

# PIEDRAS GRANDES CULTURAL PRESERVE

## Purpose and Intent of Cultural Preserve Zone

The purpose of Cultural Preserves is to preserve culturally significant sites, buildings, or zones that represent significant places or events in the flow of human experience in California (PRC 5019.74)

Piedras Grandes is located in the far southern portion of Anza-Borrego Desert State Park (ABDSP). The main features of Piedras Grandes are the massive boulder hills that encircle a gently eastward-sloping alluvial valley; Piedras Grandes contains the highest concentration of archaeological sites, rock shelters and rock art in southern ABDSP. The proposed Piedras Grandes Cultural Preserve Zone also contains the famous "Horse and Rider Pictograph," located within a rock shelter on the main trail through Piedras Grandes and, according to local folklore, is a depiction of the first Europeans to travel through the area. Parks has recently provided funds to restore this pictograph panel and to assess the condition of other pictographs in the proposed cultural preserve zone.

The remains of ancient living are everywhere: many large boulders with grinding surfaces and mortar holes; caves with pictographs within them; deep archaeological deposits, water basins where rain water collected; and archaeological sites in sand dunes. For the Native Peoples of the region and others passing through, water was and is readily available at the nearby Dos Cabezas Spring to the south.

A recent assessment of the cultural resources of the Piedras Grandes found that additional heavy impacts could be eliminated if motor-vehicle traffic were eliminated from a jeep trail, called Piedras Grandes Road, running through the heart of the cultural preserve zone. In advance of the re-classification of Piedras Grandes, a Superintendent's Closure Order was placed for the jeep trail, converting it to a foot, bike, and equestrian trail. The results of the closure, in terms of natural restoration of the area, have been effective.

Piedras Grandes is important to the Kumeyaay Peoples living on reservations in the area. Within the proposed cultural preserve zone is at least one area of dense concentration of human cremations. The rock art and other cultural features are also significant to local Native Peoples who visit this area for educational and ceremonial purposes.

The name of the proposed cultural preserve is the common Spanish-language name which describes the area and is used on maps. Kumeyaay Elders have visited the area on several occasions and have requested a higher level of management.

## Primary Goal

The Primary goal for this and all Cultural Preserves is to protect and preserve the numerous cultural resources located here.

**"Complete integrity of the resources shall be sought, and no structures or improvements that conflict with the integrity shall be permitted." (P.R.C. 5019.74)**

Guideline:

PG-G1

- Projects, activities or facility development that may affect the integrity cultural resources or impacts the cultural landscape and or the historic viewshed within the Cultural Preserve zone will not occur.

Roads and Parking

Goal:

**“The use of motor vehicles in units of the state park system is subject to the following limitations: In state wildernesses, natural preserves, and cultural preserves, use is prohibited.” (P.R.C. 5001.8)**

Guidelines:

PG-G2

- Morteros Palms road will remain open to vehicle travel and outside of the cultural preserve boundaries. Motor vehicles will need to remain on the Morteros Palms road within 10 feet from the centerline of the road as currently is required per State Wilderness policies.

PG-G3

- Piedras Grandes Road will be within the cultural preserve zone. The existing Superintendent’s road closure of Piedras Grandes Road (jeep trail) through the cultural preserve zone shall be made permanent.

PG-G4

- California State Parks shall continue to provide automobile access to the trailheads by continuing the use of roads (Tank-Piedras Grandes Road., Pipeline Road, and Dos Cabezas spur road) surrounding and adjacent to the proposed cultural preserve zone. Efforts will be made to eliminate use of washes as motor vehicle routes.

PG-G5

- A designated parking/staging area outside the cultural preserve zone will be established at the trailhead of Piedras Grandes Road jeep trail for hikers, bikers, and equestrians visiting the cultural preserve zone.

## Camping

### Goal:

The open camping policy at ABDSP within this area has caused damaging or degrading impacts to known and unknown historic and archaeological resources. Cultural preserve designation shall allow for protection of these sensitive resources and restoration of the natural environment.

### Guidelines:

#### PG-G6

- No overnight car-camping will be permitted within the Preserve Zone.

#### PG-G7

- Back-pack or hike- in camping will be available in the cultural preserve zone. Motor vehicles will need to remain on the Morteros Palms Road within 10 feet from the centerline of the road as currently is required per State Wilderness policies.

#### PG-G8

- Back-pack or hike-in camping that impacts sensitive cultural areas will not be allowed. These areas will be signed as sensitive resource areas.

## Facilities

### Goal:

Within the proposed cultural preserve zone, “**complete integrity of the cultural resources will be sought and no additional structures or improvements that conflict with that integrity shall be allowed.**” (PRC 5019.74)

### Guidelines:

#### PG –G9

- No new facility development that conflicts with the integrity of the resources, the cultural landscape or the historic view shed shall be permitted. Efforts shall be made to restore the cultural landscape by removing evidence of previous impacts such as damages to rock art panels and restoring the ground surface where evidence of illegal excavation exists.

## Social Experiences and Activities

### Goal:

**“Areas set aside as cultural preserves shall be large enough to provide for the effective management and interpretation of the resources” (PRC 5019.74)**

#### PG-G10

- The proposed Piedras Grandes Cultural Preserve will encompass approximately 1924 acres

#### PG-G11

- Visitors shall continue to have the opportunity to experience the cultural preserve zone in a manner that does not compromise the integrity of the existing significant resources.

#### PG-G12

- Interpretive signs at appropriate and strategic locations such as entrances to the cultural preserve zone, at the trail head of the main hiking, biking, and equestrian trail, the established campgrounds outside the cultural preserve zone at Dos Cabezas and Morteros Palms will enhance the visitor experience while recognizing the previous inhabitants of the cultural preserve zone and encouraging respectful visitation as well as alerting visitors to the sensitivity of both the cultural and natural resources.

#### PG-G13

- Interpretation shall include the vital importance of the springs nearby and explain the interaction of humans with these water sources through time.

#### PG-G14

- Efforts will be made to reestablish native vegetation where it has been heavily impacted.

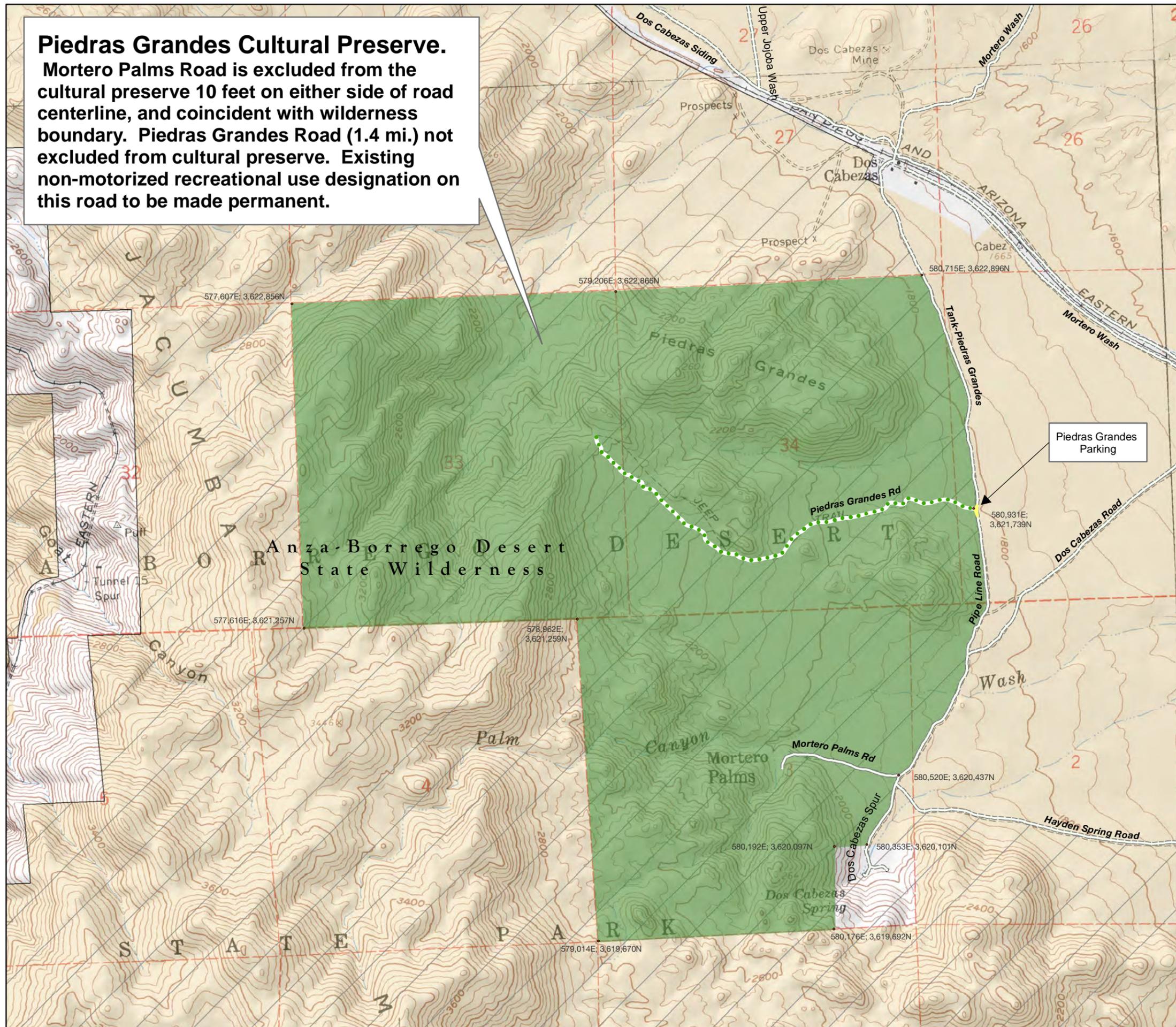
#### PG-G15

- Trained archaeological site stewards will make regular periodic visits to particularly sensitive areas and report any continuing impacts so that management of the proposed cultural preserve zone may be adjusted.

#### PG-G16

- All interpretive signs shall reflect the Kumeyaay and other Native People's Voice in names of cultural and natural features.

**Piedras Grandes Cultural Preserve.**  
 Mortero Palms Road is excluded from the cultural preserve 10 feet on either side of road centerline, and coincident with wilderness boundary. Piedras Grandes Road (1.4 mi.) not excluded from cultural preserve. Existing non-motorized recreational use designation on this road to be made permanent.



# ANZA-BORREGO DESERT STATE PARK

## Piedras Grandes Cultural Preserve 1,923.9 Acres

### Legend

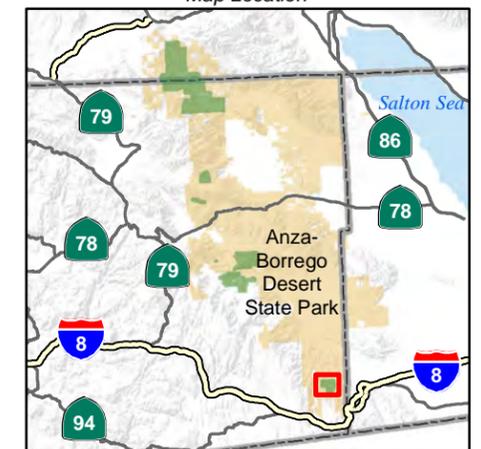
- Proposed Cultural Preserves
- Revision: Omitted from proposed CP
- Anza Borrego Desert State Park
- Existing Wilderness
- Hwy
- Local Rd
- State Park Rd
- State Park Trail

UTM 11, NAD 1983 Eastings, and Northings shown at points

Base Map: USGS 1:24,000  
 Representative Fraction: 1:19,000  
 Contour Interval: 40'      1 inch = 1,583 feet



Map Location



### NOTES:

Parcel boundaries are approximate and should not be considered legal descriptions. Maps are intended for study purposes only.

PLANNING  
DIVISION  
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GENERAL  
PLAN  
SECTION

Date 11/08/10  
 Sources:  
 Calif. Dept. of Parks  
 & Recreation,  
 Colorado Desert  
 District

