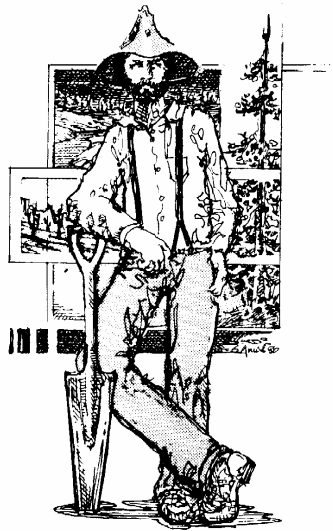


BAKER CREEK AREA INVENTORY AND ASSESSMENT 2000 CONDITIONS

Prepared for:

LADWP, and Inyo County



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This inventory provides information for assessing the extent and condition of existing yellow-billed cuckoo habitat. Soil and hydrologic information useful for evaluating enhancement alternatives is also provided.

The Baker Creek area (447 acres) is about 1.7 miles west of the town of Big Pine in Owens Valley. Elevation ranges from about 4,000 to 4,500 feet. The southern part drains to Big Pine Creek; the northern part to Baker Creek. The principal water sources are Baker Creek and the Giroux Ditch. A spring (DWP26) arises in the south part of the area. Soils were mapped at an Order 3 resolution by the Natural Resource Conservation Service. Greenbook vegetation mapping was conducted 1983 through 1987. Two rare plants occur in the area. A 1995 fire burned the south part of the area. The Baker Creek area is a part of the Twin Lakes Lease managed as a cow/calf operation.

Spring mapping conducted from 1:12,000 scale aerial photos dated 1996 was recompiled on a 2000 digital orthophoto and refined. On-site map verification and field descriptions of soil and hydrology were conducted by Sherman Jensen September 21-25, 2003; vegetation was described by Frank Smith November 13-14, 2003; additional field review was conducted December 11-13, 2003. Map units denote areas of distinctive soil, hydrologic and vegetative character. This report is compiled as digital WORD (doc) and ADOBE (pdf) files on DVD. ACCESS tabular data, ARC-VIEW shapefiles and TIFF images are also on the disk.

The Baker Creek area is divided into 351 parcels, each consisting of a dominant landtype, water regime and vegetation type. Landtypes are identified based on soil, morphology, and position relative to environmental gradients. Dominant landtypes are *alluvial spring basin*, *beaver pond*, *floodplain*, *alluvial terrace*, and *glacio-fluvial fan*. Water regimes are based on the frequency and duration of flooding, and/or depth to saturated conditions. *Permanently flooded*, *saturated*, *seasonally flooded*, *seasonally flooded-irrigated*, *seasonal high water table*, and *seasonal low water table* regimes are identified. Vegetation types are based on community physiognomy and species composition. Vegetation associations or more general vegetation series were identified. Vegetation and miscellaneous types are *water*, *bog*, *arroyo willow/bog*, *marsh-wet meadow*, *wet meadow*, *irrigated meadow*, *coyote willow-rose*, *red willow/arroyo willow*, *red willow/coyote willow-rose*, *locust*, *oak*, *rabbitbrush/mesic meadow*, *borrow pit*, and *undifferentiated upland scrub*.

Preliminary assessments of YBC habitat were compiled for combinations of vegetation type, landtype, water regime, and recent fire regime. The preliminary results indicate about 85 acres (19 percent) of high suitability, 87 acres (19 percent) of moderate suitability, 10 acres (2 percent) of low suitability, and 265 acres (59 percent) of unsuitable habitat.