

Threat Assessment for Public Lands



2002-2003

LEA SENSITIVE

PUBLIC LANDS THREAT ASSESSMENT FOR FY 2002

Supporting Agencies:

Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
National Park Service (NPS)
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFW)
AZ HIDTA and Associated Agencies
Arizona National Guard

Address:

Arizona HIDTA
Daniel Wirth, DOI Border Security Coordinator

1750 East Benson Highway
Tucson, Arizona 85714

Telephone:

(520) 746-4435

About this report:

The events discussed in this Threat Assessment are summaries of information received at the various DOI agencies, as well as the Arizona HIDTA Intelligence Center. Additional information on all the subject matter discussed above is available from the DOI Border Security Coordinator. Specific questions about this report can be addressed to Command Sergeant Major Michael E. Holmes, Arizona Army National Guard through the DOI Border Coordinator.

Situation

This Threat Assessment exclusively outlines the Department of the Interior's (DOI) responsibility for addressing the border security threat along the Mexico Border. This threat consists of possible terrorist transshipment points, the drug movement threat and the movement of large numbers of undocumented Mexican Nationals across Department of the Interior Land that borders Mexico.

The Department of the Interior is the primary land management agency in our government, responsible for 23 percent of the land in the U.S. including 10 percent of the Canadian border and 40 percent of the Mexican border. The Department of the Interior has four Bureaus with law enforcement authority. They include the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These bureaus employ approximately 4,000 federal officers with law enforcement and homeland security responsibilities for national infrastructures, borders, dams, gas and oil pipelines, electric transmission lines, national icons and the protection of natural, cultural and historic resources.

The Department of the Interior has experienced a significant escalation in border impacts from smuggling over the last four years these impacts are decimating public resources and putting the safety of our visitors and employees at serious risk. This is a result of the success of increasing the allocation of Border Patrol assets around the Ports of Entry which forced smuggling away from the Ports of Entry and through our remote rural public lands. This is well documented along the Mexican border where over 80 percent of drug smuggling occurs between the Ports of Entry. The northern border is now starting to experience similar trends.

The jurisdiction of Bureau of Indian Affairs includes lands in many states and along the International borders of Mexico and Canada. The Bureau of Indian Affairs mission is unique in that it serves a resident population of approximately 1.5 million tribal members. Mexican National drug organizations are developing extensive ties within Indian Country and are moving large amounts of controlled substances across the borders and throughout Indian Country.

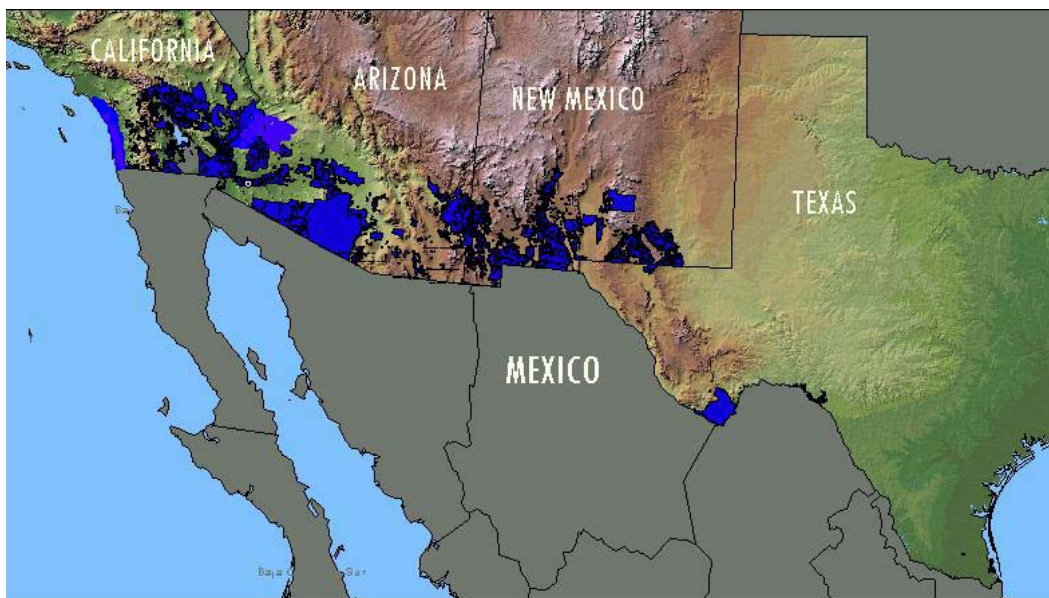
Thousands of trails and hundreds of roads have been illegally created by smugglers across our public lands. This proliferation of trails and roads damages and destroys vegetation, wildlife, and causes soil compaction and erosion. Tons of trash and high concentrations of human waste are left behind impacting wildlife, vegetation and water quality. The international border fence is repeatedly cut or torn down in most locations. Vehicles from Mexico can drive unimpeded across most of our border.

Many Department of the Interior lands can no longer be used safely by the public or employees due to pervasive smuggling. Staff exposure while conducting resource management activities is a serious safety concern. Federal land managers now must send

staff to the field in teams to ensure employee safety along the border or totally restrict employee presence in certain border areas due to the potential for unsafe encounters.

Smugglers driving vehicles at high speeds cause a significant safety risk to the public, law enforcement staff and other employees. Visitors have been subjected to carjacking, assaults and robbery from armed smugglers.

Within the 789 miles of Department of the Interior's jurisdiction on the Mexican border there are only 30 officers. The Department of the Interior has the highest assault rate on its officers of any government agency. They work in remote areas with poor communications and little if any backup.



This shows the DOI lands along the Southwest border with Mexico. This includes Bureau of Indian Affairs, National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife, and Bureau of Land Management

The United States Border Patrol operations and change of strategy over the past three years have put the vast majority of their agents in and around the border towns, with fewer agents working the outlying, more remote areas. These changes in strategy and manpower usage have disrupted how the undocumented Mexican National entering the United States. These changes also have caused Drug trafficking organizations to use other more remote smuggling routes. Many of these routes are in land entrusted to the DOI. Most of the DOI land is considered prime crossing areas, for both undocumented workers, as well as smugglers. These areas are remote and mostly uninhabited but have an extensive network of roads that cross the International Boundary.

This document will describe the terrain, the border security threat, methods of smuggling, trends and recommendations to address the recent threat on DOI Lands.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS FOR SMUGGLING IN ARIZONA:

Sequence of events that threaten Department Interior Lands bordering Mexico and the United States.

Most cocaine smuggled into the United States through DOI lands originate from South American countries - primarily Columbia. Well established drug cartels keep a firm hold on the drug trade in that portion of the world. Once the cocaine reaches Mexico it is separated into smaller loads, in most cases. It is then moved by air, rail, or highway to destinations just south of the US/Mexico border. Huge amounts of marijuana grown in southern Mexico are also moved the same way into the US.



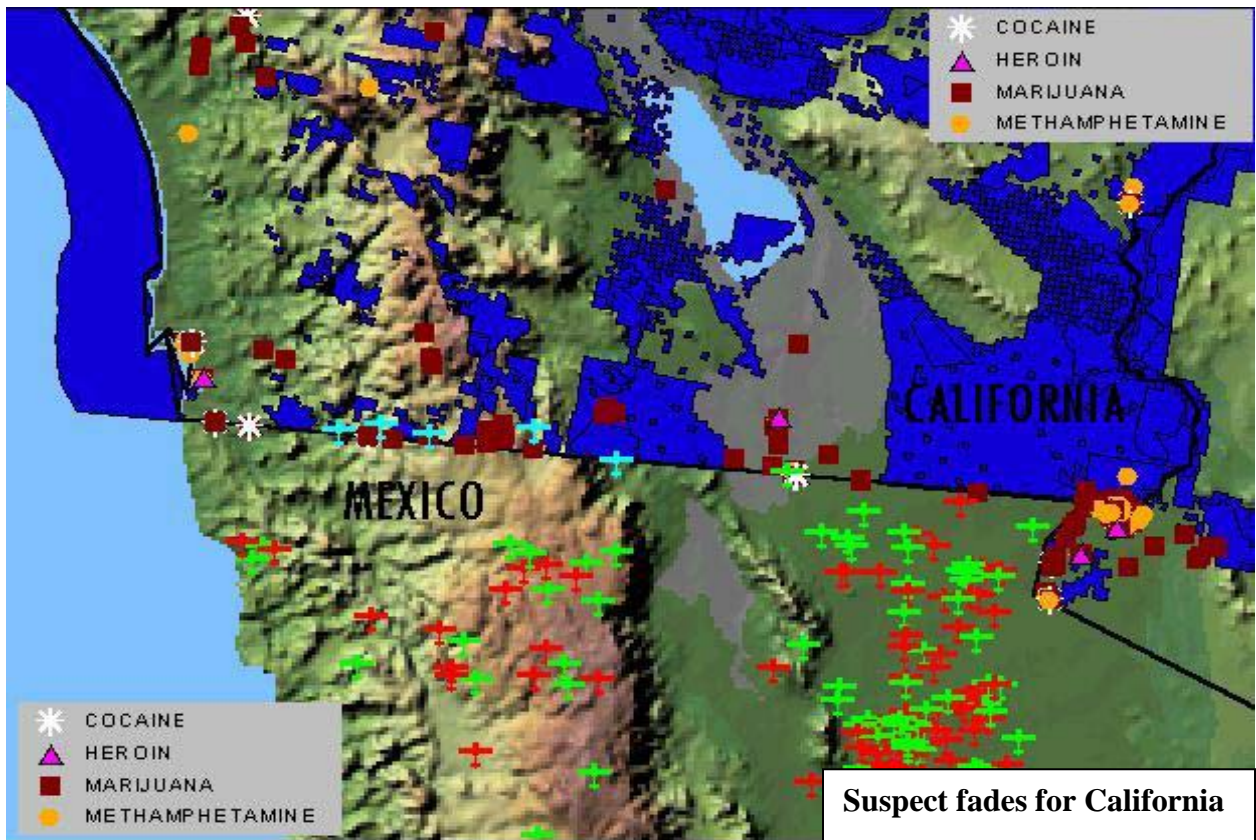
Source US Customs Service

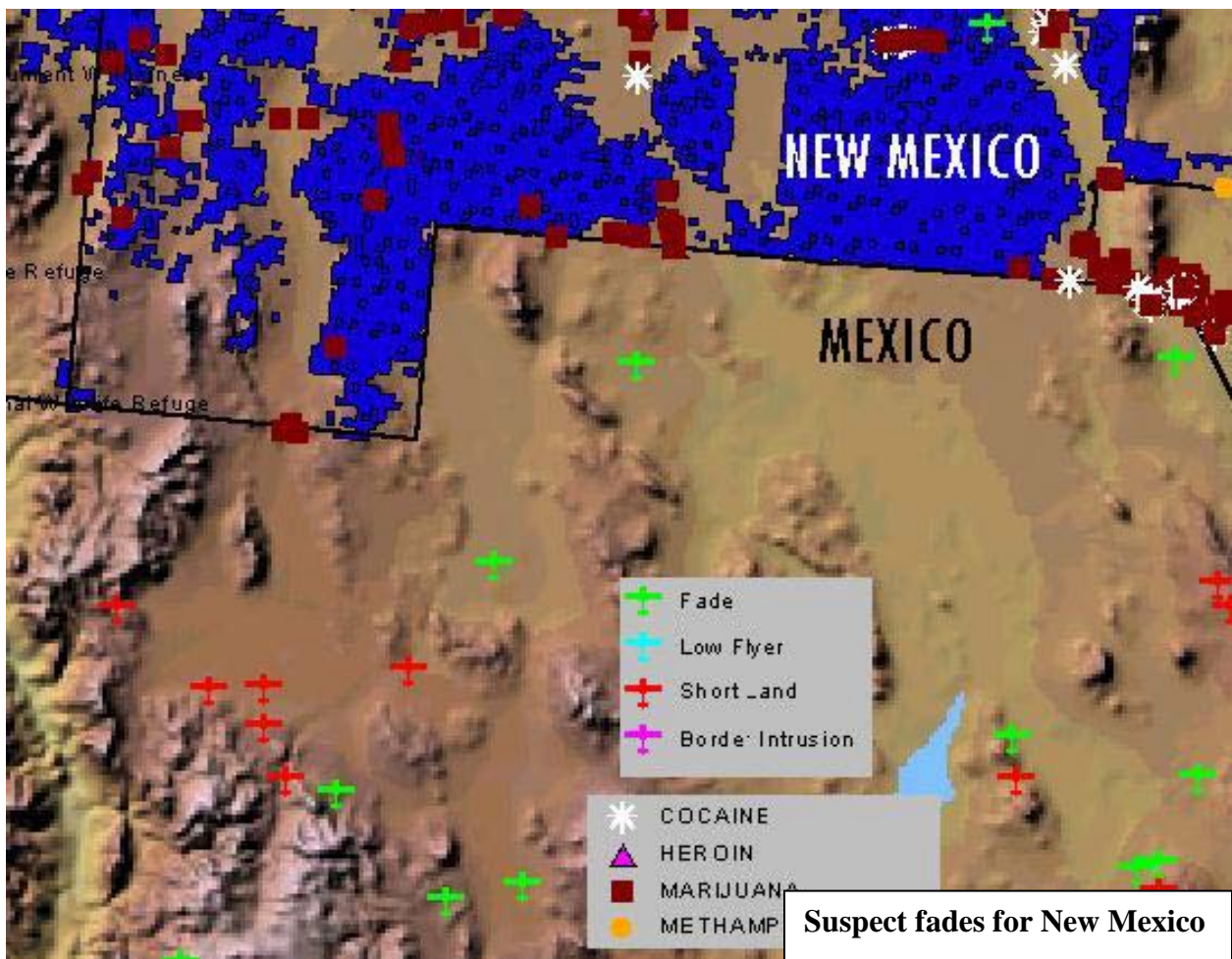
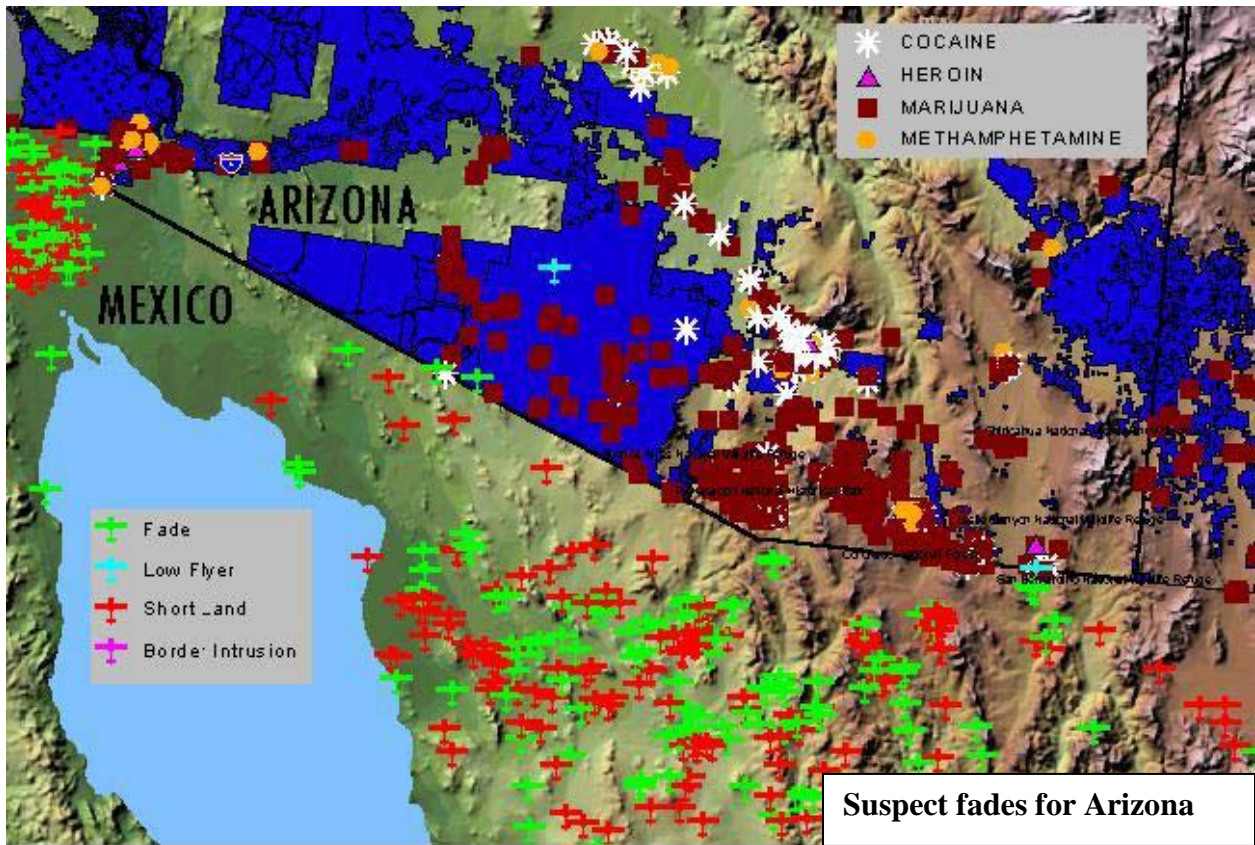
This plane and the narcotics were seized at a ranch in Mexico, near Organ Pipe National Monument, known to store and transship drugs. US Customs Air and Mexican Federal Police seized these narcotics in a joint operation.

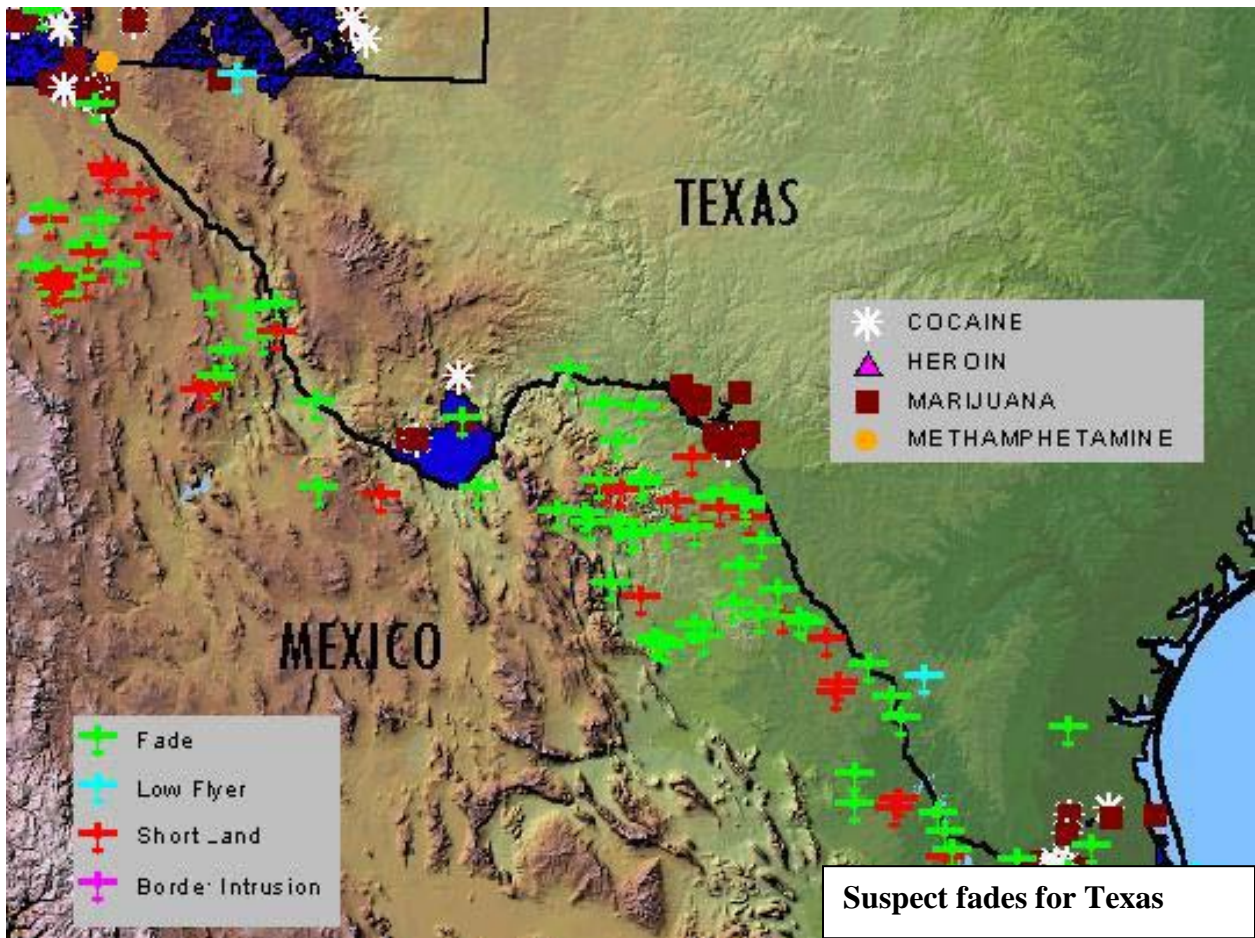


Source US Customs Service

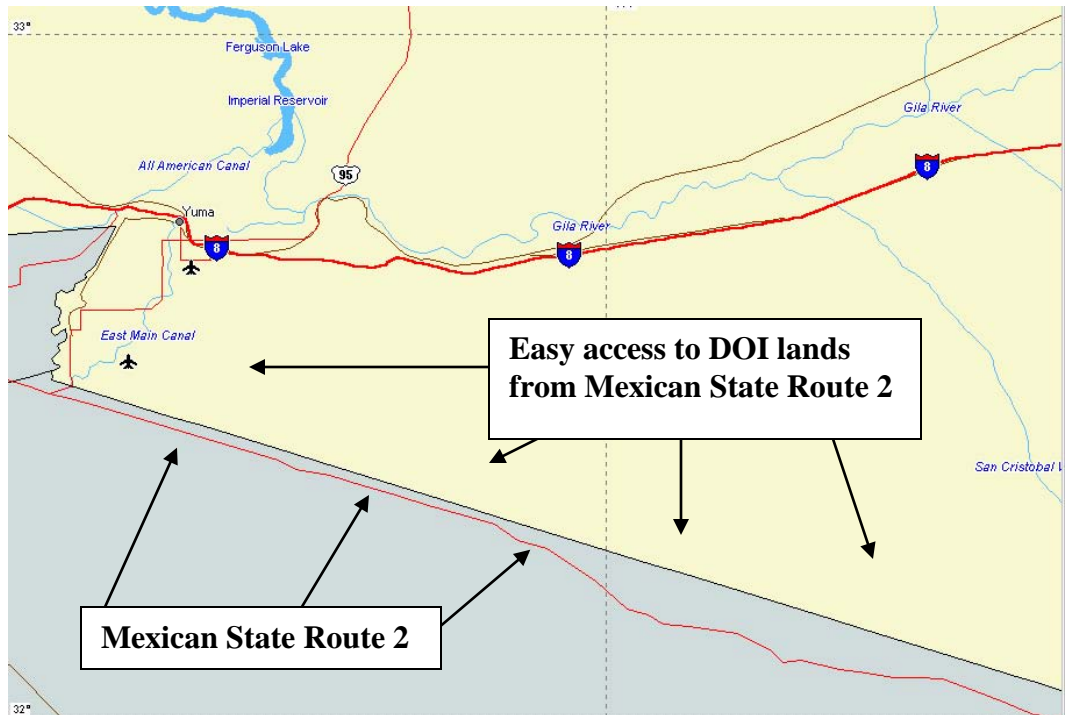
A wide variety of planes are used to smuggle drugs. This plane - used for crop dusting -was modified to carry narcotics, in this case, cocaine. This plane was being unloaded at a ranch near Yuma, Arizona – after crossing the border from Mexico.

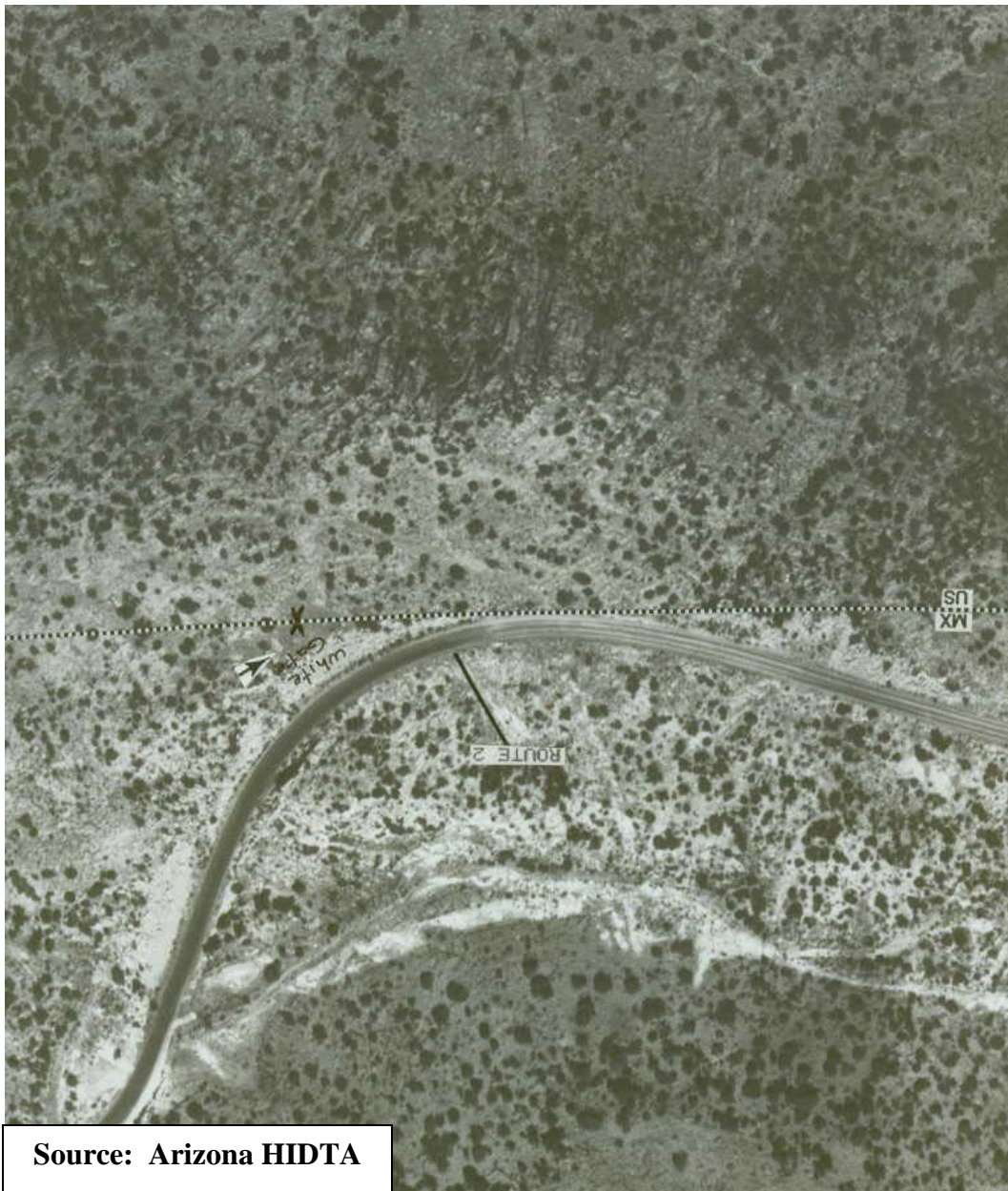






Notice that the vast majority of air fades to northern Mexico occur along the Arizona border, as in rail and contraband moved by interstate highway, drugs are separated once off loaded. They are usually stored for only a few days prior to movement across the US/Mexico border.





Source: Arizona HIDTA

Notice the close proximity of Mexican State Route 2 to the US border. State Route 2, almost exclusively, borders US Federal lands along the international boundary.



This abandoned rail yard in Mexico is used for the unloading and smuggling of narcotics through the Coronado National Memorial and the Coronado National Forest. This rail yard is located 8 miles from the US/Mexico border, adjacent to the Coronado National Memorial.



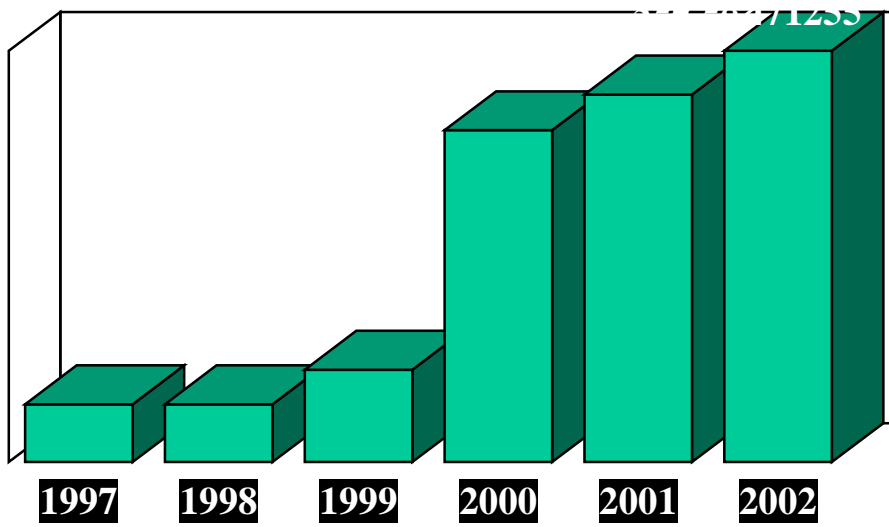
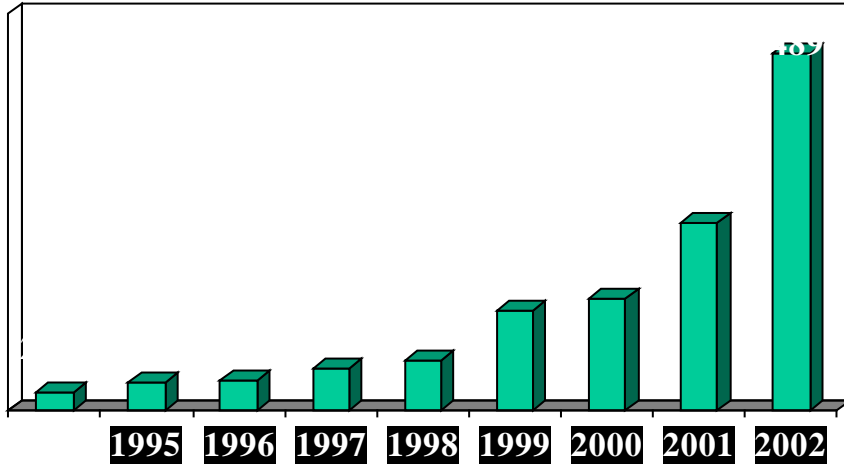
Source: National Park Service

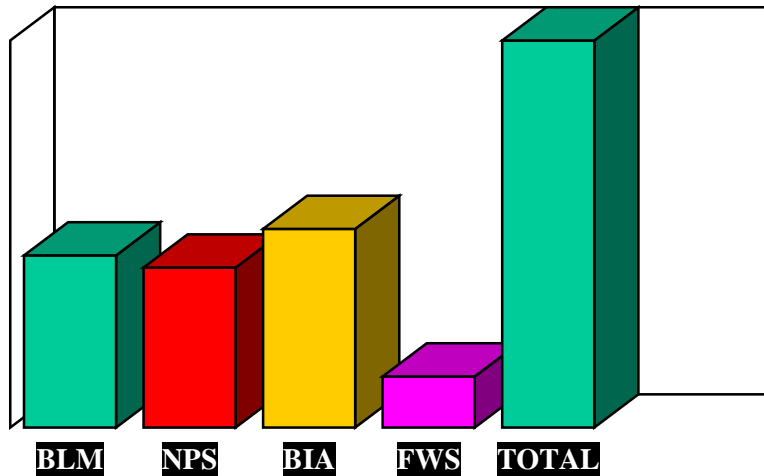
If moved by vehicle, the drugs are ‘stuffed’ into a vehicle and the vehicle then enters the United States. These vehicles can enter almost anywhere along the border onto DOI lands. In most cases, the only obstacle is a 3-strand barbed wire fence. The drugs seized in this vehicle were entering the Organ Pipe National Monument and is indicative of the packing or ‘stuffing’ of drugs into vehicles.



Source: US Fish & Wildlife

This section of fence is typical of what is found along the US/ Mexican border on DOI lands.





TERRORIST THREAT

Virtually all of the lands managed by Department Of The Interior (DOI) along the Arizona/Mexico border are sparsely populated with easy access into the United States from Mexico. Terrorist wishing to smuggle nuclear - biological - or chemical (NBC) weapons into the United States from Mexico could use well-established smuggling routes over DOI managed lands. Since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 terrorist have been able to acquire not only components for weapons of mass destruction, but also have been able to acquire shoulder held ground to ground, and surface to air missiles. These types of items to include NBC and conventional weapons are available from the former Soviet Republics, such as Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, through “black market” methods, as well as conventional weapons from nation states that support terrorism such as Iran, Iraq, Libya and North Korea. The wide-open spaces of DOI lands along the Arizona-Mexico border will invite smuggling “weapons of terrorism”. Smuggling through the International Airports in the United States, and the United States Ports of Entry along the Arizona-Mexico International Border has become more difficult. The increase in man power and technology to the United States Airport, and Border Ports of Entry will create additional incentives for International Terrorist Groups, such as Al-Qa’ida, Hizballah, Al-Jihad and HAMAS to use DOI lands as smuggling corridors into the Continental United States. It would be a short trip for terrorists to travel by vehicle, air, or rail to any of the thousands of smuggling points along the US/Mexico border.

A major area of concern is between the Tohono O'odham Indian Nation and the Gila Bend, Barry Goldwater Air Force Bombing Range. This area has become very active with smuggling and encrypted radio traffic. The Goldwater Range is being used as a smuggling route at an ever-increasing rate. This would be an ideal area to smuggle a weapon of mass destruction.

The increase of encrypted radio traffic near the Tohono O'odham Nation, the Organ Pipe NM, and especially the Cabeza Prieta Refuge should cause concern. The large increase of illegal activity in these areas, as well as the ability of the criminals to successfully use encrypted communications and smuggle contraband could easily lend itself to the smuggling of weapons of mass destruction.

Undocumented Border Crossers

The use of Department of the Interior (DOI) lands for illegal border crossings have been increasing because of the successes of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), and the United States Customs Service (USCS) at the Ports of Entry. The United States Border Patrol's (USBP) change in strategy with operations such as "Gatekeeper" and "Hold the Line" have also impacted the DOI managed lands by forcing illegal border crossings away from border towns, and into more remote areas.

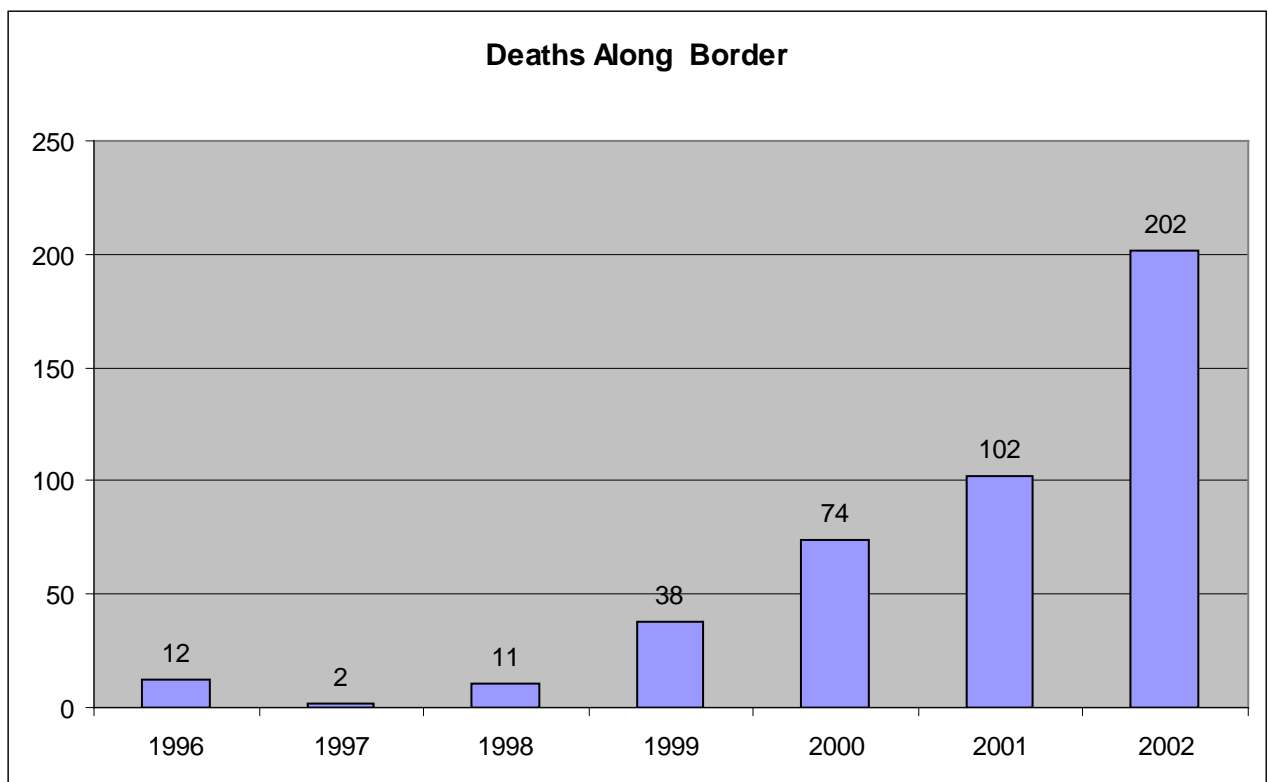
Since September 11, 2001 there has been a marked increase in funding and hiring authorization for INS, USBP and USCS. These increases, along with strategy changes by the INS and USBP, have forced illegal border crossers into areas of extreme heat and few water sources. This has resulted in the destruction of DOI managed lands, an increase in drug smuggling across these lands, and large amounts of trash and other materials left on DOI lands at campsites. The successes of INS/USCS/USBP has caused illegal border crossers into areas they are less familiar with, causing an increase in deaths by dehydration and heat stroke on DOI managed lands. In FY 2001 a record 75 illegal border crossers died in the Arizona desert, attempting to enter the United States illegally. The number for FY 2001 is over 102 deaths, an increase of over 60% in only 12 months.



Notice the 1 gallon water bottles carried by smugglers to cross the desert. In addition, water is stashed along the route to assist in the smuggling effort. These containers are often wrapped in burlap to protect them.

DEATHS OF ILLEGAL BORDER CROSSERS IN ARIZONA

This chart covers the area from the Arizona/New Mexico border to the Cabeza Prieta Wildlife Range/Berry Goldwater boundary. Notice the additional 100 deaths in FY 2002, compared to the number of deaths from the previous year.





DRUG THREAT



Drugs grown or produced in Mexico, as well as numerous South American Countries, use Arizona as a transshipment corridor into the Continental United States for distribution to the interior of the US. The drugs most commonly smuggled into the United States from Mexico are marijuana, cocaine, black tar heroin and methamphetamines, with its derivatives. The smuggling routes currently used by Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs) are the same routes used for the past 200 years to smuggle contraband into this Country. There are literally thousands of smuggling routes, criss-crossing over each other, that start in Mexico and cross into the United States, using Department of Interior land. There are hundreds of known gangs and DTOs using DOI lands to smuggle narcotics into the US with further distribution across the country. The Major DTOs such as the Coro-Quintero, The Carrillo-Fuentes and the Arellano-Felix organizations have taken advantage of the open spaces that are sparsely patrolled by Law Enforcement for the movement of large amounts of illegal narcotics across DOI lands.

Violence and corruption to protect drug loads, contraband, and illegal alien smuggling have proven effective and is on the increase. Shots fired at law enforcement, vehicles used as assault weapons, and intimidation factors such as pointing guns and laser pointers at law enforcement are rampant. Other intimidating factors such as rock throwing are very common with DTOs and human alien smugglers. Scouts tell the people being smuggled to throw rocks at law enforcement, if confronted.

The United States Border Patrol operations and change of strategy over the past three years have put the vast majority of their agents in and around the border towns, with fewer agents working the outlying, more remote areas. These changes in strategy and manpower usage have disrupted how the undocumented Mexican nationals enter the United States. These changes also have caused drug trafficking organizations to use other more remote smuggling routes. Many of the DOI lands are considered prime crossing areas, for both undocumented workers, as well as smugglers. These remote areas also could be used by terrorist smuggling either conventional weapons or weapons of mass destruction. These areas are remote and mostly uninhabited, but have an extensive network of roads that cross the International Boundary. This document will describe the terrain, the border security threat, methods of smuggling, trends and recommendations to address the recent threat on DOI lands.

LINEAR MILES COINCIDENT WITH THE U. S. - MEXICO BORDER

STATE	Miles	Total Linear Miles	
Total linear miles along US/Mexico border			1916.7 Miles
TEXAS			1223.3 Total Texas Border Miles
U. S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE			
Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge	5.2		
Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR	47.1		
International Falcon Reservoir	28.7		
	81	81	
U. S. NATIONAL PARK SERVICE			
Amistad National Recreation Area	83.5		
Big Bend National Park	245		
Chamizal National Memorial	1		
	329.5	329.5	
Total Linear Miles of Texas		410.5	34 percent of Texas Border
NEW MEXICO			179.2 Total New Mexico Border Miles
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	85.9		
Total Linear Mile of New Mexico		85.9	48 percent of the NM Border
ARIZONA			374.1 Total Arizona Border Miles
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE			
San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge	3		
Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge	5.2		
Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge	54.5		
Barry M Goldwater Air Force Range	1.8		
Conservation Area	64.5	64.5	
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE			
Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument	31		
Coronado National Memorial	3		
	34	34	
Bureau of Land Management	15	15	
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS	61.7		
Tohono O'Odham Indian Reservation	2.5		
Cocopah Indian Reservation	64.2	64.2	
Total Linear Miles of Arizona		177.7	47 percent of the Arizona Border
CALIFORNIA			140.1 Total California Border Miles
BUREAU OF INDIAN AFFAIRS			
Fort Yuma Indian Reservation	11.1		
Campo Indian Reservation	6		
		16.1	
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT			
BLM	66.7	66.7	
Total Linear Miles of California		82.8	59 percent of California Border
Total DOI miles on Border		789.1	41 percent of the SWB

Destruction by Foot and Vehicle Traffic

Lands managed by Department of the Interior (DOI) Agencies along the US/Mexico border face a variety of environmental problems from different sources. Drug traffickers and Illegal Mexican Nationals crossing the US/Mexico Border (both on foot and by vehicle) across DOI managed lands have forced this agency to contend with this increasing threat. Large amounts of garbage, foot and vehicle traffic from Mexico, have caused destruction of this fragile environment – to include plants and animals protected by the endangered species act. These animals and plants face destruction of their habitat, putting additional stresses on these endangered species. With some of the areas receiving only 4 inches of rain annually, it could take years for the environment to reestablish itself after heavy vehicle or foot traffic. Illegal crossings for both foot and vehicle traffic have already negatively effected this fragile environment!



Groups of 100 or more illegal crossers are not uncommon on DOI managed lands

Toxic Waste Dumping

Because of the vast open areas, DOI managed land along the US/Mexico border is very susceptible to toxic waste dumping. Some illegal dumpers of toxic waste will dump these waste pollutants at the nearest available place. Others illegal dumpers frequently use illegal roads to more remote areas to dump their waste. Still others, to include producers of the drug methamphetamine will use abandoned mine shafts for their illegal drug production or the dumping of toxic waste. The dumping of waste and pollutants into vertical mine shafts is exceptionally dangerous because in many cases these pollutants are never found and will contaminate ground water for decades. This type of dumping is a long term threat to ground

water and kills many animals that use these shafts for shelter, notably bats, snakes and lizards.

Plant – Animal Smuggling

Additional stress on these fragile environments is caused by personnel using these areas to fill request from all over the world for exotic plants and animals. Lizards, snakes, horned lizards, and desert toads are among the fauna with a high demand in the international illegal animal trade. Plants, especially cacti, are at great risk, not only from the professional smuggler of plants, but also by the legitimate visitor that thinks “It will not hurt” to take one little cactus. Trapping animals is one way these traders do business; another way is to travel on paved roads at night, looking for these animals and capturing them off of the warm asphalt.

Wildfires

Another area of concern is the amount of wildfires caused by undocumented Mexican Nationals that enter the United States across DOI and U.S. Department of Agriculture lands. Undocumented Mexican Nationals were suspected of causing 8 major wildfires (of 100 acres or more) and destroying 68,413 acres or 108 square miles of public lands in FY 2002. Hundreds of other wildfires, less than 100 acres, (usually 1-5 acres) were also caused by undocumented Mexican nationals entering the United States through DOI and USDA lands. The majority of these fires are caused by carelessly discarding cigarette butts or camp fires burning out of control. Most of these fires are distinguished by local authorities or fire departments.



Source: USFS

Wildfires such as this are common in the summer months along the US/Mexico border. Most fires are started by discarded matches or cigarettes, or from a campfire carelessly left burning as smugglers and illegal Mexican Nationals enter across federal lands.

Trash Dumping

Illegal dumping of trash by undocumented Mexican nationals, as well as by U.S. Citizens that live near the borders of DOI lands is also a major threat. This illegal dumping effects wildlife negatively, destroys wild habitat and causes increases in disease carrying insects such as flies and mosquitoes. Mosquitoes are a major problem where old tires and other refuge that holds water are illegally discarded on DOI land. Disease carrying mosquitoes are a threat to both human and animals in and around DOI land.

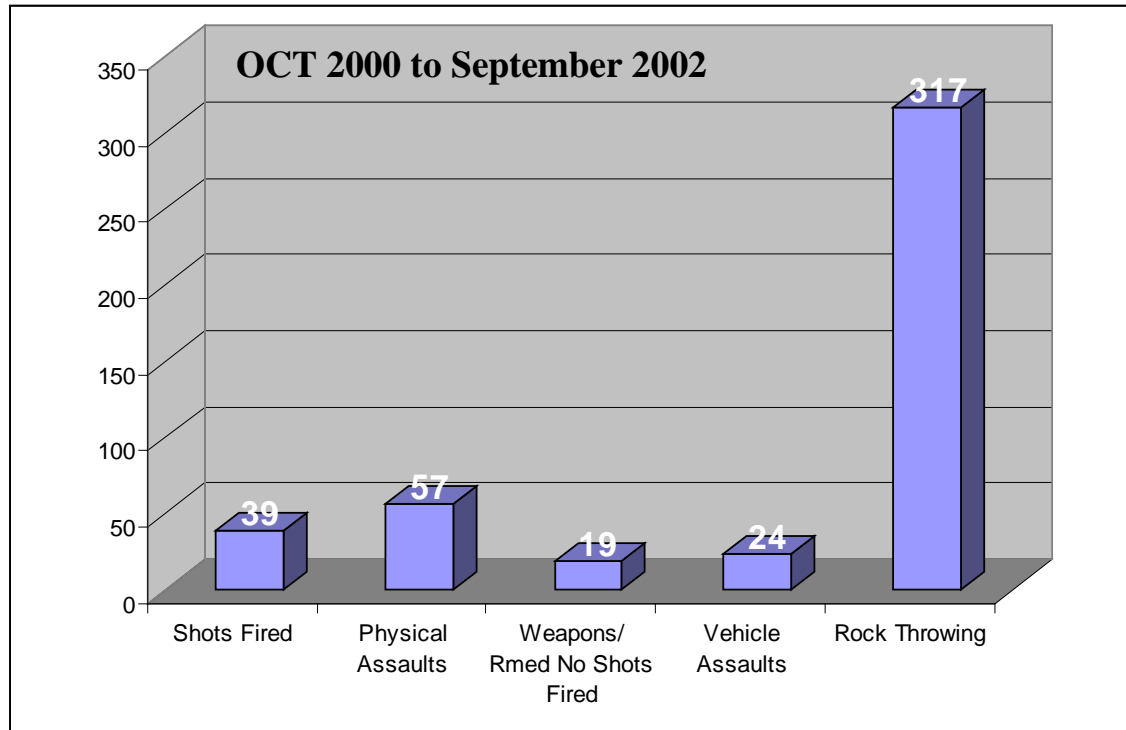


Sites such as th **Source: NPS** ommon on federal lands, as more smuggling and illegal aliens use DOI lands for entry into the United States.

Introduction of Non – Native Species

None native animals and plant life create a major problem on DOI lands. Animals such as horses, donkeys and wild cattle destroy and over graze delicate habitat that supports native species such as deer, antelope, desert and big horn sheep, to name but a few of these native species. Another problem is that U.S. citizens buy desert species of reptiles from other parts of the world, both legally and illegally, and let them go in the Arizona desert when they (reptiles) are no longer wanted. The same holds true for fish, non-native fish inhabit many of the creeks and waterholes on DOI lands, as well as on the Coronado National Forest and the Barry Goldwater Bombing Range that belongs to the Department of Defense. This is occurring all along the US/Mexico border, especially on federal lands.

Border Violence Towards Law Enforcement



Rock Throwing

Border Violence has increased dramatically over the past 10 years along the Arizona/ Mexico Border. In 1995 there were only 26 incidents of Law Enforcement agents being pelted by rocks, thrown by Mexican Nationals in Arizona. By 1999 this number had increased to 99. In the past 24 months there have been 317 incidences of Law Enforcement Agents having to “take cover” because of rocks being thrown at them. Many LEAs have been injured because of this tactic. Scouts (“coyotes”) that guide undocumented Mexican Nationals and narcotic smugglers across the Arizona/Mexico Border have told the immigrants to throw rocks at LEA’s if stopped or approached. This tactic has worked to some extent, allowing people to escape or return into Mexico with contraband.

(9) Vehicle Assaults for the Department of the Interior/United States Forest Service.

Shots Fired

Scouts and enforcers of drug loads are much more likely to shoot at law enforcement officers today, than just a few years ago. In the past 24 months Federal law enforcement officers have been shot at no less than 39 times. Threats against drug law enforcement from narcotic trafficking organizations are common place and are increasing as DTOs attempt to intimidate American law enforcement. Drug smuggling organizations are much more violent today than just a few years ago. Murder, assassination, and threats are commonplace in the Mexico drug trade with whole families being assassinated over smuggling areas, or drug/money disputes. This violence has spilled over into the United States as drug trafficking organizations have become extremely aggressive at protecting their drug loads.

Their violence culminated in the death of a Federal Agent assigned to The National Park Service in August of 2002.

Physical Assaults

Physical assaults are also on the increase with both smugglers and undocumented workers becoming much more violent. Smugglers are becoming more violent toward protecting their loads. Illegal immigrants, that have paid up to \$1500.00 per person for passage into the United States view law enforcement as a major threat to achieving their work goals in the United States. Most of these immigrants have saved for several years to be able to afford their illegal passage into the United States. These illegal immigrants know that they will not be able to afford another attempt at entering the United States, and for this reason have become more violent toward our law enforcement officers. When confronted as they cross the international boundary between Mexico and the United States, the scouts (coyotes) have instructed the illegal immigrants to throw rocks at the law enforcement officers then flee.

Weapons assault-brandishing weapons at DLEAs

In attempts to hold Federal, State, and Local Law Enforcement officers/agents at bay, the brandishing of weapons have increased as a way for smugglers to return to Mexico with their contraband, once detected and confronted by United States Law Enforcement. This puts Law Enforcement officers at great risk. In the past 24 months there have been 19 separate incidents when suspected Mexican Nationals have brandished weapons at LEA's while officers are attempting to apprehend the suspects. There have been 46 lasers spottings towards law enforcement officers over the past 12 months. This is an intimidation technique used to hold law enforcement officers at bay.

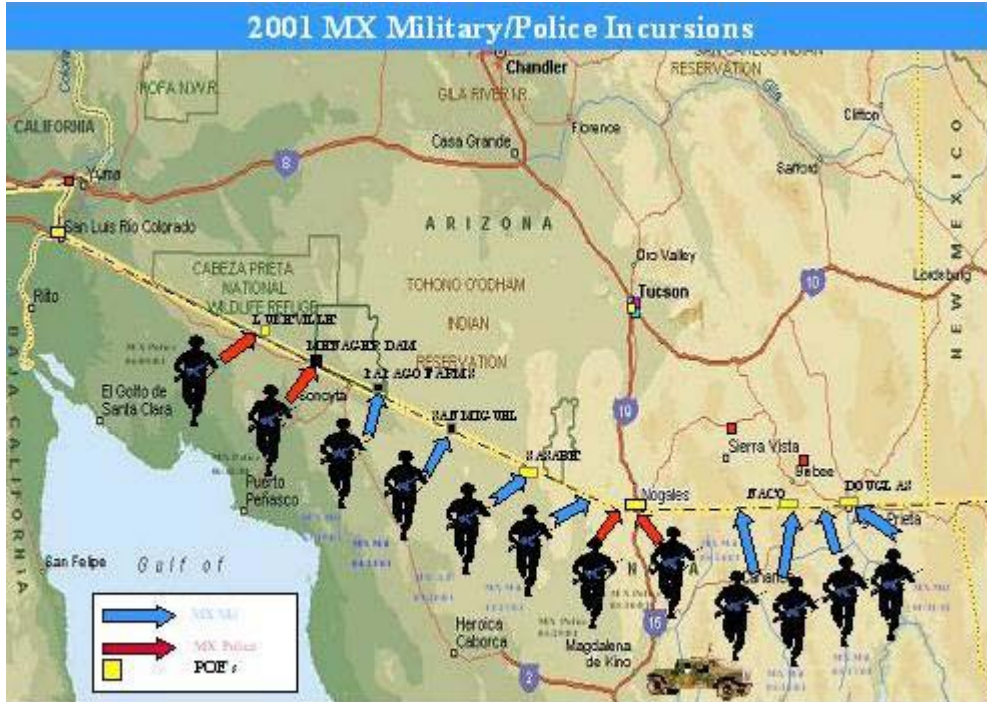
Vehicle Assaults Against Law Enforcement Agents

Using vehicles as a weapon against Law Enforcement is an ever-increasing threat toward officers. In the past 24 months, there have been 48 vehicle assaults against drug law enforcement agents in Arizona. This is more than two vehicle assault per month. Vehicle assaults are when a vehicle was used to ram a LEA vehicle, attempt to run a LEA vehicle off the road, or attempt to run over or hit a Law Enforcement Officer with a vehicle. Vehicle assaults usually occur when a vehicle is transporting illegal Mexican Nationals, or when a vehicle is used during drug smuggling attempts.

Vehicle Assaults Against State and Local Law Enforcement

These statistics do not include these vehicles on State and Interstate roads in Arizona where vehicles refuse to pull over for a traffic stop when carrying suspected illegal Mexican nationals. These often result in vehicle chases and accidents that cause death and injury to both innocent bystanders, people in other vehicles and occupants of the fleeing vehicle. A very large portion of these incidents involve Mexican Nationals that originated on DOI

Mexican Military/Police Incursions



There have been many documented incursions by Mexican Military and Police into the State of Arizona. The presence of these Mexican armed personnel usually accrue during drug or undocumented aliens smuggling activities. This presents a major threat to Law Enforcement Officers in Arizona, who's duty it is to stop the trafficking of humans and drugs. In almost every case the United States law enforcement personnel are heavily outgunned. Mexican Military and Police almost always have machine guns such as MAC-10's, used by Grupo Beta, a Mexican anti-smuggling squad, and A-K 47 and M16 used by the Mexican military. If a United States Law Enforcement personnel attempted to arrest any Mexican Military or Police personnel they would be at a huge disadvantage because United States Law Enforcement officers usually only carry side arms (9mm pistols) and are almost always outmanned.

It has long been suspected that elements of both Mexican police and military are contracted by major Drug Trafficking Organizations to protect drug loads being smuggled into the United States through Arizona. Mexican military and police have repeatedly guarded these loads for several miles after entering the United States

HOME MADE TIRE SPIKES

Home made spike sticks, commonly known as tire spike sticks, are being used as a way for the criminal element to stop vehicles on Department of the Interior lands with the intent of

robbing the occupants. These home made spike sticks have also been used to stop Law enforcement when responding to acts of criminal violence.

Criminal elements counter law enforcement vehicles by using these spikes, then fleeing back into Mexico. These methods take on an added importance when you considering the threat of terrorism and the added possibility of smuggling weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear, biological and chemical weapons or their components.



The OPNM has the highest rate nationwide of spike incidents by Law Enforcement Agencies for the purpose of stopping felons from fleeing. They are also unique in the fact that law enforcement on the DOI lands are also spiked by the smugglers. These are some of the retrieved spikes also being used on law enforcement and civilians for the purpose of robbing civilians visiting DOI lands.

VIOLENCE AGAINST CIVILIANS ON DOI LANDS

Violence against civilians that visit the Department of Interior Lands is on the increase. As successful United States Border Patrol operations in and around border towns cause large decreases in violence amid theft in those areas, the violence has moved to more remote areas. As violence such as robbery, home invasions, car jackings and theft decrease because of Border Patrol operations in border towns, violence such as car jackings, shootings, robberies and theft are becoming much more common in more remote lands. These acts of violence are directed toward civilians visiting our Parks and Federal lands along the US/Mexico border.

There is a direct “cause and effect” between Border Patrol saturation operations in border towns, and the increase of narcotic smuggling, and violence, against both LEAs and civilians, as well as undocumented Mexican Nationals dying in the deserts attempting illegal entry on DOI controlled lands.

METHODS USED AGAINST CIVILIANS ON DOI LANDS

+ **Car Jacking and Robbery:**

Getting vehicles to stop on Department of the Interior lands while on both main roads, side roads and dirt roads is a tactic of Border criminals. Some ways that criminals accomplish this is by using various types of barricades as ways to get this vehicle to stop.

+ **Rocks:**

On several occasions, rocks have been stacked on roadways, both paved and improved dirt roads to get traffic to stop. Once stopped, vehicle occupants are robbed or the vehicle is stolen, and in most cases taken into Mexico.

+ **Official Looking Barricades:**

On several occasions during this fiscal year barricades have been placed on highways and used to stop vehicles to rob the occupants or steal the vehicle. In one incident this year a suspected Mexican National used a barricade in an attempt to stop three women in a vehicle. When the women did not stop and went around the barricade the suspected Mexican National fired shots at the women tourists. Barricades are becoming more prevalent as a method for criminals to stop visitors on our National Parks.

Trees Blocking the Roads

Another way criminals stop visitors on DOI lands is the use of trees to block the roads. Some of these trees are old, dead trees. Others are freshly cut. In this picture, the visitor saw the blockade and immediately turned around before reaching it. He then informed Park Rangers of the incident.



Tactics like this are used to stop visitors to public lands. The intent is to rob, car jack, or possibly something worse.

Cactus Blocking the Road

Cacti, mainly saguaro, are cut down and dragged across the road to force Park visitors to stop. This picture was taken after a visitor was assaulted by suspected Mexican nationals and robbed. The suspects then fled back into Mexico.



This type of tactic not only destroys the fragile environment, these tactics are used with criminal intent toward citizens utilizing public lands.

CUTTING DOWN OF CACTUS

The cutting down of cactus creates two hazards to Department of the Interior lands. One hazard is to the public that visit the parks. Cactus mainly Sahuaro cactus are cut down to make a barricade to stop park visitors for criminal reasons, such as rape, robbery, vehicle theft and in a few cases worse. The other problem is the environmental effect on the parks once a cactus is cut down. In many cases these cactus are several hundred years old. This effects water erosion, the vegetation and the animals that live in the area. One resent event involving cactus being used as a vehicle blockade resulted in an elderly man being robbed of his money and watch, and then needlessly beaten before the suspected Mexican National fled into Mexico.



Cacti are cut down to use as barricades to stop visitors (usually on remote roads on public lands). Once stopped, the visitors can then be robbed, beaten, carjacked, or worse. They are also cut down for the water content by undocumented Mexican Nationals illegally entering the United States. This tactic is used to rob Park visitors of their valuables. As the vehicle approaches the cactus is pushed over and forms a barrier to stop park visitors.



CORONADO NATIONAL MEMORIAL



SOURCE: Department of Interior
View from Montezuma's Pass, CNM

GENERAL INFORMATION:

The Coronado National Memorial was established in the year 1952 to commemorate the crossing point into what is now the United States by the Francisco Coronado expedition in 1540. The monument is located on the southeast side of the Huachuca Mountains, and borders Mexico on the southern end and the US Forest Service lands on the north and west ends. The memorial is approximately 3.5 x 3.0 miles. Although there is no permanent water on this memorial, ample water in the Huachuca Mountains, year round, makes this area a prime smuggling point for both contraband and illegal Mexican nationals trying to enter the United States.

TERRAIN:

The terrain along this portion of the US/Mexico border affords easy concealment for illegal entry into Arizona because of topography. There are many arroyos and gullies that are masked by mountains in this area. Smugglers use this concealment for large scale smuggling of narcotics and other contraband. Within these 3 miles, the elevation varies some 2,700 feet. This makes observation from both ground and air very difficult, and very attractive to smugglers. Once inside the park, smugglers move either north or northeast into USFS land and the Huachuca Mountains for up to a three-day hike to state route 82. There are over 70 regularly used trails to smuggle over the Huachuca's. There are also countless game trails that are often used. Other smugglers make a "dash" for the open and flat grassland to the east of the park and state route 92. This area is known to be frequently used by the Yolanda Molina de Hernandez Organization

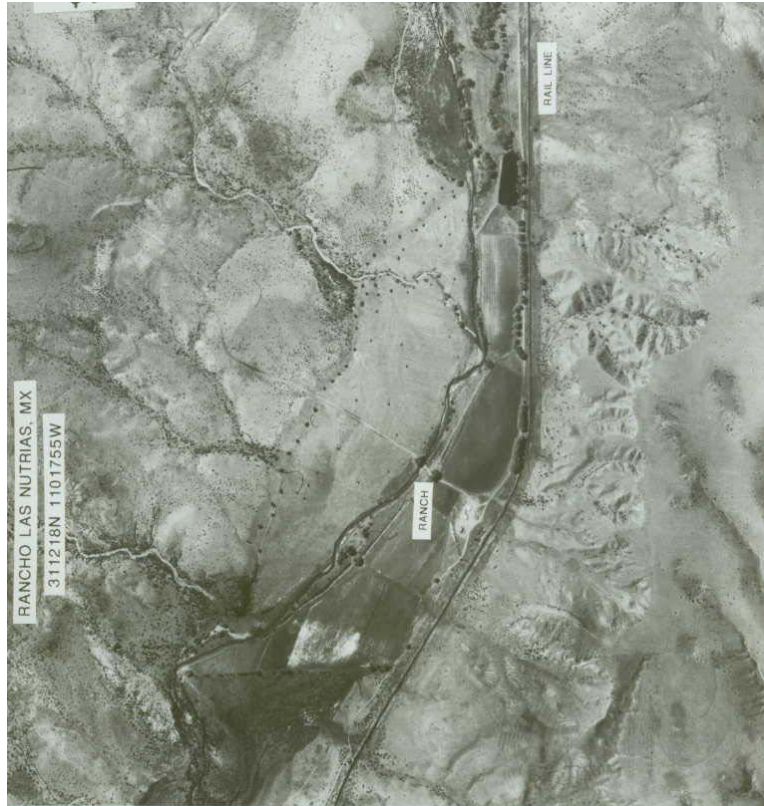


Notice flatlands, as well as mountains in this area.

SMUGGLING:

Threat to the Coronado National Memorial

Not only does the topography lend itself to smuggling in this area, there are excellent transportation arteries in Mexico that make movement of contraband on the Mexican side very easy. The roads within the Coronado National Memorial are also a challenge. There is only one road that goes through the monument and movement throughout the monument by vehicle is not easy because of the steep terrain, gorges, and arroyos. Law enforcement must stop and exit the vehicle to check for illegal entry into the monument. There are numerous ranches with rail access and abandoned rail yards in Mexico adjacent to the Coronado National Memorial that makes movement of drugs up to the Arizona border easy and very inexpensive to the DTOs. Abandoned rail yards and ranches next to rail tracks make unloading drugs very easy for these DTOs. The rails in this part of Mexico are infrequently used and it is common for trains to stop at ranches and unload supplies necessary for the legitimate operations of these ranches. Drug trafficking organizations take advantage of this system and smuggle drugs onto these trains and unload them within easy moving distance of the US/Mexico border. Much of these drugs, and other contraband are smuggled through the Coronado National Memorial or through US Forest Service land adjacent to the monument.



This Mexican ranch, across from the Arizona/Mexico border, is believed to be regularly used by DTOs to ship illegal drugs from Southern Mexico up to the Arizona border. This ranch is only 14 miles from the Coronado National Memorial. There is a clandestine airstrip on this ranch.

AERIAL THREAT:

The area adjacent to the Coronado National Memorial in Mexico is extremely active with suspect flights being among the highest in all of Mexico. Several ranches that are within a few miles of the Coronado National Memorial and the Coronado National Forest are being used as transshipment sites for illegal drugs. Most of these ranches have access to good paved roads, have clandestine airstrips, and access to the rail system. The Coronado National Memorial sits between the towns of Nogales and Douglas Arizona. This 82-mile stretch is among the most heavily used drug smuggling corridors for marijuana and cocaine in the United States. There are over 30 heavily used clandestine Mexican airstrips within 10 miles of the US/Mexico border along this 82-mile stretch of land. In addition, paved or hard packed roads are also frequently used with DTO blocking off areas of the road and planes landing with drug loads.



This plane and its drugs were seized in Mexico after the Mexican police and the US Customs Service responded to a suspect flight in Mexico. This plane landed less than 10 miles from the Coronado NM between Naco, AZ and Coronado National Memorial.

VEHICLE AND FOOT TRAFFIC:

Once the contraband is driven, flown or railed to the suspect ranches it is then stashed at these ranches awaiting transshipment across the US/Mexico border. Drug trafficking organizations need to move this contraband, usually in the form of drugs as quickly as possible. For economic reasons drugs are usually shipped within 5 days of being delivered to the stash house ranches. These drugs are then shipped through or between the Ports of Entry. Drugs that are being planned for shipment through the Ports of Entry are stashed into wheeled vehicles usually at the stash ranch house. A wide array of techniques, concealment methods and equipment are used to hide narcotics in vehicles.

Vehicles used to transport narcotics between the Ports of Entry are usually not as well prepared with narcotics concealment techniques. It is not uncommon for pick-up trucks to fill the bed of the truck with narcotics in plain view, then cross the US/Mexico border. These drugs have a pre-determined stash area, usually several miles inside the United States where it is unloaded and “mules” pick up the drugs, or other vehicles hide the drugs in trunks, trailers, motor homes, etc. for delivering somewhere in the US. The added problem with these types of illegal drug crossings is the destruction of DOI lands all across the Arizona/Mexico border. Wildlife and vegetation are destroyed as new dirt roads are being made by DTOs into the DOI lands.



This is typical of how drugs are move across DOI lands at night. These drugs were to be unloaded at a designated site, then packed into trunks, under seats, and into other hiding places within vehicles.



Vehicles like this tear up DOI lands and are then left abandoned after drugs or other contraband have been delivered.



- t. Notice the barbed wire fence and the amount of illegal traffic that has moved between Mexico and the Organ Pipe National Monument.

Tohono O'odham Nation

Land owned by the Tohono O'odham Indian Nation represents a unique problem to the war on drugs and terror. Many tribal members have relatives that live on the Mexican side of the border. Many of the tribal members do not recognize the US/Mexico boundary and the paperwork requirement for entry into and exit from the United States. Family members move freely between the two countries. For hundreds of years the Tohono O'odham (formerly the Papago) Indian Nation spanned an area that covered vast areas on both sides of the border. Some tribal members on the Arizona side of the border feel that their relatives on the Mexican side of the border are entitled to unrestricted movement and the use of US government facilities to include: medical, dental, and access to government subsistence, to name a few. Both sides of the Tohono O'odham Nation speak the same language and share the same culture. There are no reservations in the Republic of Mexico. The attitude of many tribal members creates a very difficult situation for federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies and officers.

The tactics used by US law enforcement during our counter-drug operations, coupled with the added counter-terrorism operations, do not have the complete support of the Tohono O'odham Nation, as a whole. This is due to the international boundary issues and the cross-border family issues.

The Tohono O'odham Nation has long been a major smuggling area for drugs and contraband into the United States. The boundary between Mexico and Arizona on the Tohono O'odham Nation is not much more than a three-strand barbed wire fence. Often there is no fence at all to separate Mexico from the tribal lands.

There are hundreds of smuggling routes between the two countries on this reservation that have been used for over 200 years. This area is vast. It is the second largest reservation in the country with 2,855,992 acres. This area covers more than 61 miles of the 372 miles of the Arizona/Mexico border. The western boundary is adjacent to the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and is also under the jurisdiction of the Department of Interior. The northern part of the nation extends up to Interstate 8 with the northeast extending almost to Interstate 10, making smuggling attractive in this area.

The population of the nation is 21,000 tribal members, with only 9,800 living on the reservation. The reservation is very sparsely populated, with widely separated villages. The greatest concentration of inhabitants, approximately 3,200, live in Sells, Arizona. This town supports all of the administrative functions for the nation, to include medical, social services, construction, police, and fire departments.

The terrain varies widely from arid desert plains to mountains towering over 7,700 feet. Temperatures during the summer months can reach 120 degrees. This puts additional stresses on the already undermanned law enforcement agencies because many rescue operations are required during the summer. Every year scores of Mexican nationals are found dead because of heat related injuries received while trying to illegally enter the United States.

Drug Smuggling and the Terrorist Threat

Most of the drugs smuggled into the US on the Tohono O'odham reservation are smuggled between the legal ports of entry (POE). Major Drug trafficking organizations (DTOs) and those criminal organizations that traffic in human misery by smuggling undocumented aliens into the U.S. use the Tohono O'odham reservation for the following reasons:

- Sparsely patrolled by law enforcement
- Easy access to major road arteries (I-10 and I-8)
- No formidable boundaries between the two countries
- Terrain lends itself to easy concealment from both land and air observation
- Very sparsely populated, with enough villages to give smugglers access to water
- Very cheap labor for smugglers. Drug carriers, known as mules, receive as little as \$10 per day, will carry up to 50 pounds of drugs. These mules are often only paid if they are not apprehended.
- Family connections between both countries

This easy access to smuggling of drugs and Mexican Nationals also could just as easily be used to smuggle weapons of mass destruction into the United States from Mexico. Nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, or components of these weapons could be smuggled into the US using the Tohono O'odham Nation as an entry point. Mules do not care, or want to know what they are smuggling, they only care that it is successfully smuggled and they receive their \$10.00 a day. These human transporters will ask no questions regardless of what they smuggle.

- **FLYING AT NIGHT**

Flying at night represents a majority of the fades. It is illegal to fly a private plane at night in the country of Mexico. Therefore, most of these flights are suspected of carrying contraband. Pilots would not risk losing their plane by having it confiscated by the Mexican government for flying at night unless illegal activity is involved.

- **INTELLIGENCE ON THE FLIGHT**

Numerous American intelligence agencies; CIA, DIA, DEA, etc., relay intelligence on drug movements to agencies inside the United States.

- **OBSERVATION**

This is personnel observation from either ground or air.

- PERSONNEL INTELLIGENCE

Received from law enforcement personnel working inside major drug trafficking organizations.

- No flight plan
- There has been no flight plan authorized by the Mexican government and the planes are flying without transponder being turned on.

Types of planes commonly used are:

- Cessna 210, high wing with super engine
- Cessna 207, high wing with super engine
- Any twin engine, such as the D-18



ORGAN PIPE NATIONAL MONUMENT

GENERAL:

Organ Pipe National Monument is a desert reserve located in south central Arizona and shares a 56-mile border with Mexico. This area is a notorious drug smuggling area with the Tohono O'odham Indian Nation paralleling the monument to the East and the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge to the West. State route 85 runs through the center of the Monument making this area ideal for smuggling. The rough terrain in this area has countless ravens and arroyos easily concealing the movement of drugs by backpack, horse, or vehicles across the US/ Mexico border.

Drug smuggling activity in and through the monument has steadily increased since 1995. In 1995 there was only about 500 lbs of marijuana and very few smuggling cases associated with Organ Pipe National Monument. By the year 2000, just five years later the number of marijuana had increased to 5000 lbs seized and over 100 drug cases prosecuted. By the year 2002, there was 10,845 pounds of marijuana seized by National Park Service rangers, with over 190 separate cases involving drugs.

TACTICS USED BY SMUGGLERS:

Major drug trafficking organizations use Organ Pipe National Monument for illicit drug smuggling because of the easy movement of contraband across the border, sparse law enforcement in the area, easy lines of communications and easy access back into Mexico if observed or confronted by US law enforcement officers. Smugglers of contraband, mainly narcotics, are moved into the monument by backpackers, horses, or vehicles. The drugs are then stashed and later broken down into smaller amounts and put into trunks of cars, under back seats and other concealment places in vehicles and moved out of the monument. Some of these operations are done close to the US/Mexico border with others traveling completely through the park to stash areas on Route 86, outside the park.



SOURCE: NPS

Notice the amount of water transported by these smugglers

Drug traffickers use many of the same routes undocumented Mexican workers use when entering the United States. Water is stashed all along these routes and are used by both smugglers of undocumented workers and illegal drug trafficking. These one gallon water plastic jugs are wrapped in burlap to help cushion the water jugs and absorb shock when hitting rocks and trees. These jugs, wrapped in burlap are also stashed along the routes for future drug smuggling. If shielded from the sun, and wrapped in burlap, these jugs can be hidden and then used for up to a year.



SOURCE: NPS

This one-gallon jug of water was stashed along a known drug route. It was to be used during a later drug smuggling operation.

Caches of food and water are routinely placed at strategic intervals all along drug smuggling routes. Smugglers will often times use pack animals or backpackers to “walk the trail” and stash caches of supplies for future smuggling operations through areas such as the Organ Pipe NM, Tohono O’odham Nation, and the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge. All of these areas are the responsibility of the Department of Interior and cover an area with Mexico extending some 170 miles of uninterrupted wilderness with Mexico.



Source: NPS
Seized food from a cache used by smugglers

Drugs are easily moved up to the Organ Pipe NM/ Mexico border using Mexico Route 8 and 2. These are numerous roads leading off of these routes to ranches suspected of illegal narcotic trafficking. Drugs are moved to these ranches by air or vehicle, with further breakdown into smaller vehicles, backpacks, or pack animals. They are then moved across the border.



Source: USFS

This is typical of how vehicles are loaded with narcotics when entering the OPNM. Drugs are then dropped off and hidden in trunks and under seats of waiting vehicles for better concealment.

There are hundreds of smuggling trails all along the boundary of Organ Pipe NM and Mexico. All along this boundary there is only a three-strand barbed wire fence or no fence at all separating the two countries.



Source: Arizona HIDTA

This shows the extent of the problem that Organ Pipe has with illegal traffic from Mexico into the US.

VIOLENCE ON THE MONUMENT:

Violence against the general public and law enforcement on DOI lands is on the increase. Physical violence, robberies and shootings are becoming commonplace. The smuggling of narcotics and undocumented Mexican laborers presents a very real threat that impacts on public safety within the monument. Public camping areas are frequently used as routes and places for resupplying water for all types of smuggling. Smugglers also know that public campgrounds are not sensed, thereby giving them free movement through these camping areas. This puts the public in direct contact with Mexican Nationals that are in the act of committing crimes, both in narcotics and in trafficking of undocumented workers. These are felony crimes and the public visiting our parks are in an immediate threat of possible violence against both themselves and law enforcement responding to this smuggling activity.



Source: Arizona National Guard

Notice the people in the campground. These are undocumented workers with drug smugglers taking up the rear. This picture is from a thermal imaging camera.

During recent events on the Organ Pipe Monument officers responding to crime have been shot at, attempting homicide by vehicles on numerous occasions, had rocks thrown at them and one law enforcement Park Ranger was shot and killed by a Mexican criminal entering the United States, while fleeing from Mexican police.

An accidental encounter by the general public or Park Rangers stumbling upon illegal drug trafficking could easily result in their death by these criminals. With the increase of violence to protect their drug loads an immediate increase of law enforcement is needed within the monument. Rival drug trafficking organizations and their violence have crossed over into the US. A Mexican national, suspected of running drugs was found burned to death in the vehicle he was smuggling drugs in. There are also reoccurring gun battles on both sides of the border involving the drug trade. With the increase of violence and death, drug runners using camp sites for water and free unrestricted movement, and border bandits are increasingly robbing US citizens. The monument has become an increasingly dangerous place for both the general public and law enforcement.

ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT TO OPNM:

As smugglers use the monument to move drugs and undocumented nationals it puts increasing stress on the natural state of the plants and animals. Natural resources are quickly being depleted by the massive amount of Mexican nationals crossing into the US using the monument as both a movement and staging area for human workers and drugs entering the US.

In addition, cactus are being cut down, not only for their water supply but also to be used as barriers to stop the public as they drive through the monument on established dirt roads. These cacti are being used as barriers to stop park visitors for criminal intent, usually to rob them or car jack their vehicle.

Desert trees are also cut down and used as barriers. The few areas with water during parts of the year are used by drug and illegal alien smuggling, depriving wildlife such as the desert sheep and deer of this extremely limited resource. Small slow animals such as the desert tortoise are being used as food, putting additional stress on this already endangered species. As wood is used for campfires in the winter, animals such as rodents, lizards, snakes and insects are deprived of their natural living habitat.

Trash creates not only an unsightly presence, but also negatively effects wild animals as they eat leftover food and become ill because of previously unknown bacteria; virus and germs from processed human food.



This cache of food was found on the monument, hidden to logistically support future smuggling operations.

CONCLUSION:

- Criminal activity is increasing on the Organ Pipe National Monument.
- Violence by robbery, vehicle ramming, and shootings are on the increase.
- Additional law enforcement is needed on the monument, immediately!
- Environmental threats are increasing as the Organ Pipe is increasingly being used as drug and human smuggling routes
- There is an ever increasing stress on the wildlife as it is threatened by smugglers invading the natural habitat and using wild animals and plants as food. More and more litter dump sites are being discovered all across the monument.
- Public camp grounds are increasingly being used as smuggling routes and water supply stations.
- Border Patrol saturation operations near border towns will force an increase of narcotics smuggling, contraband and illegal aliens attempting to enter the United States through Organ Pipe NM.



CABEZA PRIETA NATURAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

GENERAL:

The Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge is a desert wildlife refuge located in South Central Arizona and shares a 54.5-mile border with Mexico. To the West and North this refuge shares its border with the US Air Force Barry Goldwater Bombing Range. Its Eastern boundaries are shared with Organ Pipe National Monument and the Tohono O'odham Indian Nation. The bombing range to the East is a restricted area because of military ordinances. This does not detour narcotics traffickers as they routinely move drugs over the Air Force bombing range to I-8 with further transshipment to California and Phoenix and to the interior of the United States. The Cabeza Prieta NWR and the bombing range to the West would also lend itself to smuggling weapons of mass destruction or components of these weapons. Movement through the wildlife refuge is reasonably easy because of flat land with shallow to moderate arroyos that lend to concealment when moving contraband. The valley has some steep hills but movement is still relatively easy. These are illegal four-wheel drive roads that crisscross the refuge assisting in the movement of drugs.



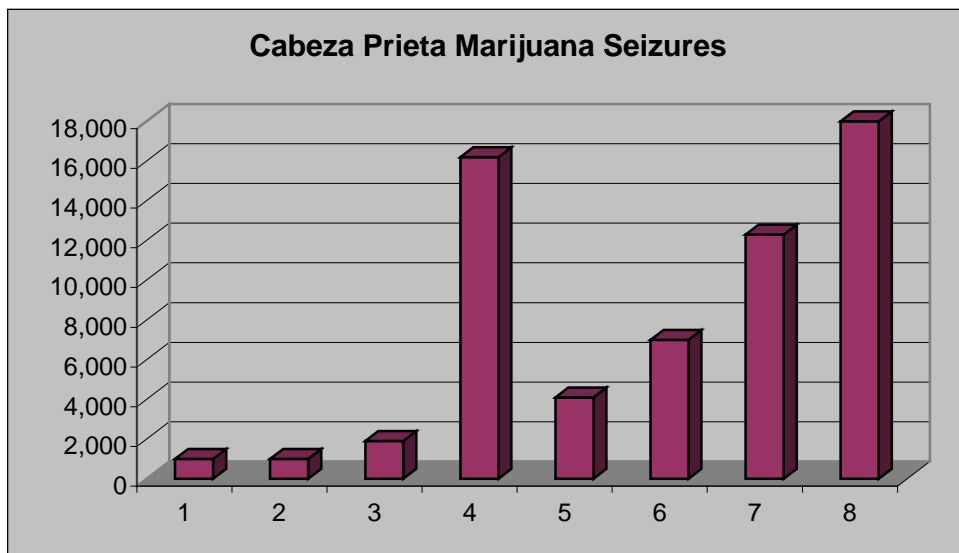
This picture illustrates the remoteness of this refuge, as well as how hard it is to track down smugglers.

Like the Organ Pipe NM, smugglers stash large caches of food and water in advance and to logistically support the periodic movement of large drug loads, across this refuge.

Drug activity through this refuse is sporadic, but is believed to be on the increase. Intelligence reports of drug movement and the huge increase of encrypted radio traffic just South of Cabeza Prieta indicate that this area is becoming a much more active smuggling route, Other indicators are the successes LEAs are having in seizing drug loads to the east and the increase of food and water caches found recently on the Cabeza Prieta.

TACTICS USED BY SMUGGLERS:

As in the Organ Pipe NM, supply caches of both food and water are placed in advance of the smuggling operations. This tactic logistically supports the smugglers and allows them to carry more contraband and less required supplies. It is not uncommon for DTOs to move these drugs up to 30 miles inside the refuge before further breakdown is done by putting these drugs into vehicles. On the far West end of the refuge smugglers will move the drugs or contraband all the way to I-8, a distance of 35 miles across the desert. Routes used will be scouted for up to a week by Mexican Nationals prior to the movement of contraband across the border. If confronted by law enforcement the mules will scatter and move back across the border.



Notice the continuous upward trend on the amounts of marijuana seized in this remote area.

On many occasions drug smuggling in this area will follow groups of illegal aliens to see the response of law enforcement, or send these aliens ahead a day or two and see if they are apprehended. If not, then they feel they have found a sensor free, non-patrolled route.



Source: USCS

Notice how the backpacks of narcotics are used, as demonstrated by this law enforcement officer.

Movement of drugs up to the Cabeza Prieta is extremely easy for DTOs and others that would want to use this corridor into the United States. The use of Mexico state route 2 follows the Arizona/ Mexico border across from the refuge. Movement of contraband up to the Arizona border by vehicle is easier here then on other parts of the Arizona/ Mexico border. The remoteness of this area makes illegal activities easy and human intelligence harder to get in a timely manner.

Drugs are also flown into ranches that support operations along the Cabeza Prieta and the Mexico border.

Drugs are stashed at he ranches until time to move the drugs to the border for transshipment into the United States. Organizations using these ranches smuggle drugs and other contraband through Department of Interior (DOI) lands to both the East and West of Cabeza Prieta, as well as through this refuge. Drugs are usually moved within a few days of being delivered to these Mexican ranches.

VIOLENCE ON THE REFUGE:

Violence against the general public and law enforcement is not as common on the Cabeza Prieta as on other DOI lands. One reason is that less illegal activity is conducted on this refuge. Another reason is that road structure in the refuge is almost non-existent compared to other DOI lands making accidental encounters less frequent. If criminal activity such as violence is thrust upon law enforcement officers, it is much harder for the smugglers to get back into Mexico before Customs Air, or USBP Air responds.

There is always the real possibility of an accidental encounter between the public or law enforcement and scouts hired to protect drug loads. Violence has occurred in the past and there are continuous reports by civilian visitors to the refuge of illegal immigration activities as well as illegal drug operations.

ENVIRONMENTAL THREAT:

As on the Organ Pipe NM smugglers and undocumented workers pose a real threat to this fragile environment. New trails, use of natural resources, trash, and abandoned vehicles are always present. In addition, the use of seasonal water holes by DTOs and undocumented workers denies these natural resources to the wildlife. Vegetation on this refuge is extremely vulnerable to vehicle and foot traffic, taking decades for small trees and cactus to grow only a few feet.

Endangered species such as the Desert Tortoise are used as food. Dead trees and plants that are used by wild animals for habitat are burned by smugglers to cook food and stay warm. Trash left behind by these smugglers negatively effect the environment and the wildlife.

Abandoned vehicles on refuge land create a problem of removal. Vehicles required to be towed away the abandoned vehicle must cross fragile ground creating an additional threat to this environment. Many vehicles are burned upon abandonment to hide the evidence of this illegal activity.

CONCLUSIONS;

- This area will be increasingly used as a smuggling route in the future.
- This area is much more susceptible to any negative environmental impact because of the sparse vegetation, low rainfall, and slow growth rates of vegetation.
- Additional law enforcement and park rangers are needed to protect this environment.
- The environmental threat on the Cabeza Prieta will continue to increase until adequate law enforcement and park rangers are present.
- Successes for smuggling through this area is higher than in other areas, but logistically harder for the smugglers. This causes a threat to human life as smugglers and illegal Mexican workers miss judge the amount of required water for crossing this very remote desert.
- A continuing increase in human deaths will occur on this desert as USBP operations concentrate on border towns, forcing illegal activities into more remote areas such as the Cabeza Prieta.