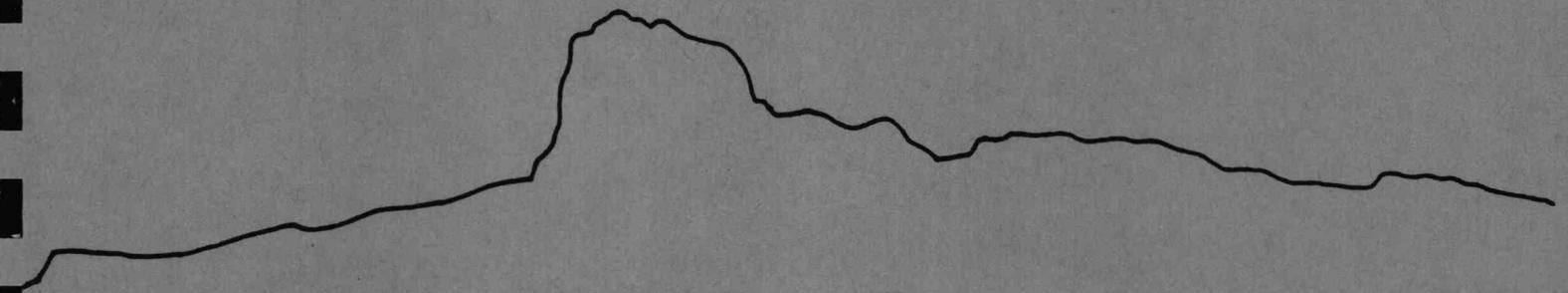


D-46

IN
STORAGE

WEST SIDE BOUNDARY STUDY



GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

ON MICROFILM

PLEASE RETURN TO:
TECHNICAL INFORMATION CENTER
DENVER SERVICE CENTER
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

WEST SIDE BOUNDARY STUDY
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK

Southwest Regional Office
National Park Service
April 1987

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Edge of white dunes and Guadalupe Escarpment

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of this Study

Adjacent to the west boundary of Guadalupe Mountains National Park is an area of white gypsum and red quartzose dunes. The National Park Service and various private organizations and individuals have long been interested in preservation of these dunes, and the State of Texas has identified them as a Texas Natural Landmark. The area contains unusual plant associations and rare species, including one eligible for federal endangered species status, as well as numerous archeological sites. The dunes are also of geologic interest and are known for their scenic beauty. In 1980, the National Park Service published Environmental Assessment, Master Plan Supplement, Guadalupe Mountains National Park, which included an analysis of the dunes area and alternatives for enlarging the park boundary. The present study updates the information in the earlier document and proposes that the park boundary be expanded.

Purpose and Significance of the Park

Guadalupe Mountains National Park was established in 1966 (Public Law 89-667) to "preserve in public ownership an area in the State of Texas possessing outstanding geological values together with scenic and natural values of great significance." The 76,293-acre park is in a remote, sparsely populated area of West Texas, adjacent to the New Mexico state line, about 115 miles east of El Paso and about 60 miles southwest of Carlsbad, New Mexico.

The Guadalupe Mountains are significant for a combination of outstanding scientific and scenic resources. The primary feature is a portion of the Capitan Reef, one of the most extensive and significant fossil reefs in the world. The reef formed in the seas of the Permian Period and was then uplifted to form a huge V-shaped plateau. Rising steeply from the desert floor, the reef contrasts sharply with the surrounding Chihuahuan Desert, creating spectacular scenery and providing unique habitats for plant and animal species, many eligible for status as endangered or threatened. The park also contains important cultural resources, representing use of the area by prehistoric peoples and the nineteenth century ranching history of the region. Many features are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

History of Planning

In December 1979, the National Park Service initiated a study to supplement the 1976 Master Plan, Guadalupe Mountains National Park. The project included a boundary study, west side development plan, and a wilderness reevaluation study. The Environmental Assessment, Master Plan Supplement, Guadalupe Mountains National Park was released for public review in December 1980. One part of the boundary study in the master plan included alternatives for expansion of the park's west boundary to include the dunes adjacent to the park (see map, page 11). The public comment period extended from December 1980 through February 15, 1981.

In August 1981, the master plan supplement project was delayed indefinitely. In October 1985, a major landholder in the sand dunes area wrote the Secretary of the Interior offering to exchange lands within the dunes area for federal land in another area or state. The National Park Service is now completing the boundary study for the west side of Guadalupe Mountains National Park. **The present study covers only the west side boundary; other aspects of the 1980 study are not included.** Because the present study is within the scope of the 1980 document, an additional environmental assessment is not required. Consultation and coordination begun in 1980 will be continued as appropriate, and compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act will be completed.

ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY AREA

The study area includes all of the red and white dunes and a portion of the adjoining grasslands bordering the present access road to the area. On the east it is bounded by Guadalupe Mountains National Park. Private cattle ranches adjoin the other sides. A section of land 1 1/2 - 2 miles west of study area has been subdivided into 20-acre parcels, but there has been no residential development as yet. Dell City, Texas, is approximately 10 miles to the west. A small community of about 400 persons, Dell City is at the center of an irrigated farming area. After a period of growth and prosperity in the 1950s and 1960s, Dell City has experienced a decline, as energy, labor, and transportation costs have risen.

Natural Resources

The white gypsum dune field covers about 2,000 acres and is the second best example next to White Sands National Monument of a gypsum dune field in the Chihuahuan Desert. It has been designated a Texas Natural Landmark. The dunes are about 50 percent granular gypsum. The parent source of this gypsum is the alkali lakebed or salt flats to the west. Individual dunes within the dune field range from 3-foot high, heavily vegetated dunes in the southern and western portion to 60-foot high largely unvegetated dune ridges in the north. A 2,500-acre field of more common red quartzose dunes is northeast of the white dunes. These dunes are smaller and visually less impressive but provide an interesting contrast to the white dunes.

An important aspect of the contrast between the red and white dunes is the difference in vegetative cover. Gypsum dunes present unique challenges to plant life. The sands move constantly, and many chemical elements important in plant nutrition are lacking. Although there is moisture below the surface, lack of humidity above ground is a problem, and because the white sand absorbs little heat during the day, temperatures can drop precipitously at night. The red dunes display a comparatively rich vegetative cover. Of 17 species studied in a portion of the quartzose dunes (Worthington, 1985), only three penetrated into the gypsum dune field more than 500 meters, seven more than 100 meters, and three do not even appear in the narrow transition, or ecotonal, area.

Small gypsum dunes to the south and west of the main dune field are generally covered by a dark cryptogamic crust and support vegetation dominated by gypweed. Cryptogams--a lichen and fungal association--produce significant soil nitrogen and prevent sheet erosion. Their presence is essential in stabilizing and preparing the soil for other vegetation. The cryptogamic crust is very fragile; simply walking across it can open the soil to erosive forces. On the major dune field, the two common plant associations are rosemary-mint/broom pea in the open areas and relatively dense stands of gyp grama grass in the depressions. Common plants in the quartzose sands include honey mesquite, snakeweed, creosote bush, giant dropseed, and soaptree yucca. The fine sands of this association are very unstable when the sparse vegetative cover is removed. One species, scale broom (Lepidospartum burgessii), which is a candidate for endangered species status, has been found within the study area on stabilized dune ridges to the west of the active dune field.

Vertebrates in the dunes area are generally scarce because of the arid conditions. Reptiles are the most frequently seen. One extremely pale form of the lesser earless lizard (Holbrookia maculata) is found only at White Sands National Monument in New Mexico and within the study area. The insects and other invertebrates of the dunes have not been studied. Such a study has been highly recommended because "if there are any endemic animals in the gypsum dunes it will probably be some species of insect." (West 1985) Also relationships among insects and endemic plants would be of interest.

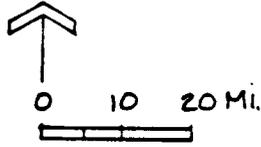
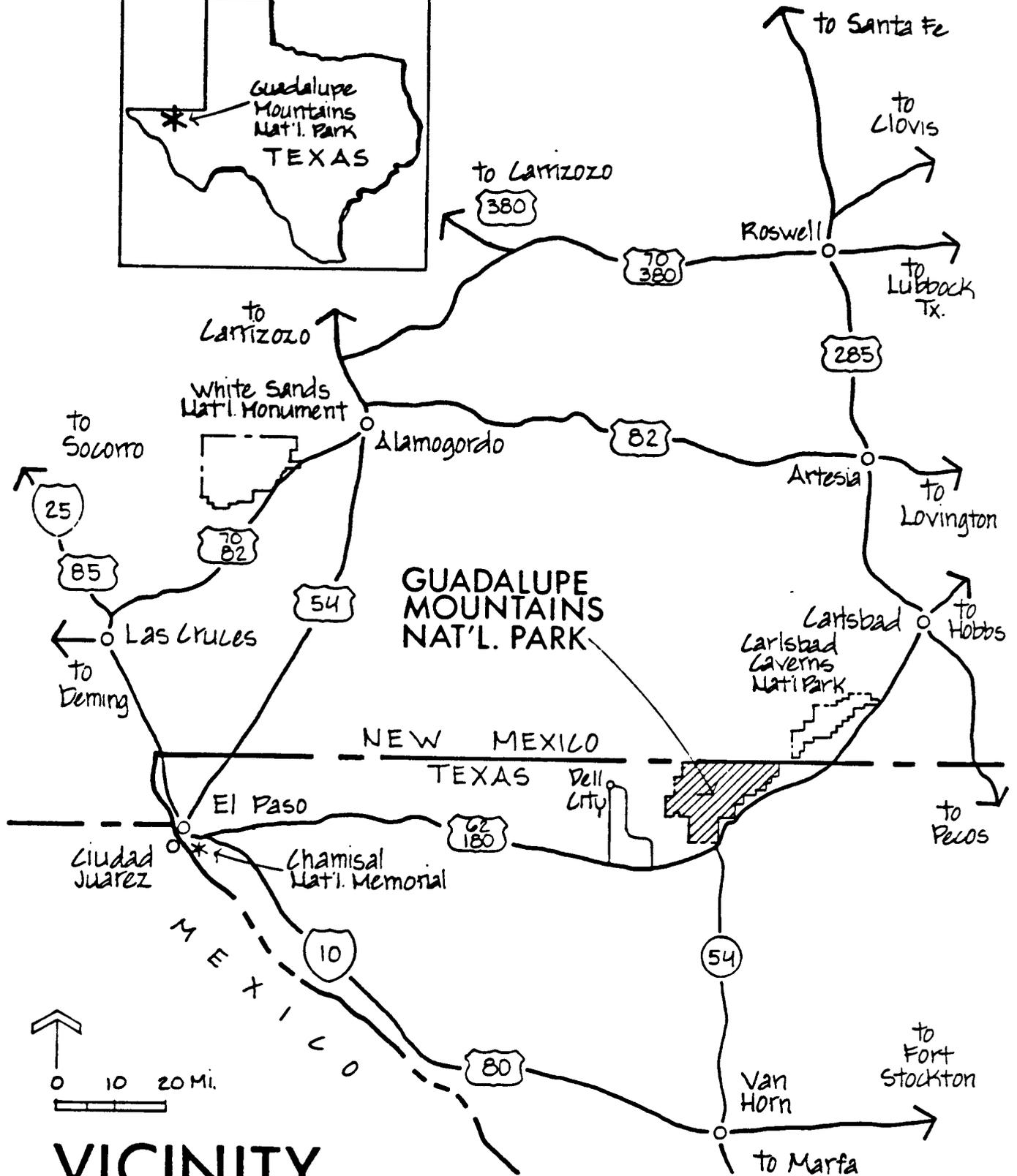
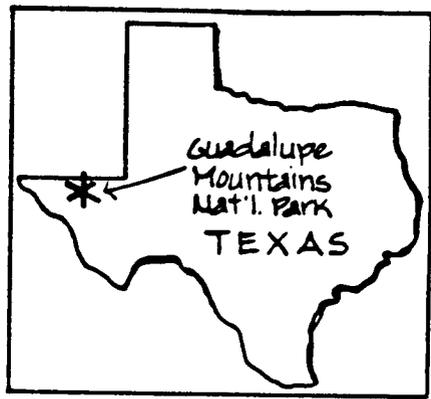
Generally, the diversity of substrates in a comparatively small area--salt flats and grasslands to the west of the dunes, the gypsum dunes, the quartzose dunes, and the bajadas to the east--make the west side of the Guadalupe Mountains an excellent place to study transition zones or edge effects, especially between gypsum and non-gypsum communities of plants and animals. Of these diverse habitats, only the salt flats are not represented within the park or the study area.

Cultural Resources

The diverse geology and natural resources of the study area are also of interest in regard to use of land and natural resources by prehistoric man. Twenty archeological sites lie within the area proposed for addition to the park, with the largest number of sites and most complex sites found in the red dunes. The majority of these sites are similar in age to sites in the park and could be seasonal or functional activity areas of the same people. The period of largest population and greatest use was from circa 2,500 B.C. (Late Archaic) to circa A.D. 800-1500 (Ceramic Phase).

The prehistoric populations of the Guadalupe Mountains were mostly mobile societies that relied on hunting and gathering for subsistence. Major influences on these peoples were the diversity of natural resources such as water, flora, and fauna and the seasons when use of these resources was possible. A sample survey of northern Hudspeth County stretching from the Guadalupe Mountains in the east to the vicinity of Dell City (Katz and Lukowski, 1981, Katz and Katz, ND) identified five physiographic zones, which may have been used differentially through time by various cultural groups:

- Zone 1: Low hills and ridges west of the salt basin including the general vicinity of Dell City
- Zone 2: Salt basin floor with dry lake and pond environments and grasslands

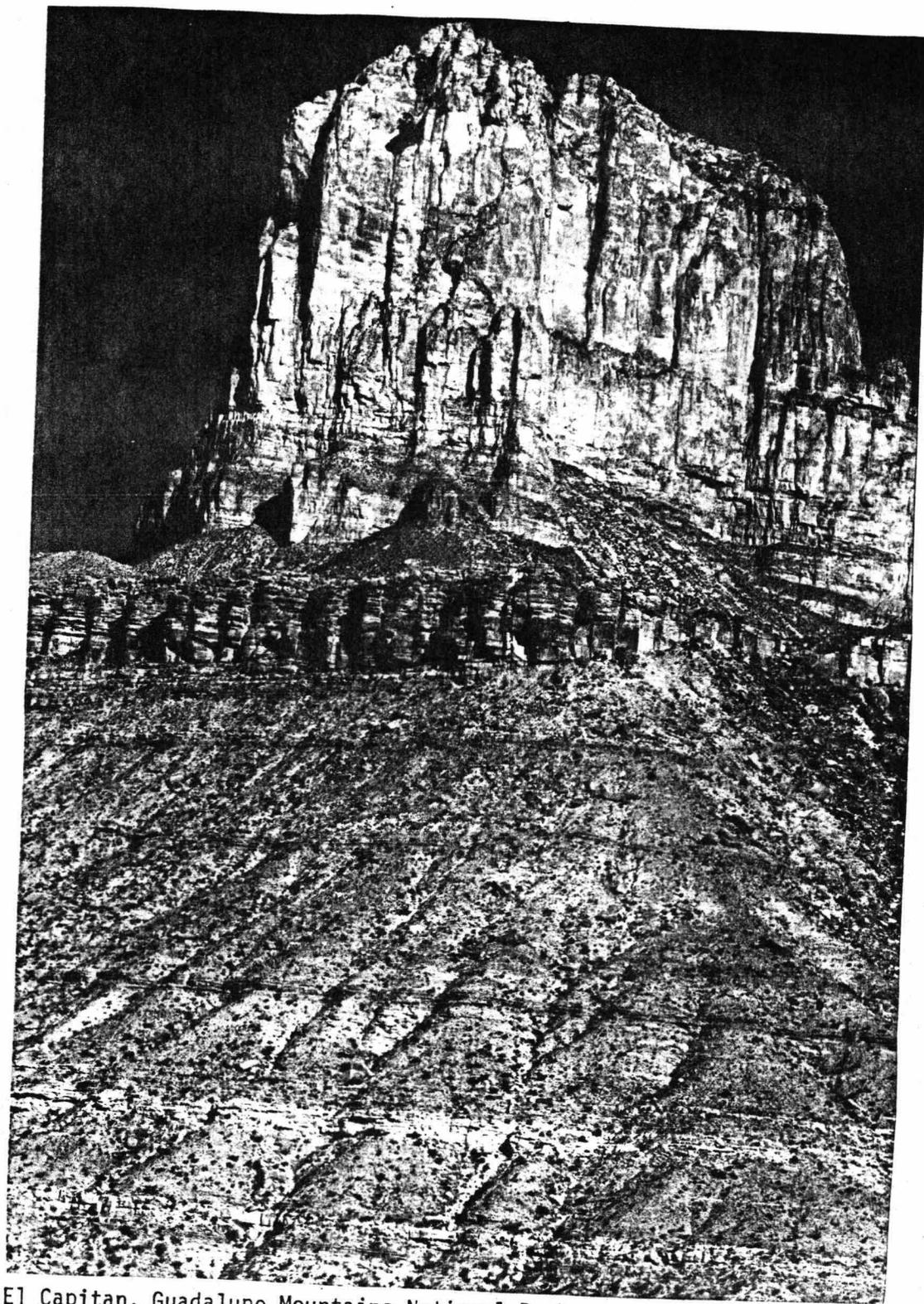


VICINITY

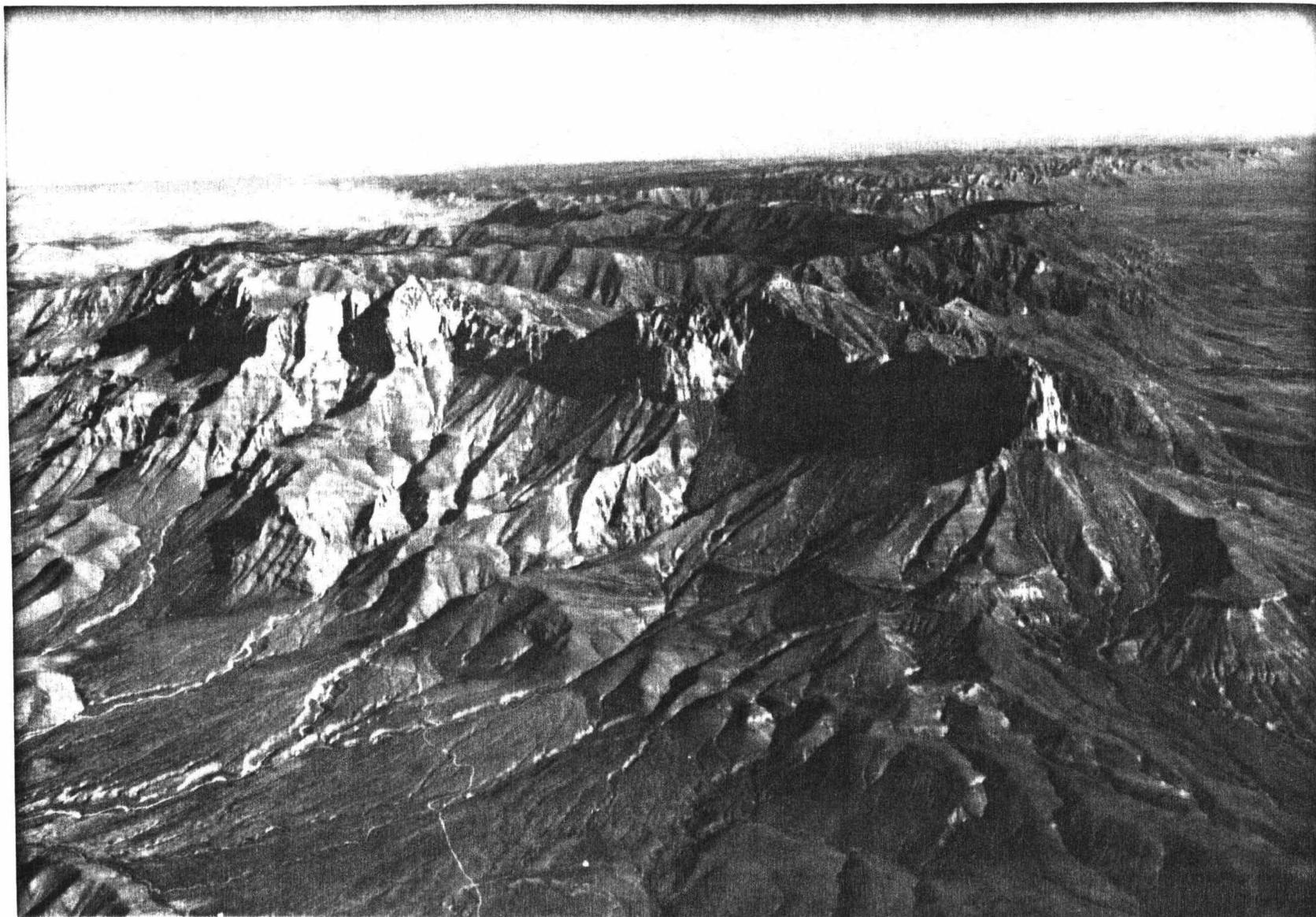
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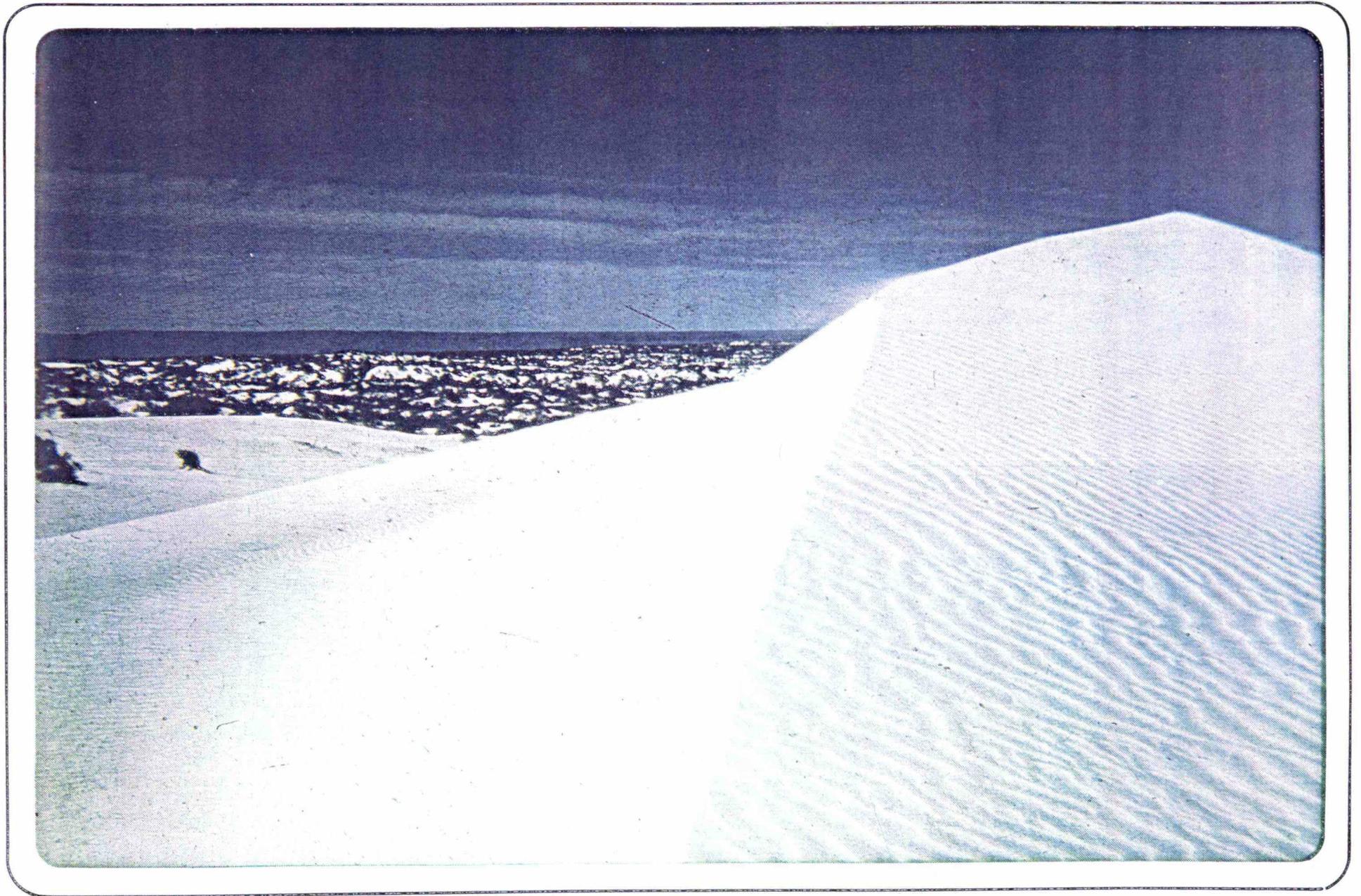
ON HIGHWAYS



El Capitan, Guadalupe Mountains National Park



Guadalupe Mountains, west escarpment



Main white dune field



Red dunes from top of white dunes

Zone 3: Gypsum dunes

Zone 4: Alluvial fans descending into the salt basin from the Guadalupe Mountains

Zone 5: Guadalupe Mountains

An understanding of the prehistoric cultures of the Guadalupe depends on knowledge of the settlement and subsistence strategies of those people over a range of environmental zones. At the present time, the park includes and protects cultural resources in portions of zones 4 and 5. The proposed boundary change would include an additional important archeological site-bearing section of zone 4 and all of the cultural resources associated with zone 3. Parts of zone 2 (grasslands) would be added to the park as well. Sites in the lower zones have been subjected to damage by artifact collectors. Acquisition of lands within the study area would extend protection to help curb future site disturbance.

The 1848 discovery of gold in California prompted the creation of numerous roads to the Pacific Ocean including one passing just south of the Guadalupe Mountains and then heading northwest from the park. During the ten-year span between 1849 and 1859, thousands of settlers, soldiers, gold-seekers, government and private surveyors, and continental mail companies traversed this trail. For one year (1858-1859) the Butterfield Overland Mail Company used this route for its stage/mail route from St. Louis to San Francisco and located a station at Pine Springs now within the park. Traces of this trail, known as the Butterfield or the Emigrant trail, are preserved within the west side of the park. The proposed addition would include additional parts of the trail.

Visitor Use Potential

The study area is highly scenic. The Guadalupe Mountains on the east are characterized by a dramatic fault scarp and Guadalupe Peak, the highest mountain in Texas, while the open salt basin to the west provides open vistas. The dunes area itself conveys a sense of a "special place," first, because of its diversity: The stark white dunes contrast with the salt lakes to the west, the red dunes, the grasslands, and the mountains to the east. Secondly, this diversity is within a small area. The scale is human. It is possible to walk from one end of the dune field to the other on an easy day hike, and to explore the various west side environments in a short visit. The effect is of intimacy within the solitude of spectacular mountain and desert scenery.

This experience is very different from the vast gypsum dune field and the heavy recreational use at White Sands National Monument.

Because of the small size of the dune area and the need to protect the sensitive vegetation and archeological material, visitor use would be limited to low impact activities. Past plans have concentrated on picnicking, camping, and limited exploration of the area, primarily on foot. Also, improved access to the west side could lead to an additional trailhead for the Guadalupe Mountains hiking trail system.

A private landowner has secured a right-of-way for a road to be built by Hudspeth County from Dell City to the national park boundary south of the main dune field. This road would be one of two public access roads on the west side; the other is a mostly unimproved dirt road leading into the park from U.S. 62-180 east of the Patterson Hills. Other roads are private ranch roads.

Because the study area is approximately 2,000-5,000 feet lower in elevation than the rest of the park, it would provide important opportunities for visitors who arrive in the winter when other parts of the park, especially the high country, are substantially colder and subject to greater snowfall. On the west side, snow seldom remains on the ground more than a day. Spring and fall, however, are the ideal times for west side visitation. In spring there is the additional attraction of colorful wildflowers. At Pine Springs, and some other places in the park, the season from December to May is characterized by exceptionally strong winds which have caused highway accidents and blown over tents in the campground. The west side is much less windy during that season. Summer days, however, can be uncomfortably hot. Precipitation is low, with most rainfall occurring from May to October. During the wet months, usually half the monthly total precipitation occurs during one day or less, and flash floods are frequent.

Land Ownership

There are six different landowners within the proposed addition. All have been contacted regarding the present study and, as far as is known, all will be willing to sell, exchange, or donate their property to the federal government. The subsurface is almost entirely owned by the State of Texas. No commercially valuable mineral deposits are known within the area, and none are likely.

SUMMARY AND PROPOSAL

An addition of 10,122.92 acres to the west side of Guadalupe Mountains National Park is recommended (see map, page 11). The recommended addition is slightly larger (509 acres) than Alternative B (9,500) acres in the 1980 Environmental Assessment, Master Plan Supplement and is of a somewhat different configuration. The reasons the recommended boundary differs from the 1980 boundary alternatives are as follows: Recent archeological studies of the area have indicated more precisely the extent and significance of the archeological material in the study area. Accordingly, the boundary of the recommended addition follows most of the northern boundary of Alternative B to include all of the red dunes. It does not, however, extend as far west as the Alternative B boundary.

The proposed addition will contain all of the white gypsum dunes, which are geologically significant and contain unusual biological associations. The recommended boundary lies 1/2 mile to 1 mile west of the boundaries in the 1980 alternatives. Aerial photography and recent vegetation surveys show the white dune field extending further west than has been shown on maps in the past. Also the recommended addition will encompass stabilized dune ridges. These ridges constitute habitat for a species eligible for listing as endangered, are part of the geology of the white dunes, and are covered by cryptogams (see page 5).

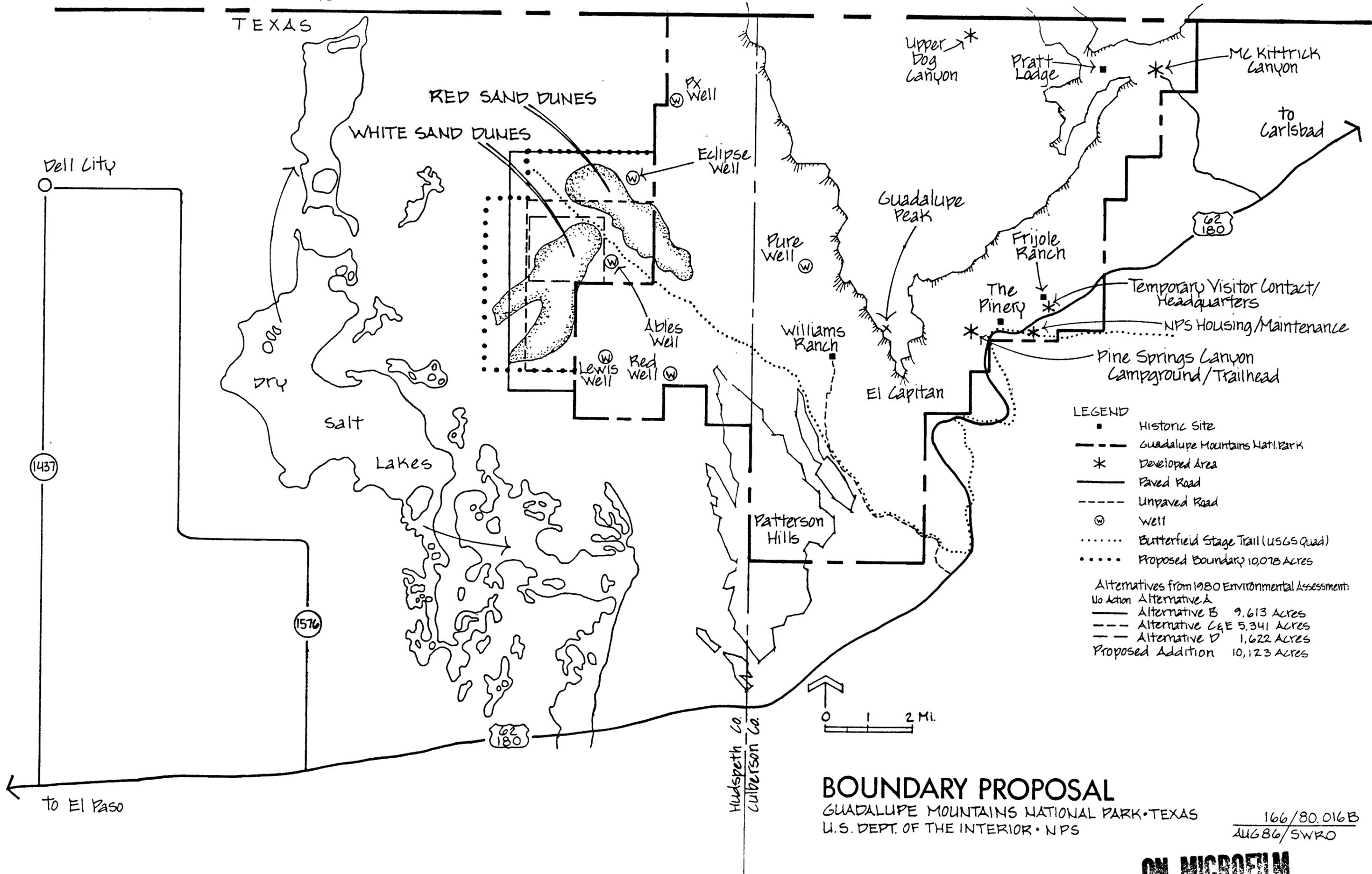
Because of a past history of unauthorized use of the dunes by ORV recreationists, collectors of archeological material, and others, it is essential to discourage unauthorized pedestrian access to the dunes from the boundary, which will be fenced and gated. The proposed boundary allows for this important protection by including a comparatively small area of grasslands in the northeast part of the study area including the present access point to the dunes (a gate on an east-west ranch road shown on the map, page 11). The addition of the grasslands to the park will also add to the diversity and beauty of the park.

The dunes area with its spectacular scenery, diversity within a small area, significant natural and cultural resource values, and comparatively mild winter, spring, and fall climate will provide a quality educational and recreational experience for park visitors, different from the experience at other areas in the park or at White Sands National Monument. Legislation will be needed to expand the boundary and to authorize acquisition of land or interests in land.

NEW MEXICO

LINCOLN NATIONAL FOREST

TEXAS



- LEGEND**
- Historic Site
 - Guadalupe Mountains Natl. Park
 - * Developed Area
 - Paved Road
 - - - Unpaved Road
 - ⊙ Well
 - Butterfield Stage Trail (USGS Quad)
 - - - Proposed Boundary 10,078 Acres

Alternatives from 1980 Environmental Assessment:

- No Action Alternative A
- Alternative B 9,613 Acres
- - - Alternative C&E 5,341 Acres
- - - Alternative D 1,622 Acres
- Proposed Addition 10,123 Acres



BOUNDARY PROPOSAL

GUADALUPE MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK • TEXAS
U.S. DEPT. OF THE INTERIOR • NPS

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ON MICROFILM

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Summary of Public Comment

The Environmental Assessment, Master Plan Supplement was available for public comment from mid-December 1980 until February 15, 1981. Seventy-two letters and a petition were received. An open house on January 14, 1980, in Carlsbad, New Mexico, and a public meeting on January 15, 1980, near the park were attended by 3, and 80 to 85, persons respectively.

Generally, local citizens opposed any land acquisition, either in fee or easement, unless the landowners were willing to sell. There was strong local support, however, for improved road access from Dell City to the park's west side. Park visitors and conservation organizations from nearby urban areas generally favored Alternative B, which proposed including both the white and red dunes and part of the adjoining grasslands (total 9,500 acres) within the park.

Summary of Impacts

Despite gates and reasonable vigilance by landowners, archeological materials have been removed, and there have been serious incidents of trespass by off-road vehicles, causing at times significant damage to the gypsum dunes and dune vegetation. If the current subdivision of land near the study area leads to residential development, threats of trespass will increase. Although the present landowners have not overgrazed the land, good future range management cannot be assured, and any level of grazing could affect archeological remains and unique plant associations. Federal interest in the land, with fencing and appropriate patrol, would minimize these problems, thereby protecting archeological resources and habitat for rare and unusual species, including one eligible for listing as endangered or threatened.

Furthermore, the proposed boundary provides for eastward dune migration, protects the scientifically interesting "edge" areas where the gypsum dune habitat meets other physiographic areas, and provides contrasting life zones to enhance the visitor experience.

If grazing were discontinued on the 10,122.92 acres of semi-arid salt flats and sand dunes, the local ranch economy would not be significantly affected. Use of two wells could be discontinued,

but ground water is plentiful in the area, and these water sources are not irreplaceable.

The proposal will not have a significant impact on the human environment, and an environmental impact statement will not be prepared on the proposed action:

Recommended: RB Smith
Superintendent, Carlsbad and
Guadalupe Mountains National Parks

3/3/87
Date

Approved: Eldon G. Ray
Acting Regional Director, Southwest Region

3/19/87
Date

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Ric Alesch, Park Planner, Denver Service Center

SELECTED REFERENCES

Katz P.R. and Lukowski, P.D.

1981 "Salt Flat Locality of Northern Hudspeth County"
In Five Archeological Investigations in the Trans-Pecos
Region of Texas. Texas Antiquities Committee, Austin,
Texas

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service

1980 Environmental Assessment, Master Plan Supplement,
Guadalupe Mountains National Park

West, Steve

1985 "Vertebrate Fauna of the Gypsum Dunes and Surrounding
Desert Grassland, Hudspeth County, Texas"
Prepared for Texas Nature Conservancy

Worthington, Richard D. and Reid, William H.

1985 "Vegetation of the Gypsum Dune Habitat, Hudspeth
County, Texas"
Prepared for the Texas Nature Conservancy

APPENDIX A: LEGISLATION



Public Law 89-667
89th Congress, H. R. 698
October 15, 1966

An Act

80 STAT. 920

To provide for the establishment of the Guadalupe Mountains National Park in the State of Texas, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That, in order to preserve in public ownership an area in the State of Texas possessing outstanding geological values together with scenic and other natural values of great significance, the Secretary of the Interior shall establish the Guadalupe Mountains National Park, consisting of the land and interests in land within the area shown on the drawing entitled "Proposed Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Texas", numbered SA-GM-7100C and dated February 1965, which is on file and available for public inspection in the offices of the National Park Service, Department of the Interior.

Guadalupe Mountains National Park, Texas.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, however, the Secretary shall omit from the park sections 7 and 17, P.S.L. Block 121, in Hudspeth County, and revise the boundaries of the park accordingly if the owner of said sections agrees, on behalf of himself, his heirs and assigns that there will not be erected thereon any structure which, in the judgment of the Secretary, adversely affects the public use and enjoyment of the park.

SEC. 2. (a) Within the boundaries of the Guadalupe Mountains National Park, the Secretary of the Interior may acquire land or interests therein by donation, purchase with donated or appropriated funds, exchange, or in such other manner as he deems to be in the public interest. Any property, or interest therein, owned by the State of Texas, or any political subdivision thereof, may be acquired only with the concurrence of such owner.

Land acquisition, etc.

(b) In order to facilitate the acquisition of privately owned lands in the park by exchange and avoid the payment of severance costs, the Secretary of the Interior may acquire approximately 4,667 acres of land or interests in land which lie adjacent to or in the vicinity of the park. Land so acquired outside the park boundary may be exchanged by the Secretary on an equal-value basis, subject to such terms, conditions, and reservations as he may deem necessary, for privately owned land located within the park. The Secretary may accept cash from or pay cash to the grantor in such exchange in order to equalize the values of the properties exchanged.

SEC. 3. (a) When title to all privately owned land within the boundary of the park, subject to such outstanding interests, rights, and easements as the Secretary determines are not objectionable, with the exception of approximately 4,574 acres which are planned to be acquired by exchange, is vested in the United States and after the State of Texas has donated or agreed to donate to the United States whatever rights and interests in minerals underlying the lands within the boundaries of the park it may have and other owners of such rights and interests have donated or agreed to donate the same to the United States, notice thereof and notice of the establishment of the Guadalupe Mountains National Park shall be published in the Federal Register. Thereafter, the Secretary may continue to acquire the remaining land and interests in land within the boundaries of the park. The Secretary is authorized, pending establishment of the park, to negotiate and acquire options for the purchase of lands and interests in land within the boundaries of the park. He is further authorized to execute contracts for the purchase of such lands and interests, but the liability of the United States under any such contract shall be contingent on the availability of appropriated or donated funds to fulfill the same.

Publication in Federal Register.

(b) In the event said lands or any part thereof cease to be used for national park purposes, the persons (including the State of Texas)

Preferential rights to reconveyance.

who donated to the United States rights and interests in minerals in the lands within the park shall be given notice, in accordance with regulations to be prescribed by the Secretary, of their preferential right to a reconveyance, without consideration, of their respective rights and interests in minerals which they donated to the United States. Such notice shall be in a form reasonably calculated to give actual notice to those entitled to such preferential right, and shall provide for a period of not less than one hundred and eighty days within which to exercise such preferential right. The preferential right to such reconveyance shall inure to the benefit of the successors, heirs, devisees, or assigns of such persons having such preferential right to a reconveyance, and such successors, heirs, devisees, or assigns shall be given the notice provided for in this subsection.

Lands withdrawn
from leasing.

30 USC 351 note.

(c) Such rights and interests in minerals, including all minerals of whatever nature, in and underlying the lands within the boundaries of the park and which are acquired by the United States under the provisions of this Act are hereby withdrawn from leasing and are hereby excluded from the application of the present or future provisions of the Mineral Leasing Act for Acquired Lands (Aug. 7, 1947, c. 513, 61 Stat. 913) or other Act in lieu thereof having the same purpose, and the same are hereby also excluded from the provisions of all present and future laws affecting the sale of surplus property or of said mineral interests acquired pursuant to this Act by the United States or any department or agency thereof, except that, if such person having such preferential right to a reconveyance fails or refuses to exercise such preferential right to a reconveyance as provided in subparagraph (b) next above, then this subsection (c) shall not be applicable to the rights and interests in such minerals in the identical lands of such person so failing or refusing to exercise such preferential right to a reconveyance from and after the one hundred and eighty-day period referred to in subparagraph (b) next above.

Future mineral
development.

(d) If at any time in the future an Act of Congress provides that the national welfare or an emergency requires the development and production of the minerals underlying the lands within the boundaries of the national park, or any portion thereof, and such Act of Congress, notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (c) of this section or any other Act, authorizes the Secretary to lease said land for the purpose of drilling, mining, developing, and producing said minerals, the Secretary shall give the persons (including the State of Texas) who donated such minerals to the United States notice of their preferential right to lease, without consideration, all or any part of the respective rights and interests in minerals which they donated to the United States, subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary may prescribe. Such preferential right shall inure to the benefit of the successors or assigns, and of the heirs or devisees of such persons having such preferential right in the premises. The persons entitled to a preferential right under this subsection shall be given the same notice thereof as persons entitled to preferential rights under subsection (b) of this section. If such person having such preferential right fails or refuses to exercise such right within the time specified in the above notice, the Secretary may thereafter lease the minerals involved to any other person under such terms and conditions as he may prescribe.

Oil or gas communitization
agreement.

(e) If at any time oil, gas, or other minerals should be discovered and produced in commercial quantities from lands outside of the boundaries of the park, thereby causing drainage of oil, gas, or other minerals from lands within the boundaries of the park, and if the Secretary participates in a communitization agreement or takes other action to protect the rights of the United States, the proceeds, if any, derived from such agreement or action shall inure to the benefit of the

donors of the oil, gas, or other minerals, or their successors, heirs, devisees, or assigns.

Sec. 4. The Guadalupe Mountains National Park shall be administered by the Secretary of the Interior in accordance with the provisions of the Act of August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535; 16 U.S.C. 1-4), as amended and supplemented.

Administration.

Sec. 5. Any funds available for the purpose of administering the five thousand six hundred and thirty-two acres of lands previously donated to the United States in Culberson County, Texas, shall upon establishment of the Guadalupe Mountains National Park pursuant to this Act be available to the Secretary for purposes of such park.

Availability of certain funds.

Sec. 6. There are hereby authorized to be appropriated such sums, but not more than \$1,500,000 in all, as may be necessary for the acquisition of lands and interest in lands, and not more than \$10,362,000, as may be necessary for the development of the Guadalupe Mountains National Park.

Appropriation.

Approved October 15, 1966.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY:

HOUSE REPORT No. 1566 (Comm. on Interior & Insular Affairs).
 SENATE REPORT No. 1682 (Comm. on Interior & Insular Affairs).
 CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 112 (1966):

June 20: Considered and passed House.
 Oct. 7: Considered and passed Senate, amended.
 Oct. 10: House concurred in Senate amendments.



The C L RANCH

DELL CITY, TEXAS
79837

October 1, 1985

Donald P. Hodel, Secretary of the Interior
C and Eighteenth Street, NW
Washington, D. C. 20240

Dear Secretary Hodel:

The Guadalupe Mountain National Park in extreme west Texas has some unusually beautiful and rare white sands adjoining its western border.

The last two superintendents of Guadalupe Mountain National Park - Bill Dunmire and Don Dayton - as well as the residents of nearby Dell City, Texas, favored the National Park Service acquiring some of this attractive land with its rare and endangered plant and animal life.

The owners of this land are willing to cooperate with the National Park Service in making this land available with no cash outlay.

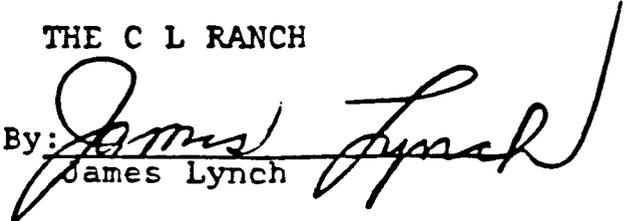
The C L Ranch owns many sections of this land bordering the park and would consider trading its land for some federal land in another area or state that might be available.

Enclosed are three photographs of the white sands area with Guadalupe Mountain National Park in the background. The two men in the photos are Ed Legg, left, and Andrew Sansom, area directors of the Nature Conservancy. The Nature Conservancy owns several hundred acres of the white sands.

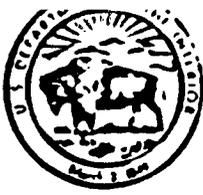
If a trade for some of this land - that should be forever preserved - is of interest to you, we would appreciate hearing from you at your convenience.

Sincerely,

THE C L RANCH

By: 
James Lynch

JL mbl



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

P.O. BOX 37127

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20013-7127

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L1417(763)

NOV 26

Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Southwest Region

From: ^{Acting} Director

Subject: Boundary Expansion Study for Guadalupe Mountains National Park,
Texas

This is in response to your memorandum of October 18 regarding the possible expansion of the boundary of Guadalupe Mountains NP to include lands adjacent to the west side of the park. We understand that these lands contain outstanding sand dune formations and are listed as a Texas Natural Landmark. Therefore, we believe a boundary expansion study is warranted.

We caution you, however, to undertake this effort with the understanding that financial constraints are tight and land exchange options limited. We must be careful to avoid raising landowners expectations. The study should address the relative merit of the area's natural resources without losing sight of political and financial realities.

If the study shows that the boundary expansion is, indeed, warranted and important, then we anticipate that you will prepare a legislative support package for transmittal during the next legislative session in 1986.



Dennis J. Deery