired future conditions) /Allowable Uses/Management Actions	Resource
<p>Objective: Stabilize dunes for protection of cultural resources and to limit PM10 emissions.</p> <p>Allowable uses: Uses that are scientific or that would not adversely affect the cultural resources.</p>	Soil, water, air
<p>Objectives: Maintain/promote rare and unique plant communities including alkali meadows and the Olancha Greasewood plant assemblage. Maintain/promote Special Status Plants and their habitat, including but not limited to: Manage alkali meadow as a rare plant community which may include BLM sensitive plants <i>Calochortus excavatus</i>, <i>Sidalcea covillei</i>, <i>Plagiobothrys parishii</i>. Manage greasewood salt flats for BLM sensitive plant, <i>Loeflingea squarosa</i>. Retain the following RMP guidance (1993 Bishop RMP): Yearlong Protection of endangered, threatened, candidate, and sensitive plant and animal habitats – no discretionary actions which would adversely affect target resources would be allowed.</p>	Vegetation - Including special status plant species

<p>Manage to achieve Desired Plant Community goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DPC for Sand Dunes in the Owens Lake and South Inyo Management Areas: The goal is to insure adequate vegetative cover and microclimatic conditions for <i>Trigonoscuta owensi</i>, Owens sand dune snout beetle. • DPC for the Section 22 Spring Complex and Springs and Associated Wetlands in the Owens Lake Management Area: The goal is to maximize essential habitat characteristics for migratory and resident bird species. <p>Management Actions:</p> <p>Survey for BLM Sensitive species; identify current occupied and potential habitat.</p> <p>Prevent invasive plant infestations from impacting rare and unique plant communities.</p> <p>Manage in accordance with current policy and RMP guidance, including Yearlong Protection of listed and BLM Sensitive species habitats.</p>	
<p>Objectives:</p> <p>Manage dunes for Owens sand dune snout beetle (rare).</p> <p>Manage alkali meadow for Owens Valley vole (BLM Sensitive).</p> <p>Manage for the protection of migratory birds and for raptors including Golden Eagle, Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcons, Prairie Falcon.</p> <p>Manage for LeConte’s Thrasher (BLM Sensitive species elsewhere in the state but not in this area, due to lack of data).</p> <p>Manage for protection of desert tortoise (Federal Threatened) if present.</p> <p>Manage for protection of important bird area.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>Survey for BLM Sensitive species, desert tortoise, LeConte’s Thrasher, and Owens sand dune snout beetle; identify current occupied and potential habitat.</p> <p>Identify and implement actions to conserve and improve habitat conditions.</p>	<p>Fish and Wildlife - Including special status fish and wildlife species</p>
<p>Objective: Limit or design all undertakings to a level below the threshold for an Adverse Effect.</p> <p>Allowable Uses: Yearlong Protection of mortuary complex and any significant cultural resources. No discretionary actions which would adversely affect target resources would be allowed.</p> <p>Consider the resources on the landscape level and limit any activities that would alter the setting, context, or feel of the cultural sites. .</p> <p>Management Actions: Manage the resource in manner consistent with Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and SHPO guidance for the protection of pre-historic cemeteries. Consider the potential impacts within the landscape level for impact analysis. Engage the appropriate tribal entities in consultation regarding these resources which have been identified as having religious and spiritual importance.</p>	<p>Cultural Resources</p>

See programmatic ACEC cultural resources objective and action items in general resource rules	
<p>Objective: Retain the appearance and setting of the historic landscape.</p> <p>Allowable Uses: uses that would not negatively impact the historic or ethnographic setting above the threshold for an adverse effect determination.</p> <p>Management Actions: Manage the resource in manner consistent with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation guidance for landscape level analysis.</p>	Visual Resources
Not an allowable use. Renewable energy development is not compatible with unit values and criteria.	Renewable Energy

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Preferred Alternative 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

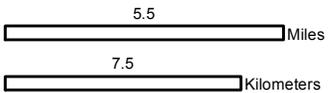
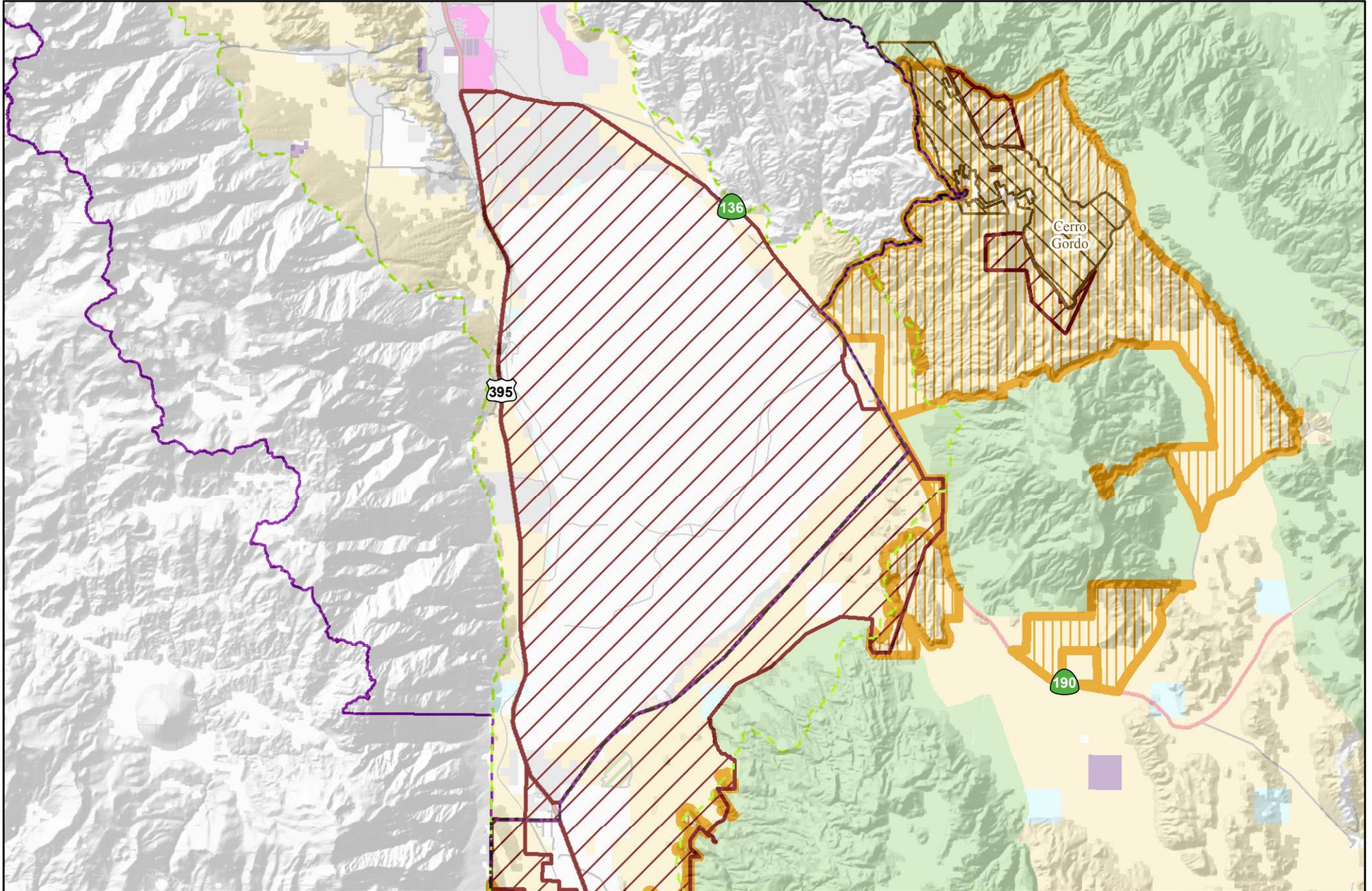
- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- Other Federal
- Military
- Private

GTIF

- Interstate
- US Hwy
- CA Hwy
- County Hwy



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Alternative 1 ACECs

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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

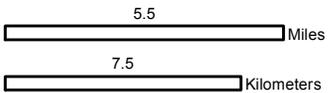
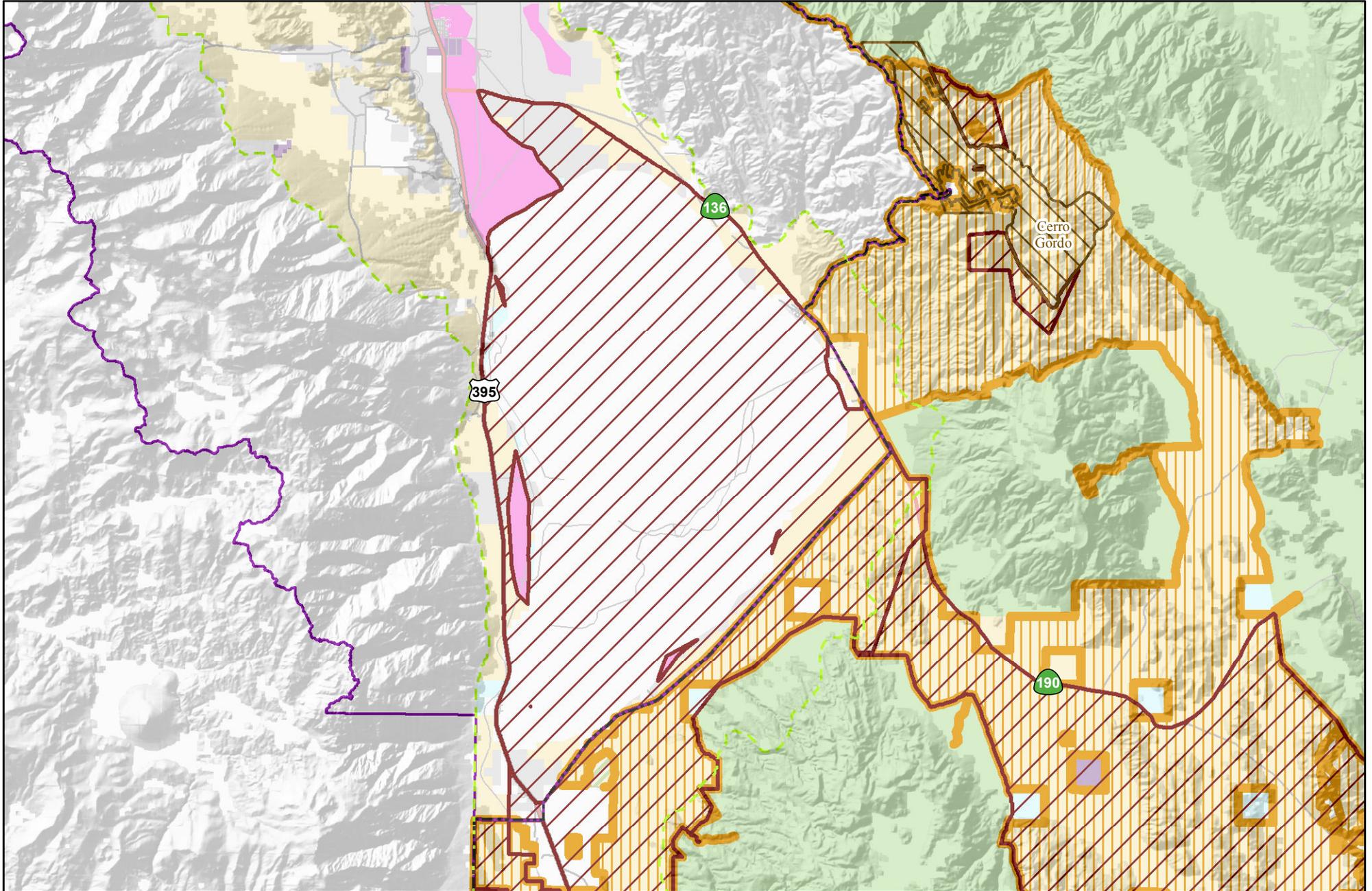
- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- Other Federal
- Military
- Private

GTIF

- Interstate
- US Hwy
- CA Hwy
- County Hwy



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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

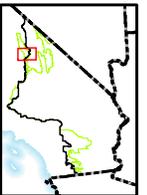
- Cities
- OHV Areas
- CDCA Boundary
- DRECP Boundary
- BLM Field Office

Land Status

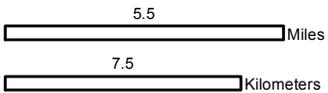
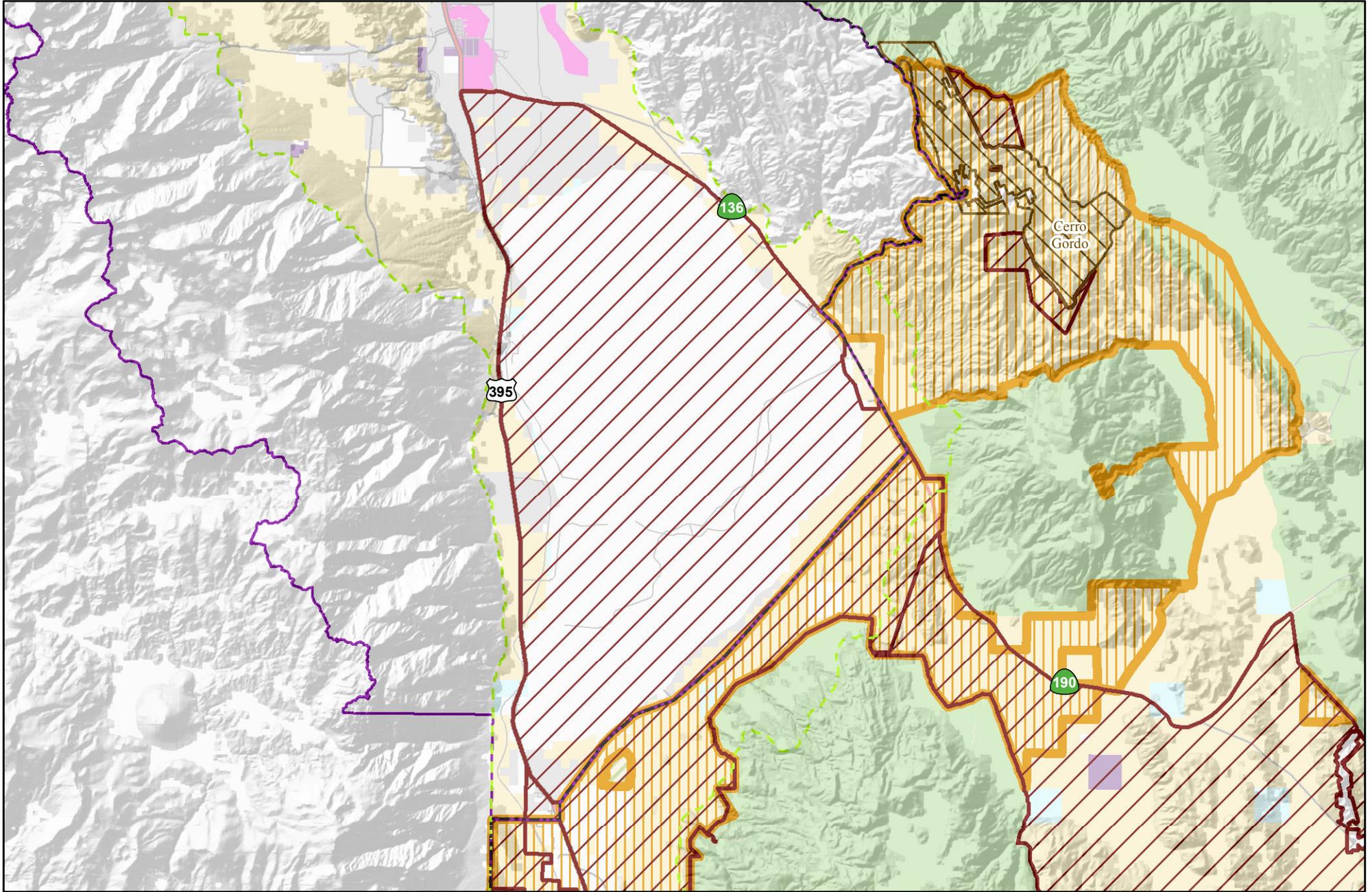
- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- Other Federal
- Military
- Private

GTIF

- Interstate
- US Hwy
- CA Hwy
- County Hwy



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Alternative 3 ACECs

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ACEC Layers

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

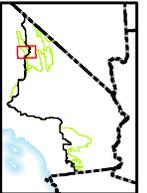
- Cities
- OHV Areas
- CDCA Boundary
- DRECP Boundary
- BLM Field Office

Land Status

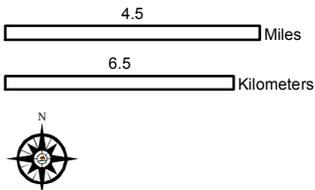
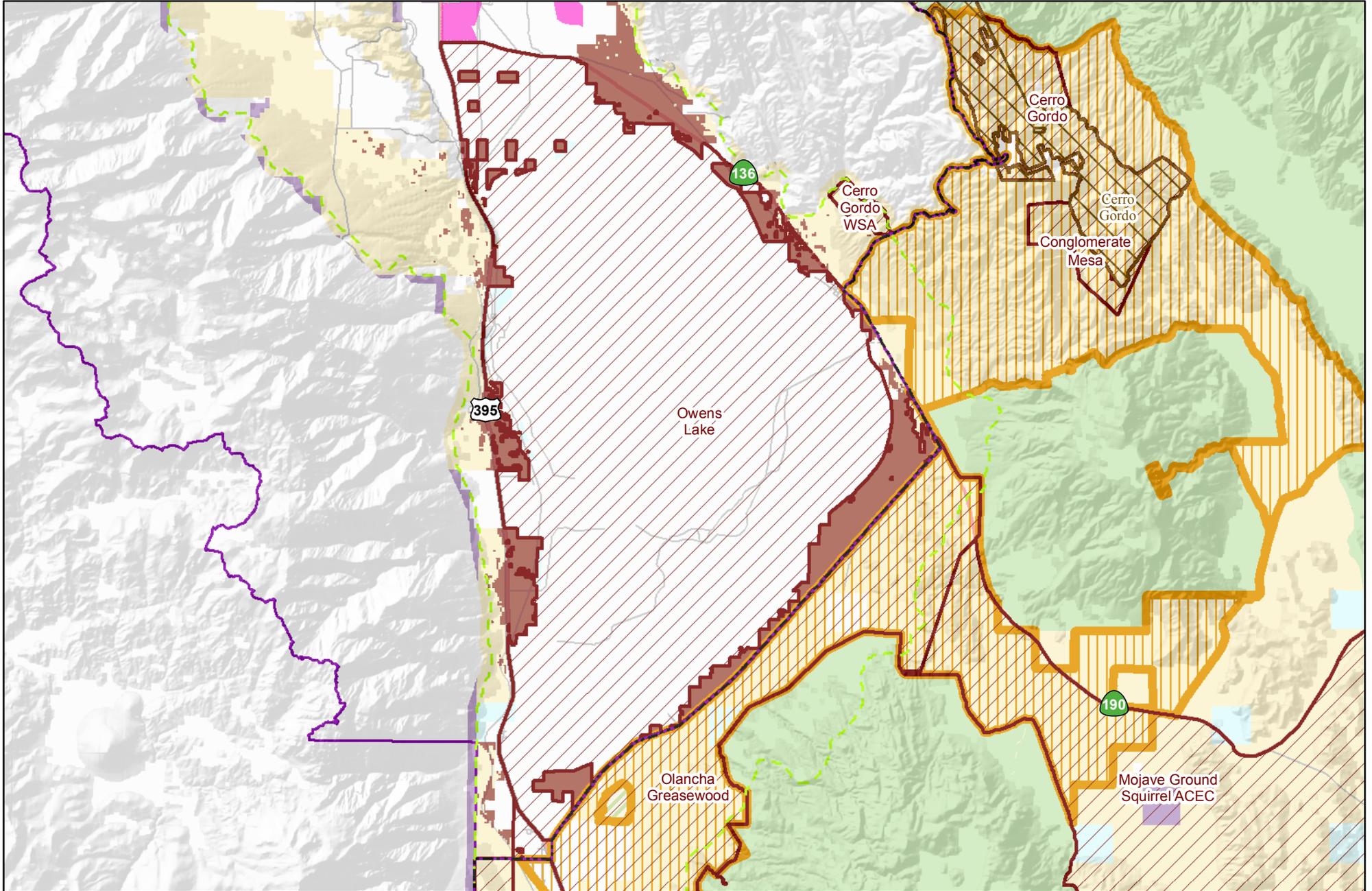
- Bureau of Land Management
- State
- Other Federal
- Military
- Private

GTLF

- Interstate
- US Hwy
- CA Hwy
- County Hwy



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Alternative 4 ACECs
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ACEC Layers		Design Focus Areas	Land Status	GTLF
Existing ACEC	Variance Lands	Bureau of Land Management	Interstate	US Hwy
Proposed NLCS	OHV Areas	State	CA Hwy	County Hwy
Proposed ACEC	CDCA Boundary	Other Federal		
Proposed Wildlife Allocation	DRECP Boundary	Military		
Legislatively and Legally Protected	BLM Field Office	Private		

