San Sebastian Marsh-San Felipe Creek

Description/Location: The unit is located in western Imperial County, bounded on the north by Highway 78, on the east by State Highway 86, on the southeast by the Superstition Hills and on the south and west by Lower Borrego Valley.

Nationally Significant Values:
Ecological: The conservation lands and ACEC are the only designated Critical Habitat for the federally listed endangered desert pupfish and the perennial stream and salt marsh habitat justify it as nationally important. Other special status species can be found at San Sebastian Marsh-San Felipe Creek, including the flat-tailed horned lizard. The conservation lands would provide connectivity with the proposed West Mesa conservation lands to the south.

Cultural: The proposed conservation lands and ACEC hold a rich history of human occupation. Prehistoric and historic use centered on the marsh environment which represented a stable water source in a desert environment. Prehistoric archaeological sites eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) including villages, temporary campsites and trails are located within this ACEC. The Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail also passes through this ACEC and one of the important campsites that Anza used is located here.

Scientific: Prehistoric and historic archaeological sites with scientific information potential that make them eligible for listing in the NRHP are located within this ACEC.

Special Designations/Management Plan/Date: ACEC Plan No. 61, 12/01/1986

Relevance and Importance Criteria: Relevant biological and cultural resources. San Felipe Creek/San Sebastian Marsh provides a corridor of unique and highly valuable habitat. The portion of the stream between Tarantula Wash and Harper's Well Wash is spring fed and perennial. Even in the driest years, a series of interrupted pools persists. Six primary habitat types occur within the ACEC. These include marsh, creosote bush scrub, mesquite woodland, mesquite dune, alkali sink scrub, and wash community.
Goals: Protect the wildlife, habitat and cultural resource values of the San Sebastian March-San Felipe Creek ACEC while providing for compatible public uses. Provide for sustained water flow in the San Felipe watershed.

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	6,500	0	NA
Preferred Alternative	6,500	6,500	0	1%
1	6,400	6,500	0	1%
2	6,500	6,500	0	1%
3	6,500	6,500	0	1%
4	6,500	6,500	0	1%

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

Alternatives :
All Alternatives – this existing ACEC would continue to be managed as it currently is.

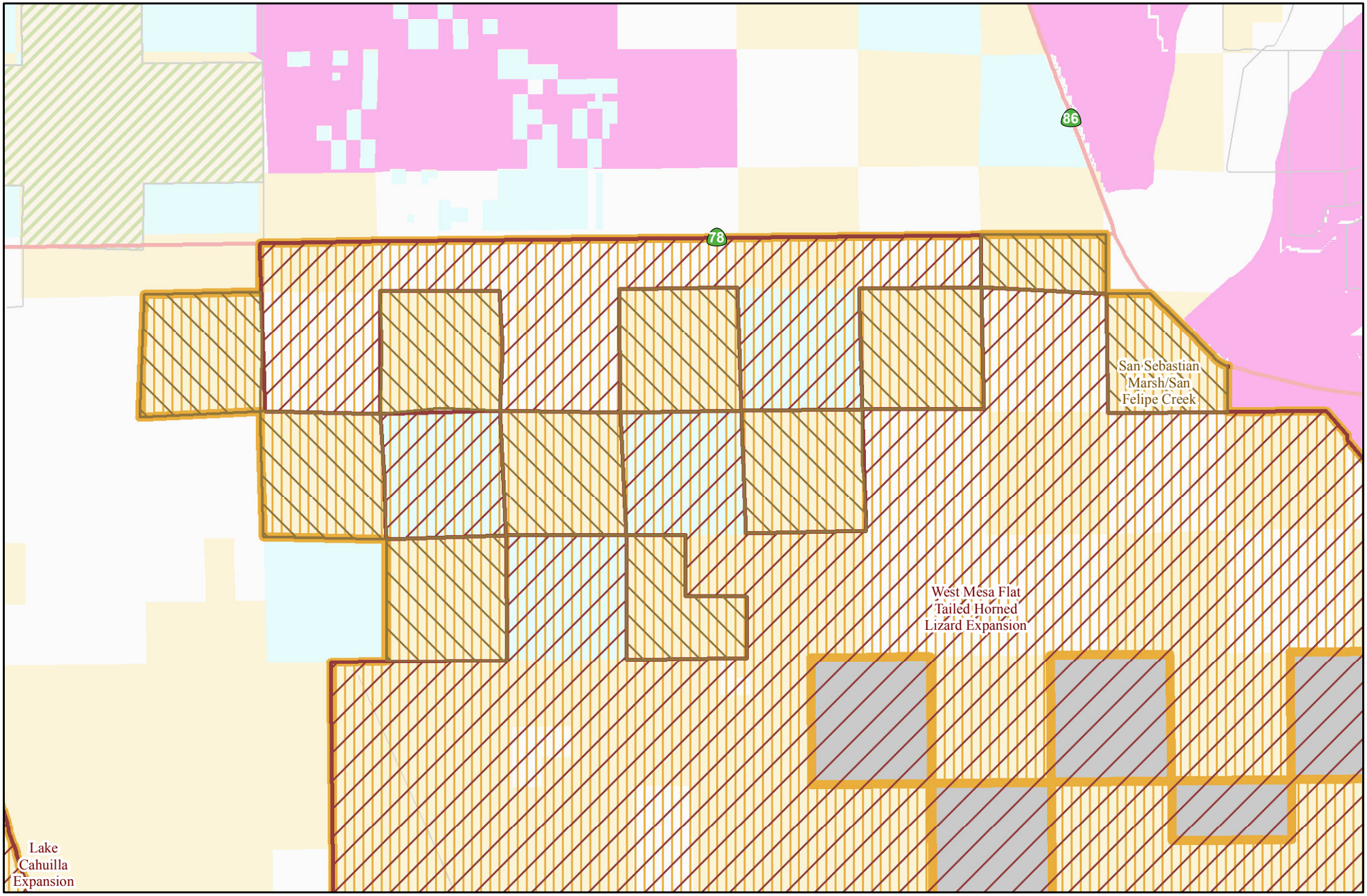
Objectives (desired future conditions)/Allowable Uses/Management Actions	**Resource**
Objective: Minimize soil disturbance. Objective: Develop a watershed hydrology model for San Felipe Creek to determine effects of factors such as agriculture, precipitation, plant invasions, flooding and seismicity on marsh habitat and stream flow Management Action: Gather hydrology data needed to create models Objective: Maintain and enhance native aquatic species and their habitats of special management concern Management Actions: Enhance aquatic habitats. Install and maintain wildlife guzzler. Objective: Manage the ACEC with the standards for CO, H2S, visibility-reducing particles, and attainment for other criteria in accordance with the standards set by the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District. Management Actions: Coordinate with the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District.	Soil, water, air
Six primary habitat types occur within the ACEC. These include marsh, creosote bush scrub, mesquite woodland, mesquite dune, alkali sink scrub, and wash community. Objective: Protect the following sensitive plant species from unnatural ground disturbance: Salton Milk-Vetch (*Astragalus crotalariae*) (CNPS 4.3)	Vegetation (incl. special status species)

Gravel Milk-Vetch (*Astragalus sabulonum*) (CNPS 2.2) Parish's Club-Cholla (*Grusonia parishii*) (CNPS 2.2) Wiggins' Cholla (*Opuntia wigginsii*) (CNPS 2.2) Thurber's Pilostyles (*Pilostyles thurberi*) (CNPS 4.3) Objective: Control exotic vegetation and promote native vegetation Management Action: Develop a restoration plan with the California Department of Fish and Game for the San Felipe watershed that includes removing of salt cedar (no burning), replacing the tamarisk-occupied area with native riparian shrubs and trees (mesquite especially), and envisions landscape connectivity between the ACEC the BLM lands in the headwaters of the watershed; Management Action: Initiate a program of land acquisition of tamarisk-infested lands upstream of the ACEC to remove tamarisk, revegetate with native species, and halt downstream spread of tamarisk into the current ACEC; Management Action: Work with the other public lands managers in the San Felipe Creek watershed on landscape-level planning to improve the ecological function of the watershed and to enhance the native vegetation.	
Special Status Species: Desert Pupfish (*Cyprinidon macularius*) Colorado Valley Woodrat (*Neotoma albigula venusta*) Flat-tailed horned lizard Crissal Thrasher Le Conte's Thrasher Loggerhead Shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*) Southern Leopard Frog (*Rana yavapaiensis*) - extirpated Objective: Determine the composition of wildlife and plant species resident within the ACEC. Management Action: Perform wildlife inventories for comparison with the UC-Santa Cruz 1982 inventory. Objective: Control exotic aquatic wildlife species where they are detrimental to native species, especially *Gambusia affinis*. Management Action: Install a fish barrier east of Highway 86 Objective: Improve native wildlife habitat Management Action: Install a freshwater pond for the southern leopard frog and desert pupfish and reintroduce a population of the frog into enhanced habitat Management Action: Install wildlife guzzlers outside the riparian zone of the creek and marsh.	Fish and Wildlife (incl. special status species)
See programmatic ACEC cultural resources objective and action items in general cultural resources rules. Objective: Provide for the protection of highly sensitive cultural resources. Management Action: Perform route restoration to erase illegal routes. Management Action: Monitor the creation of illegal routes and perform route	Cultural Resources

restoration as needed. Management Action: Conduct regular ranger patrols and surveillance. Management Action: Exclude OHV use within one mile of cultural resources except on designated routes. Management Action: Nominate the significant sites or potential district to the NRHP. Management Action: Consult with local Indian tribes and knowledgeable traditional practitioners regarding the cultural resource values present within the ACEC. Objective: Increase public awareness of the cultural resources values within the ACEC. Management Action: Install informative signage and kiosks at various appropriate locations within the ACEC. Objective: Monitor the known significant archaeological sites and record new sites that may exist within the ACEC. Management Action: Work with local and national archaeological and historical organizations and institutions to develop partnerships to enable proactive survey and recordation. Management Action: Apply for grant or other funding to pay for the studies. Objective: Evaluate the need for stabilization projects to retard erosional processes within the ACEC that may be negatively affecting the prehistoric village sites.	
Objective: Ensure the general management and protection of paleontological resources consistent with the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act and the Omnibus Act. Management Action: Conduct a paleontological assessment to determine the paleontological potential of the area. Management Action: Develop plans for the inventory, monitoring, and scientific and educational use of paleontological resources as needed.	Paleontology
Objective: Administer and manage trail resources in accordance with Old Spanish Trail Comprehensive Management Plan, NTSA, FLMPA, local RMPs, and agency policy and direction. Allowable Uses: Research, interpretation, recreation. Management Action: Designate Trail Management Corridor	National Historic Trails
Objective: Protect characteristic landscape of the marsh, and particularly the historic landscape surrounding the Anza NHT and related historic sites. Management Actions: Mitigate impacts to visual resources by applying appropriate techniques and prescriptions of appropriate VRM class.	Visual Resources
Objective: Manage the route of travel network to fulfill requirements of the original CDCA Plan and the WECO Plan Amendment. Management Action: Provide signage and maps to the public to inform them of route locations and regulations. Management Action: Increase ranger patrols and other BLM personnel visits to the area.	Trails and Travel Management

Management Action: Create barriers as necessary and monitor the creation of illegal routes. Perform route restoration as needed. Management Action: Coordinate with Border Patrol as to the sensitivity of the area. Educate agents about the fragile resources and the damage they can do by driving off route unnecessarily.	
Objective: Promote public understanding of ACEC values and encourage compliance. Management Action: Increase ranger and other BLM personnel visits to the area. Management Action: Install signage and update kiosk. Provide maps to the public to inform them of route locations and regulations. Objective: Promote dispersed recreational activities in this area which would include sight-seeing, hiking, and birdwatching. Management Action: Create a watchable wildlife site.	Recreation
Existing ROWs: CalTrans material site ROW All but 640 acres leased for oil and gas. When the leases expire, the BLM will not renew them. New proposals for ROWs 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.	Rights of Way
Objective: Manage ACEC collaboratively with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Management Action: Acquire private lands in the San Felipe watershed through purchase or exchange.	Land Tenure
No Renewable Energy Development Geothermal: Available for geothermal leasing and development with a NSO stipulation.	Renewable Energy
Objective: Permit mineral development in the ACEC with stipulations to minimize impact on resources. Allowable Uses: Geothermal Leasing. Mineral leasing with stipulations. Management Actions: Close coordination to ensure mineral and energy development has minimal impact on wildlife, habitat and cultural resources. Allow geothermal leasing with no surface occupancy.	Locatable Minerals Mineral Materials Non-Energy Leasables

San Sebastian Marsh/San Felipe Creek



1.5 Miles

2 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

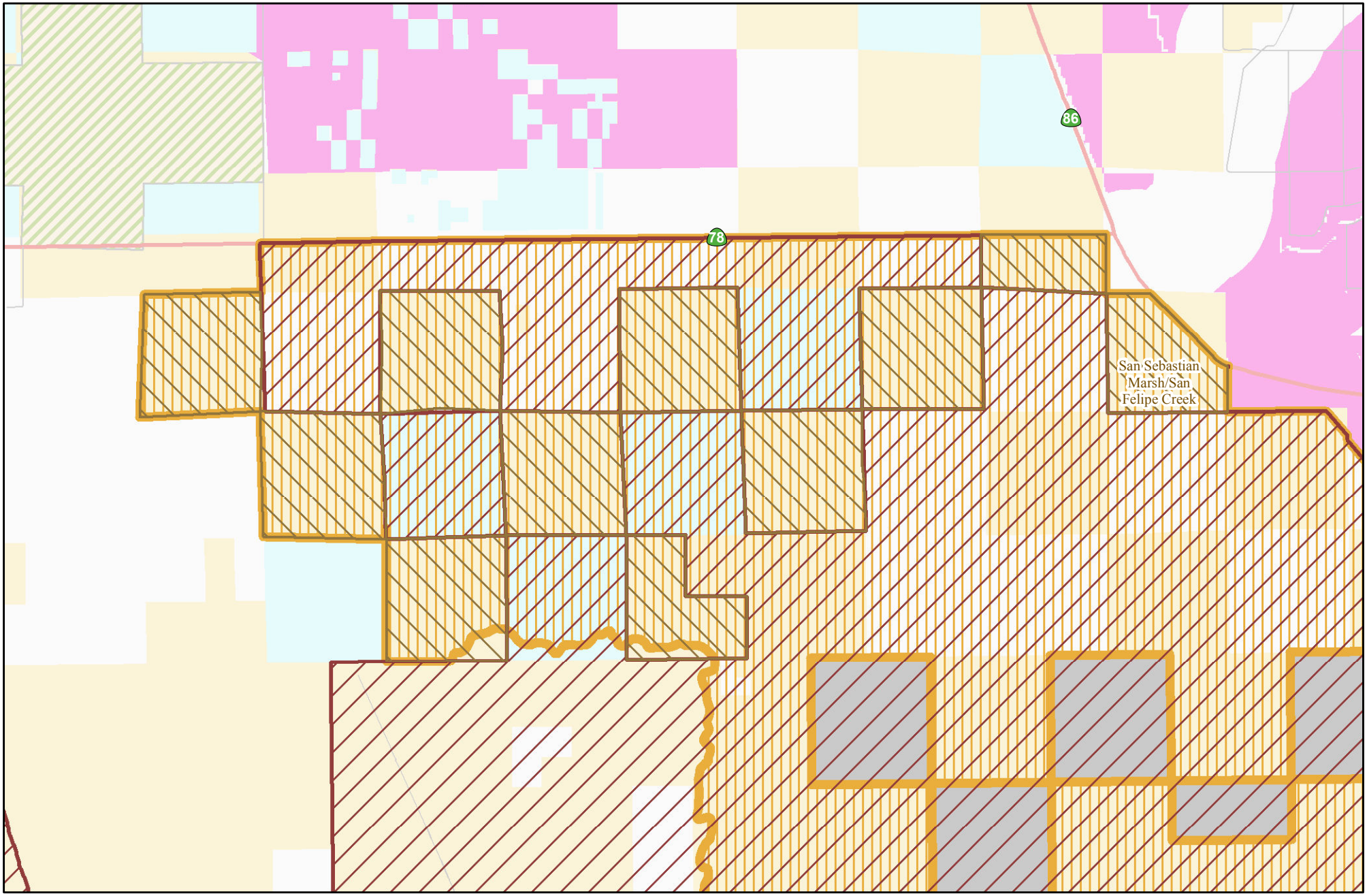
Land Status

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

GTLF

- Interstate
- US Hwy
- CA Hwy
- County Hwy

San Sebastian Marsh/San Felipe Creek



1.5 Miles

2 Kilometers

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Alternative 1 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

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- Other Federal
- Military
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GTLF

- Interstate
- US Hwy
- CA Hwy
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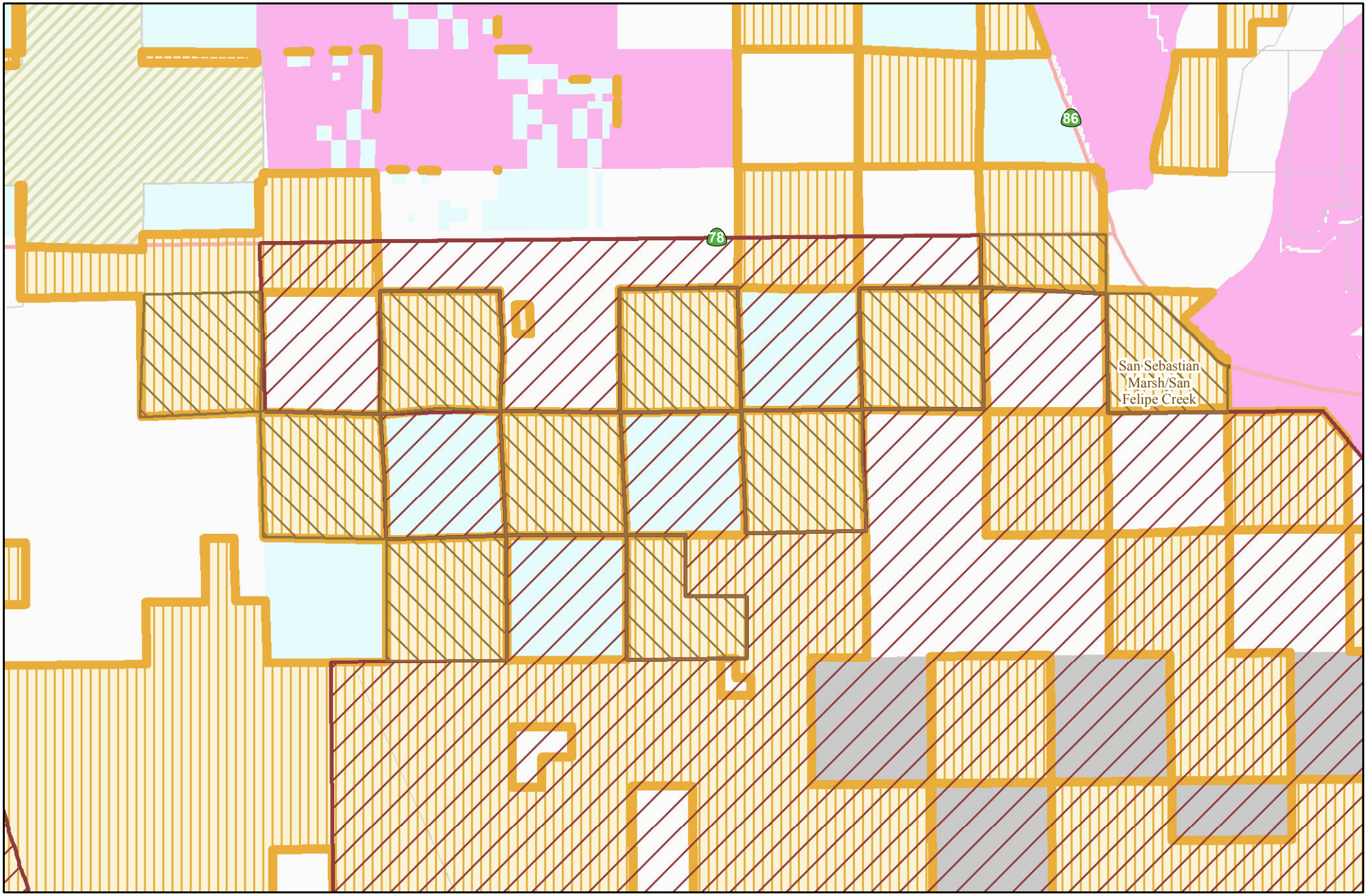
San Sebastian Marsh/San Felipe Creek



1.5 Miles

2 Kilometers

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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

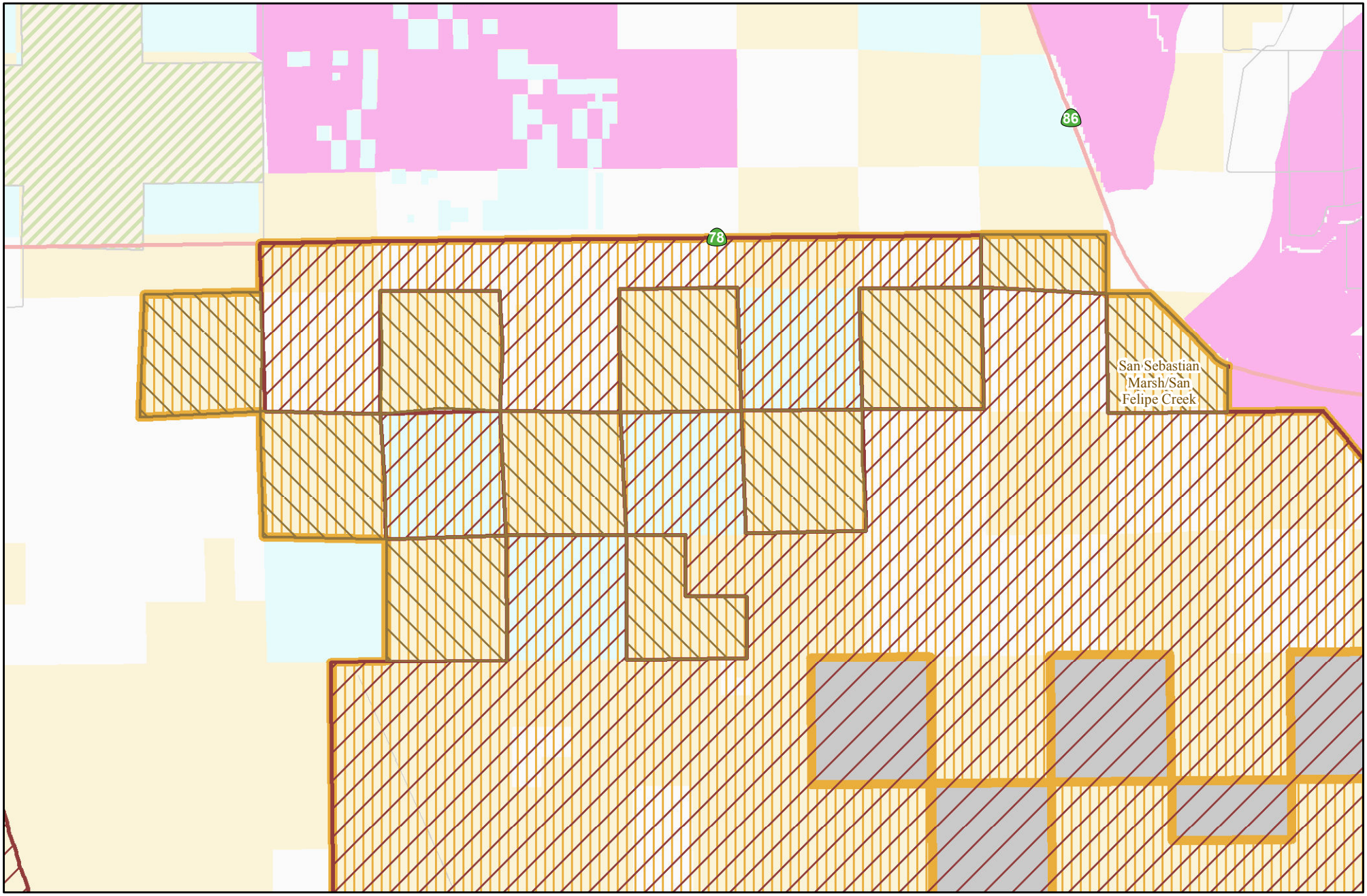
Land Status

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

GTLF

- Interstate
- US Hwy
- CA Hwy
- County Hwy

San Sebastian Marsh/San Felipe Creek



1.5 Miles

2 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

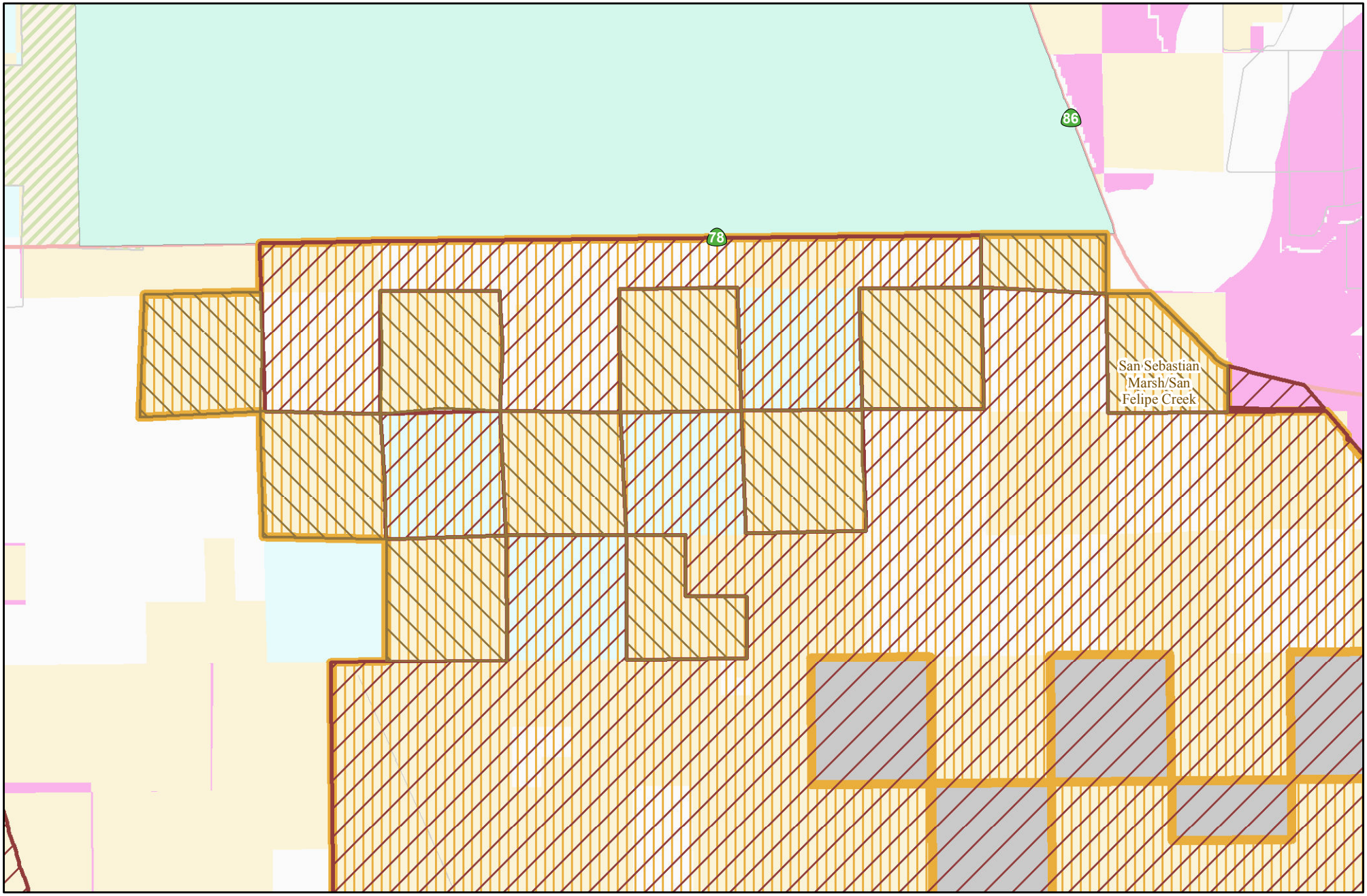
Land Status

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

GTLF

- Interstate
- US Hwy
- CA Hwy
- County Hwy

San Sebastian Marsh/San Felipe Creek



1.5 Miles

2 Kilometers

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Alternative 4 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

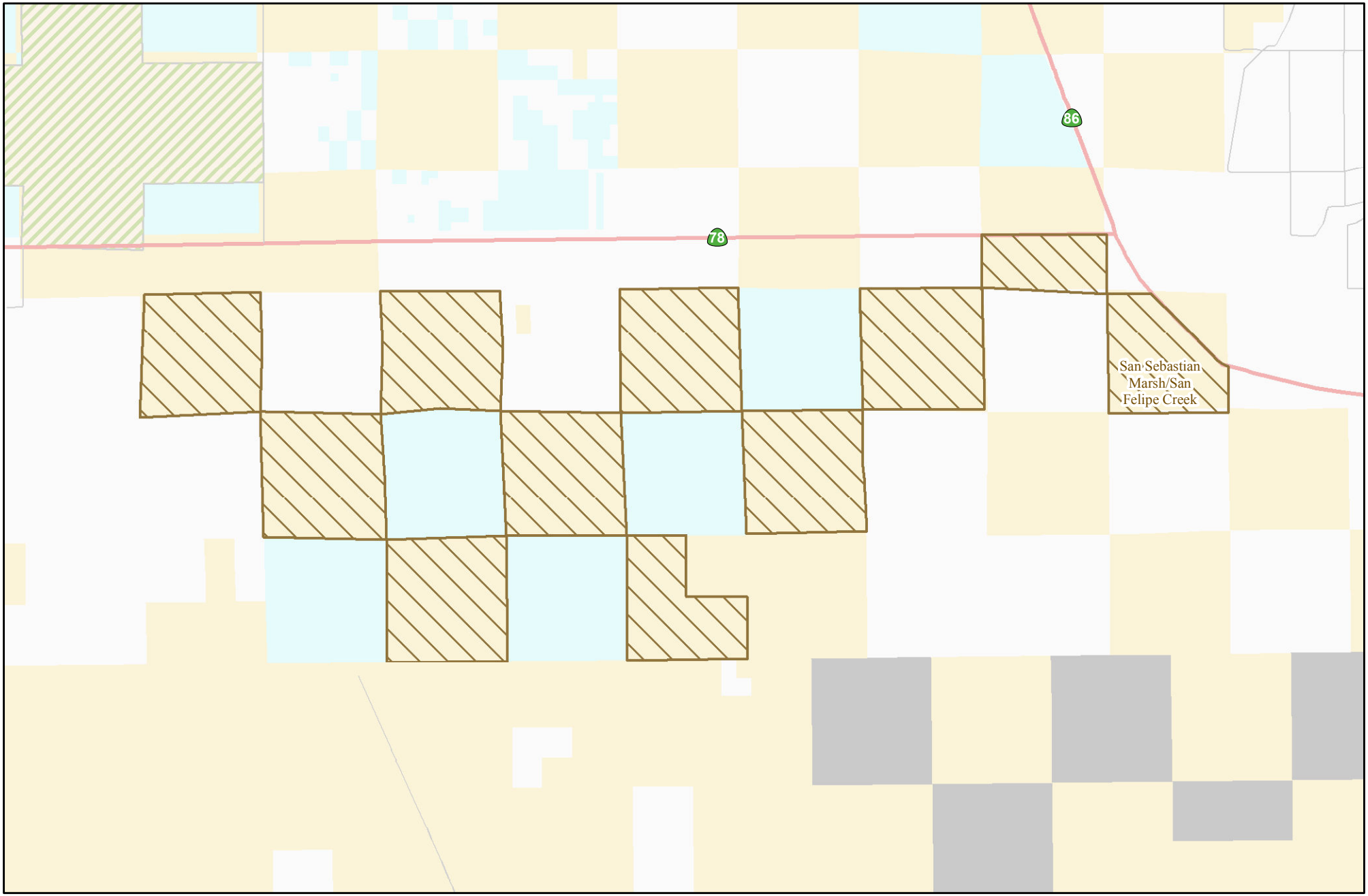
Land Status

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

GTLF

- Interstate
- US Hwy
- CA Hwy
- County Hwy

San Sebastian Marsh/San Felipe Creek



1.5 Miles

2 Kilometers

N

No Action ACECs

Date Printed: 5/29/2013

Prepared by BLM California State Office

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