

3.13.3 Railroad System

Railroad access is also available to the Fort Irwin area. Both the Union Pacific and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroads offer freight services into the Barstow area. Military equipment used in training exercises arrives by rail and is transferred at the U.S. Marine Corps Yermo Annex located off I-15, east of Barstow. From the Yermo Annex all or most wheeled vehicle equipment is brought to and from Fort Irwin on the Manix Trail; heavy equipment is trucked to and from Fort Irwin via Fort Irwin Road. Amtrak provides passenger service to the Barstow area.

3.14 Socioeconomics

The following discussion summarizes the social features and economic resources associated with the study area. Social and economic features include the residents and economic activities that occur within the study area.

3.14.1 Region of Influence

The socioeconomic ROI is defined as the geographical region inside which the possible direct and indirect socioeconomic effects of the Fort Irwin's proposed expanded maneuverable training area at Fort Irwin may occur. The geographic area in which indirect socioeconomic impacts are likely to result includes surrounding communities and towns, most of which are within approximately 100 miles of Fort Irwin and the study area. The study area is the geographic area in which direct impacts are likely to result and composed of the area of the alternatives.

The majority (approximately 78 percent) of the study area is federally owned and managed (see Section 3.9, Land Use). There are residences in the study area but no population centers, e.g., communities, towns, or cities. The closest population centers are the city of Barstow and several small communities including Daggett, Hinkley, Yermo, and Baker, all of which are within approximately 50 miles of the main post on Fort Irwin. Hinkley is west of Barstow just off State Highway 58. Yermo and Daggett are east of Barstow off I-15 and I-40, respectively. Baker is a small community east of Fort Irwin and the study area at the junction of I-15 and State Highway 127. Within the ROI, there is over 3 million acres of privately held land.

3.14.2 Demographics

The estimated population residing within the study area is less than 150 individuals. These individuals include a combination of full-time and part-time residents. Most residents are concentrated in the southern portion of the study area near Coyote Dry Lake. One family resides in the Superior Valley portion of the study area, and no residents are located in the East Gate portion.

3.14.3 Economics

Two private businesses currently operate in the study area. Silver Lake Mine is in the East Gate portion of the study area. The commodity mined at Silver Lake Mine is iron. It is also involved in cement production. The mine employs an average of 10 individuals. A mixing plant, the Daily Transit Mix, is in the southern portion of the study area near Coyote Dry Lake. The Daily Transit Mix produces ready mix concrete, rock and sand, and employs 4 individuals.