



United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Washington, D.C. 20240
<http://www.blm.gov>

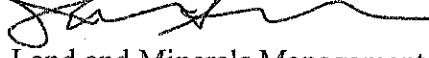


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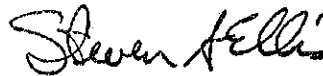
AUG - 9 2016

Memorandum

To: Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management and Budget

Through: Janice M. Schneider 
Assistant Secretary - Land and Minerals Management

From: Steven A. Ellis
Deputy Director, Operations



Subject: Notification to Congress on the Agua Caliente Land Exchange Proposal

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is considering a proposal to complete the Agua Caliente Land Exchange in Riverside County, California. Appraisals completed on March 7, 2015, establish the value of the Federal land at \$795,000 and the value of the non-Federal land at \$845,000. A market analysis is being completed to determine if the values have changed and if amended appraisals are required. If the values need to be adjusted, the Department of the Interior's Office of Valuation Services (OVS) will complete amended appraisals prior to finalizing the exchange in accordance with Federal standards and regulations. The appraisals will be reviewed and approved by a qualified OVS review appraiser and acreage adjustments may be made to equalize the values. Any remaining difference in the appraised values will be eliminated through an equalization payment at closing in an amount not to exceed 25 percent of the Federal land value. Previously obligated Land and Water Conservation Funds in the amount of \$50,000 are available for the BLM's use in equalizing land values, if needed.

The Explanatory Statement accompanying Division G of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016 (P.L. 114-113), requires the Department of the Interior to notify the House and Senate Committees on Appropriations of proposed land exchanges where the Federal land is valued over \$500,000. Proposed land exchanges valued between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 require advance notification to the Committees. Proposed land exchanges valued over \$1,000,000 require notification and a 30-day examination period.

The BLM has prepared letters to the Appropriations Subcommittees on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies of the Senate and House of Representatives for signature by the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget. The attached letters include a summary of the transaction with maps. I request that you sign these letters so that we may move forward with this exchange proposal. Signing these letters does not represent a commitment by the Department of the Interior to complete this exchange.

Attachments



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, D.C. 20240

SEP 15 2016

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative McCollum:

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A similar letter has been sent to the Honorable Ken Calvert, Chairman, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski, Chairman, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, United States Senate; and the Honorable Tom Udall, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies, Committee on Appropriations, United States Senate.

Sincerely,

Kristen J. Sarri
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
Policy, Management and Budget

Enclosures

Summary
Agua Caliente Land Exchange Proposal
Riverside County, California

Exchange Parties: The proposed land exchange would be between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), California Desert District, Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office and the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (Tribe).

Federal Land: The exchange proposal involves approximately 2,560 acres of BLM-managed surface and mineral estates. The Federal land is within the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument (Monument) which is within the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA), and adjacent to and intermingled with lands within the Agua Caliente Indian Reservation. Because the parcels are within the Monument, they are no longer open to mineral entry. Generally, the Federal land is isolated with access typically controlled by the Tribe.

Non-Federal Land: The BLM would receive approximately 1,470 acres of Tribal land, including both surface and mineral estates. The non-Federal land is also within the Monument and CDCA. The resource values on the non-Federal land are expected to generally be equivalent to the resource values on the Federal land. Acquisition of the non-Federal land would consolidate the ownership of Federal lands within the Monument, assure more efficient management of the public lands, and reduce conflicts with other non-Federal land owners.

Valuation: By appraisal dated March 7, 2015, the Federal land was valued at \$795,000 and the non-Federal land was valued at \$845,000. A market analysis is being completed to determine if the values have changed and if amended appraisals are required. If the values need to be adjusted, the Department of the Interior's Office of Valuation Services (OVS) will complete amended appraisals of the Federal and non-Federal lands prior to finalizing the exchange in accordance with Federal standards and regulations, including 43 CFR 2201.3 and the "Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions." The appraisals will be reviewed and approved by a qualified OVS review appraiser and acreage adjustments may be made to equalize the values. Any remaining difference in the appraised values will be eliminated through an equalization payment at closing in an amount not to exceed 25 percent of the Federal land value. Funding from BLM's Land Acquisition budget line item for Emergency, Hardships and Inholdings in the amount of \$50,000 is available for the BLM's use in equalizing land values, if needed.

Authorities: Section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1716), as amended, provides that a tract of public land or interests therein may be disposed of by exchange where the Secretary of the Interior determines that the public interest will be well served by making that exchange.

Land Use Plan Consistency: The 2004 Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Management Plan specifically identified and proposed the lands for transfer between the Tribe and BLM.

Land Exchange Objectives and Benefits: Both the Federal and non-Federal lands are located within the Monument and CDCA. The proposed land exchange would implement provisions of the Cooperative Agreement between the Tribe and BLM for coordination and cooperation in the

management of Federal lands within the Monument, as well as the Memorandum of Understanding between the Tribe and BLM for acquisition and exchange of lands within the Monument. The proposed exchange would facilitate effective and efficient management of the Monument through consolidation of the land base, i.e., reducing the extent of “checkerboard” land ownership. For the Tribe, the exchange would support the resource preservation goals of the Indian Canyons Master Plan and the effective implementation of its Tribal Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, currently in draft form, by placing the exchange lands under Tribal management.

Position of Interested Parties: The BLM published a Notice of Exchange Proposal in local newspapers in conformance with Federal regulations beginning on November 15, 2008, and provided a 45-day public comment period for Federal, Tribal, State, and local governments, authorized users, adjoining landowners, and other interested parties. No comments or notices were received. An environmental assessment addressing environmental effects of the proposed land exchange was released for public review and comment on July 27, 2010. A high level of interest was stimulated by the proposal. Comments were received from 144 individuals, ten organizations, and three governmental entities. Based on public comments and upon further internal review, it was determined that preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) was necessary to address potentially significant effects of the proposed land exchange. In reaching this determination, consideration was given to location of the Federal lands proposed to transfer within the Monument, its proximity to the Palm Canyon Creek National Wild and Scenic River, the location of designated critical habitat for the endangered population of bighorn sheep occupying the Peninsular Ranges of California, and the absence of a regulatory mechanism for public participation in future decision-making processes affecting lands once transferred to the Tribe.

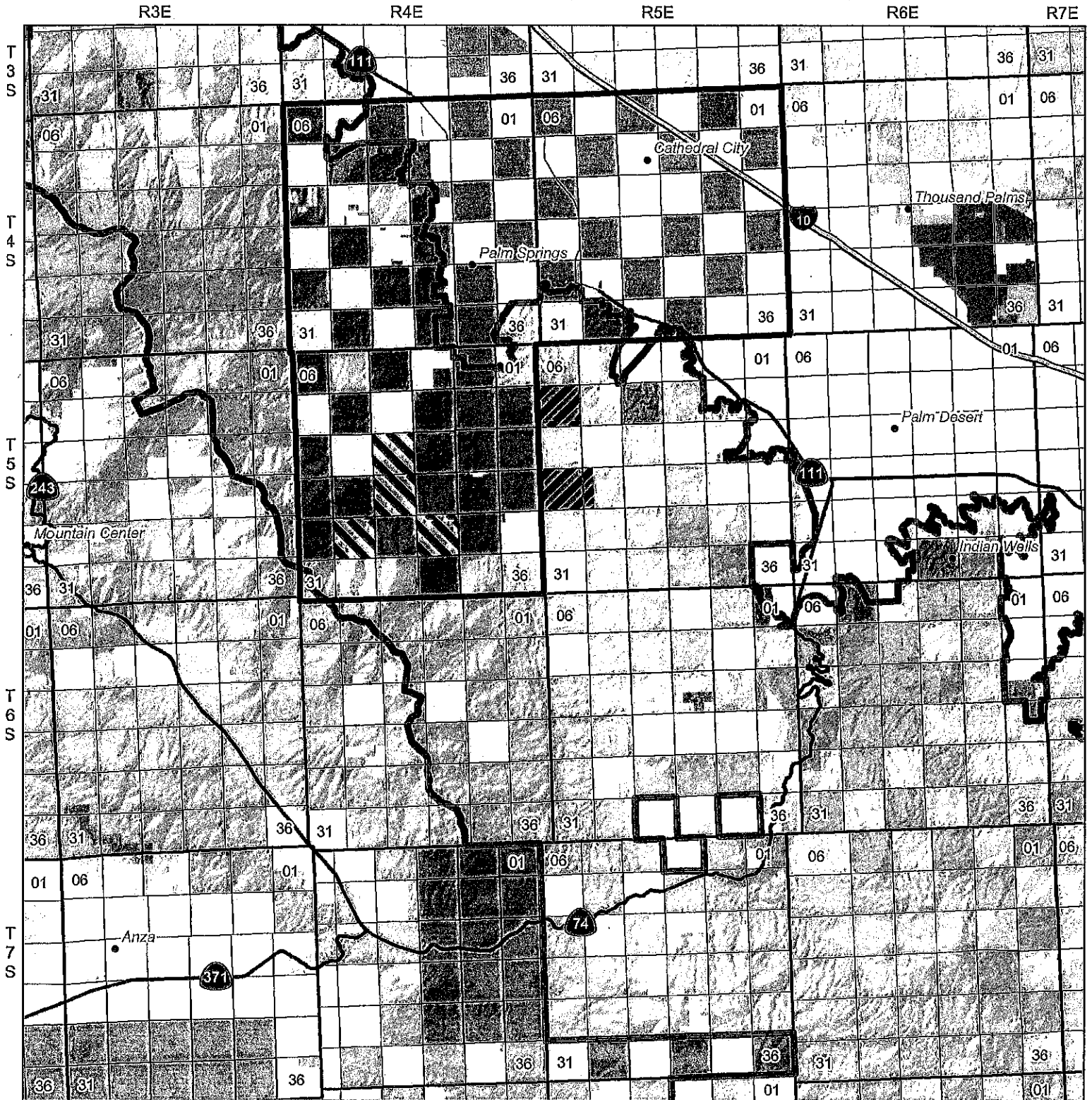
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Agua Caliente Exchange

CA 42965 PT/FD

March 8, 2016



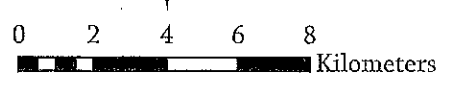
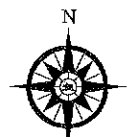
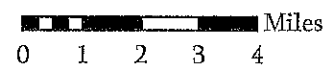
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- Santa Rosa-San Jacinto Mountains National Monument

Land Status

- Bureau of Land Management
- Forest Service

- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
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United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

SEP 15 2016

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Chairman, Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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Sincerely,

Kristen J. Sarri
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary
Policy, Management and Budget

Enclosures

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Riverside County, California

Exchange Parties: The proposed land exchange would be between the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), California Desert District, Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office and the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (Tribe).

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Authorities: Section 206 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1716), as amended, provides that a tract of public land or interests therein may be disposed of by exchange where the Secretary of the Interior determines that the public interest will be well served by making that exchange.

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Position of Interested Parties: The BLM published a Notice of Exchange Proposal in local newspapers in conformance with Federal regulations beginning on November 15, 2008, and provided a 45-day public comment period for Federal, Tribal, State, and local governments, authorized users, adjoining landowners, and other interested parties. No comments or notices were received. An environmental assessment addressing environmental effects of the proposed land exchange was released for public review and comment on July 27, 2010. A high level of interest was stimulated by the proposal. Comments were received from 144 individuals, ten organizations, and three governmental entities. Based on public comments and upon further internal review, it was determined that preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) was necessary to address potentially significant effects of the proposed land exchange. In reaching this determination, consideration was given to location of the Federal lands proposed to transfer within the Monument, its proximity to the Palm Canyon Creek National Wild and Scenic River, the location of designated critical habitat for the endangered population of bighorn sheep occupying the Peninsular Ranges of California, and the absence of a regulatory mechanism for public participation in future decision-making processes affecting lands once transferred to the Tribe.

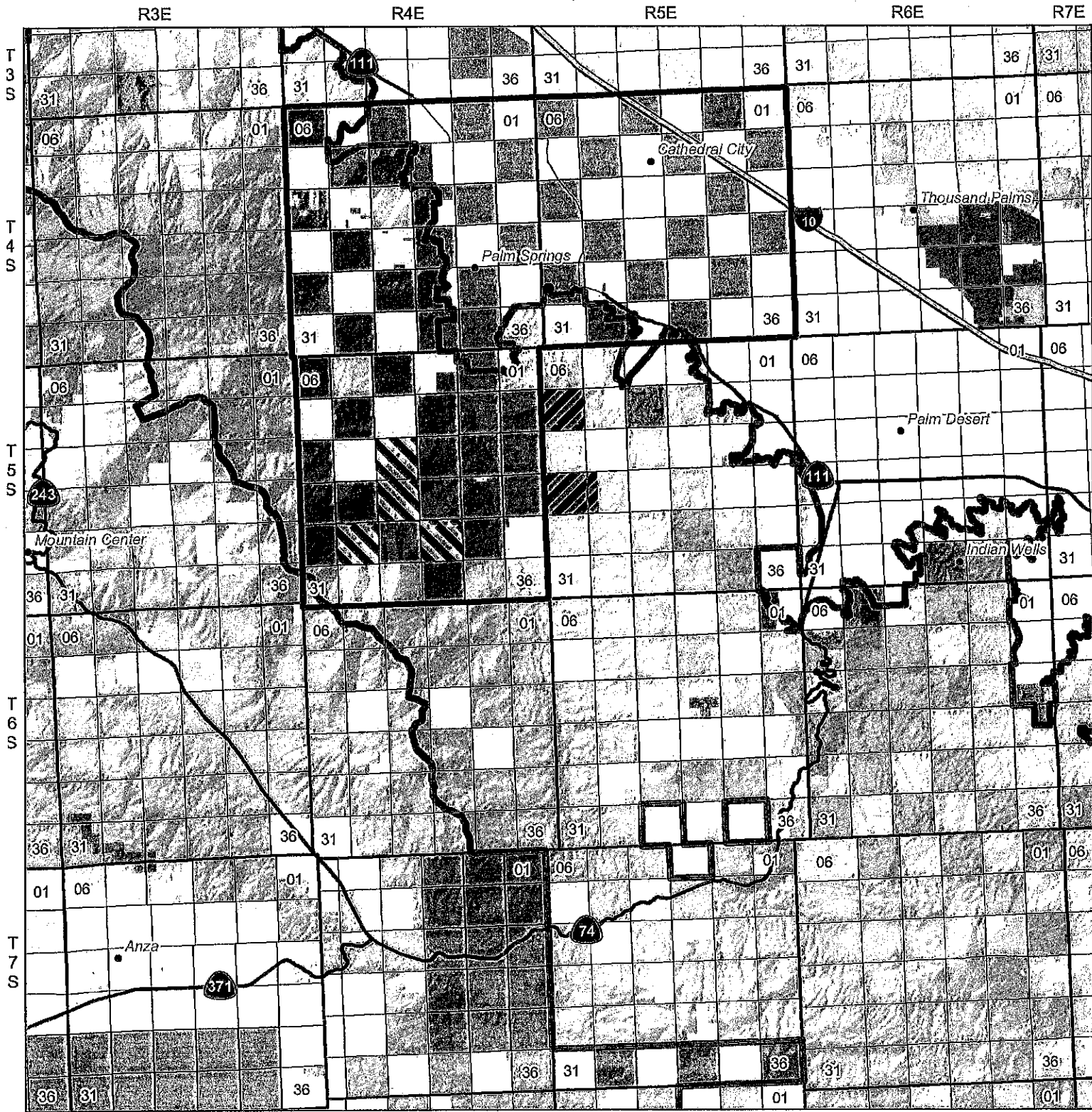
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Agua Caliente Exchange

CA 42965 PT/FD

March 8, 2016



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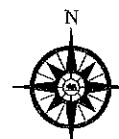
Land Status

Bureau of Land Management

Bureau of Reclamation

Miles

0 1 2 3 4



Kilometers

0 2 4 6 8



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

SEP 15 2016

The Honorable Tom Udall
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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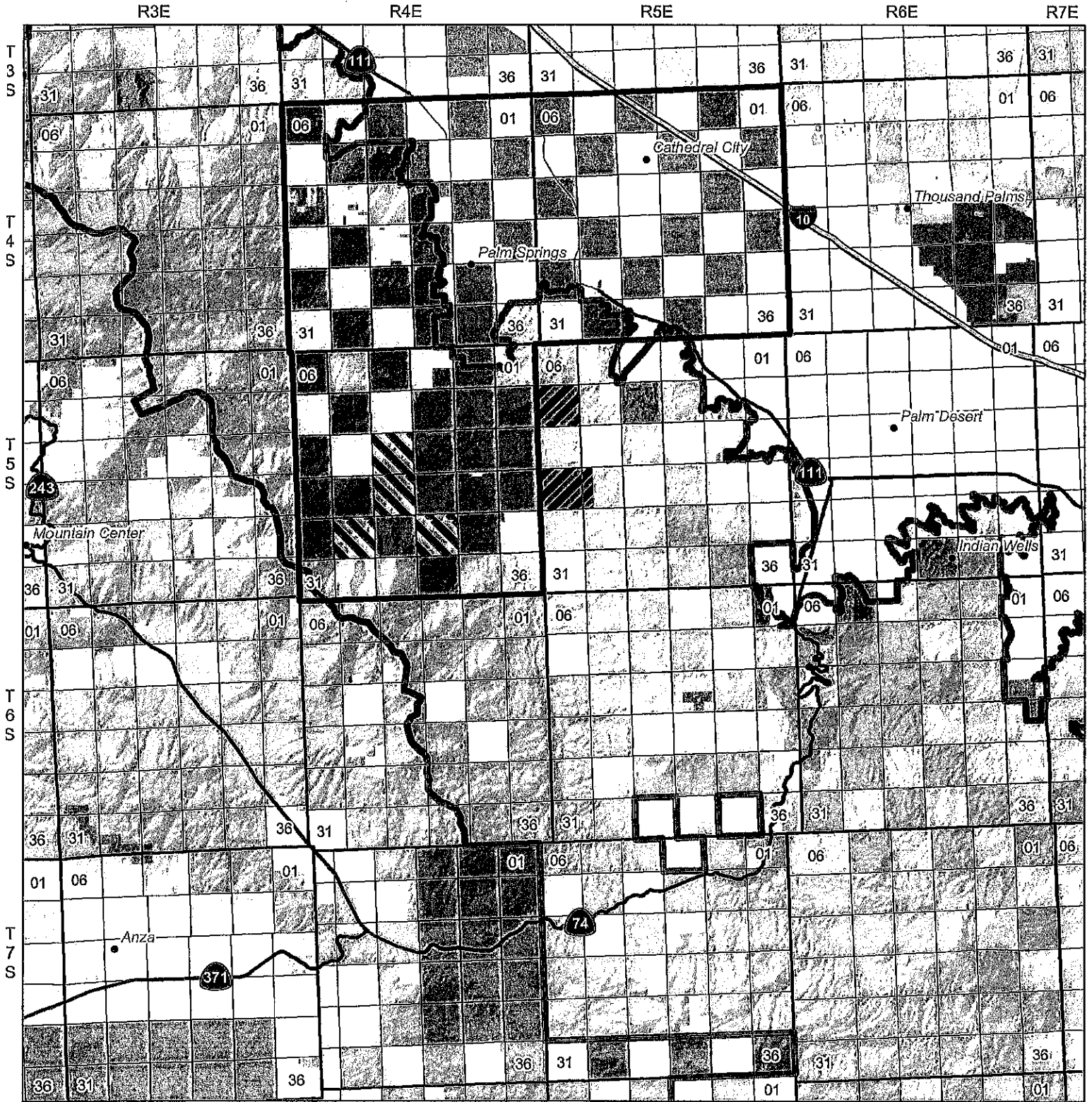
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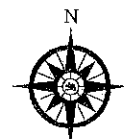
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0 1 2 3 4 Miles

0 1 2 3 4 Miles



0 2 4 6 8 Kilometers



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SEP 15 2016

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Land Use Plan Consistency: The 2004 Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Management Plan specifically identified and proposed the lands for transfer between the Tribe and BLM.

Land Exchange Objectives and Benefits: Both the Federal and non-Federal lands are located within the Monument and CDCA. The proposed land exchange would implement provisions of the Cooperative Agreement between the Tribe and BLM for coordination and cooperation in the

management of Federal lands within the Monument, as well as the Memorandum of Understanding between the Tribe and BLM for acquisition and exchange of lands within the Monument. The proposed exchange would facilitate effective and efficient management of the Monument through consolidation of the land base, i.e., reducing the extent of “checkerboard” land ownership. For the Tribe, the exchange would support the resource preservation goals of the Indian Canyons Master Plan and the effective implementation of its Tribal Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, currently in draft form, by placing the exchange lands under Tribal management.

Position of Interested Parties: The BLM published a Notice of Exchange Proposal in local newspapers in conformance with Federal regulations beginning on November 15, 2008, and provided a 45-day public comment period for Federal, Tribal, State, and local governments, authorized users, adjoining landowners, and other interested parties. No comments or notices were received. An environmental assessment addressing environmental effects of the proposed land exchange was released for public review and comment on July 27, 2010. A high level of interest was stimulated by the proposal. Comments were received from 144 individuals, ten organizations, and three governmental entities. Based on public comments and upon further internal review, it was determined that preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS) was necessary to address potentially significant effects of the proposed land exchange. In reaching this determination, consideration was given to location of the Federal lands proposed to transfer within the Monument, its proximity to the Palm Canyon Creek National Wild and Scenic River, the location of designated critical habitat for the endangered population of bighorn sheep occupying the Peninsular Ranges of California, and the absence of a regulatory mechanism for public participation in future decision-making processes affecting lands once transferred to the Tribe.

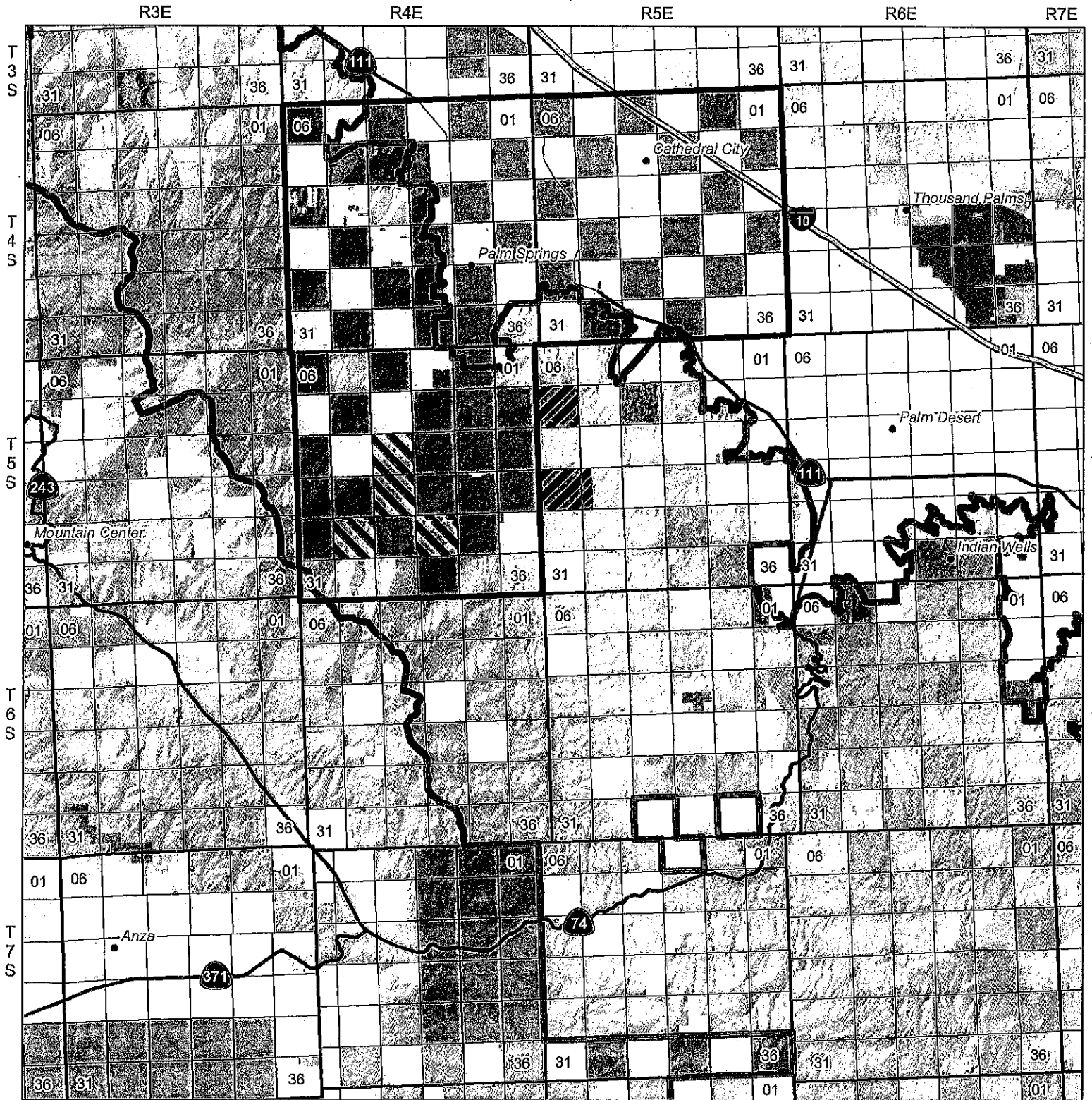
On February 10, 2012, a Notice of Intent to prepare a draft EIS was published in the *Federal Register*. Public scoping meetings were held at two locations in Palm Springs, California, on March 22 and 27, 2012. Approximately 75 people attended the first public scoping meeting on March 22, 2012, and about 50 people attended the second meeting on March 27, 2012. Oral comments were provided by 24 individuals, six of whom represented non-governmental organizations. In addition, the BLM received scoping comment letters and email messages from 62 individuals, five of whom represented non-governmental organizations and two who represented governmental entities. The issue most commented on related to public access to non-motorized recreation on existing trails. In response to public comment, the BLM removed several Federal parcels from the proposed exchange. A Notice of Availability for the draft EIS was published in the *Federal Register* December 29, 2014, allowing for a 90-day public review and comment period. Once Congressional approval is provided for the exchange, the final EIS will be released along with the Record of Decision, which will describe the exchange as proposed in this package, upon publication of a Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register*.



Agua Caliente Exchange

CA 42965 PT/FD

March 8, 2016



Relevant Layers

- Federal/BLM Land Proposed for Exchange
- Non-Federal/Tribal Land Proposed for Exchange
- Agua Caliente Indian Reservation
- Santa Rosa-San Jacinto Mountains National Monument

- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Bureau of Reclamation
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- State
- Local Government
- Private/Unclassified

Land Status

- Bureau of Land Management
- Forest Service

