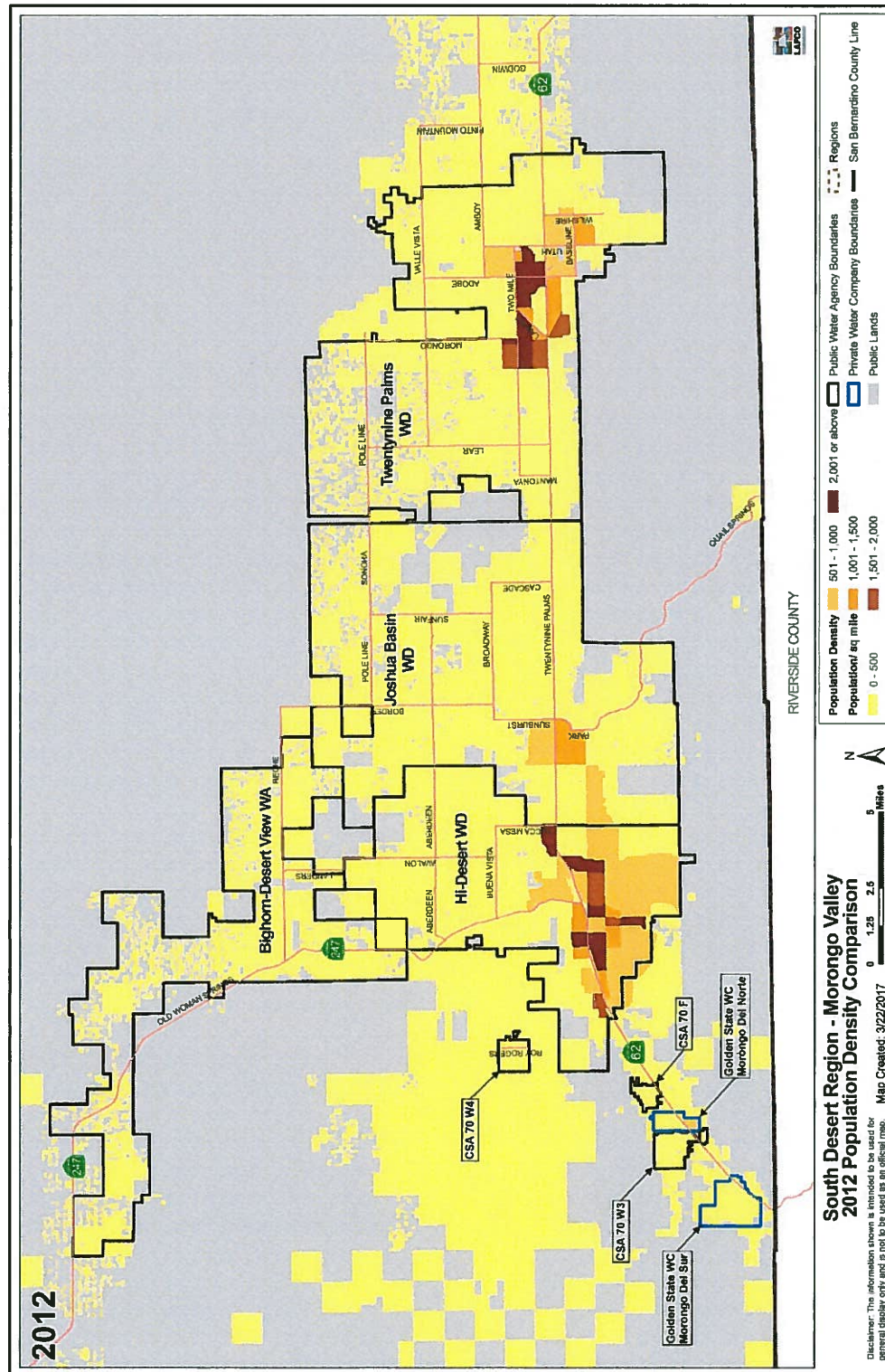
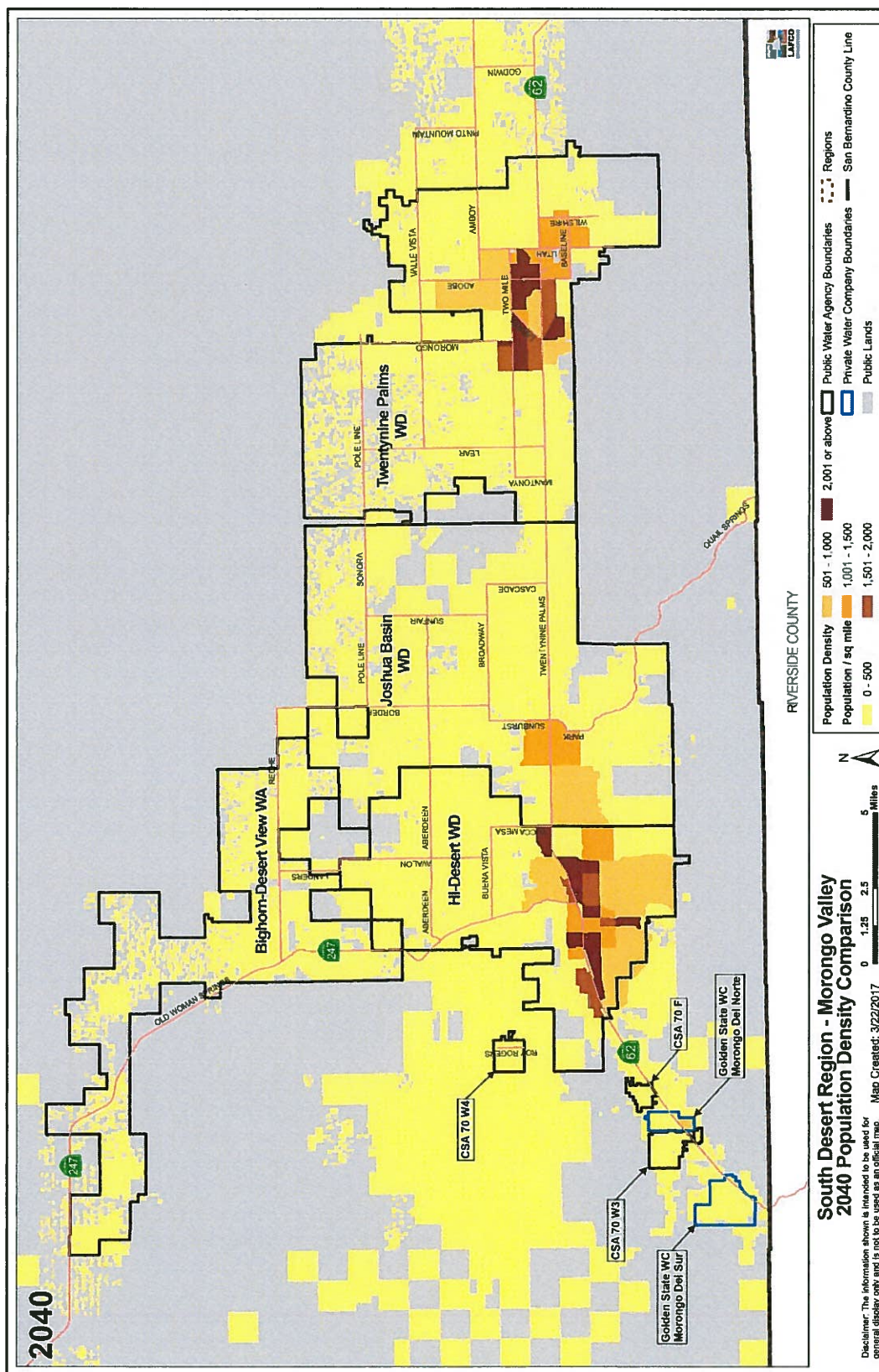


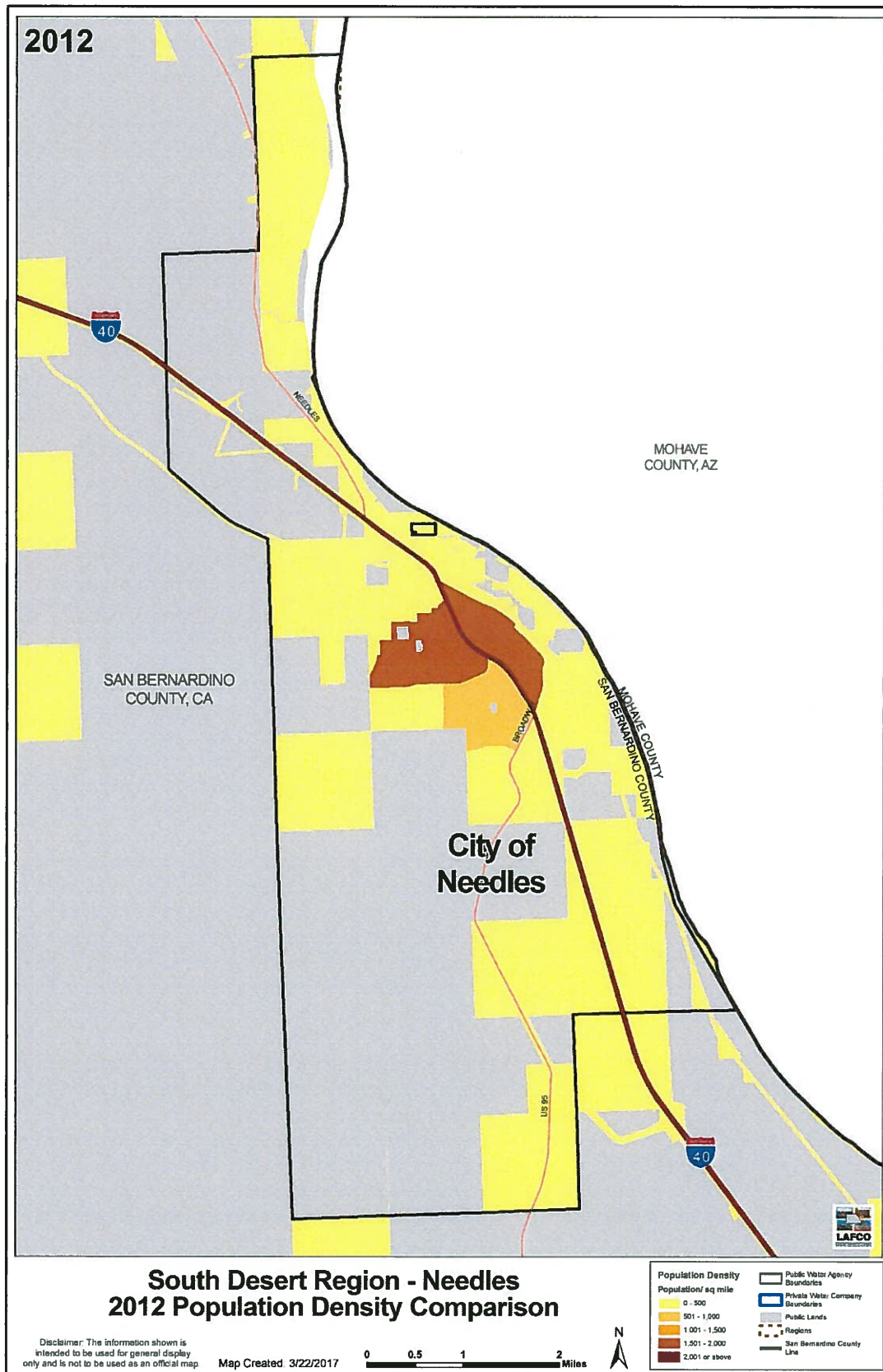
**Figure E-1:
2012 and 2040 Density Comparison - South Desert**



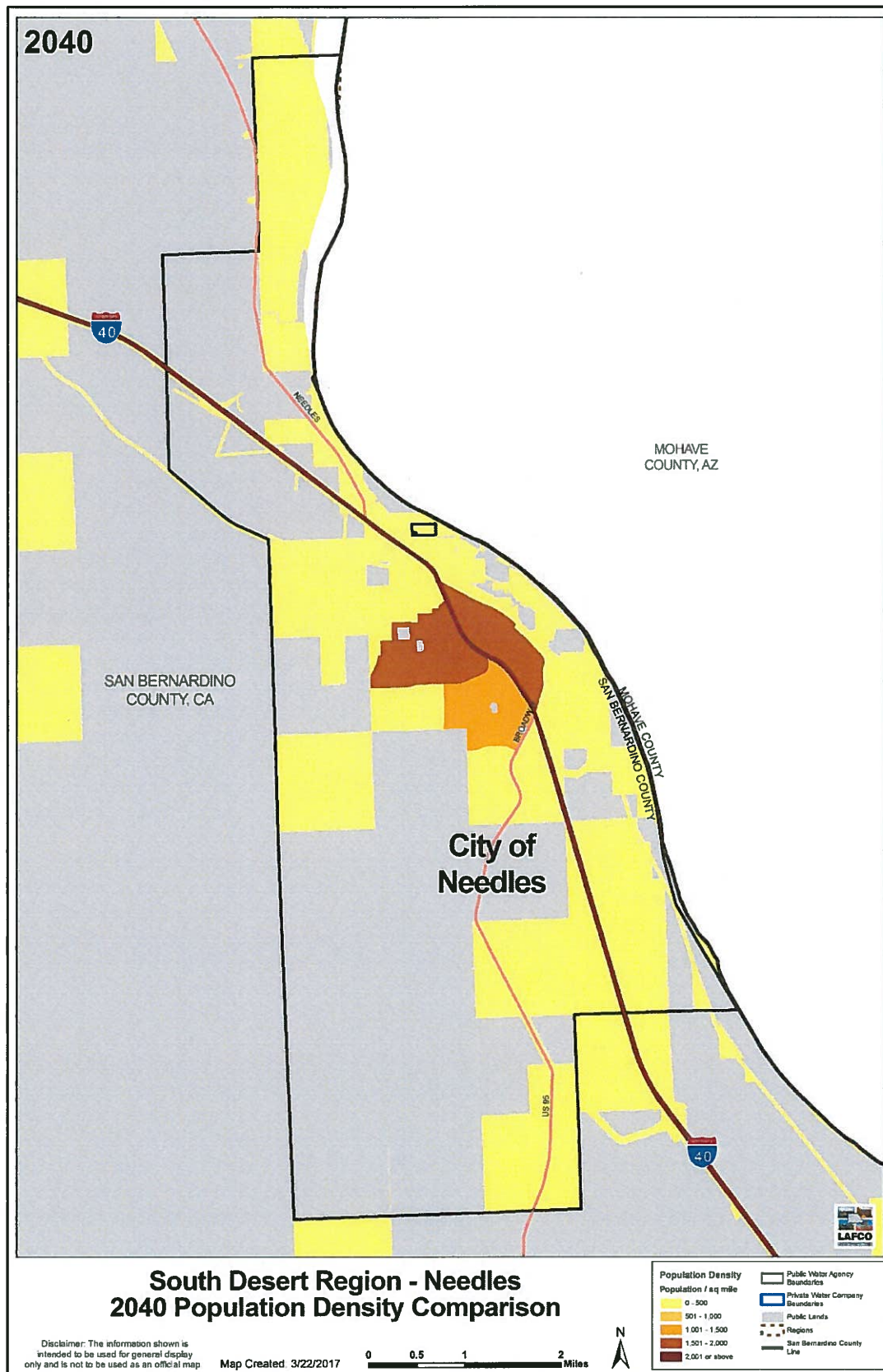
Countywide Service Review for Water
Appendix E – South Desert Region



Countywide Service Review for Water
Appendix E – South Desert Region



Countywide Service Review for Water
Appendix E – South Desert Region



B. DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

Primer on Disadvantaged Communities – DUCs, DACs & More

Disadvantaged Communities

The State of California adopted a definition of disadvantaged community (or “DAC”) through passage of Proposition 50, the Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Act of 2002. This measure added §79505.5(a) to the California Water Code and defines a disadvantaged community as a *“community with an annual median household income that is less than 80 percent of the statewide annual median household income.”* For 2016, 80% of the statewide median household income is \$50,043.³ State law requires various entities (i.e. LAFCO, cities and counties, and water agencies) to, in some manner, identify disadvantaged communities which can be located in both incorporated and unincorporated areas.

Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities

Particular to LAFCOs, the state mandate is to identify the location and characteristics of disadvantaged unincorporated communities (or “DUCs”). §56375 specifically prohibits an annexation to a city of any territory greater than 10 acres where there exists a disadvantaged unincorporated community that is contiguous to the area of proposed annexation unless an application to annex the disadvantaged unincorporated community has also been filed.

DUCs are defined as *territory that constitutes all or a portion of a “disadvantaged community,” including 12 or more registered voters or some other standard as determined by the Commission, and have a median household income that is less than 80% of the statewide annual income.* The DAC definition, as defined in Water Code §79505.5(a), differs from the definition of a DUC in two important ways: (1) a DUC must be inhabited, and (2) DUCs comprise unincorporated territory only, not territory within cities. For purposes of further defining a DUC, San Bernardino LAFCO policy defines a community as an *inhabited area comprising no less than 10 dwelling units adjacent or in close proximity to one another.*

Need for Consistency

Other State agencies, such as the California EPA, use alternative criteria to identify disadvantaged communities for grant funding purposes. The different criteria used to identify disadvantaged communities at the local and state government levels is confusing and complicates implementation of a consistent approach to addressing our disadvantaged residents. While staff recognizes the difficulty in developing a one-size-fits-all definition, LAFCO staff’s position is that additional work needs to be done State-wide to develop a method for identifying disadvantaged communities that is more consistent yet recognizes the diversity of communities and geographies in California.

³ Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI)

Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities (DUCs)

For LAFCOs, the state requires that service reviews identify and describe the characteristics of disadvantaged communities of *unincorporated* areas only (commonly referred to as “DUCs”). For the purposes of defining a DUC, San Bernardino LAFCO policy defines a *community* as an inhabited area comprising no less than 10 dwellings adjacent or in close proximity to one another. Uninhabited areas include vacant or government lands. Based upon the criteria identified, Figure E-2 identifies those areas that meet the criteria of a DUC.⁴

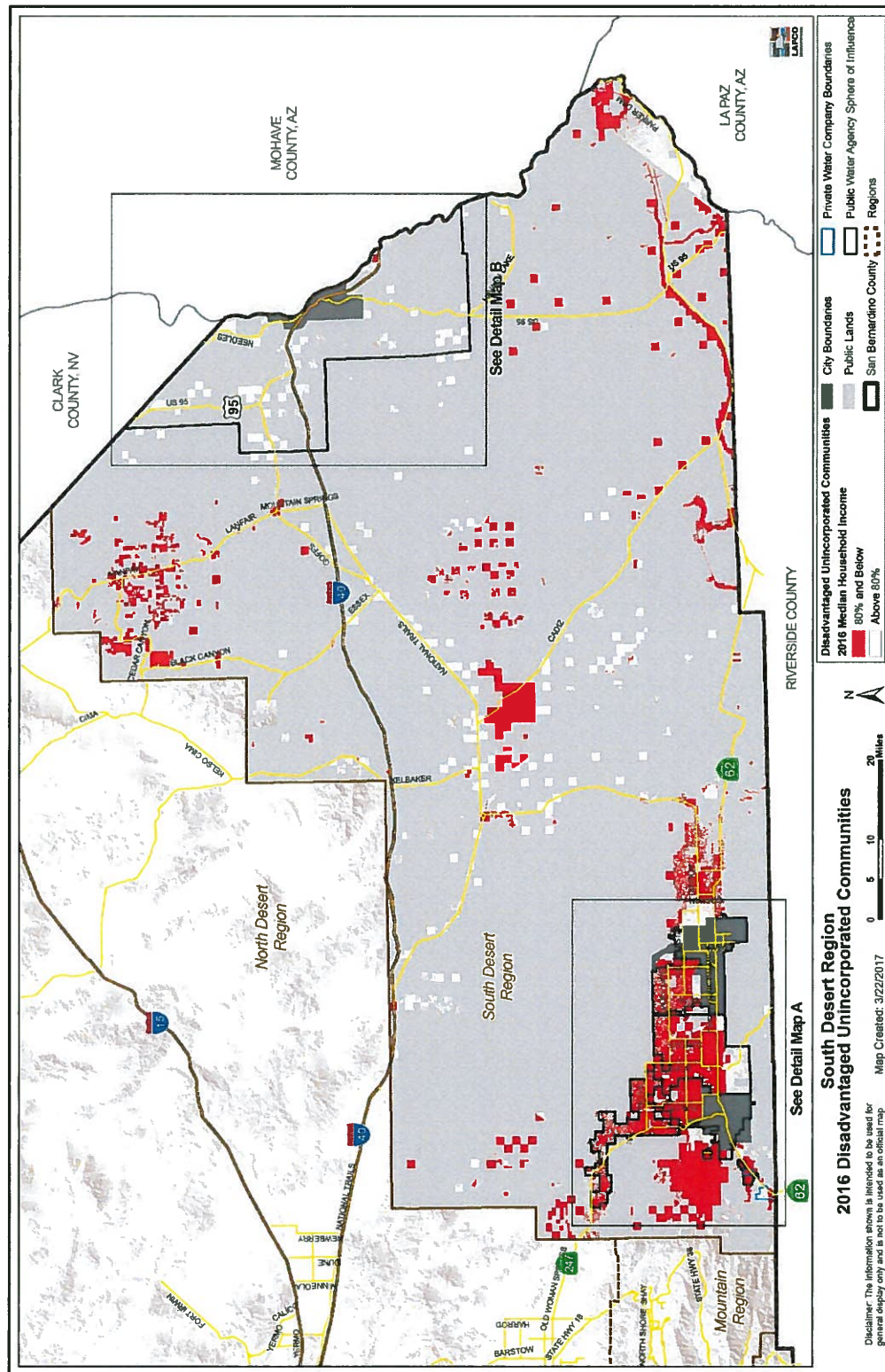
The DUCs identified in the mapping show that the major unincorporated areas in the South Desert region meet the criteria of a DUC. Characteristics of these areas are as follows⁵:

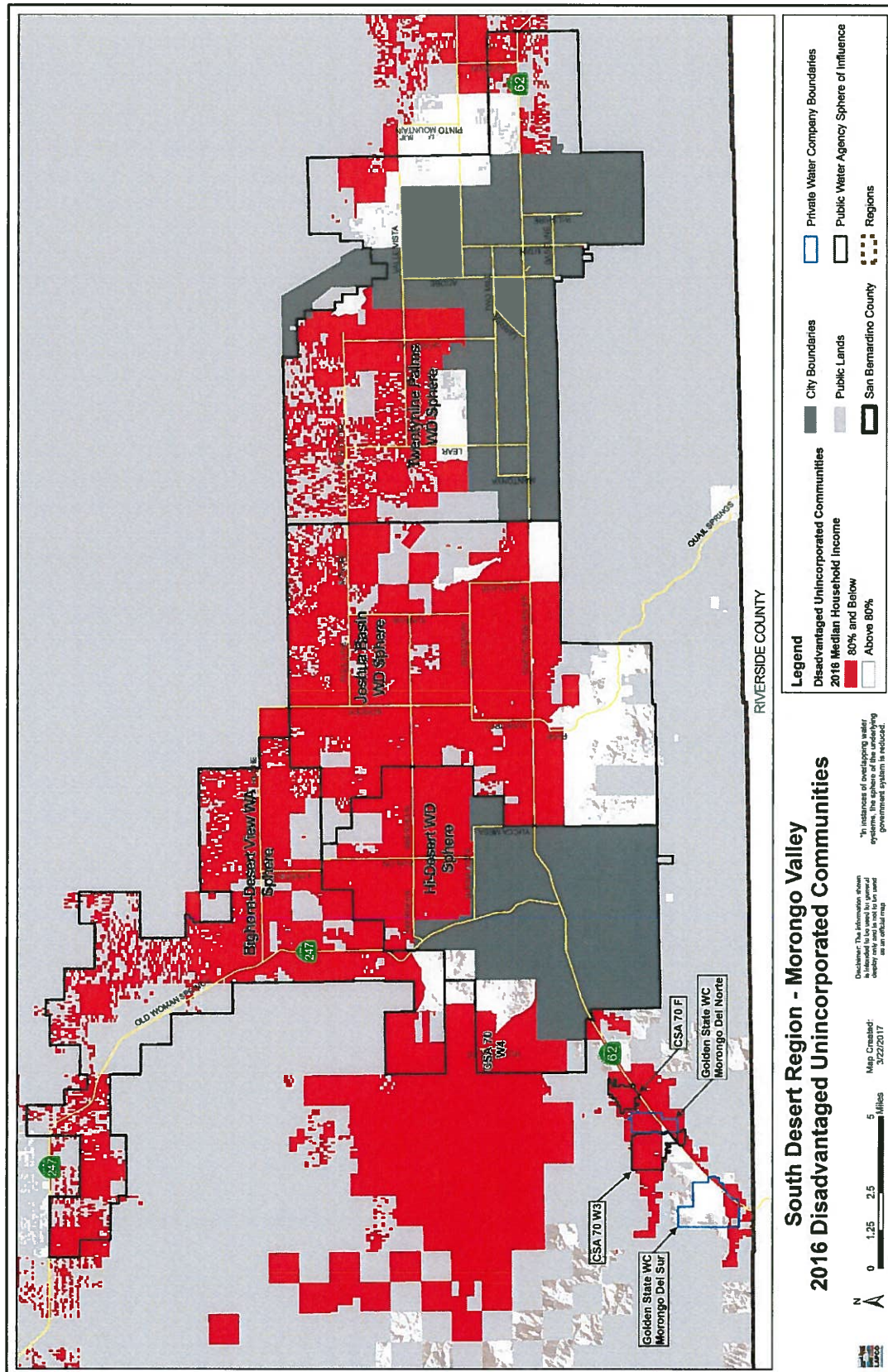
	Morongo Valley	Homestead Valley	Yucca Valley unincorporated	Joshua Tree	29 Palms unincorporated
Area, sq. miles	8	46	24	65	32
Pop., 2016	1,527	3,101	3,225	6,689	1,116
Households, 2016	717	1,403	1,238	2,750	497
Median Household Income	\$42,466	\$31,828	\$38,823	\$32,954	\$31,858
Characteristics	Natural desert setting, rural lifestyle, equestrian oriented community, predominance of large residential lots, lack of traffic congestion, tranquility (Morongo Community Plan)	Wide open spaces and natural features including, rock formations, desert vegetation and wildlife. The predominant land use is rural residential with large lots. There is very little commercial or industrial development (Homestead Valley Community Plan)	Natural desert setting, rural lifestyle, wide open spaces and natural features. Predominant land use is rural residential with large lots. There is very little commercial or industrial development	Residential land uses, ranging from single-family houses on large lots to mobile homes and multi-family apartment buildings. The small commercial and industrial district of the Joshua Tree Community is located along Twentynine Palms Highway (Joshua Tree Community Plan)	Natural desert setting, rural lifestyle, wide open spaces and natural features. Predominant land use is rural residential with large lots. There is very little commercial or industrial development

⁴ For this map, non-developable areas include lands in the name of: United States of America, Government Land, State of California, and County of San Bernardino, as identified by the County Assessor.

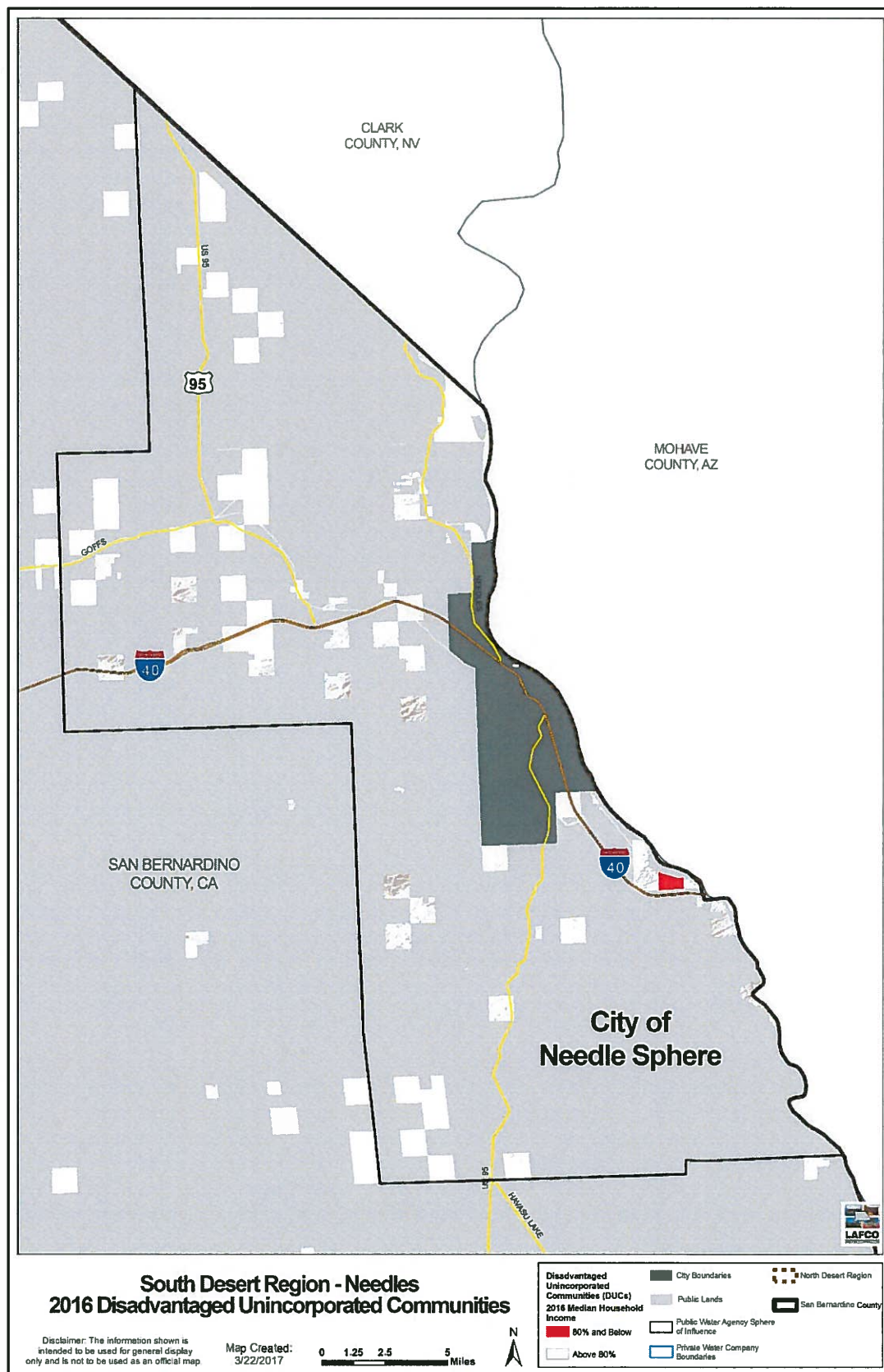
⁵ ESRI

Figure E-2:
Disadvantaged Unincorporated Communities - South Desert





Countywide Service Review for Water
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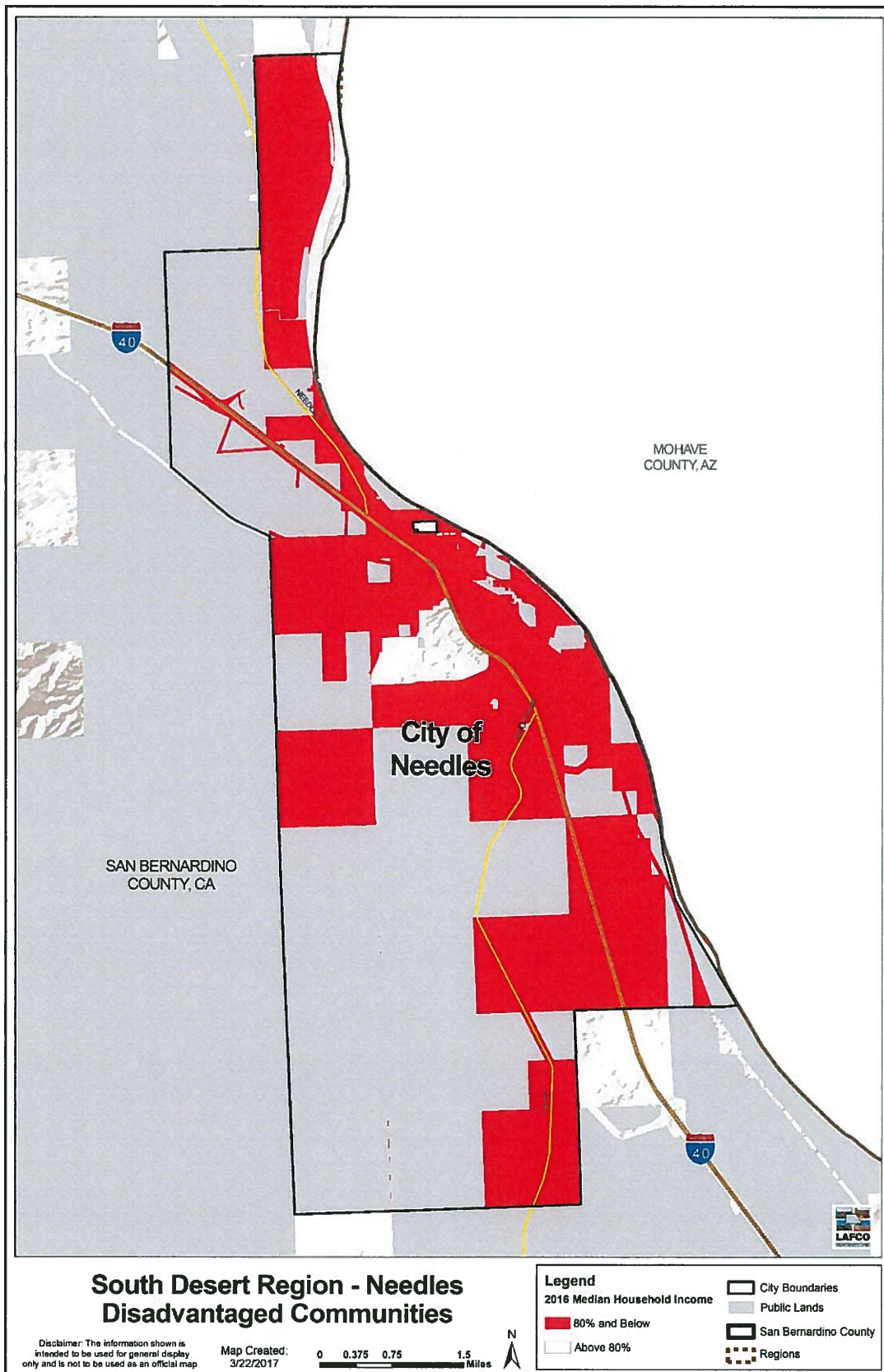
Disadvantaged Communities (DACs)

Taking the discussion of a DUC a step further, disadvantaged communities (“DACs”) include both unincorporated and incorporated areas. Figure E-3 identifies the disadvantaged communities of the South Desert cities and their surrounding areas, including an enlarged map of the City of Needles. On the whole, the South Desert classifies as a disadvantaged region. The vast majority of the unincorporated area is disadvantaged, although there are portions of incorporated Yucca Valley and Twentynine Palms which are not classified as disadvantaged.

During the development of the MWA 2014 Integrated Regional Water Management Plan, a collaborative effort to identify and implement water management solutions on a regional scale, there was overwhelming agreement among the stakeholders to help and support Disadvantaged Communities (“DACs”) ⁶. MWA developed a Small Systems Program to support and assist DACs through the Integrated Water Management Plan process. This objective was ranked as a high importance and a high urgency project. The program was developed with input from stakeholders and the California Rural Water Association (“CRWA”). The scope of the program is to provide guidance/assistance with grant applications, performing needs assessments and providing specific training to DACs applying for state and/or federal funding related to improving water management practices. The following identifies the key issues, needs, challenges, and priorities for the Mojave Region with respect to disadvantaged communities:

- Understand the needs of different DAC communities in the region;
- Help educate communities about requirements and opportunities;
- Provide support to DACs in applying for assistance; and
- Help improve water management systems, including water quality, that serve DACs.

⁶ DACs include disadvantaged territories that are both unincorporated and incorporated.



C. GROUNDWATER BASINS

Basin Prioritization by the State

There are 33 basins or sub-basins that are wholly or partially located within the South Desert.⁷ As part of the California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring Program and pursuant to the California Water Code §10933, the Department of Water Resources (“DWR”) is required to prioritize California groundwater basins based on their adverse effects to the local habitats and stream flows and to help identify, evaluate, and determine the need for additional groundwater level monitoring.⁸ Figure E-4 maps the South Desert basins by priority rating (with an overlay of the MWA boundary and Warren Basin adjudicated area), and Table E-2 is a summary of key basin characteristics from the DWR.

There are two medium priority basins that slightly extend into the South Desert Region – the Lower Mojave River Valley (6-40) and Coachella Valley (7-21.02). The effect on this extension is insignificant as there is no population near the areas or community wells.

The Warren Valley Basin (7-12) is the sole adjudicated basin in the South Desert. Additionally, although not truly adjudicated, a legal agreement exists for Ames Valley Basin (7-16). Information on these basins follows Table E-2.

⁷ “Groundwater basins or sub-basins” refers to basins and sub-basins as defined in DWR Bulletin 118. Department of Water Resources, 2003. California’s Groundwater – Bulletin 118 Update 2003.

⁸ The DWR will reprioritize the basins in 2017.

