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# NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD COUNCIL TOUR



NATIVE CALIFORNIA FAN PALMS  
DEAD INDIAN CREEK, COACHELLA VALLEY

## Welcome to the Riverside District

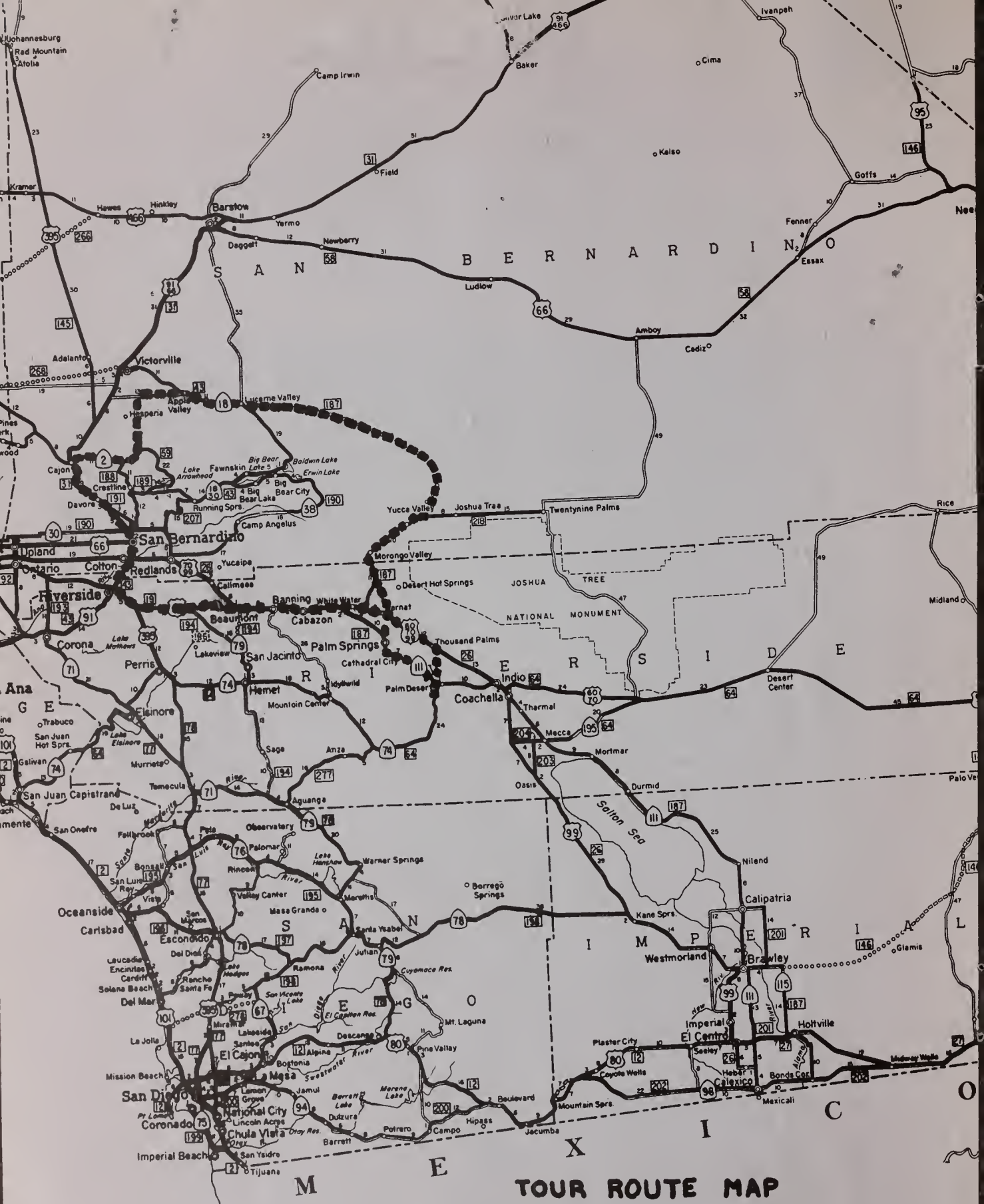
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
Stewart L. Udall, Secretary

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
Charles H. Stoddard, Director

CALIFORNIA STATE DIRECTOR  
J. Russell Penny



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TOUR ROUTE MAP

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Welcome to Riverside

We are pleased that the National Advisory Board Council selected Riverside for the 1966 Spring meeting.

This field tour will take you through about five per cent of the Riverside District.

The tour is designed to show some of the complex land management problems before the Bureau in Southern California. You will observe the impact of population pressures, freeways and imported water. You will see examples of poor land use planning and development as well as examples of good planning and land development.

At the end of this trip you will have had a vivid demonstration of the need for the policy direction set out in the "Classification and Multiple Use Act" and in the "Public Sale Act".

You will have seen only a sample of Southern California. There are many facets of the Bureau's responsibility for good land stewardship that should be seen. Plan another trip to Riverside.

*Hall H. McClain*

Hall H. McClain  
Manager, Riverside District & Land Office

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"WE NEED TO PLAN....."

## Introduction

The purpose of this tour is to demonstrate the need of planning now for the future management of the public lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management. This trip is designed to show the results of poor or no planning in the past. Tour guides will point out some of the growing pressures being exerted for the use and disposition of the public lands. We want to show the need, the opportunities, and the many benefits to be gained from mutual cooperation with the state, counties, communities, interested groups, and knowledgeable individuals in the accomplishment of this task. In brief, we are working to achieve dynamic plans which will result in good conservation-management practices designed to best serve the public now and in the future.

The continuing population increase experienced by this state has created an unprecedented encroachment of urban and suburban uses upon the traditionally agricultural and ranch lands. As we leave Riverside on this tour, you will see how businesses and homes have displaced the citrus orchards. The citrus grower in turn has displaced the dry farmer who has been forced to move to marginal land for his crops. Ten years ago our dry farmer would have rebelled at the thought of attempting to cultivate these marginal lands.

In the same vein, the greater portion of the government lands administered by the Bureau were considered nearly worthless by most people less than 20 years ago. These lands were the less desirable remnants created by the action of disposition and selection under the many land and mineral laws. However, there is now no doubt of the value of these lands.

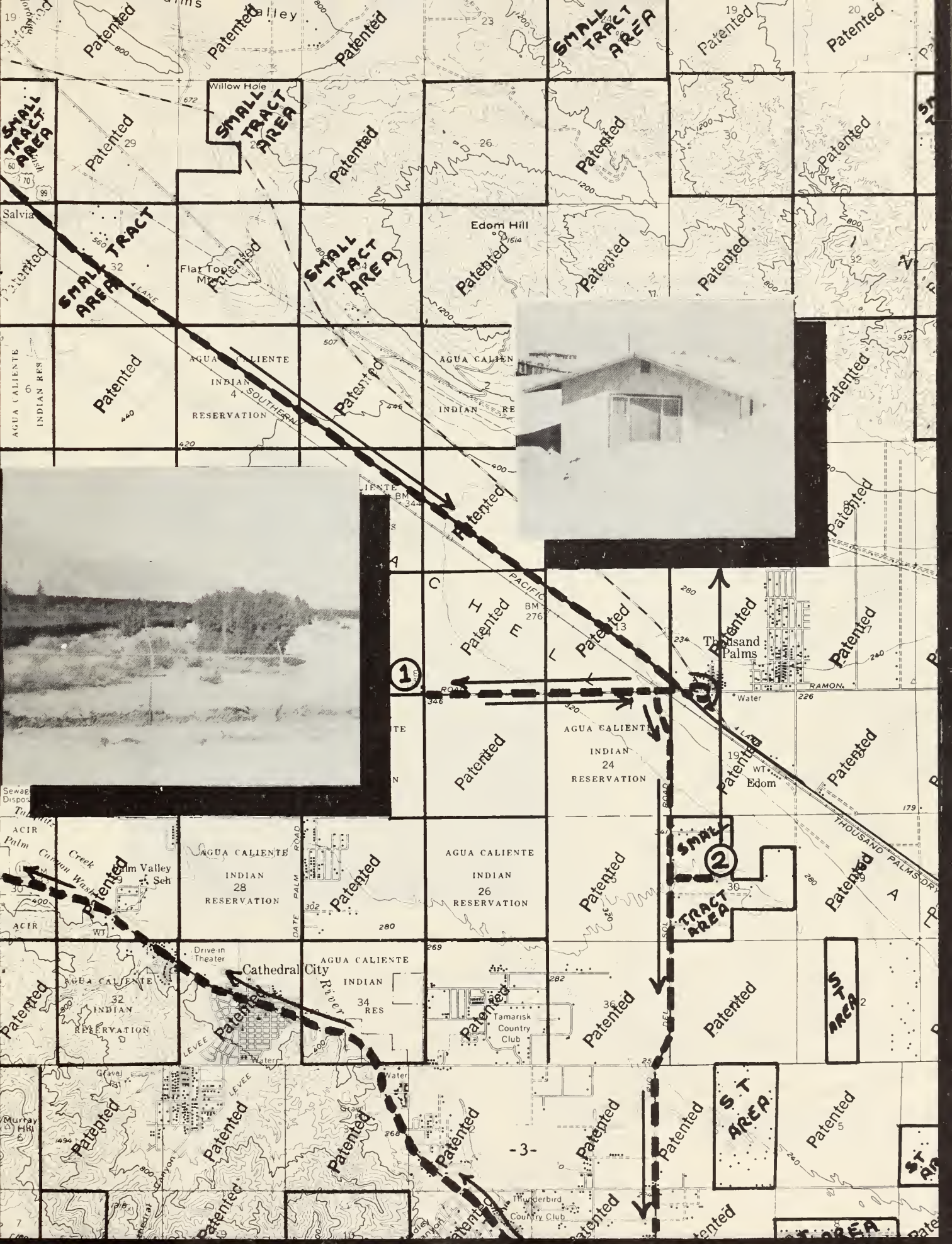
Since the land ownership pattern of the public and private land is varied and intricate, the Bureau is faced with many problems in management.

We hope to demonstrate today some of the conflicts of use and the need for joint planning by the Bureau, the affected counties, other agencies and interested persons or groups. You will be shown the results of good planning and the results of the lack of planning in the development of land. We will point out recreational and multiple use areas where the Riverside District is preparing management plans which will provide for retention and development under Public Law 88-607 (Classification and Multiple Use Act). The guides will also point out public lands in the path of a growing community which should be considered under the Public Sale Act, Public Law 88-608. Both public sale and private exchange interest and applications have been received in the Riverside District for these lands. Other areas of interest will be indicated as they are encountered on the tour.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to ask the Riverside District personnel accompanying the tour.

#### Stop 1 (Pullover)

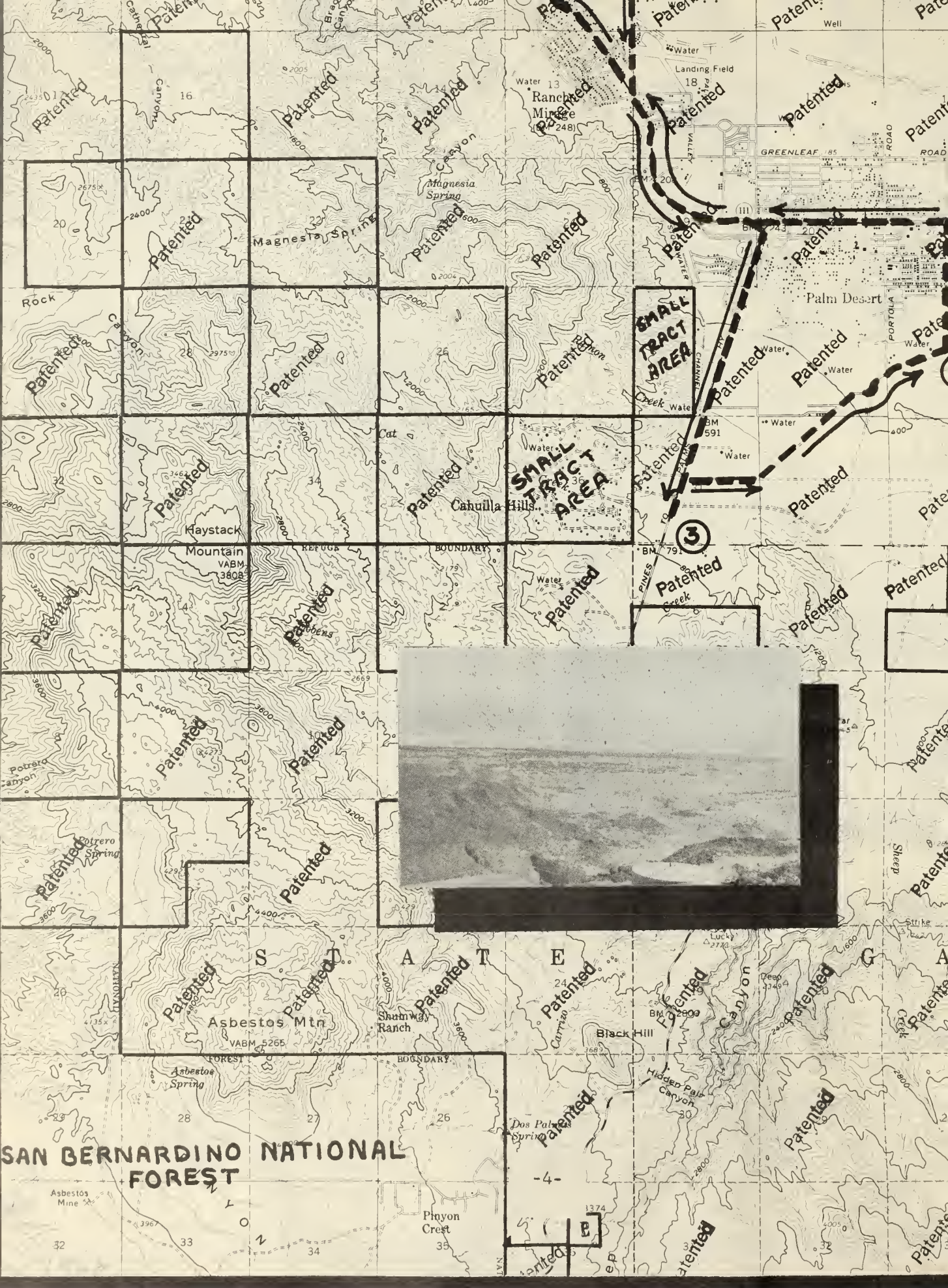
Here you can see what has been done to control the wind, blow-sand, and sand damage. This memorial park is located in the center of the Coachella Valley wind channel. Note how the tree-rows decrease the wind velocity which forces the wind to lose its sand carrying capacity before it reaches the interior of the park. Adequate planning and zoning can assist in encouraging new developments to follow the example set here. Conversely planning and zoning might preclude certain types of development.



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SAN BERNARDINO NATIONAL FOREST

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### Stop 2 (Disembark - 15 min.)

This is a small residential development which was built at a time when the zoning and building code was inadequate. Perhaps this area would have been zoned non-residential had it received the proper study. Certainly a building inspector today would condemn a slab poured upon a sand dune as was done at the small stucco cabin on the north side of the road. Note how the wind has eroded the sand from under the slab and how the slab has collapsed from its own weight.

### Stop 3 (Pullover)

Here we have a small tract community which lies adjacent to private lands now being developed or which are prime for development. The lands which were patented as small tracts are selling from \$1200 to \$2000 per acre. Private lands here along the road sold for \$7500 per acre in January of 1964. Had adequate planning and zoning been in force, it is very unlikely that the small tract use would have been permitted here. This is a good example of land that should have been disposed of in a block as contemplated by the Public Sale Act. The small tracts will probably remain as a substandard development for some time to come.

A side note, all the even numbered sections behind the small tract section, which are still federally owned, are being integrated into the Bureau's Santa Rosa Mountains Recreational and Wildlife Area.

### Stop 4 (Tour)

The drive through the Silver Spur Ranch will demonstrate a subdivision where most aspects of good planning are evident. It provides for wind and sand control, open space (public garden, etc.), attractive arrangement of dwellings and services, and areas for public use.

In accordance with Public Law 88-608, the new Public Sale Law, when

Government lands are suitable and needed for the growth of the community, they should be offered at public sale to developers who can meet the zoning and building requirements required by the county authorities. Hence the developments would be attractive and orderly such as this one through which we are passing.

Stop 5 (Disembark, 15 min.)

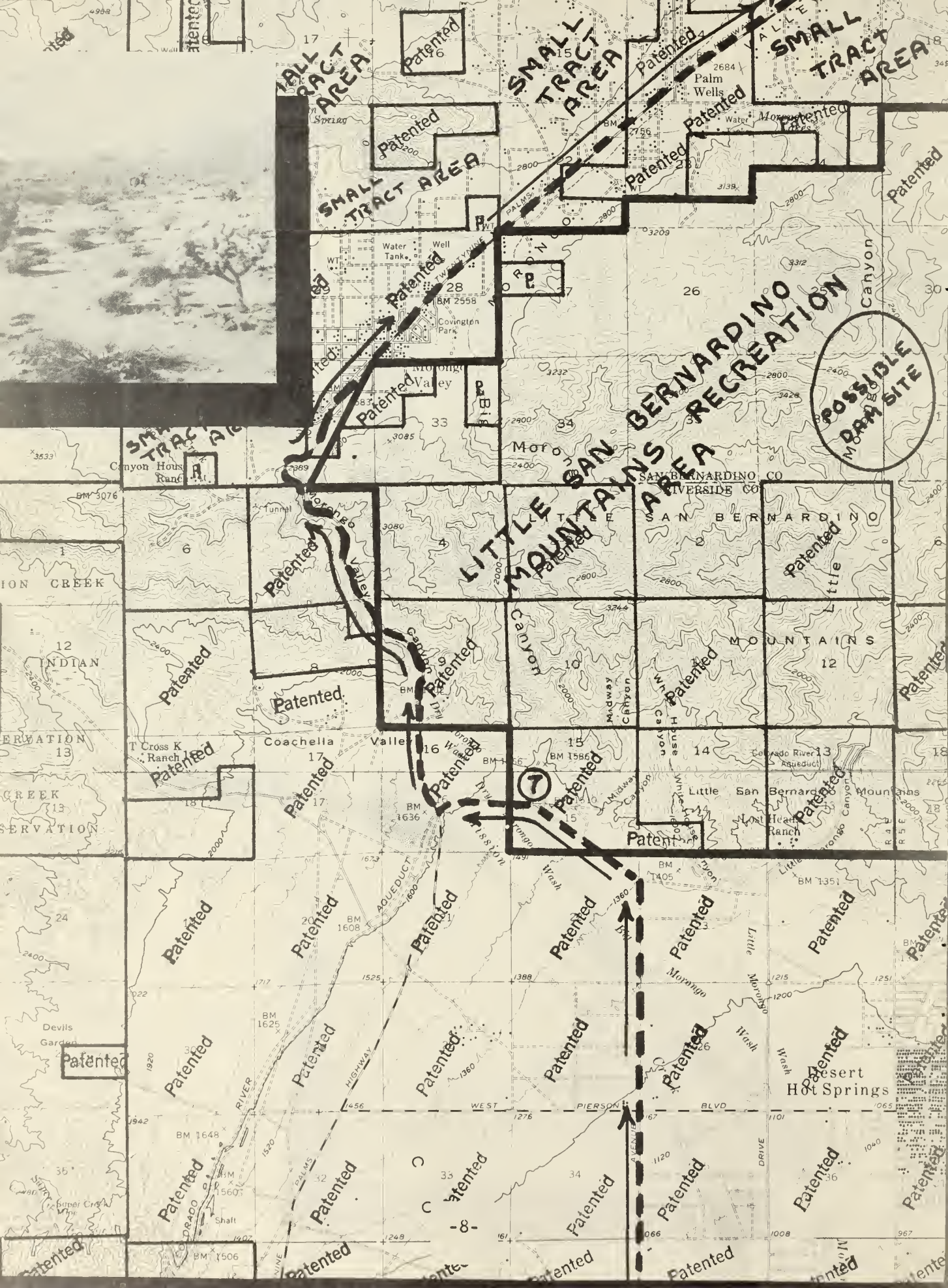
This stop reveals the intensive development taking place less than two miles from the center of Palm Springs. The lands being developed are in section 25. Section 36, directly south, is public land. The Riverside Office has received several applications filed under the existing land laws to acquire this section 36. Section 36 is in demand for its high speculative and development value. Lots in this private development are selling from \$20,000 to \$100,000 each. The most expensive home and lot here cost \$750,000. Here is a prime example of government lands that are required for the orderly growth of a community. As you can see, it is important that planning based on valid data be completed before any disposal action takes place on this land. The allowance of a non-compatible use could inflict a ruinous influence on this subdivision.

LUNCHEON AT THE EL MIRADOR HOTEL

Stop 6 (Pullover)

The 320 acre parcel lying to the left is public land. It too, has been the subject of numerous applications for disposal. There is a problem here however. When there is a period of extended rainfall, the runoff from a part of the San Jacinto Mountains flows over this property in a solid sheet. The water flows out of Chino Canyon and across the





Small Tract Area

Small Tract Area

Small Tract Area

Small Tract Area

Small Tract Area

LITTLE SAN BERNARDINO MOUNTAINS RECREATION AREA

POSSIBLE DAM SITE

ION CREEK

INDIAN

ERVATION 13

CREEK 13

ERVATION

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Devils Garden

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large alluvial fan which you can see at the base of the mountains. The Corps of Engineers and the Coachella Valley County Water District have separately considered constructing a channel or diversion dike from the mouth of Chino Canyon to the Whitewater Riverbed. If the channel were placed to the northwest of this land so that it would be protected from flooding, Riverside District appraisers believe the 320 acres would be worth about one million dollars. Should a large part of this land be used for the channel or a diversion, the value would be greatly reduced. We need engineering advice to base our judgment as to adequate flood control and dike location.

#### Stop 7 (Pullover)

The piles of earth you see here are the excess backfill from the Colorado River Aqueduct construction. Water from the Colorado River is carried through this system ultimately to be used in Los Angeles.

About four miles to the northeast lies a site that is being considered as one of the possible reservoirs for the Feather River Water Project. The site is surrounded by some 13,700 acres of public land. The Riverside District is preparing a recreation plan here for what we call the Little San Bernardino Mountains Recreational Area. Facilities for camping, picnicking, hiking, horseback riding, and nature study will be developed. The map page indicates our position at this stop, the possible reservoir site and the Recreational Area.

#### Stop 8 (Pullover)

This is Yucca Valley. It is one of the fastest growing desert communities in the Riverside District. Land values here have doubled in the last two years. The Bureau administers large tracts of land which

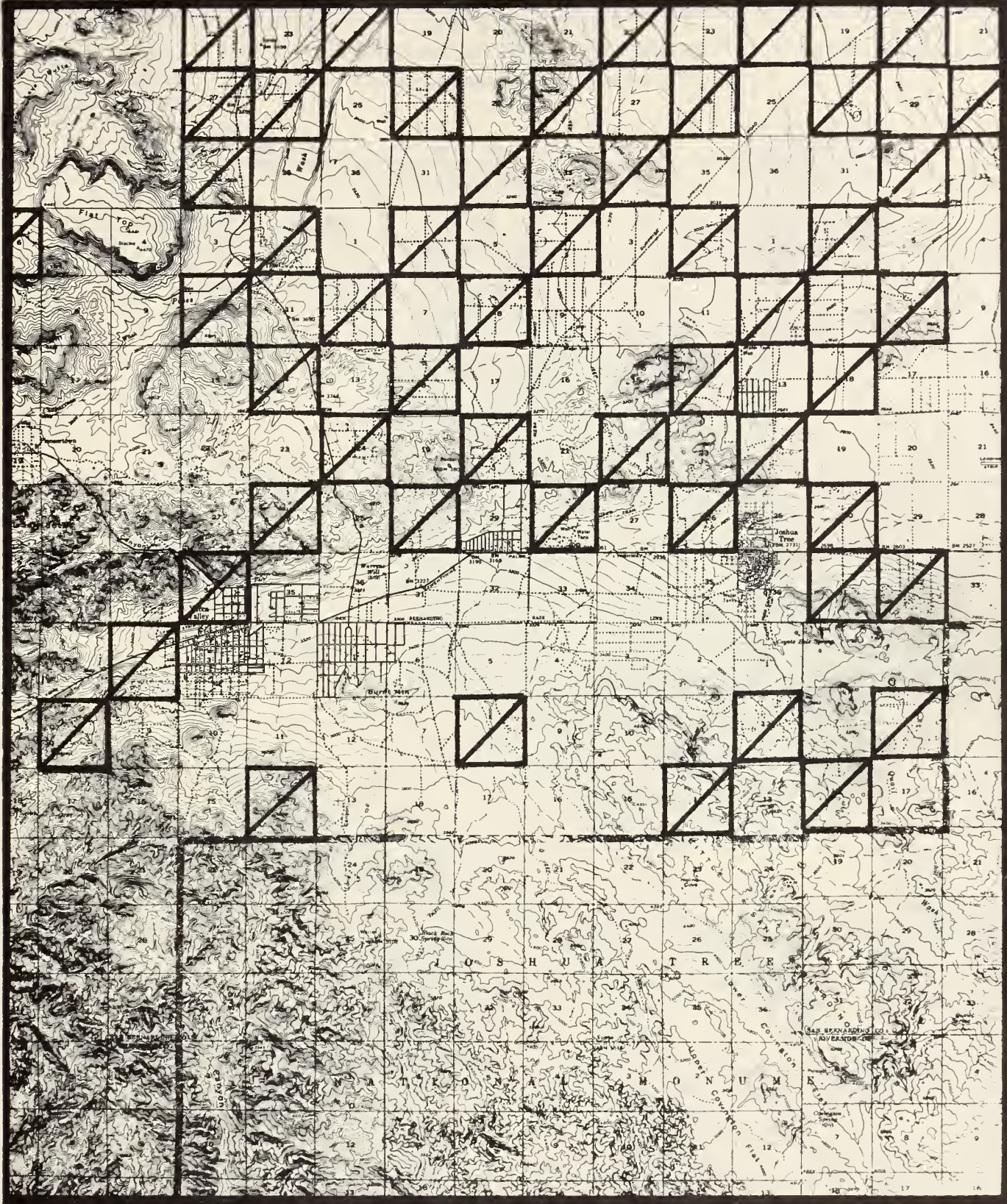
are within the expected 15 year growth limit of the community. In addition there are many small tracts in the outlying areas. It is apparent that plans should be developed now for the future uses of the land, so the growth of the community may be molded into a pleasant and desirable place to live. The map shows the location of this stop and the government lands which are covered by various types of land disposals applications.

#### Stop 9

This is one of the nicer small tract communities. It contains many permanent residents. A large number of these people are retirees who are seeking the cleaner air, the peaceful atmosphere, and the greater number of sunny days the desert provides. There are also younger people who earn their living down in the valley but prefer to reside in the high desert. Numerous recreational and health facilities have been developed. Most of the small tract areas around Yucca Valley have electric power, domestic water, and telephone service.

We believe that although there was no intensive planning in the development of these small tracts, they reflect the spirit and the intent of the Small Tract Act. Of course it also takes community spirit and pride of ownership for an attractive community. This seems to be in evidence here.

A map on the following page shows the areas around Yucca Valley and Joshua Tree in which the Bureau still has small tract activity. The next page has a plat illustrating the way in which the Riverside District has planned for the disposition and retention of lands remaining in a typically fragmented small tract section. This plat illustrates how planning has



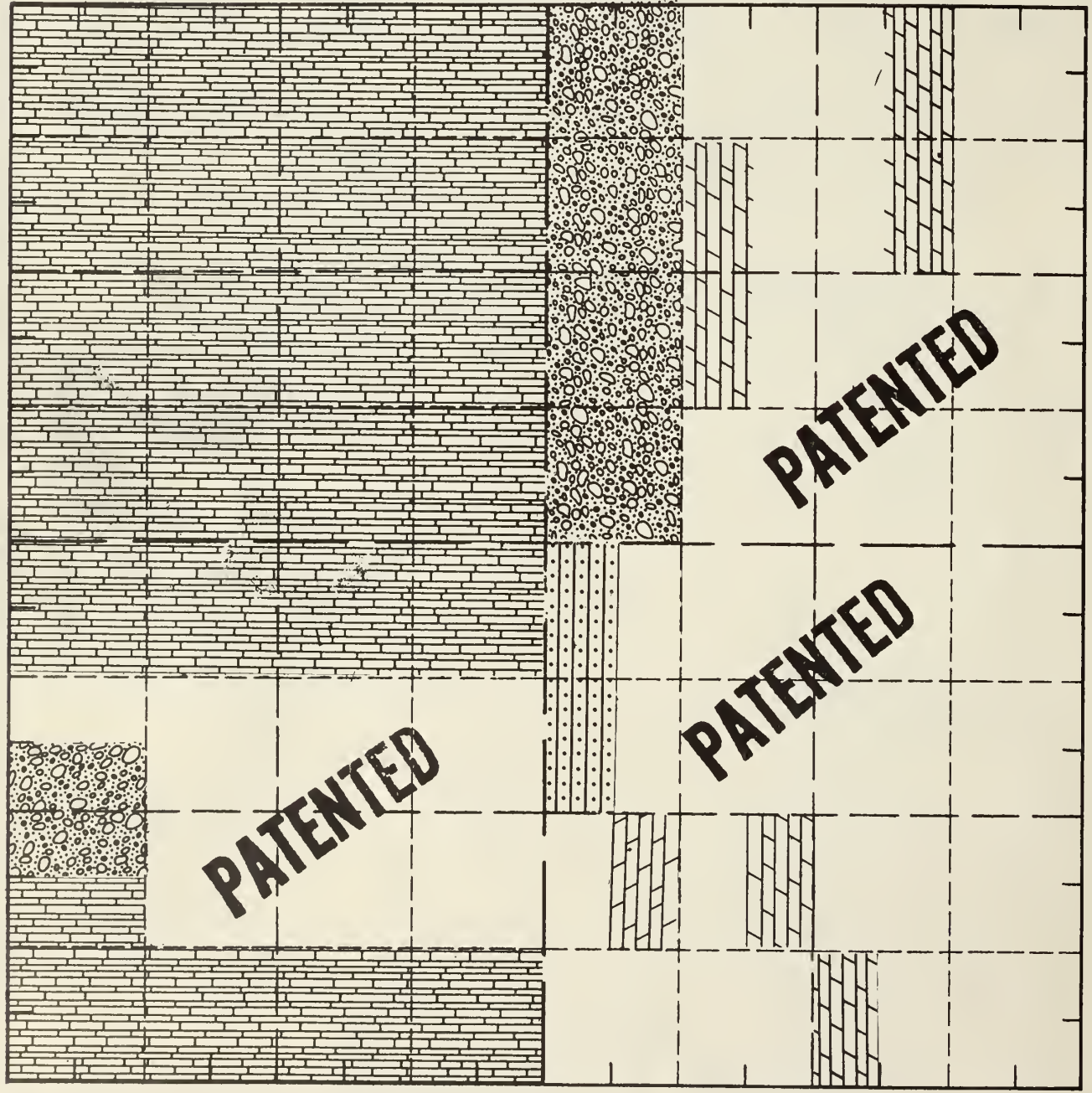
YUCCA VALLEY - JOSHUA TREE  
SMALL TRACT ACTIVITY AREA

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

SECTION PLAT



Section **14**, Township **1N**, Range **6E**, **SB** Meridian.



	RESERVE LANDS
	OPEN SPACE
	PUBLIC PURPOSES
	PROPER FOR SALE
	PRIVATELY OWNED







been accomplished to retain lands for open space, to provide land for public purposes, and to place some land in a reserve category. Isolated acreages of five to ten acres will be sold at the weekly small tract auction. Similar planning has been completed for all small tract areas in the District. Such plans have been approved by the counties and their planning agencies.

This transition from the uncontrolled filing of applications by individuals and agents to the managed planned small tract disposals is the result of County and Bureau joint effort dating back to the 1950's.

Stop 10 (Disembark - 10 min.)

County of San Bernardino Officials have asked the Riverside District to hold this site for their acquisition under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act. They plan to construct the "Ruby Mountain Roadside Rest" here. Picnic facilities and comfort stations will be developed for public use.

On the south and southwest lies the Bureau's Bighorn Mountain Recreational Complex. It contains roughly 106,000 acres. There is a pinon-juniper-joshua tree woodland over much of the area. Rabbits, upland birds, and deer will provide hunting in this Recreational complex. Desert Bighorn sheep, protected by the game laws, are not uncommon. The Bureau plans to provide campsite and picnic facilities, riding and hiking trails plus sightseeing and nature study facilities. Here we find grazing, mining, recreation, and other uses operating simultaneously. A map on the following page shows the location of this recreational complex.

## Stop 11

From here you can see Johnson Valley. These lands have been subject to much activity under the Desert Land Act and the Homestead Act. In 1959 the Secretary of the Interior classified the land for non-agricultural use only. This closes it to all agricultural entries. This action was taken because of the large number of farming failures due to the climate and the excessive expense necessary to reclaim the land. Although the soil is fairly well suited for agriculture there are many problems which are well nigh insurmountable. Water must be developed from wells. In this area it is usually distributed through portable irrigation systems which can be easily connected and removed from centrally located main lines. Rodents are a serious problem. Farmers have found that to protect their crops they must fence their fields with chicken wire set at least 12" below the surface to prevent burrowing. Although it would seem to the contrary, the growing season is very short and wind damage is substantial. The soil is lacking in organic matter and must be conditioned for a commercial yield. In 1957 the U. S. Geological Survey reported that there is only enough water left in this basin to irrigate the privately owned land, at present rates for a period of 22 years. The annual mean rainfall is less than three inches.

The Riverside District is regularly requested by the public to allow agricultural entries in this valley. It is obvious that the privately owned lands are not devoted to agriculture at this time. This indicates the wisdom of precluding further land disposals under the agriculture land laws in this area.





SMALL TRACT AREA  
SMALL TRACT AREA  
SMALL TRACT AREA  
SMALL TRACT AREA

SAN BERNARDINO NATIONAL FOREST  
AN BERNARDINO NATIONAL FOREST

Further north across Johnson Valley are the Rodman Mountains.

The Riverside District has prepared a Recreation Inventory for the Rodman Mountains which contains 260,000 acres. This area has interesting geologic features, Indian petroglyphs and related artifacts, plus other features making it suitable for nature study. Here also there are bighorn sheep, rabbits, and quail. These mountains have many week end visitors during the winter months. The District hopes to install campsites, picnic sites, riding and hiking trails, and nature study trails. The area has some prime archeological study sites. A map showing the Rodman Mountains Recreation Area follows.

#### Rest Stop at Park in the Town of Lucerne Valley

At this rest stop observe the map on display which shows the area covered by the Mojave Water Agency - the agency established by the State of California to distribute the Feather River Waters. The map shows the local districts which will purchase the water by sub-contract from the Mojave Water Agency, and market it locally. It is envisioned that there will be water service from Adelanto to Twentynine Palms. The greatest impact of the "new" water is expected to be in the Victorville region. Here there is more industry and urban and suburban development. A new source of water is expected to draw even more industry and people. The Hesperia area is believed to be next in growth potential from the "new" water. Both these areas hope to draw people with new recreational facilities such as golf courses and other attractions.

A lesser amount of growth is expected to occur in the Lucerne Valley-Old Woman Springs areas. At this time local Real Estate brokers are

forecasting arrival of water to obtain sales. Although lines and service are planned to pass through Yucca Valley, Joshua Tree, and Twentynine Palms, growth and change will not be expected immediately. One of the reasons is that the longer delivery cost is going to make the water more expensive than in Lucerne Valley. Secondly these locales have sufficient water for a reasonable time in the future.

It is expected that this "new" water will add tremendous pressure for the use and disposal of nearby lands administered by the Bureau. Here and now there is a unique opportunity to plot our course in a direction which will make most advantageous use of these public lands. In brief, "We need to plan....".

#### Stop 12 (Disembark)

This is the northern entrance to Cedar Springs. Up the canyon to the south is to be the principal reservoir that will service the desert with Feather River Water. Now that the Feather River Project is becoming a reality, water to reach here by 1970, it is not hard to imagine the impact this "new" water is going to have on all land development within reach of this water.

An early reaction to this new influence is found in some of the real estate brokers' offices. They are and have been "pushing" their listings with the promise of additional water. Speculation in private land is off to a running start.

Chambers of Commerce from Adelanto to Twentynine Palms are advertising the coming "fluid" wealth which they hope will bring growth and prosperity to their towns. Since all of these desert areas are closely surrounded by Federally owned lands administered by the Bureau, one becomes aware of





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SAN BERNARDINO NATIONAL FOREST



the intense planning needed to insure a sound program of land management or disposal. In the Cedar Springs area there is cooperative planning in progress between the Corps of Engineers, the Forest Service, San Bernardino County, the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and the owners of Las Flores Ranch. As you probably noticed, from the signs, the Las Flores Ranch covers many thousands of acres in the locality. It has seized the opportunity presented by the reservoir for the establishment of a complete new community. This community has been planned to include all needs of the residents as well as those of tourists. The Las Flores Plan has had approval and guidance from the county. Commercial and residential uses have been well integrated with open space in keeping with the most advanced planning techniques.

To the south, the Forest Service, in conjunction with the County, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and the Corps of Engineers, is planning for the recreational potential and utility of the Cedar Springs Reservoir itself. To the north San Bernardino County is planning a regional park. The Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and the Las Flores Ranch are assisting the County in this endeavor. The Bureau of Land Management administers several thousand acres of public lands nearby which have recreational potential and which are going to be greatly influenced by this intense development and use.

#### Conclusion

We hope that you have had an enjoyable and informative trip. As we have tried to say many times today, personnel in the Riverside District see the need and have the opportunity to make plans now for the public land which can shape the development of Southern California in the

immediate future and for coming generations. You have seen the results of little or no land use planning. The need for a cooperative and concerted planning effort has been demonstrated. In a small way we have tried to show that the Bureau is planning for future needs and that it hopes to provide facilities that are second to none. It is very regrettable that the tour could not continue to some of the many Recreational and Multiple Use Areas of the Riverside District. Last of all, we are delighted to have had the opportunity to be your host for today. Thanks for letting us show you this small part of the district.

Our thanks are extended to personnel of the San Bernardino Air Materiel Area Printing Plant, Norton Air Force Base, San Bernardino, California for the assistance provided in production and printing of this booklet.



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