

12-7-98

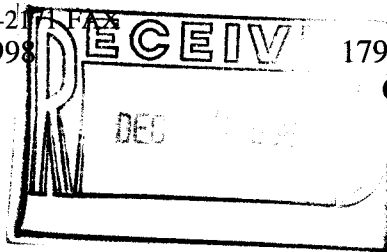


United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Surprise Field Office
P.O. Box 460
602 Cressler Street
Cedarville, CA 96104

(530)279-6101 - (530)279-2171 FAX
December 7, 1998



In Reply Refer To:

1792 (CA-370) P
CA-370-98-05

CERTIFIED MAIL #P 954 727 101
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

Cathy Barcomb
Commission for the Preservation of Wild Horses
123 W. Nye Lane
Carson City, NV 89706-0818

S. DAVIS

Dear Cathy:

Below is my decision for the **Bitner Allotment Management Plan Revision**. It is identical to the Decision Record for Environmental Assessment CA-370-98-05, dated September 24, 1998. A copy of these documents are enclosed.

PROPOSED DECISION

It is my decision to implement the Proposed Action in Environmental Assessment CA-370-98-05. Additionally, the decision includes all the mitigation measures that were proposed in the Environmental Assessment.

My decision implements a new grazing strategy and projects designed to meet a new set of objectives for the Bitner Allotment. The decision also includes specific projects to resolve the issues that BLM, in consultation with the permittee and other affected interests, determined were important. One other action is the [REDACTED].

A p [REDACTED] approximately [REDACTED] the boundary of the Sheldon NWR. This fence is designed to [REDACTED] from the lower portion of Badger Creek to enhance riparian conditions. Impacts are similar to the other proposed fences, as discussed in the Environmental Assessment. It is my decision to implement this project, as proposed.

RATIONALE

Implementation of this decision would replace an out of date Allotment Management Plan that lacked specific objectives with a new grazing strategy, new objectives, and a set of projects designed to meet the objectives. The decision implements recommendations from two Technical Review Teams that visited the allotment and Bitner Ranch in 1997.

Several interested individuals and groups expressed concerns about the proposed location of the Evans Camp Fence in a Wilderness Study Area. Based on these concerns, a field inspection of the project area was conducted on August 7, 1998. Those present felt the new fence proposal (1.2 miles of new fencing and .8 miles of existing fence removal) would help restore the riparian ecosystem and is compatible with wilderness values. The proposed fence will also close the way leading from Evans Camp to the north.

The reason I have chosen to include the closure of the road through the Bitner Ranch and Meadows is that BLM completed an alternative route around sensitive areas in 1998 and therefore the existing road is not needed for public access. Also during 1997, several incidences of vehicular damage to the meadow occurred and one incidence of theft of historic materials occurred from the Bitner Ranch.

If you have any questions concerning this Decision please contact Rob Jeffers or me at (530) 279-6101.

PROTEST AND APPEAL PROCEDURES

In accordance with 43 CFR 4160.2, any applicant, permittee, lessee or other affected interest may protest this Proposed Decision under 43 CFR Sec. 4160., in person or in writing to the Authorized Officer at the following address: **Susan T. Stokke, Field Manager, Surprise Field Office, P.O. Box 460, Cedarville, CA 96104.** Any protest must be filed within [REDACTED] days after receipt of the Decision. The protest, if filed, should clearly and concisely state the reason(s) as to why the Proposed Decision is in error.

In accordance with 43 CFR 4160.3(a), "In the absence of a protest, the proposed decision will become the final decision of the authorized officer without further notice unless otherwise provided in the proposed decision".

Any person whose interest is adversely affected by the Final Decision may file an appeal and petition for stay of the Decision pending final determination of appeal. The appeal and petition for stay must be filed in the office of the Authorized Officer at the address stated above within 30 days following receipt of the Final Decision, or 30 days after the date the Proposed Decision becomes final.

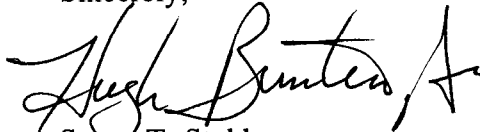
The appeal shall state the reasons, clearly and concisely, why the appellant thinks the Final Decision is in error.

Should you wish to file a motion for a stay, the appellant shall show sufficient justification based on the following standards, as required by 43 CFR 4.21(b)(1):

1. The relative harm to the parties if the stay is granted or denied,
2. The likelihood of the appellant's success on the merits,
3. The likelihood of immediate and irreparable harm if the stay is not granted, and
4. Whether the public interest favors granting the stay.

As noted above, the petition for stay must be filed in the office of the Authorized Officer.

Sincerely,


for Susan T. Stokke
Surprise Field Manager

Nor-Cal East Herd Management Areas and Associated Grazing Allotments

**Herd Management
Area Name and Number**

Allotment Name

Eagle Lake Field Office

Fort Sage (CA-241)

West Fort Sage (all), North Fort Sage (part) and South Fort Sage(all) Allotments

Twin Peaks (CA-242)

Observation, Twin Peaks, Spanish Springs, Twin Butte, Spanish Springs AMP, Shinn Peak, Deep Cut, Calneva Winter Range and Dry Valley Winter Range Allotments

Surprise Field Office

Coppersmith (CA-261)

Tuledad Allotment

Buckhorn (CA-262)

Tuledad Allotment

Fox Hog (CA-263)

Bare Allotment

High Rock (CA-264)

Massacre Mountain Allotment

Wall Canyon (CA-265)

Wall Canyon Allotment

Nut Mountain (CA-266)

Nut Mountain Allotment

Bitner (CA-267)

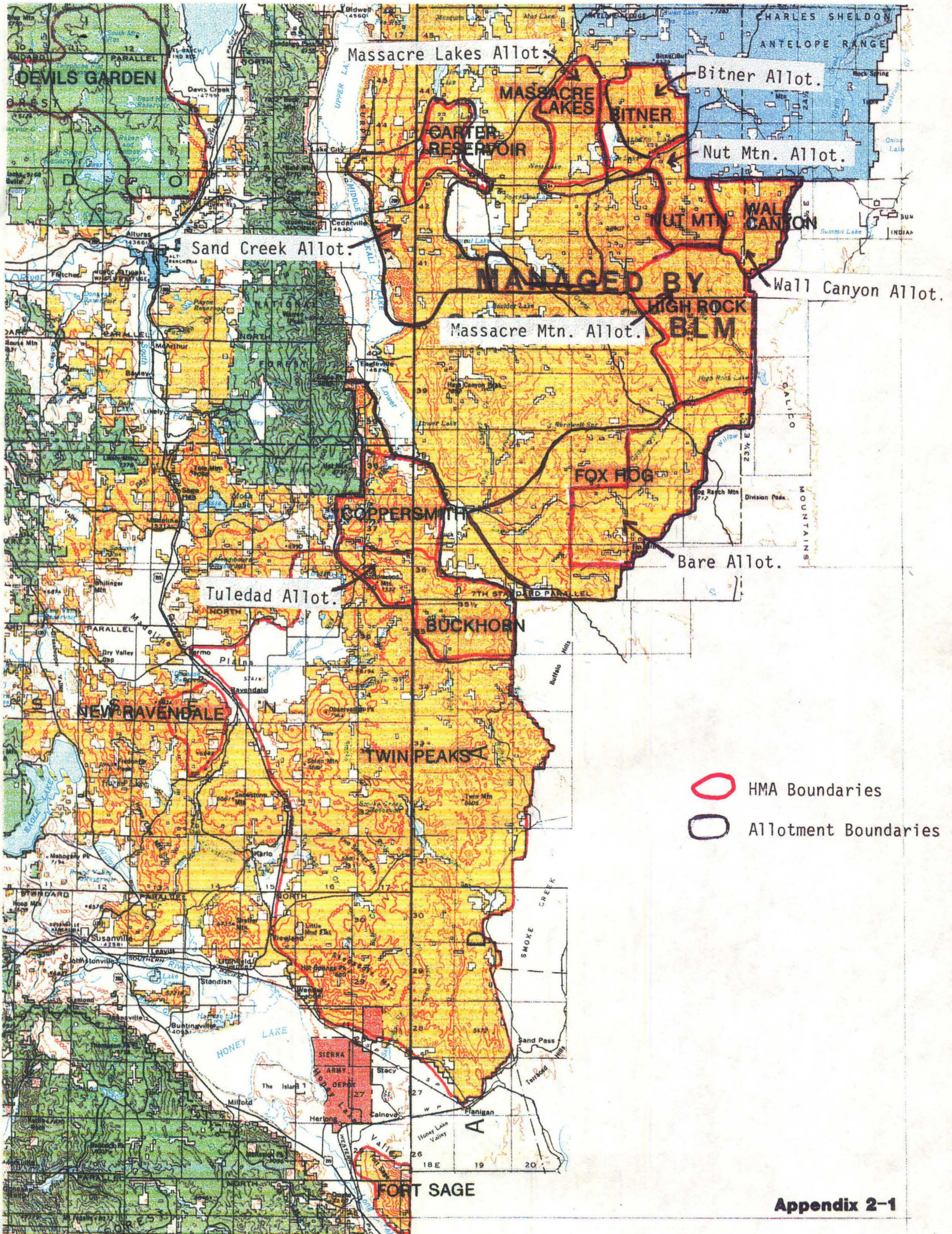
Bitner Allotment

Massacre Lakes (CA-268)

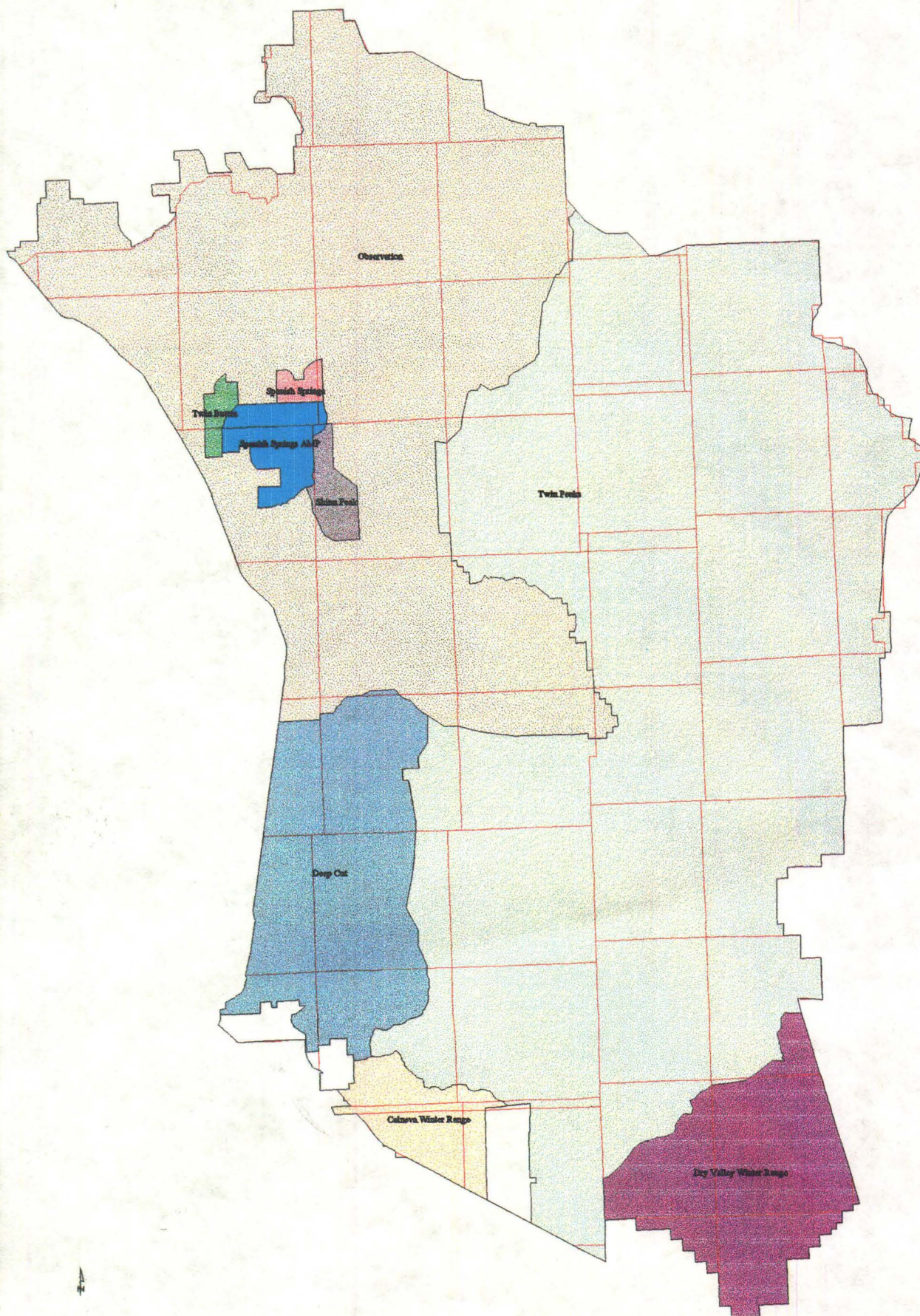
Massacre Lakes Allotment

Carter Reservoir (CA-269)

Sand Creek Allotment



Grazing Allotments / CALNEVA



March 16, 1998

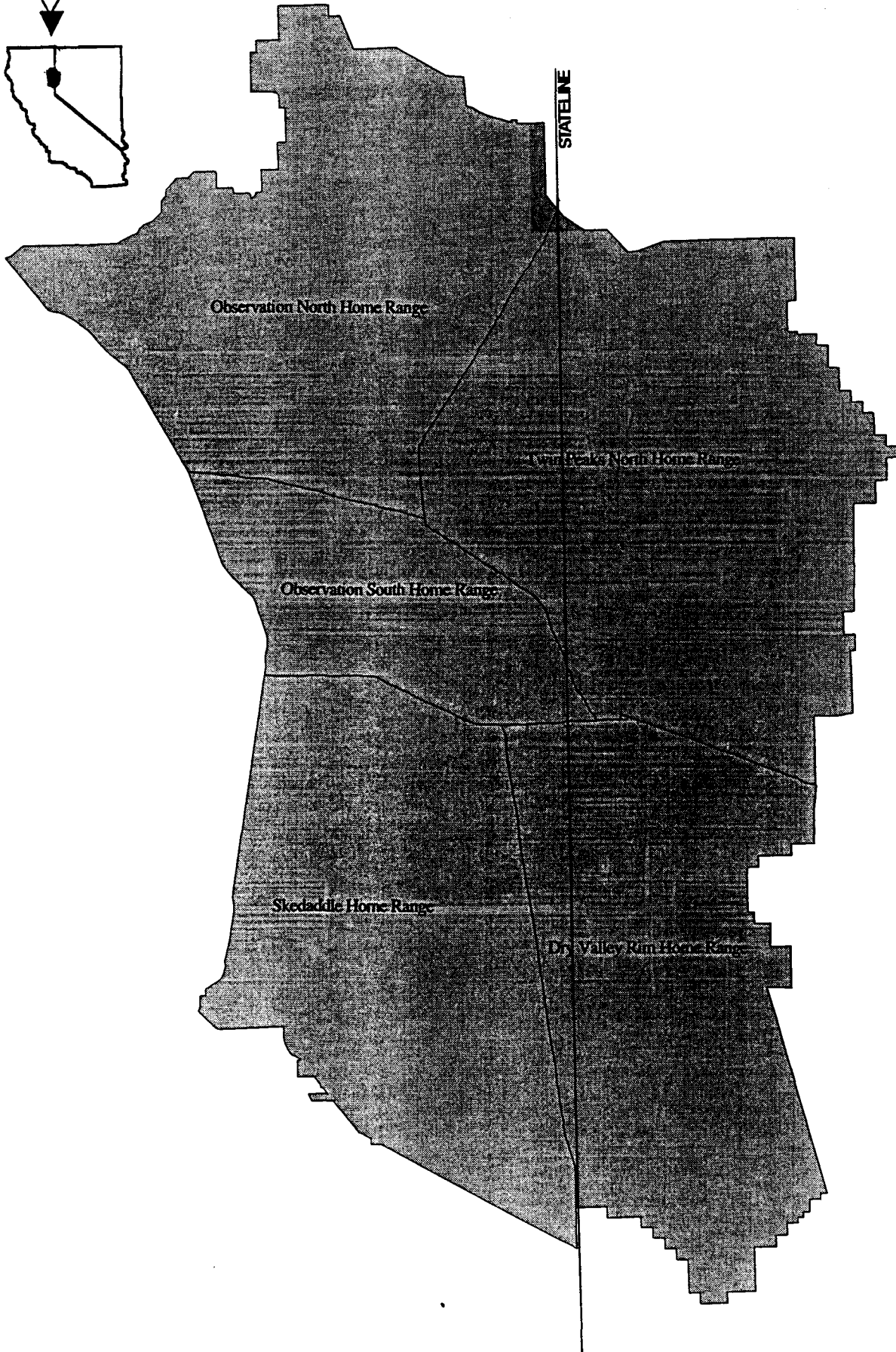
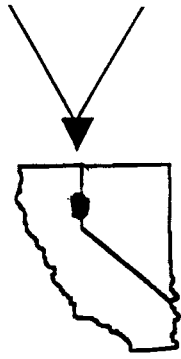
THIS MAP WAS PREPARED FOR THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION BY THE CALIFORNIA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



Map Scale = 1:126720



TWIN PEAKS HERD MANAGEMENT AREA

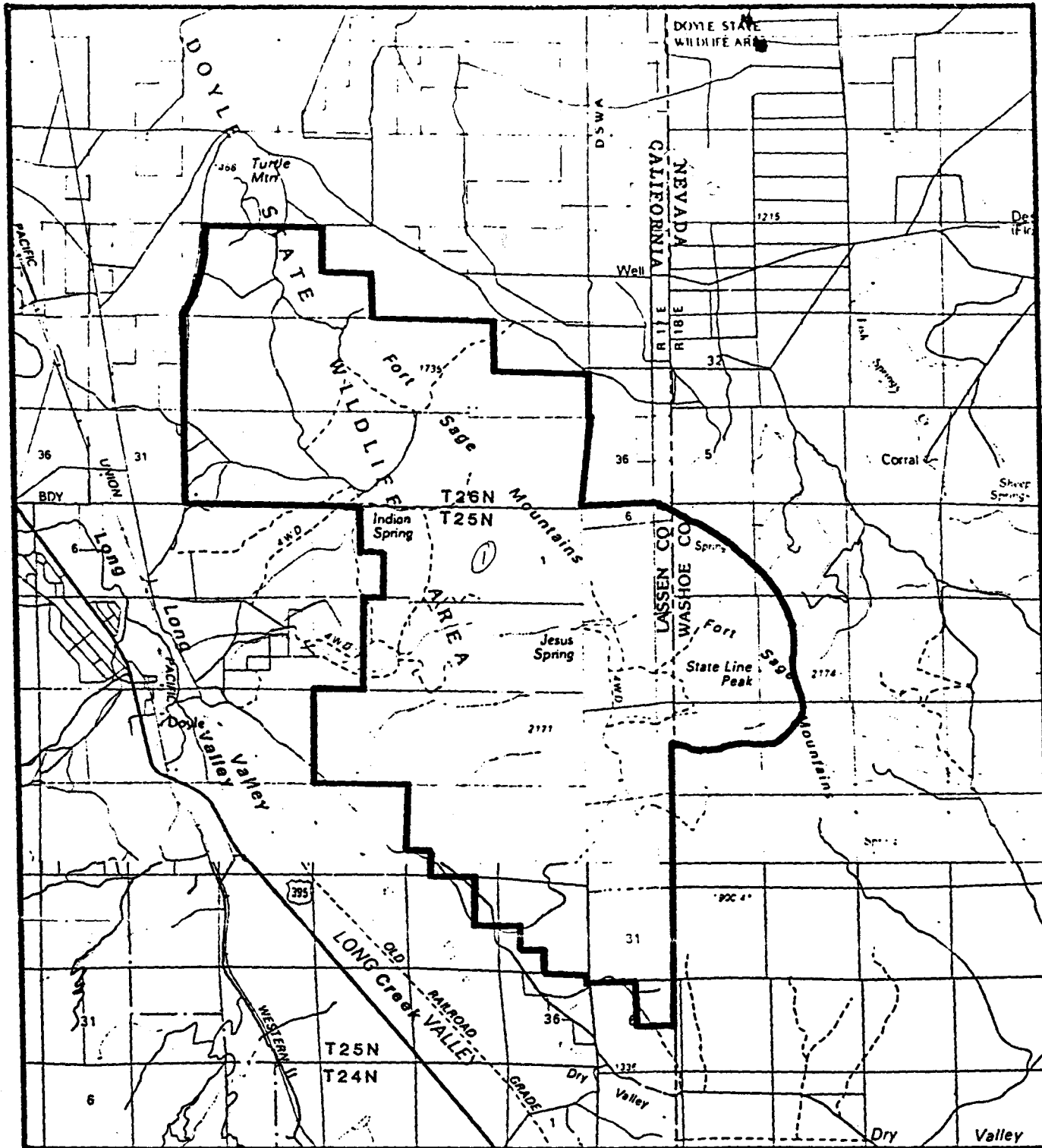


April 11, 1997

THIS MAP WAS PREPARED FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY!
 Prepared for the Bureau of Land Management
 Eagle Lake Resource Area
 NOT FOR RELEASE
 Compiled by Susan Hoffmeyer
 Cartographic: E. Smith



Map Scale = 1:400000



R17E

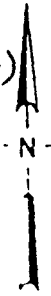
R17E R18E

8/26/98

All or part of the following allotments are in the Fort Sage Herd Management Area: West Fort Sage; (all)
 North Fort Sage; (part)
 South Fort Sage (all)

— Herd Management Area boundary

UNITED STATES
 DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
 CALIFORNIA STATE OFFICE
 HERD MANAGEMENT AREA
 FORT SAGE



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