

Southern California National Forests
Inventoried Roadless Area (IRA) Analysis
(Reference FSH 1909.12-2007-1, Chapter 72)

Cucamonga B
San Bernardino National Forest

Overview

- **IRA name**
 - Cucamonga B
 - 11,882 acres
- **Location and vicinity, including access by type of road or trail**
 - The Cucamonga B Inventoried Roadless Area is located within the western portion of the Front Country Ranger District of the San Bernardino National Forest. It is bounded on the west primarily by the existing Cucamonga Wilderness; on the south by National Forest System Road (NFSR) 1N34 Cucamonga Truck Trail; on the east side by private land in Lytle Creek, NFSR 2N57, and 2N58; and on the north by NFSR 3N06. Cucamonga B is separated from the Cucamonga C Inventoried Roadless Area by Day Canyon. This area is comprised of the upper Lytle Creek and Cucamonga Creek watersheds. It lies west of the rural community of Lytle Creek, with the more larger, more urbanized Rancho Cucamonga and Upland communities located in the valley about one mile south.
- **Geography, topography and vegetation (including the ecosystem type(s))**
 - Cucamonga B contains steep, heavily dissected ridges with dense chaparral ecosystems and some riparian areas in the lower elevations and mixed conifer in the upper elevations. Elevations range from about 3,000 to 7,800 feet with an aspect that varies. Topography is steep from Lytle Creek west up towards the boundary with the Angeles National Forest.
 - A few minor, intermittent streams are present along with some of the perennial North, Middle and South Forks of Lytle Creek.
- **Current uses of the area**
 - Approximately 6,260 acres within the Cucamonga B Inventoried Roadless Area were classified as ‘Recommended Wilderness’ land use zone in the 2005 Forest Plan Revision.
 - A portion of this unit is proposed to be designated as Wilderness in the 2011 ‘Angeles and San Bernardino National Forests Protection Act,’ H.R. 113. See bill text and map.
 - The Middle Fork Trailhead, just outside the unit boundary, is the beginning of the Middle Fork Trail (6W01) into the Cucamonga Wilderness. The Middle Fork Trailhead is accessible via the Middle Fork Road, Forest Road 2N58. This road leaves the Lytle Creek Road about two miles above the Lytle Creek Ranger Station. The Middle Fork Road is unpaved and high-clearance vehicles are

required to reach the trailhead. The trail climbs steeply for the first half mile and is unshaded. At the top of the ridge the trail splits (unsigned trail junction). The lower trail leads to Stonehouse Camp and is not maintained any further. The upper trail contours around a steep rocky hillside, crosses a small seasonal stream, then leads further to the Cucamonga Wilderness Boundary sign. Here the trail becomes more shaded. Shortly before Third Stream Crossing Camp hikers will have to cross the creek (2.3 miles from trailhead). After Third Stream Crossing the trail switchbacks up to Comanche Camp (3.8 miles from trailhead), and eventually reaches Icehouse Saddle (5.5 miles from trailhead). Total elevation gain from the trailhead to Icehouse Saddle is 3,600 feet. Once at the saddle hikers can choose to hike up Cucamonga Peak and/or Ontario Peak, over to the Three T's (Timber, Telegraph, and Thunder Peaks), or hike down to the Icehouse Trailhead on the Angeles National Forest.

- Stonehouse Crossing is an area just outside the existing Cucamonga Wilderness boundary but within the Cucamonga B Inventoried Roadless Area that provides a novice level hiking and camping experience. It has stoves/grills and open campfires are allowed. It is the only opportunity of its kind within the Front Country Ranger District.
- There are a number of dispersed camping area “yellow post” sites near the Joe Elliott Tree Memorial. They are very popular with hunters in the fall. There is another dispersed area “yellow post” site in the Coldwater Canyon area. It is often inaccessible due to rough road/water in the creek conditions. However, it has a devoted following of visitors who have long enjoyed the open campfire policy there. It is just outside the unit boundary.
- Several parcels of private land lie within this unit.
 - ‘Timber Gulch’ is located in the SW1/4 of Section 8, T 2 N, R 6 W. APN 0350 –011–04. The land appears to be un-developable. It is a narrow drainage with steep slopes, 160 acres in size. The parcel is a homestead patent issued 5/23/1885 under the authority of the Homestead Act of 5/20/1862. No road or vehicle access. The owner would have to cross National Forest System land to access their land. A stand of big cone Douglas fir is present.
 - Another portion of Timber Gulch is owned by the San Bernardino Mountains Land Trust. This patented mining claim parcel is upslope and contiguous to the other parcel’s west line. APN 0350-011-06. This recent acquisition is 26 acres in size. The parcel is the Williams Lode, patented on 6/14/1918 under the Lode Mining Law of 5/10/1872. Evidence of mining includes a 20 foot un-timbered adit (a nearly horizontal passage from the surface in a mine). It is located in narrow drainage with steep slopes and no vehicle access. There is a live stream, 20 foot waterfall, and riparian habitat with maples and alders.
 - The third parcel is owned by the San Gabriel Valley Council of Boy Scouts APN: 0350- 241-06 (20.66 acres). The parcel was transferred to the Scouts on 12/26/07. It had been a patented mining claim with several prospect holes, caved portal, tools and equipment, and a cabin. All the

improvements were burned in the Grand Prix Fire of 2003. A foundation and scattered debris remain.

- **Appearance and surroundings (such as the characteristics of contiguous areas)**
 - The appearance of the Cucamonga B unit is similar to surrounding terrain; steep, primarily chaparral covered hillsides.
- **Key attractions, if any, such as sensitive wildlife and scenic landmarks**
 - Portions of the Middle Fork (2.4 miles between the Commanche camp site in the Cucamonga Wilderness to near the Middle Fork Trailhead) are eligible and tentatively classified as a Wild River. It has outstandingly remarkable fisheries values, is free of impoundments, and is in a largely primitive watershed with an undeveloped shoreline and access from a nearby road and trail.
 - Bonita Falls are a locally known three-tiered set of waterfalls about 400 feet in height near the South Fork of Lytle Creek in Section 27, T2 N, R 6 W. It is the second tallest in the Forest. In the canyon above are two more small waterfalls. Bonita Falls usually appear from January to May or after a significant rainfall. There is no designated system trail access to Bonita Falls.

Capability

Indicate each potential wilderness area's capability for wilderness by describing the basic characteristics that make the area appropriate and valuable for wilderness, regardless of the area's availability or need. The principal wilderness characteristics that follow are generally, but not necessarily, listed in order of importance or desirability.

- **Naturalness of the area**

Include the degree to which humans and past or present human activity may have affected natural ecological processes and conditions.

 - Cucamonga B is relatively natural and free from disturbance. The Scenic Integrity Objective is High.
 - Trout are stocked in Lytle Creek. Invasive weed species known within or adjacent to the unit in Lytle Creek in high numbers are:
 - tamarisk (*Tamaricaceae sp*)
 - tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*)
 - tree tobacco (*Nicotiana glauca*)

Non-native grasses (such as *Bromus spp.*) are also known in the area.

 - Several streams flow through a portion of this unit for a total of 12.13 miles. They include:
 - Coldwater Canyon 1.20 miles
 - Lytle Creek 1.28 miles
 - North Fork Lytle Creek 2.89 miles
 - Middle Fork Lytle Creek 2.77 miles
 - South Fork Lytle Creek 3.98 miles

A few other minor, unnamed intermittent streams are also present. All of these streams are free-flowing within the unit; there are no developed surface water diversions or impoundments. Portions of the Middle Fork Lytle Creek are eligible and tentatively classified as Wild River as described above.

- The Watershed Condition Analysis rated all 6th Field Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUC) using 12 indicators to determine if they were Functioning (Class 1, rating 1.0 to 1.6), Functioning at Risk (Class 2, rating 1.7 to 2.2), or Impaired Function (Class 3, rating 2.3 to 3.0).¹ Direct effects from roads and trails accounted for 15% of the rating. Indirect effects from roads and trails contributed to an additional 12%. Water quality accounted for 10% and water quantity (development of springs or diversions) accounted for 10%. Additional indicators focused on aquatic habitat, aquatic biota, and terrestrial biological features. Under capability, wilderness areas should be rated as Class 1 or have the potential to be moved to a Class 1 condition with some focused watershed restoration work. Availability will address the resource conditions that contributed to the current rating.
 - Cucamonga B - The southern and southeastern portion of Cucamonga B is within the Cajon Wash - Lytle Creek watershed, which rated as Impaired Function (2.8). Multiple factors including the population pressure on recreation, road and trail issues, Cajon Pass development as a utility corridor, 303d listing, major water developments and atmospheric deposition from high population pressure.
 - The northern portion that bounds the Cucamonga Wilderness is within the North Fork Lytle Creek watershed, which rated as Functioning at Risk (2.2). Factors bringing this watershed to the boundary of an impaired function condition include similar factors (development, 303d listing, major surface and groundwater development), but with the relatively undeveloped wilderness, the watershed is rated better than the Cajon Wash - Lytle Creek watershed and atmospheric deposition from high population pressure.
- Light from the nearby urbanized communities in the Inland Empire degrades the quality of the night sky to some degree.
- Class I National Ambient Air Quality Standards apply for the adjacent Cucamonga Wilderness.
- The wildfire history in this unit is extensive with many recorded wildfires since the Forest began record keeping. The most recent large event here was the 2003 Grand Prix Fire (13,287 acres in both Cucamonga B and Cucamonga C). Other major (1,000 acre plus) events occurred in 1913 (1,445 acres), 1936 (1,578 acres), 1949 (3,997 acres), 1968 (1,618 acres), 1970 (4,894 acres shared between Cucamonga B and Cucamonga C) and 1984 (1,345 acres).
- **Undeveloped**
 Include the degree to which the area's appearance is appropriate and valuable for wilderness.
 - There are no permanent improvements in the unit.
 - Human occupation and modification of the area, including evidence of structures, construction, and habitations are present in the nearby community of Lytle Creek as well as the greater Inland Empire in the valley to the south.

¹ See http://www.fs.fed.us/publications/watershed/Watershed_Condition_Framework.pdf

- Views of and sounds from Interstate 15, State highways and local roads are evident at times and from certain vantage points.
 - The northwest area of the unit borders the upper east end of the Mt. Baldy Ski Lifts winter sports area.
 - There are:
 - 2.30 miles of system road
 - 0.34 miles of temporary road
 - 7.11 miles of unauthorized roads
 - 0.66 miles of system non-motorized trail
 - -0- miles of system OHV trails
 - -0- miles of unauthorized OHV trails
 - 0.08 miles of unclassified trail
- **Opportunities**
Experiences often unique to wilderness such as solitude, self-reliance, adventurous and challenging experiences, and primitive recreation.
 - Experiential benefits are available to the visitor within Cucamonga B. These benefits may include moderate to high feelings of solitude, the opportunity to experience isolation from sights, sounds, and the presence of others from the developments and evidence of humans. That is because this unit is relatively large (11,918 acres) in size, has significant screening from vegetative or natural features, and somewhat distant to human impacts and intrusions like roads and agency and public development.
 - Similarly, physical and mental challenge, a spirit of adventure and awareness, and a sense of self-reliance and inspiration are moderate to high. Cucamonga B is relatively remote for southern California and area offers some isolation and thus moderate adventure, excitement, challenge, initiative, and self-reliance. Dense chaparral and steep slopes preclude much cross-country travel, although that has changed somewhat due to recent major wildfires. It is possible to feel a part of nature, to have a vastness of scale and a degree of challenge and risk while using outdoor skills that are measures of primitive and unconfined recreation one might find in other southern California wilderness. This is reflected in the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) here, mostly Semi-Primitive Non-Motorized but also with some Semi-Primitive Motorized and a small amount of Roded Natural.
 - Major recreational opportunities include hiking, horseback riding, camping (primitive), nature viewing and hunting.
 - **Special features and values**
Include those of ecological, geological, scientific, educational, recreational, scenic, or historical value. Describe rare and endangered plant and animal species and other wildlife.
 - Bonita Falls are a locally known three-tiered set of waterfalls about 400 feet in height near the South Fork of Lytle Creek in Section 27, T2 N, R 6 W. It is the second tallest in the Forest. In the canyon above are two more small waterfalls. Bonita Falls usually appear from January to May or after a significant rainfall. There is no designated system trail access.

- Some of the largest sugar pines (*pinus lambertiana*) in southern California are found on San Sevaine Ridge.
 - This is San Gabriel bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*) range.
 - Critical habitat for mountain yellow-legged frog (*Rana muscosa*) – along Lytle Creek in the northern boundary of the unit and San Bernardino kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys merriami parvus*)
 - Important occupied habitat for California spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis occidentalis*).
 - Occupied habitat for speckled dace (*Rhinichthys osculus*), a Region 5 sensitive fish species.
 - Modeled habitat for southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*)– 100 acres arroyo toad (*Anaxyrus californicus*).
 - Most of Cucamonga B has not been previously surveyed for cultural resources. The presence of prehistoric sites is highly likely based on topography and the availability of water.
 - Culturally sensitive plants that were gathered by Serrano Indian people occur here.
 - There are no known prospects or potential for significant mineral deposits. Limestone pendants in the surrounding areas have moderate potential for future development. No known significant metallic mineral deposits have been identified in this area. However, numerous mine sites have been identified as described under ‘Availability’ below.
 - This unit has only one known sensitive plant occurrence. There is a small occurrence of *Streptanthus bernardinus* (Laguna Mountains jewelflower) which is a widespread species on the Forest. There are no threatened or endangered plant species or their habitats within this unit. A new plant subspecies was found within or immediately adjacent to this unit: *Monardella australis* ssp. *jokerstii* and is only known in the southeastern San Gabriel Mountains and once found in the Santa Ana River downstream of this area that may have washed down from this area.
 - There are no significant wildlife corridors and/or connectivity.
 - There are outstanding landscape features visible from some vantage points in this area: Thunder Mountain, Telegraph Peak, Timber Mountain, Bighorn Peak and Cucamonga Peak. All are in the adjacent Cucamonga Wilderness.
 - There are no existing or potential research natural areas.
 - There are no Critical Biological Areas.
 - There are no unique or specific scientific or educational opportunities.
- **Description of size and shape**
Include the implications of the area’s size, shape, and juxtaposition to external influences on the wilderness attributes.
 - Cucamonga B is 11,882 acres in size, more than the 5,000 acre size recommendation in the Wilderness Act. It could be a contiguous addition to the existing Cucamonga Wilderness. The size, shape, and juxtaposition to external influences in Cucamonga B would be considered manageable but there would be administrative challenges as described above. The unit is mostly untrammled by

humans and retains substantial primeval character. The shape of the unit and juxtaposition to external influences pose minor to moderate challenges to wilderness resources.

- **Summary of the boundary conditions, needs, and management requirements**
Should the area be designated for wilderness, address whether or not boundary changes would enhance the wilderness characteristics or whether or not it would be possible to use boundary modifications to separate incompatible activities from those characteristics.
 - Proposed boundary locations generally avoid conflicts with roads and other improvements; however there are some improvements within the unit. These boundaries could be readily and accurately described as they are located adjacent to roads, creeks and follow section lines, although the portions of boundary that follows the section lines would be moderately difficult to administer. Other factors include:
 - Portions of the Cucamonga B unit are relatively close to the community of Lytle Creek. In the past, motorized equipment and mechanical transport have been used as part of initial attacks on wildfires in the Lytle Creek Wash. Potential impacts might be minimized by placing the recommended wilderness boundary at the toe of the slope in this area rather than in Lytle Creek itself. That would allow managers to aggressively attack wildfires that start near NFSR 3N06.
 - There are a number of dispersed camping area “yellow post” sites near the Joe Elliott Tree Memorial. They are very popular with hunters in the fall. The area boundary should set back from NFSR 1N34 to exclude these sites. There would be concerns about changing the open campfire policy that is popular with these visitors (as campfires are not allowed in Forest wilderness). There is a similar situation in San Sevaine Flats.
 - The proposed wilderness boundary could be set back from the Middle Fork of Lytle Creek Road 2N58 to cause less confusion to the public. This road is closed at the Middle Fork Trailhead, as indicated by boulders at the line between Sections 17 and 18. The boundary at this location is about 200 feet up from the Trailhead.

Availability

Indicate availability of the potential wilderness area by describing other resource potentials. Summarize pertinent quantitative and qualitative information including current use, outputs, trends, and potential future use and/or outputs for the applicable resources.

- Forest Plan Land Use Zones
 - Backcountry (BC) 2,287 acres
 - Backcountry Motorized Use Restricted (BCMUR) 11 acres
 - Backcountry Non-motorized (BCNM) 2,658 acres
 - Developed Area Interface (DAI) 664 acres
 - Recommended Wilderness (RW) 6,260 acres

- Recreation, including tourism
 - No specific recreation visitation figures are available for Cucamonga B. Major recreational opportunities include hiking, horseback riding, camping (primitive), nature viewing and hunting. There would be some effects on dispersed recreation uses. Some mountain biking opportunities would also be forgone with wilderness designation. Approximately seven acres of the Mt. Baldy ski area permit lies within this unit.
- Wildlife species, populations, and management needs
 - This is San Gabriel bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*) range.
 - Critical habitat for mountain yellow-legged frog (*Rana muscosa*) – along Lytle Creek in the northern boundary of the unit and critical habitat for San Bernardino kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys merriami parvus*)
 - Important occupied habitat for California spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis occidentalis*).
 - Occupied habitat for speckled dace (*Rhinichthys osculus*), a Region 5 sensitive fish species.
 - Modeled habitat for southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*)– 100 acres arroyo toad (*Bufo californicus*).
 - There are major management challenges in the riparian areas of this unit due to unauthorized vehicular incursions.
- Water availability and use
 - See above discussions regarding water. Lytle Creek is heavily used by visitors, especially in the summer.
- Livestock operations
 - A very small (0.4 acre) portion of the currently vacant Lone Pine Allotment lies within this unit.
- Timber
 - None.
- Minerals
 - Approximately two acres have been withdrawn from mineral entry.
 - Numerous mine sites have been identified as follows. See map.
 - Blue Diamond Mine. A 65 foot long adit and three long pits as much as five feet deep. Known placer gold operations. This was a tungsten prospect.
 - SB-Able. Active gulch placer mining claims. No known production.
 - Williams Prospect. Gold and silver prospect. Sulfide minerals in waste pile. High public use as it is close to a former shooting area.
 - Middle Fork 1 and 2. Placer mining claims held by prospecting clubs. High use and available road access.
 - Rolling Thunder # 2. Placer mining claims held by individuals and leased to prospecting clubs.
 - Bonita Prospect. Gold and silver prospect. A 108 foot adit and 26 feet long open drift. Non-motorized trail access.
 - Blew Jordon Mine and Millsite. Lead-zinc deposit with a mine dump in the site. There are numerous trenches and pits with potential acid rock

- drainage problems. Use by public is low as the site is in a remote area. No known active mining claim.
- California Hercules: Lead, zinc, silver, copper mine. Currently inactive. A 40 foot long open adit. Access is poor. No facilities left at the mine. Potential pollutants may be present.
 - Brown Prospect. Iron sulfide minerals present. Poses minor acid rock drainage problem. Open adits present. Nearest road is two miles away and the area is remote.
 - Sierra de Oro Prospect. Gold and silver commodity. No sulfide hazards on the property. No motorized access.
- Cultural resources
 - There are no known heritage special features. Culturally sensitive plants that were gathered by Serrano Indian people occur here.
 - Authorized and potential land uses
 - Approximately 21 acres of this unit contain special use authorizations as described above. And five acres are categorized as having a Forest Service facility.
 - Management considerations including fire, insects and diseases, and presence of non-Federal lands
 - This unit lies within the Wildland/Urban Interface (WUI) as follows:
 - WUI – Defense Zone – 1,093 acres
 - WUI – Threat Zone – 6,879 acres
 - WUI – Developed Area – 15 acres
 - Some vegetative mortality has occurred in this area due to the recent drought and insects/disease. The eastern boundary of this area borders the community of Lytle Creek. There are no fuels management projects currently underway in this unit.
 - Cucamonga B is interspersed by several parcels of private land as described above.

Need

Summarize the factors considered and the process used in assessing the need for each potential wilderness area.

- Location, size, and type of other existing wildernesses in the general vicinity and their distance from the proposed area.
 - Cucamonga Wilderness, 12,781 acres of National Forest System, is located adjacent to the west.
 - Sheep Mountain Wilderness, 41,883 acres of National Forest System (primarily on the Angeles National Forest), is located two miles northwest.
 - Some additional wilderness designation is useful and appropriate here.
- Present visitor pressure on other existing wildernesses, the trends in use, changing patterns of use, population expansion factors, and trends and changes in transportation.
 - There is light to moderate, mostly day use within the Cucamonga and Sheep Mountain Wilderness areas. The Inland Empire and High Desert (Hesperia, Victorville) populations are growing. The area is easily accessed by vehicle from

the Los Angeles, Orange County, Inland Empire, and San Diego metropolitan areas within two hours.

- There were 85,100 recreation visits to all San Bernardino National Forest wilderness areas in FY 2009 (this and the following demographics are from the Forest National Visitor Use Monitoring – NVUM – Report of May 2010). Demographics: 63% male, 37% female; 97% white race/ethnicity; 28% ages 50 – 59 and 8% under the age of 20. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being ‘hardly anyone there’, most (35%) visitors rated their stay in the wilderness as a ‘6’. About 10% reported a ‘7’ or above towards overcrowding. Most people reported being satisfied with the performance of the Forest Service during their wilderness visit. The average duration of a visit to a designated Forest wilderness was 6.8 hours; median (numeric value separating the higher half of a sample from the lower half) visit duration was 3.9 hours. This indicates mostly day (not overnight) use.
- The extent to which non-wilderness lands on the NFS unit or other Federal lands are likely to provide opportunities for unconfined outdoor recreation experiences.
 - Much of the Front Country Ranger District non-wilderness land encompasses similar landscapes and opportunities. However the Cucamonga B area is more distinct and unique.
- The need to provide a refuge for those species that have demonstrated an inability to survive in less than primitive surroundings or the need for a protected area for other unique scientific values or phenomena.
 - Nelson's bighorn sheep are affected by development. There is a need to provide a sanctuary for Nelson's bighorn sheep as well as California spotted owl.
- An area's ability to provide for preservation of identifiable landform types and ecosystems.
 - There is a moderate ability to provide for preservation of identifiable landform types and ecosystems in Cucamonga B.
 - The California Chaparral Forest and Shrub Ecosystem Province makes up 0.3% of the total land area in the United States but is represented in 0.5% of the National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS) in the lower 48 states as of 1998. That ratio has since grown. Therefore, this Province is well represented in the NWPS (Loomis and Echohawk 1999).