



## Categorical Exclusion Form

**Project:** Programmatic NEPA-Guided Bighorn Sheep Hunting  
**Project ID:** 09-moja-038P/PEPC 26563

**Project Description:** The California Desert Protection Act of 1994, the enabling legislation for Mojave National Preserve, establishes hunting, fishing and trapping as a permitted activity in the Preserve (PL 103-433, Sec. 506(b)). The National Park Service has, accordingly, permitted hunting in Mojave National Preserve. Bighorn sheep hunting is usually carried out with the assistance of professional guided outfitters. Each outfitter must apply for a commercial use authorization to conduct their business in the Preserve.

Bighorn sheep are found in the Old Dads and Kelso Peak mountains (CDFG Hunt Zone 2) and on Clark Mountain (CDFG Hunt Zone 3). Guides are typically hired by tag holders to locate desert bighorn. Since the creation of Mojave National Preserve, one to three professional hunting guides have obtained incidental business permits or commercial use authorizations each year. For the 2009-2010 season, Mojave National Preserve has received two commercial use authorization applications, and may likely receive a third, for guided bighorn hunting.

The purpose of this PEPC project is to address commercial guided hunting activities within one over-arching environmental review and NEPA decision. A NEPA decision document resulting from the environmental review process will facilitate the issuance of CUAs for desert bighorn guided hunting, until such time as a concessions contract may be warranted.

### Project Locations:

County:	San Bernardino	State:	CA
Location 1			
District:	Old Dads & Kelso Peak	Section:	
Location 2			
District:	Clark Mountain	Section:	

### Mitigation(s):

- Limit commercial hunting by the number of staging areas. The number of CUAs issued to commercial guides remains unlimited. When/if the number of CUAs exceeds the number of approved staging areas, guides will, instead, need to be spaced out over the course of the hunting season to avoid overcrowding at any one time. Three staging areas have been identified by reviewers. See attached map for more information.
- Require commercial guides to provide more information about their daily observations of all sheep, and detailed information regarding the take: date, time, location (UTM), size and age of sheep, activity taking place at time of kill, and any other information that would assist us in managing this activity. Guides must inform MOJA of their departures and arrivals to the Preserve, vehicle information, client information, and vehicle staging areas. They need to notify MOJA of kills within 48 hours of take.

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Describe the category used to exclude action from further NEPA analysis and indicate the number of the category (see Section 3-4 of DO-12):

**A.6 Commercial use licenses involving no construction.**

Mojave National Preserve staff has completed an interdisciplinary review of the proposed action. Reviewers commented on bighorn sheep population estimates, potential to limit the number of commercial guides per hunting season, data on sheep kills, and staging areas for commercial operations. The mitigations listed above are designed to improve accountability of commercial operators and to better manage commercial hunting in the Preserve. Reviewers were supportive of a programmatic NEPA decision. They did not identify significant adverse impacts to the natural or cultural resources of Mojave. It is, therefore, concluded that impairment will not occur from the issuance and implementation of commercial use authorizations for guided bighorn sheep hunting.

On the basis of the environmental impact information in the statutory compliance file, with which I am familiar, I am categorically excluding the described project from further NEPA analysis. No exceptional circumstances (e.g. all boxes in the ESF are marked "no") or conditions in Section 3-6 apply, and the action is fully described in Section 3-4 of DO-12.

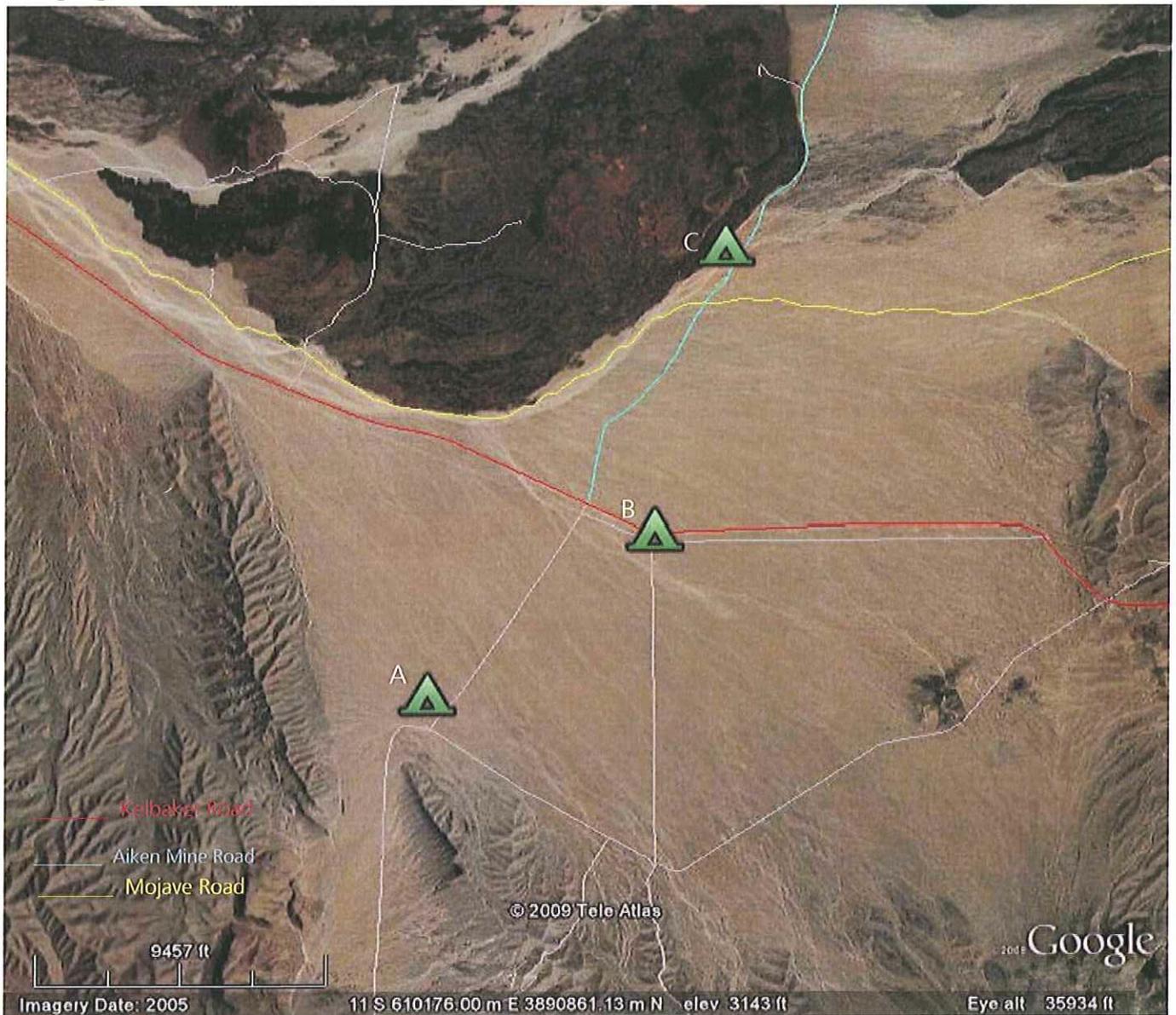
**Park Superintendent / Date:** Lawrence J. Whelan acting 9/24/01

**NPS Contact Person:** DANETTE WOOD 

**Title:** Environmental Compliance Specialist

**Telephone number:** (760) 252-6107

## Staging Areas for Hunting Guides, Mojave National Preserve



Site A: lat 35.135641°, long -115.807888°; Jackass Canyon Road across from Aiken Mine Road

Site B: lat 35.150124°, long -115.783141°; Kelso Communications Site access road west of Kelbaker Road

Site C: lat 35.175258°, long -115.775505°; Willow Wash at junction of Aiken Mine Road and Mojave Road