

Desert Discovery Center Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA)

RMA/RECREATION MANAGEMENT ZONE (RMZ) OBJECTIVE(S) DECISIONS

Objective Statement: Designate this area as a Special Recreation Management Area. To manage the Desert Discovery Center SRMA to provide interpretation, nature education, and an outdoor classroom setting as well as a public space for various public activities and events. Develop extensive facilities and displays. Moreover, this will proceed with the full cooperation of the myriad partners involved with the site.

Activities The Desert Discovery Center is operated through a dynamic and effective multi-agency partnership where the primary activities are providing nature education through an outdoor classroom program, and public interpretive programs & displays. Additional activities include presentations & special events, scenic viewing, picnicking, rest & relax, exercise, walking, organization & public meetings. This site serves as a city wild lands park for neighboring kids playing chase, tag, hide & seek, catching lizards, flying kites & reading books.

Experiences: This SRMA provides a piece of quiet and nature in the heart of the city where people often stop to rest, look over the interpretive materials, get out and stretch, and simply to enjoy the panoramic view. Visitors from around the world drop in to see, touch & learn about the Old Woman Meteorite, 2nd largest in N. America. The openness provides for regular unscripted visits by neighbors & kids, and the settings physical layout exercises many people on a regular basis. This site is being developed to function as an outdoor classroom and provides tangible hands on learning experiences, the programs provide kids opportunities to experience the cultural & natural history through arts, crafts, dance and plays. In addition to local visitors the site provides a break with visitor amenities for interstate 15 travelers, including groups, families & individuals.

Benefits: This SRMA is a bit unique because it provides significant personal benefits to visitors and workers alike. This tranquil setting provides brief respite from daily life for neighbors, visitors and workers. The facility provides valuable community benefits through education programs, hands on job skills, confidence building and a second chance at life for volunteers & paid staff; site workers include retirees, disabled workers, students, work to welfare recipients, interns, at risk youth, and first offenders. The outdoor classroom provides significant social and community benefits by instilling an understanding and respect for the land; the resulting curiosity and understanding in youth grows to an appreciation & respect for the surrounding public lands. This results in environmental benefits through compatible land use activities, reduced vandalism, fewer incidence of damage to resources, increased participation in re-cycling, reduced levels of inappropriate dumping, volunteer support, funding, resource projects and reduced vandalism.

RECREATION SETTING CHARACTERISTICS (RSC) DESCRIPTIONS

Physical: This SRMA has qualities of the landscape fitting the *Urban Classification*. Sitting in the heart of Barstow, this 12 acre site is located on one of the city's main streets, 2 blocks from interstate 15. Site

improvements include paved parking, 7,000 sq. ft. visitor center, native desert pond & cactus garden area, large enclosed patio, 11 acre open space with .25 mile nature trail, 6 shade ramadas & picnic tables, landscaping, lighting, interpretive displays, restrooms, kiosk, solar energy panels, administrative office space, complete range of utilities & net connectivity, plus solar panel power generation. Starting in 2012 the city began an urban trail plan with the DDC and neighboring facilities forming the core components for a planned community multi-modal trail systems.

Social Components: All of the qualities of the social component dictate that the site is *Urban in Classification*. The site is popular with local school kids in groups up to several hundred. Families on regional and cross country vacations frequently visit; as do a wide range of travelers because of the sites proximity to the highway. The Old Woman meteorite is on display here and draws a wide range of visitors from across the country and around the globe. The local youth are a target group for outdoor classroom with the intent to develop and grow a sense of respect & stewardship for the surrounding desert landscape. The goal is to grow a sense of ownership in local citizens for the landscape around them; and therefore reduce the potential for vandalism & destructive behaviors harmful to the natural setting. The orientation plaza is growing as a popular site for teens to meet & greet, and the sites proximity to multi-occupancy housing leads to continuous stream of youthful interactions.

Operational Components: This is an inner-city facility with excellent access off main street, about 2 blocks from easy off & on to Interstate 15. Walkways connect the site to the adjacent community center, traditional park, playground & tennis courts, and nearby museum. There is a large paved parking area for cars, buses & motorhomes; including handicap parking & cement walkways. Inside the center a visitor counter is staffed and a wide range of displays are available for browsing. Visitor amenities include restrooms, walkways, water fountains, shade structures, picnic tables and overlooks. There is an attached courtyard cactus garden and desert pond, both with live native desert species. The pond and an inside fish tank contain native turtles and Mojave River tui chub.

MANAGEMENT ACTIONS & ALLOWABLE USES

Acres by Alternative on BLM Lands:

No Action	Preferred Alternative	1	2	3	4
0	13	0	0	0	0

Recreation and Visitor Services: The facility has regular hours of operations during daylight; parking, picnic and outdoor park space are open 24/7. The site is operated in partnership with several agencies & organizations contributing various personnel & resources; visitor counter is staffed when the facility is open, typically by volunteers; group tours & outdoor classrooms are by appointment only.

Other Programs: Provide flexibility and growth in the partnership to allow the site to evolve as necessary for the best use to meet dynamic and changing community & agency needs.

Renewable energy development is not an allowable use in SRMAs due to the incompatibility with the values of the SRMA. Two exceptions to this management action are: 1) geothermal development is an allowable use if a geothermal-only DFA overlays the SRMA designation and complies with a “no surface occupancy” restriction; and, 2) in the Preferred Alternatives if a DRECP variance land designation overlays the SRMA, renewable energy may be allowed on a case-by-case basis if the proposed project is found to be compatible with the specific SRMA values.

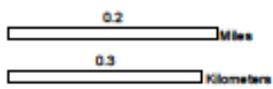
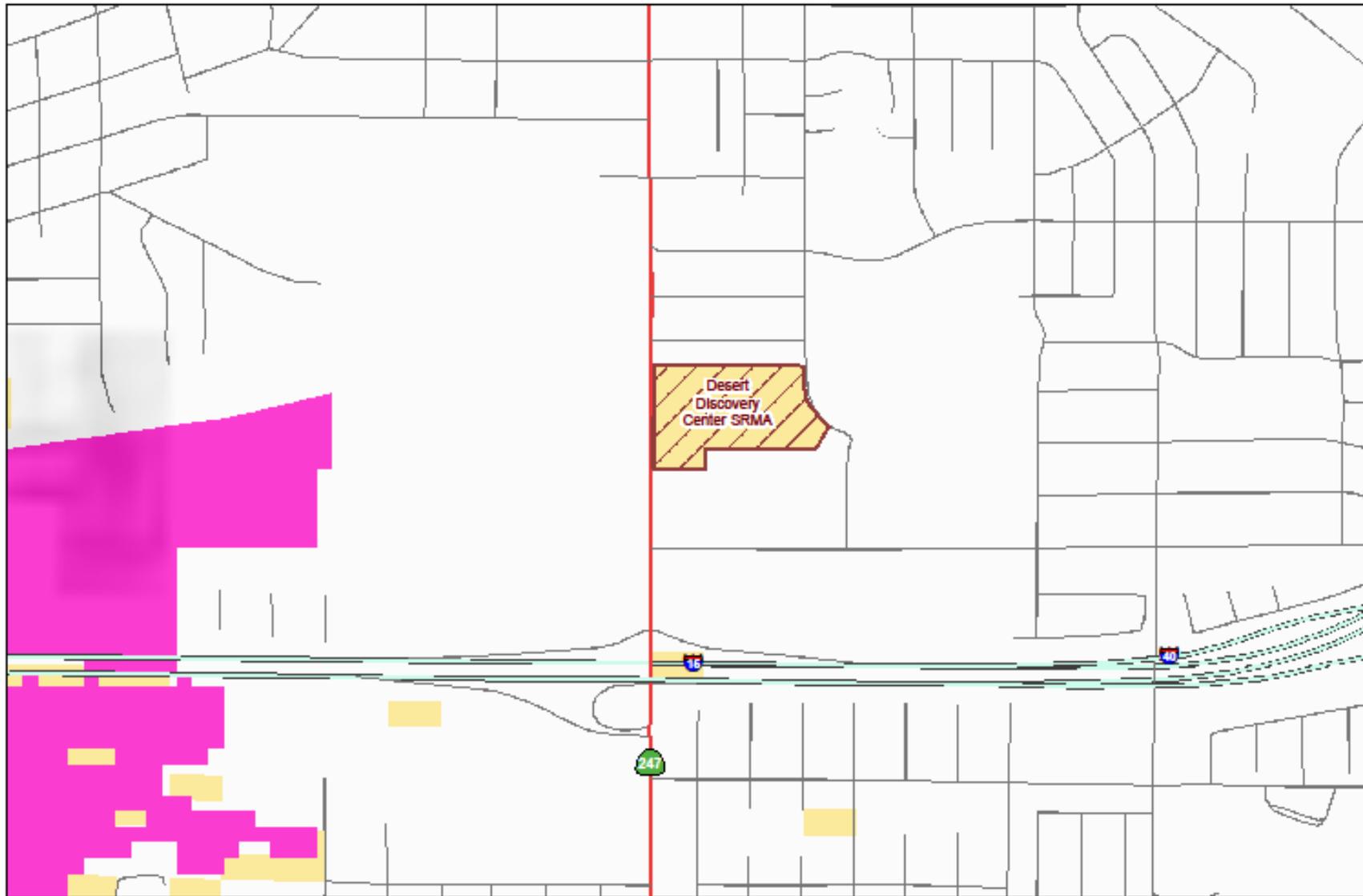
Implementation Decisions: An activity level plan would be developed to identify and designate current and future recreational opportunities, appropriate facilities to provide for and manage the proposed uses, parameters for streamlined Special Recreation Permitting of recreation events, staffing and funding needs, parameters for facility and road/trail maintenance, partnerships, possible recreation fee considerations, and an implementation schedule.

The plan will address avenues to operate the site in full cooperation among all partners. In the interim, existing approved plans and agreements will continue to share responsibility for managing various elements as agreed. This includes efforts to upgrade facility and incorporate emerging sustainable building design concepts. Partners continue to help with upgrades where possible, and the dual purpose of providing a showcase demonstration facility that interprets through example sustainable technology.

Mitigation:

1. Maintain through traffic motorized route network connectivity with roads and trails leading into and through the Desert Discovery Center SRMA.
2. Manage renewable energy development on adjacent and nearby lands to avoid traffic conflicts with visitors & permitted uses.

Desert Discovery Center SRMA



All Alternative's SRMAs and ERMA's



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ACEC Layers

- Proposed SRMA
- Design Focus Areas
- OHV Areas
- Legislatively and Legally Protected

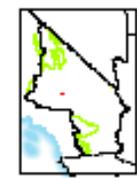
- Cities
- CDCA Boundary
- DRECP Boundary
- BLM Field Office

Land Status

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

GTIP

- Interstate
- US Hwy
- CA Hwy
- County Hwy



The information and maps shown on this system should be used for planning purposes only. It should not be the sole source for determining map boundary locations