

2. Resource Inventory

2.1 Aesthetics and Glare

This section discusses the existing aesthetic resources and sources of glare in Imperial County. The regulatory environment and existing conditions have been assessed and analyzed to determine the constraints and opportunities associated with retaining the natural landscapes in the rural areas while balancing the needs of the built environment in the County's urban and agricultural areas.

2.1.1 Terminology

The following is a summary of aesthetics and glare terminology discussed in this section.

- **Glare** – A continuous source of bright light that can be produced by indirect reflection of sunlight or the reflection of the bright sky surrounding the sun.
- **Glint** – A momentary flash of bright light and a type of glare produced by direct reflection of sunlight.
- **Scenic Highway** – A segment of a state, County, or local highway that is designated as “scenic” by a federal, state, or local agency.
- **Scenic Vista** – A view of scenic resources from a specific point that is recognized as having superior visual and/or aesthetic qualities.
- **Sensitive Viewer Groups** – Groups of people who share a commonality, such as being a tourist, resident, or commuter, and who are affected by the visual quality and character of viewsheds and scenic vistas.
- **Vantage Point** – The position from which a viewer looks at an observation point, viewpoint, or viewshed.
- **Viewshed** – An area composed of land, water, and cultural elements that may be viewed and mapped from one or more viewpoints and that has inherent scenic qualities and/or aesthetic values as determined by those who view it.
- **Viewshed Unit** – A portion of the landscape that displays primarily homogenous visual characteristics of the basic landscape features (e.g., land and water forms, vegetation, and structures).
- **Visual Resource** – Those landscape patterns and features that are visually or aesthetically pleasing and that contribute positively to the definition of a distinct community or region including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings.

2.1.2 Regulatory Environment

The following is a list of laws, policies, and plans relevant to aesthetics and glare.

Federal

- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA)
- Wilderness Act

- Bureau of Land Management Visual Resource Inventory and Management Guidance

State

- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- California Scenic Highway Program

Local

- Imperial County General Plan
- Imperial County Land Use Ordinance (Title 9) Division 5

2.1.3 Existing Conditions

Imperial County extends over 4,597 square miles between Riverside County to the north, Mexico to the south, San Diego County to the west, and Arizona to the east. The County's visual character varies greatly. It includes natural scenic visual resources such as deserts, sand dunes, mountains, recreation areas, and the Salton Sea. Many of the natural scenic resources are located on land under Bureau of Land Management (BLM) jurisdiction. The County includes agricultural areas and built environments such as urban areas and solar and geothermal development.

2.1.3.1 Scenic Visual Resources

Imperial County contains several scenic visual resources; the general locations of these areas are identified in Figure 2.1-1 (all figures are located at the end of this section).

Desert Areas

The desert areas include the Yuha Desert, West Mesa, lower Borrego Valley, East Mesa, and Pilot Knob Mesa.

The Yuha Desert is located in the southwest portion of the County within the West Mesa area and is intersected east/west by Interstate 8 (I-8). As viewed from I-8, its seemingly barren landscape contrasts sharply against the surrounding mountains. The Yuha Desert contains unique geologic features including sand chimneys and painted gorge formations that add scenic value to the natural landscape. Cultural features in the Yuha Desert include large earth sculptures, or geoglyphs, constructed by prehistoric Native Americans. Geoglyphs are rare and one of the most fragile archeological features known. The most visually prominent plant in the Yuha Desert is the ocotillo, which can stand up to 15 feet in height.

The desert of the West Mesa area is bordered on the east by the Superstition Mountains and on the west by the Fish Creek Mountains. The lower Borrego Valley desert area is located in the northwestern area of the County, bordered on the north by the Santa Rosa Mountains, on the south by the Vallecito Mountains, and on the east by the Salton Sea. The East Mesa area lies to the west of the Algodones Dunes and to the east of the agricultural areas of the Imperial Valley. The Pilot Knob Mesa area is located just east of the Algodones Dunes and west of the Cargo Muchacho Mountains.

The vegetation of these desert areas consists of the creosote scrub community. Dominant in this community is the creosote bush. Other plants include ocotillo, mesquite, palo verde, saltbush, and encelia. Also contributing to the scenic quality of the desert areas are the springtime blooms of desert wildflowers. In springtime, up to 60 species of annuals may be viewed. A typical scene would include large, white evening primroses gleaming over variegated carpets of sand verbena, sunny desert

dandelion, and desert sunflower, which are often joined by desert marigold, coreopsis, and other daisy family species (ICPDS 2009).

Mountain and Wilderness Areas

Mountains are a significant visual resource in Imperial County. The eastern foothills of the Peninsular Range run along the County's southwest side. These foothills include the In-Ko-Pah or Jacumba Mountains, Coyote Mountains, and Fish Creek Mountains. Portions of these mountain areas are designated by the BLM as Wilderness Areas, part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. The intention of this designation is to secure natural areas for the public purposes of recreation, scenic, scientific, educational, conservation, and historical use (BLM 2014a). The Wilderness Areas are included in Figure 2.6-1 (Imperial County Recreation and Open Space Areas). East of these mountain/wilderness areas is Mount Signal, located along the international border on the eastern edge of the Yuha Desert, west of Calexico, which is visible from the entire Imperial Valley (ICPDS 2009).

At the northwest corner of the County, the southeast foothills of the Santa Rosa-San Jacinto Mountains are a prominent feature from State Route (SR) 86. The Superstition Mountains and Superstition Hills, located in West Mesa southeast of the lower Borrego Valley and west of Westmorland and Brawley, are visible looking north from I-8 west of El Centro and from SR 86 between El Centro and the Salton Sea.

In the northeastern part of the County, the Chocolate Mountains, named because of their color, stretch northwest by southeast between Riverside County and the Colorado River. They are bisected by SR 78 between Glamis and the Palo Verde area. These mountains reach an elevation of 2,700 feet and are highly visible from throughout the County. They are extremely rugged, virtually undeveloped, and used as a naval gunnery range (ICPDS 2009). In addition, the Palo Verde Mountains Wilderness Area and the southern portion of the Little Chuckwalla Wilderness Area are located in the northeast corner of the County. The southeastern border of the County includes the following Wilderness Areas: Indian Pass, Picacho Peak, Imperial Refuge, and Little Picacho Peak. As shown in Figure 2.1-1, these wilderness and mountainous areas are not located near the County's urban areas or major highways, so they are not prominent features in the County viewshed.

Algodones Dunes

The Algodones Dunes are the largest sand dunes in California. This dune system covers approximately 160 square miles, extending for 45 miles along the eastern edge of the Imperial Valley agricultural region in a band averaging 6 miles in width. They extend lengthwise in a northwest-southeast direction and are situated between the East Mesa and Pilot Knob Mesa areas. They are bisected east/west by SR 78 between Brawley and Glamis and by I-8 between El Centro and Yuma. The dunes consist of shifting sands and attain a thickness of at least 200 feet in some parts. Rising to heights of over 300 feet above the surrounding desert floor, the dunes are a well-known landmark to local residents, and thousands of highway travelers pass them annually. A portion of the dunes are designated as a Wilderness Area by the BLM. Based on these qualities, the dunes represent a unique visual resource.

The dunes were created by earth upheavals that elevated the area above the ocean some 200 million years ago along with the action of erosional forces over the ancient Salton Sea shoreline. For millions of years, the climate of California's desert area was tropical, but as the earth's crust shifted along the San Andreas Fault, the coastal mountains were pushed up, cutting off the moisture-laden air coming from the ocean. At the same time, the interior plains of Southern California began to drop, forming a basin known as the Salton Sink. The Colorado River covered a wide area, periodically diverted by silt deposits remaining after floods. Sometimes the river flowed into the Gulf of California as it does today, and other

times it turned westward into the Salton Sink. At such times, the Salton Sink would form a large freshwater lake. Scientists refer to this ancient body of water as Lake Cahuilla. The last Lake Cahuilla covered much of the Imperial, Coachella, and Mexicali valleys as late as 1450.

The most popular theory holds that the Imperial Sand Dunes were formed from windblown beach sands of Lake Cahuilla. The prevailing westerly and northwesterly winds blew the sands eastward from the old lakeshore to their present location. This process continues to this day.

Prevailing winds cause the dunes to migrate toward the southeast at the rate of approximately 1 foot per year. The sand dunes played a major role in early exploration, travel, and development in Imperial County and have long been an obstacle to travelers moving east and west. Though a few pioneers crossed the dunes with horse and mule pack trains, this natural barrier continued to hinder California's southern commerce until the first road, known as the "auto railroad" was built in 1911.

In 1916, the California Highway Commission, which assumed responsibility for the trans-dunes highway in June 1915, built an improved plank road, which lasted until 1926, when it was replaced by a new two-lane asphalt road. The Imperial Sand Dunes are considered a significant visual resource in the County due to their unique scenic qualities, historic features, and prominent visibility to a large number of people.

Salton Sea

The Salton Sea is located in the northwestern portion of the County and extends into Riverside County, measuring 35 miles in length and a surface area of approximately 376 square miles. The Salton Sea has been sustained by agricultural drainage from the Imperial, Coachella, and Mexicali valleys; rainfall; storm runoff from the surrounding mountains; and groundwater inflow. Because the Salton Sea exists in a closed basin, the only outflow is evaporation, resulting in a rising level of salinity. Despite the salinity, the area represents an important wildlife habitat area and provides migrating and wintering habitat for thousands of waterfowl and other birds. Masses of these birds are visible from the shores of the Salton Sea. This waterbody represents a unique visual resource because of its massive size, its location in a desert area, and its value to wildlife.

State Park and Recreation Areas

Anza-Borrego Desert State Park is located on the eastern side of San Diego County, with portions extending east into Imperial County and north into Riverside County. The park features washes, wildflowers, palm groves, cacti, sweeping vistas, and many miles of hiking trails (CSP 2014).

Imperial County's state recreation areas also provide scenic resources for recreationists. The recreation areas include the Heber Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area, Picacho State Recreation Area, Salton Sea State Recreation Area, and Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area. The Picacho State Recreation Area contains unique scenic values which are created by volcanic formations that rise several hundred feet from the valley floor.

Overlooks

The Osborne Overlook offers scenic views of the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area, North Algodones Dunes Wilderness, and surrounding area. The overlook is located among the largest and tallest dunes (BLM 2013).

The Juan Bautista de Anza Overlook provides a view of the Yuha Basin and surrounding landscape. The monument commemorates the two expeditions (1774 and 1775) led by Spanish explorer Juan Bautista de Anza (BLM 2010a).

Scenic Highways

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) manages the California Scenic Highway Program. The goal of the program is to preserve and protect scenic highway corridors from changes that would affect the aesthetic value of the land adjacent to the scenic corridor (Caltrans 2008). No state scenic highways have been designated in Imperial County; however, the following four routes in Imperial County are considered eligible for a state scenic highway designation:

- **Interstate 8:** The initial segment for future scenic highway designation status lies between the San Diego County line and its junction with SR 98 near Coyote Wells. This segment, known as Mountain Springs Grade, has a long, rapid elevation change, remarkable rock and boulder scenery, and plant life variations.
- **SR 78:** The portion of SR 78 from the junction with SR 86 near Julian to the San Diego County line is eligible for a future scenic highway designation. That area is considered scenic because of its desert characteristics and view of Salton Sea.
- **SR 111:** SR 111 travels along the northeast shore of the Salton Sea and is eligible for a future scenic highway designation from Bombay Beach to the County line. The drive contrasts the flat, wide portions of the Salton Sea with the rugged variations of the Chocolate Mountains.
- **Borrego-Salton Seaway:** County Highway S-22 is also known as Borrego-Salton Seaway; it begins in Salton City and ends at the community of Borrego Springs in San Diego County. This route includes views of Clay Point, the Anza Verde Wash, and scenic viewpoints (ICPDS 2008a).

2.1.3.2 Other Visual Characteristics

Agricultural Areas

It is estimated that approximately 20 percent (588,416 acres) of the land in Imperial County is made up of irrigated agricultural areas. The majority of the agricultural activity is concentrated in the Imperial Valley area (512,163 acres), followed by Bard Valley in the southeast corner of the County (14,737 acres) and Palo Verde Valley in the northeast corner of the County (7,428 acres). These areas are characterized by square or rectangular fields, typically 40 to 80 acres in area, that are sometimes interspersed with scattered farmhouses and related agricultural structures. These agricultural regions are crossed by irrigation canals and drainages that parallel dirt farm roads. Several cattle feed yards, other animal ranches, and aquaculture farms are located throughout the Imperial Valley, as are a few agricultural processing/packaging plants including Spreckels Sugar, fertilizer/chemical plants, and other agricultural-related operations. Agricultural areas dominate the visual scenes along I-8 and sections of SR 78, SR 86, SR 111, and SR 115 (ICPDS 1996, 2009; Brian F. Mooney Associates 1993).

Urban Areas

Imperial County's urban areas include the areas surrounding seven incorporated cities (Brawley, El Centro, Imperial, Westmorland, Holtville, Calipatria, and Calexico) and five unincorporated communities (Heber, Niland, Seeley, West Shores/Salton City, and Winterhaven). These areas are characterized by low-rise, mixed-use development and contain or propose a broad range of residential, commercial, and industrial uses.

The urban area of El Centro is characterized by strip commercial development along SR 86, Imperial Avenue, and Main Street. Industrial and residential development is located on the fringes of the strip commercial areas. The City of Imperial's urban layout is similar to that of El Centro but includes the Imperial County Airport on SR 86. The Brawley urban area is characterized by commercial development along SR 78, with residential development in the outlying areas. Calexico is characterized by strip commercial development along SR 111 and residential uses to the east and west. Urban development is not usually considered a visual resource, but it makes up an important segment of the County's existing visual environment.

Military Facilities

Military activities are centered at the Naval Air Facility El Centro, located north of Seeley, with military field and aerial operations conducted on approximately 350,000 acres in the Chocolate Mountains, 76,800 acres in the Superstition Mountains, 36,600 acres at the Salton Sea Test Base, and at other smaller sites throughout the County. The US Army Yuma Proving Ground, centered in Arizona, also include lands in the southeast portion of the County (ICPDS 2008b).

The Chocolate Mountains Aerial Gunnery Range is the largest military range in the County. As noted in the viewshed analysis shown in Figure 2.1-1, the majority of the Chocolate Mountains range is "not visible" from the County's major roads and highways. This also applies to the Yuma Proving Ground at the eastern boundary of the County. The smaller military facilities are located in the "visible" areas of the viewshed analysis.

Solar Power Development

Many areas previously used as farmland are being converted to solar power facilities. If all solar projects currently proposed and under review are approved, Imperial County would have approximately 20,000 acres of solar development. Currently, the IV Solar Company, Centinela Solar, Imperial Solar South, Campo Verde Solar, and Mount Signal Solar are operating (ICPDS 1993; SEIA 2013).

2.1.3.3 Sources of Light and Glare

Light and glare may be created day or night from various residential, commercial, and industrial uses throughout the County. Potential sources of glare during the day may include surface water, motor vehicles either parked or traveling on surrounding roadways, paved surfaces, building windows, and solar facilities. At night, light sources include street lamps, accent and security lighting on buildings, parking lot lighting, vehicle headlights, existing transmission lines, and some park facilities. The Ocotillo Wind Energy Facility is located along I-8 near the western border between Imperial and San Diego counties. This project has red and white flashing lights on all of the towers that dominate the view for travelers along Interstate 8.

2.1.3.4 Bureau of Land Management Visual Resource Management Areas

Over 43 percent of the land in Imperial County is managed by the BLM. The FLPMA of 1976 (43 United States Code [USC] 1701) requires the BLM to protect the quality of scenic values on public lands and to consider those values before allowing uses that may have negative visual impacts. To accomplish that goal, the BLM developed a Visual Resource Management (VRM) system to inventory and analyze visual resource values of an area. The VRM system serves two purposes: first as a tool to inventory existing visual resources and second as a management tool by establishing objectives for the visual resource categories (BLM 1984a). The Visual Resource Inventory (VRI) process is described in detail in BLM Manual H-8410-1—*Visual Resource Inventory* (BLM 1984b). The four VRI classes are I, II, III, and IV. These

inventory classes represent the relative value of visual resources, Classes I and II being the most valued, Class III representing a moderate value, and Class IV being of least scenic value. Class I is assigned to Wilderness Areas and Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), where the current management situation requires maintaining a natural environment essentially unaltered by human actions, even where exceptional scenic values are not exhibited. All other BLM-administered lands are then assigned one of the four VRI classes (Table 2.1-1) based on scenic quality, sensitivity level, and distance zones.

Table 2.1-1. Visual Resources Inventory Classification

		Visual Sensitivity						
		High		Medium			Low	
Special Areas		I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Scenic Quality	A	II	II	II	II	II	II	II
	B	II	III	III*/IV*	III	IV	IV	IV
	C	III	IV	IV	IV	IV	IV	IV
Distance Zones		f/m	b	s/s	f/m	b	s/s	s/s

Source: BLM 1984b

Key to Distance Zones:

f/m = foreground/midleground

b = background

s/s = seldom seen

* If adjacent areas are Class III or lower, assign Class III; if higher, assign Class IV.

The following is a summary of how scenic quality, sensitivity level, and distance zones are rated.

Scenic Quality: The scenic quality is the measure of an area's visual appeal. To determine the scenic quality, an area is divided into Scenic Quality Rating Units on a basis of like physiographic characteristics; similar visual patterns, texture, color, variety, etc.; and areas which have similar impacts from man-made modifications. Each unit is rated A, B, or C (most to least scenic) based on seven key factors:

- Landform
- Water
- Adjacent Scenery
- Cultural Modifications
- Vegetation
- Color
- Scarcity

Sensitivity Level: Sensitivity levels are a measure of public concern for scenic quality. Public lands are assigned high, medium, or low sensitivity levels by analyzing the various indicators of public concern. Sensitivity Level Rating Units have no set formula, and their boundaries are determined by assessing the overall concern driving the unit. Distance zones can be important in this decision because distant disruptions to the landscape affect people less. The other factors considered for rating purposes are:

- Types of Users
- Public Interest
- Special Areas
- Amount of Use
- Adjacent Land Uses
- Other Factors

Distance Zones: Three distance zones are based on visibility from travel routes and observation points. These are determined by traveling in the field and physically testing what can be seen and how:

- Foreground-Midleground – Includes areas visible from highways, rivers, or other viewing locations which are less than 3 to 5 miles away.
- Background – Includes areas visible past the foreground-midleground zone and usually less than 15 miles away.

- Seldom Seen – Includes areas that are not part of the foreground-middleground or the background and that are generally hidden from view.

The resulting VRI classes provide the basis for considering visual values in the BLM’s planning process. Management (or VRM) classes are then assigned through the Resource Management Plan development process. These management classes describe the visual management objectives of a given area, ranging from preservation to major modification, as well as the different degrees of modification to the basic elements of the landscape (form, line, color, texture) that are allowed. The management objectives established for each VRM class are shown in Table 2.1-2. Figure 2.1-2 shows the VRI Sensitivity Level Ratings for Imperial County.

Table 2.1-2. Visual Resource Management Objectives by Class

Visual Resource Class	Visual Management Objective
Class I	The objective of this class is to preserve the existing character of the landscape. This class provides for natural ecological changes; however, it does not preclude very limited management activity. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be very low and must not attract attention.
Class II	The objective of this class is to retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be low. Management activities may be seen, but should not attract the attention of the casual observer. Any changes must repeat the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.
Class III	The objective of this class is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape should be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.
Class IV	The objective of this class is to provide for management activities which require major modification of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high. These management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer attention; however, every attempt should be made to minimize the impact of these activities through careful location, minimal disturbance, and repeating the basic elements.

Source: BLM 1984b

2.1.4 Constraints and Opportunities

This section discusses the potential constraints and opportunities associated with the regulatory requirements and existing conditions of the County’s aesthetic resources in relation to the potential goals and objectives for the update to the *Conservation and Open Space Element*.

2.1.4.1 Constraints Due to Regulatory Requirements

The areas of the County where visual resources are rated by the VRI as High to Moderate (as shown in Figure 2.1-2) are managed by federal or State agencies. Much of the federal land is administered by the BLM or is occupied by military installations. State lands within the County primarily account for State parks and recreation areas. Federal and State lands are not under the jurisdiction of the County, and therefore, are not available for County-designated open space and conservation areas. However, as discussed below, any private inholdings surrounding federal or State lands may present an opportunity for conservation or open space.

For land under the County’s jurisdiction, existing General Plan documents provide the goals and objectives for current and future development. The County’s goals and objectives for economic growth could conflict with the objectives for conservation areas and the preservation of open space. For instance, the County’s *Land Use Element* identifies the preservation of commercial agricultural

operations as the first goal, which includes objectives for continued growth in this industry. Agriculture operations, while not necessarily scenic, may present a pastoral setting appreciated by many viewers. However, as agriculture is converted to renewable energy, this pastoral viewshed is lost. The second goal of the *Land Use Element* identifies economic growth and establishes objectives to diversify the local economy and provide the space and land use classifications to meet current and projected economic needs for commercial development (ICPDS 2008b). As shown in Figure 2.1-1, the open areas surrounding the developed land of the Imperial Valley are primarily rated as high and moderate value. As such, continued efforts for growth and economic development would encroach on the existing open space areas where visual resources are present and/or prevalent.

2.1.4.2 Constraints Due to Existing Conditions

Land under the County's jurisdiction primarily consists of rural areas actively used for agricultural production, rural residential and commercial development, large open space areas, mining activities, and recreation areas. The County consists of 2,942,080 acres with approximately 1,459,926 acres under federal jurisdiction, 37,760 acres under the jurisdiction of the State, 10,910 acres within Indian reservations, 480,000 acres in agriculture, and 671,000 acres in desert and mountain regions. The remaining acreages are located in the incorporated cities. With the exception of the 671,000 acres in desert and mountain regions, the jurisdictional boundaries and existing land uses would constrain the establishment of County-designated conservation and open space areas based on visual resources.

As discussed in the setting above, the BLM's VRM system is used to inventory and analyze an area's visual resource values. In areas of the County where the land is rated as Class III (moderate value) and Class IV (least scenic value), these areas would not be considered opportunities for the conservation of open space due to the moderate to low value of the visual resources. As shown in Figure 2.1-2, the majority of these areas are located at the southeast corner of the County.

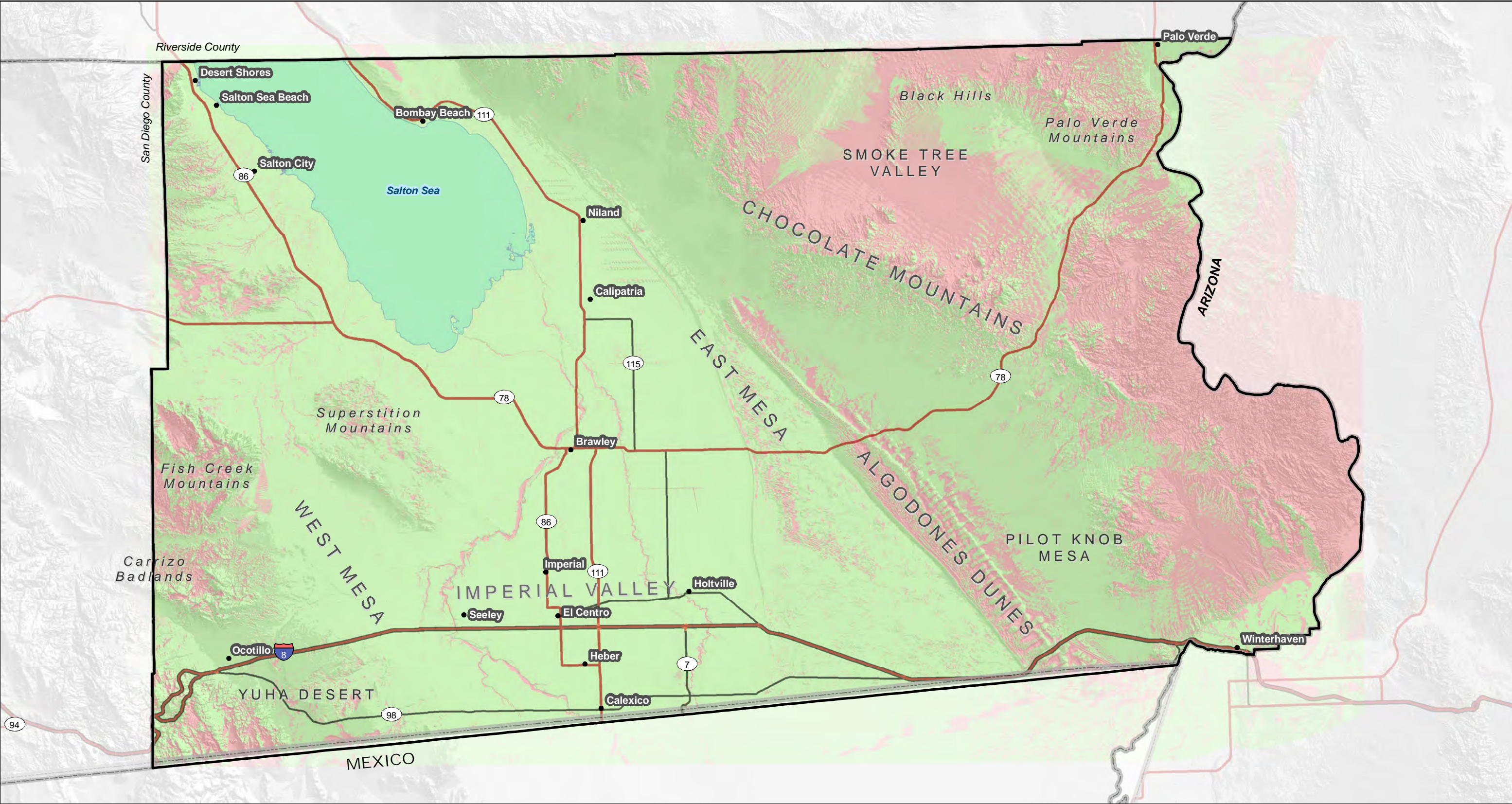
2.1.4.3 Opportunities

Goals and objectives for the preservation of visual resources are included in the existing Imperial County General Plan *Conservation and Open Space Element* (ICPDS 1993), the *Circulation and Scenic Highways Element* (ICPDS 2008a), and the specific area plans discussed in the *Land Use Element* (ICPDS 2008b). Some of these goals include protecting and enhancing the aesthetic character of the region and encouraging the preservation and enhancement of the natural beauty of the desert and mountain landscape. Therefore, the goals and objectives for the preservation of visual resources from these documents can be used as the foundation for the objectives related to visual resources in the updated COSE.

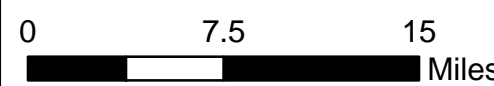
County areas proximate to BLM lands shown on Figure 2.1-2 that have a high to moderate value for maintenance of visual quality could represent opportunities for conservation and open space areas. Although these areas are within BLM lands, private inholdings under the County's jurisdiction may be available for conservation or open space designations. Similarly, any private or County lands surrounding state lands or recreation areas would also be available for conservation and open space designations. As noted in the constraints discussion above, there are 671,000 acres in the desert and mountain regions that are within private inholdings under the jurisdiction of the County. The areas that are considered to have high scenic values would present opportunities for conservation and open space designations. In addition, the County can focus on preserving the rural views of existing agriculture.

Although no highways in Imperial County are designated as state scenic highways, there are routes that are considered eligible for designation, which should be pursued by the County. Along any designated

state scenic highway, development projects in the vicinity would require CEQA analysis of impacts to the visual character of the land surrounding the highway. The Initial Study Environmental Checklist form in CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G, includes questions relating to aesthetics. New projects would have to be analyzed for their potential effects to the surrounding existing visual character and quality, including scenic vistas, natural environment and existing landscape, general built environment and historic buildings, and scenic highways, and whether they would create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. Potential projects would need to take into consideration their locations in relation to key observation areas from which they would be viewed and the effects they would have to the existing aesthetics of the surrounding area.



* Viewshed analysis conducted based on the major roads depicted on this map.

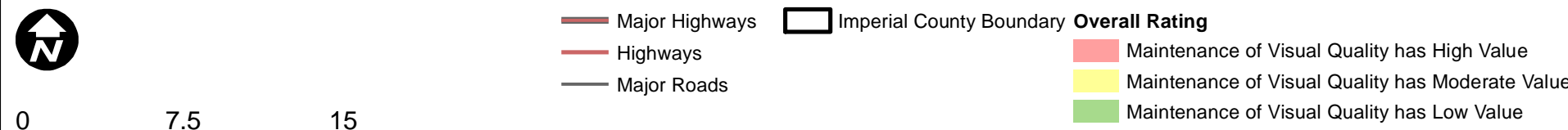
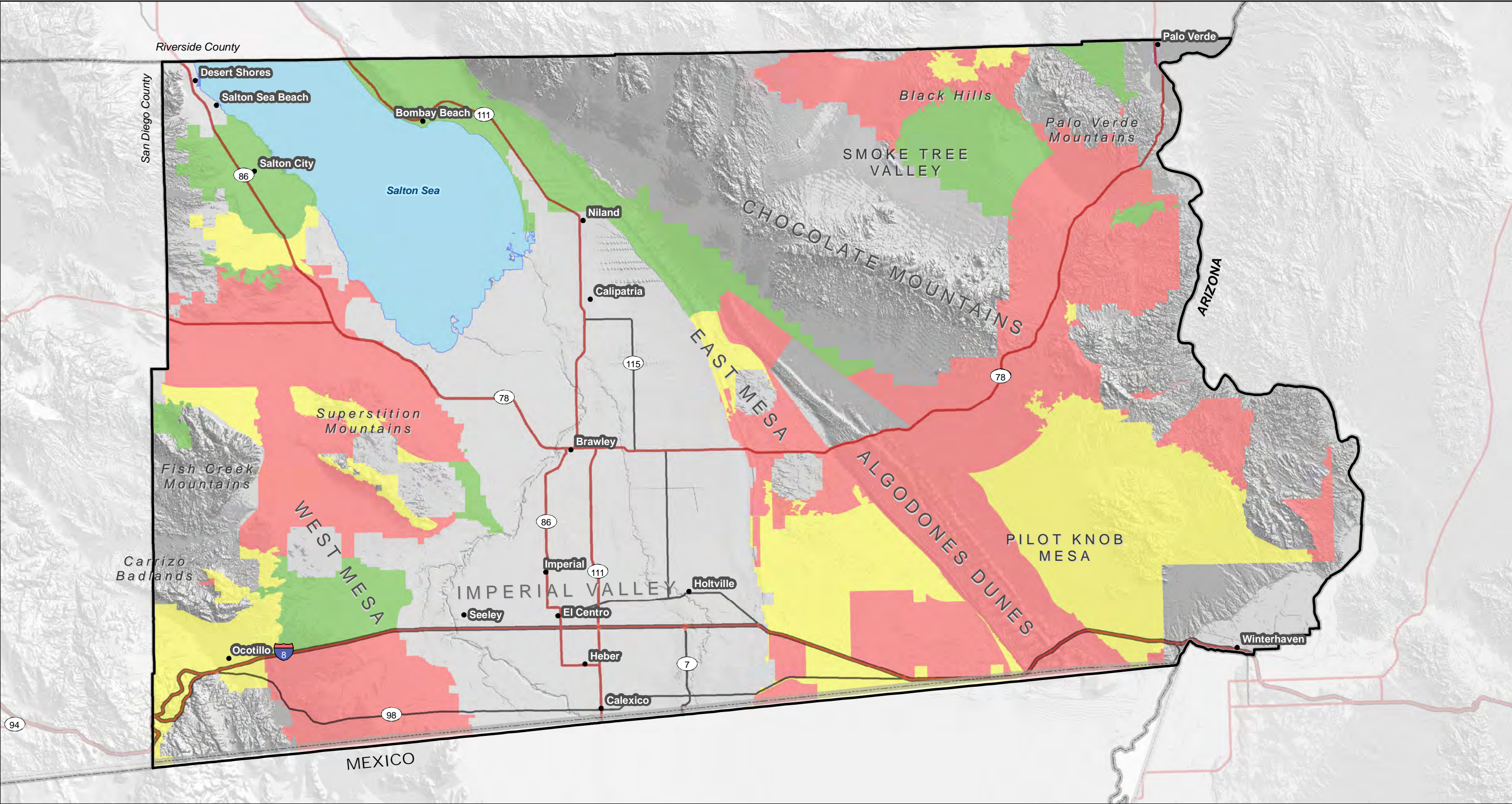


Source: Chambers Group, 2014

- Major Highways
- Highways
- Major Roads
- Imperial County Boundary
- Viewshed Analysis***
 - Not Visible
 - Visible

Figure 2.1-1

Imperial County
VRI Sensitivity Level Ratings for BLM-Managed Lands



Source: Otak, Inc. and the BLM Ridgecrest Field Office, 2012

Figure 2.1-2

Imperial County
VRI Sensitivity Level Ratings for BLM-Managed Lands