



# North Gila Planning Area Background Study



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## ***North Gila Planning Area Background Study*** **Executive Summary**

In December of 2001, the Board of Supervisors adopted the Yuma County 2010 Comprehensive Plan (Plan). The Plan is intended to accomplish coordinated and harmonious development in the unincorporated areas of Yuma County. In order to accomplish the goals and objectives of the plan the County was divided into a number of regional planning areas. The North Gila Planning Area is bounded on the east by the Gila Mountains and Yuma Proving Ground, the California-Arizona boundary marks the western edge of the Planning Area, County 7th Street forms most of the southern boundary of the Planning Area, and the Yuma Proving Ground forms the northern boundary. The North Gila Planning Area covers a total area of 60.5 square miles (38,715 acres). The North Gila Planning Area is a rural area that is predominately used for agricultural purposes, with nonagricultural land being mountainous or riparian areas owned by various government entities.

The total population of the North Gila Planning Area is 903. The North Gila Planning Area has a low population density of approximately 15 persons per square mile. However 75% of the planning area population lives in quarter mile area bound by Canyon Road, Avenue 9E, County 6th Street and Buckshot Road.

When compared to Yuma County and the State of Arizona as a whole, the North Gila Planning Area has a much different age profile. A larger proportion of planning area residents are in the 10 to 15, 45 to 49, and 60 to 64 age cohorts than in the County and the State as a whole, as illustrated in Figure 30 on page 16.

Since the Plan was adopted in 2001, development trends in this part of the County have identified a need to update the Plan to better reflect the goals and needs of the area. The first step in this process is the preparation of the North Gila Planning Area Background Study, which details current conditions of the planning area and how the area has changed in the past seven years.

Land designated as Agriculture/Rural Residential makes up 47.8% of the Planning Area. This represents mostly the portion of the Planning Area that is irrigated and actively farmed. Land with an Open Space and Recreational Resources designation make up 40.8% of the Planning Area. Almost all of this is mountainous land in the Laguna and Gila Mountain ranges owned by the federal government.

Since 2002 there have only been four amendments to the Comprehensive Plan that changed land use designation in the North Gila Planning Area. Three of the amendments were on land previously designated as Agriculture/Rural Residential; however, none of this land was being used for active agriculture purposes. Three of the amendments were to residential classification with a very low density. The general trend for the area for development is very low density residential development to slowly occur on non-farmable land that is in close proximity to irrigated farmland.



Figure 1: Gila Gravity Main Canal

## ***North Gila Planning Area Background Study*** **Executive Summary**

In the North Gila Planning Area 96.7%, of the land is zoned Rural Area - 20 acre minimum parcels (RA-20). Land with this zoning classification is either privately-owned irrigated farmland, or government-owned vacant desert or mountains. There are 271 acres with residential zoning applications, totaling .07% of the Planning Area. Since 2000, the Board of Supervisors approved seven rezoning in the North Gila Planning Area. Five of these rezonings occurred in the area bounded by Canyon Rd, Avenue 9E, County 6th Street and Buckshot Road. All but one of these rezonings were to a residential zoning district, most commonly to Suburban Ranch - 1 acre minimum parcels (SR-1), and all but one were rezoned from Rural Area - 20 acre minimum parcel (RA-20).

Between January 1, 2000, and August 31, 2007, twenty housing units were constructed or placed in the Planning Area. Of these, 80% were manufactured homes, 15% were single family site built homes, and 5% were mobile homes. Mobile homes are defined as structures built on or prior to June 15, 1976, on a permanent chassis, but do not include recreational vehicles and factory built buildings.

Nearly all building/placement permits were in two concentrated areas, one bounded by Canyon Rd, Avenue 9E, County 6th Street and Buckshot Rd and in the vicinity of County 3rd Street and Gila Gravity Main Canal. No housing units have been added to the planning area since year end of 2006



Figure 2: Agriculture in the North Gila Planning Area

**North Gila Planning Area Background Study  
Location**

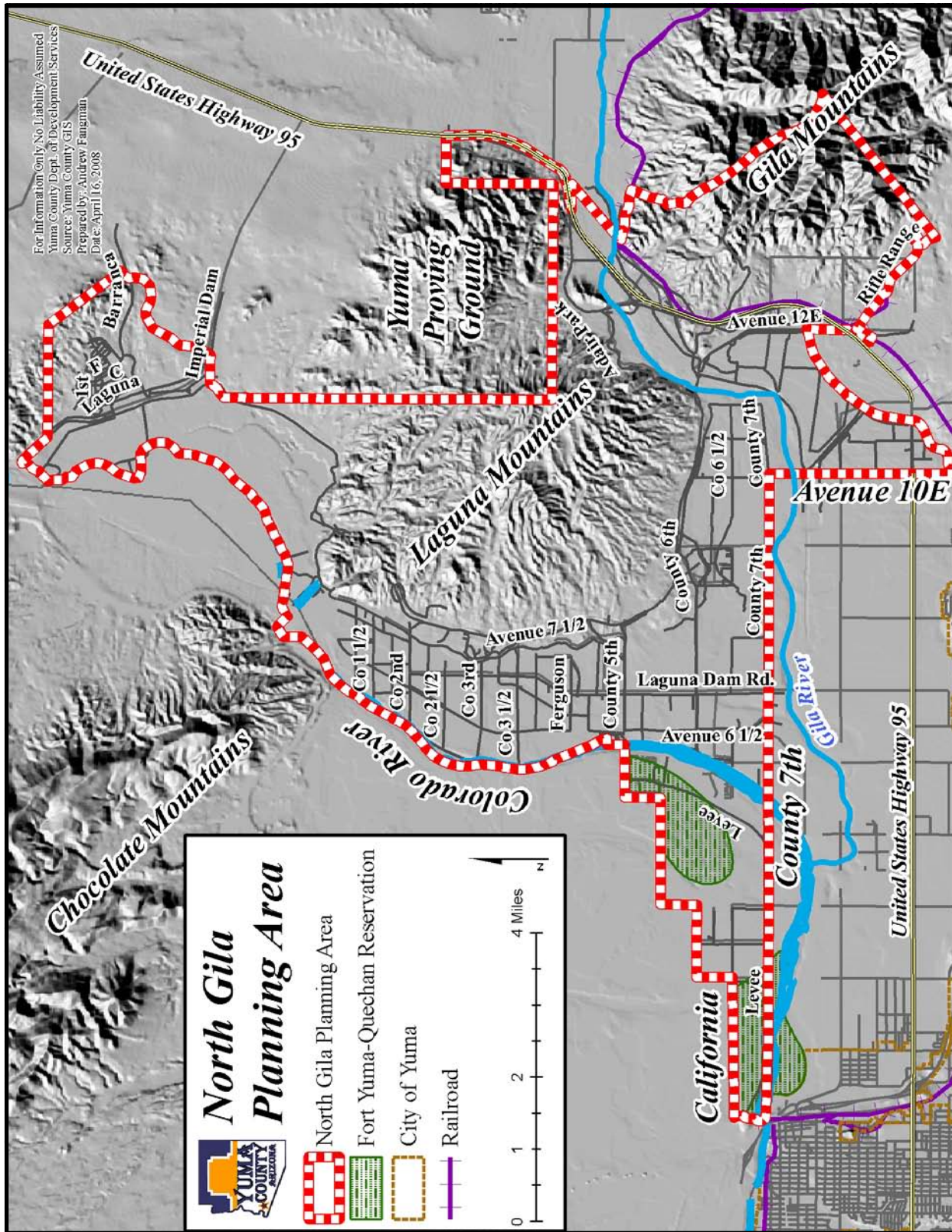


Figure 3: North Gila Planning Area Topography

**North Gila Planning Area Background Study  
Location**

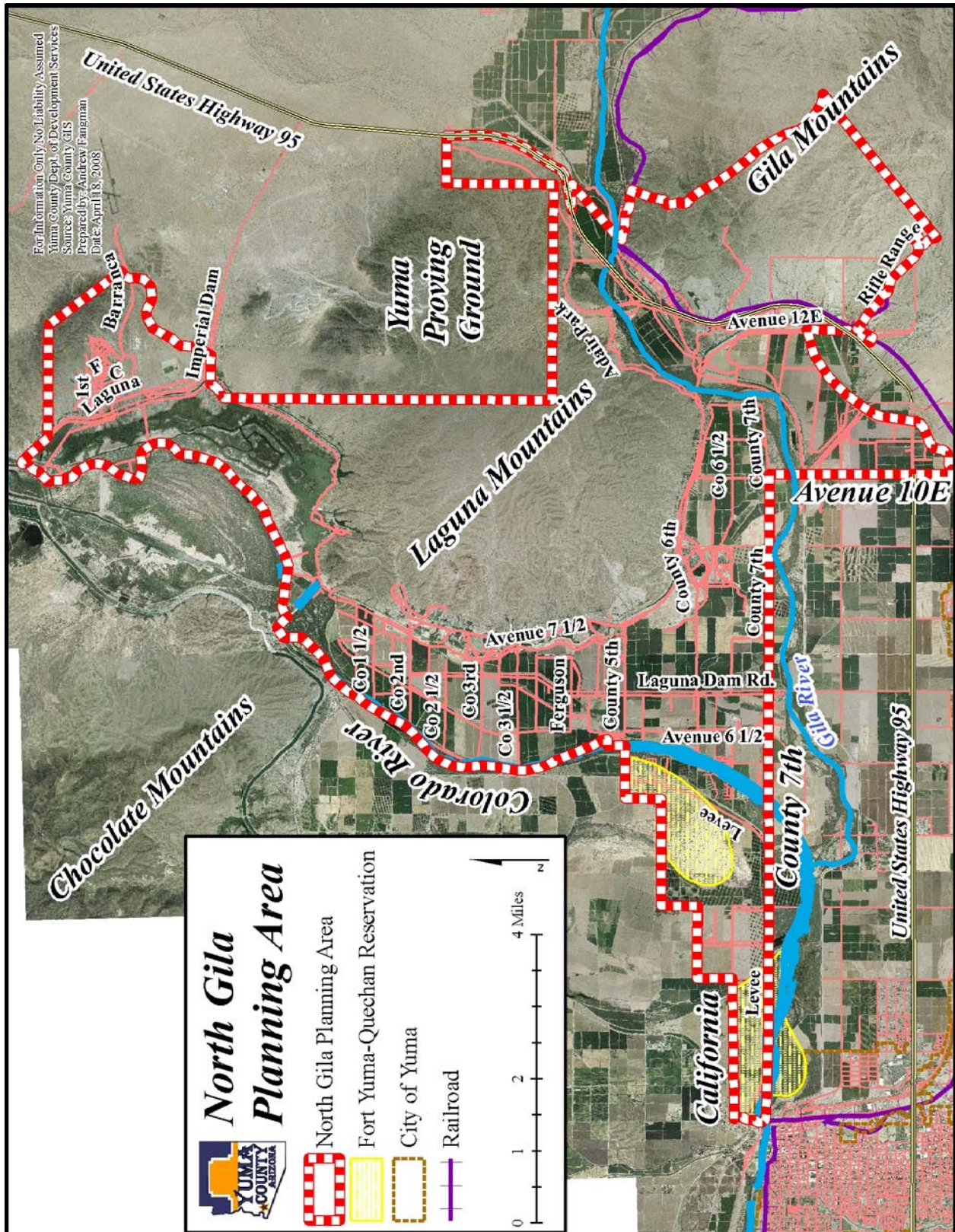


Figure 4: North Gila Planning Area Aerial View

## North Gila Planning Area Background Study Irrigation Districts

The North Gila Planning Area contains parts of two irrigation districts. 6,365 acres are within the North Gila Irrigation District and 1,915 acres are within the Yuma Irrigation District. A total of 8,280 acres within irrigation districts, and nearly 100% of the land is being used for active agriculture production.

Water for irrigation is diverted from the Colorado River at Imperial Dam, which is located on the northwestern edge of the Planning area, and delivered through the facilities of the Gila Project. Farmland within the North Gila Planning Area tends to be of the highest quality found in Yuma County, all of it located off the mesa in the fertile river bottoms. Some of the more common crops that are grown in the planning area include: lettuce, cotton, melons, wheat, safflower, and many others.

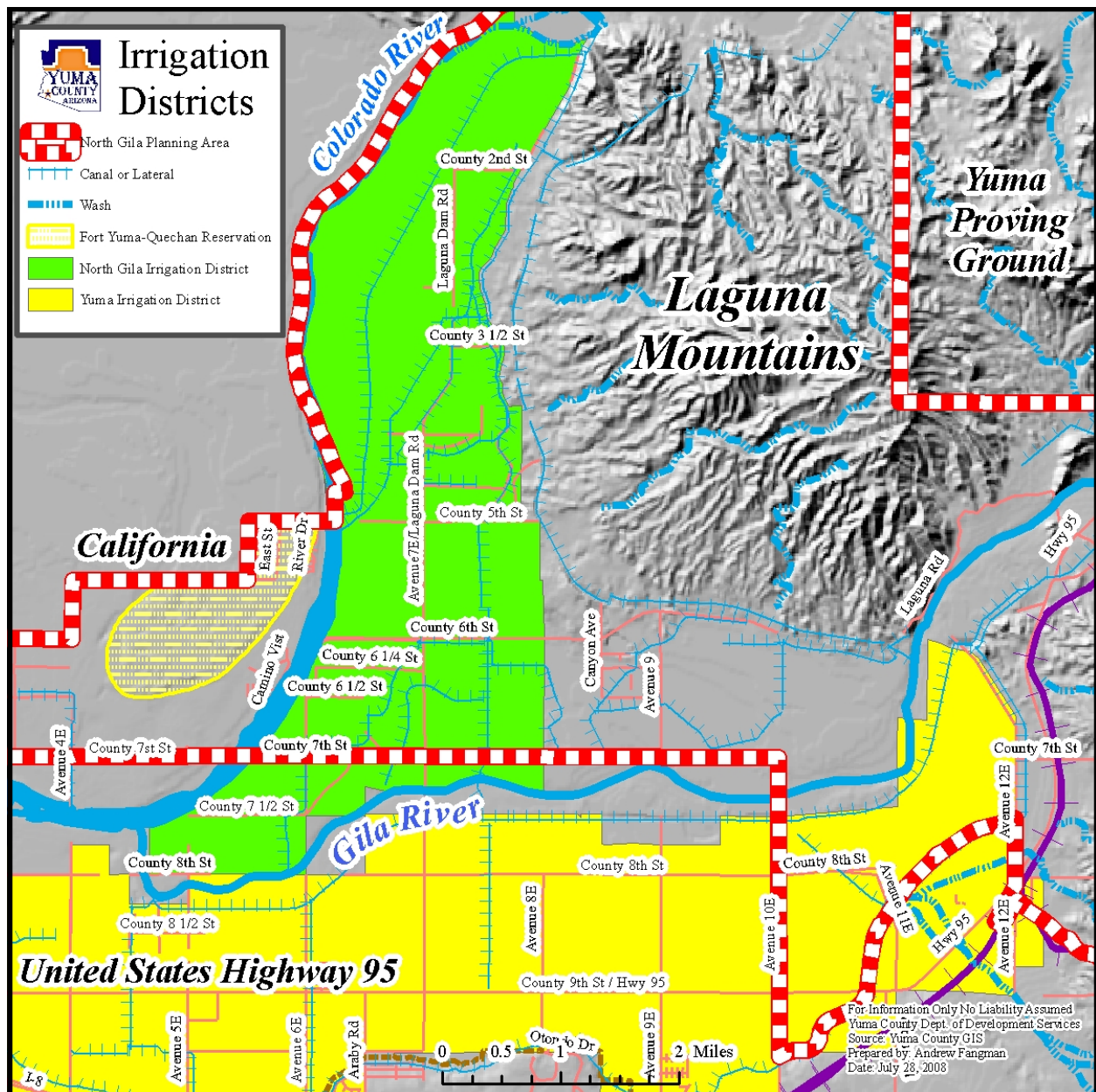


Figure 5: Irrigation Districts



**North Gila Planning Area Background Study**  
**Vegetation**

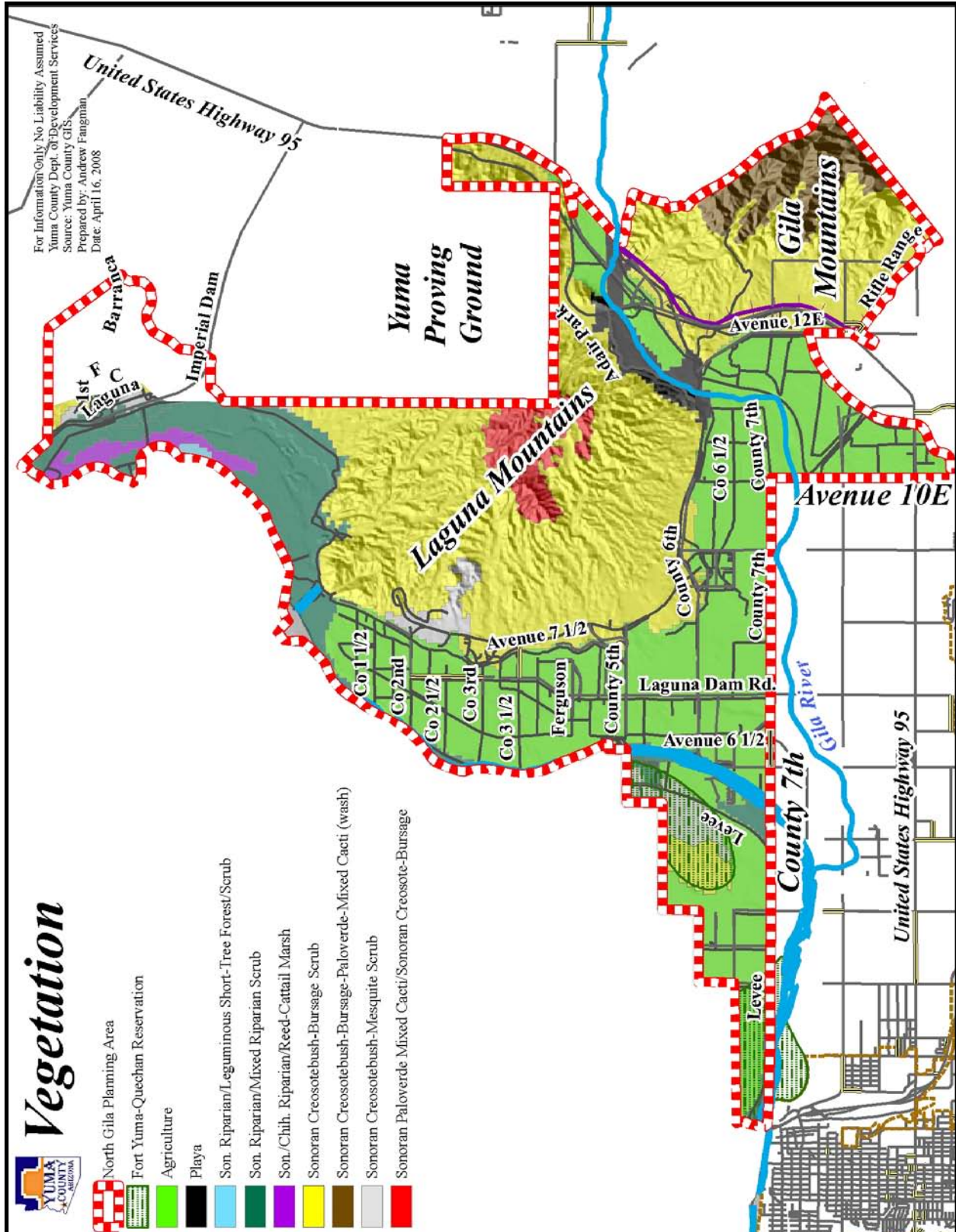


Figure 6: Vegetation Type

## North Gila Planning Area Background Study Vegetation

### **Sonoran Riparian/Mixed Riparian Scrub:**

Confined to places with abundant moisture which may not be associated with obvious riparian features. Closed or nearly closed stands of microphyll and nanophyll deciduous shrubs. Herbs, if present, are patchy and scattered. Shrub height is 1.2–2.1 m with scattered plants to 3.7 m. Total vegetation cover is 50–100%.<sup>1</sup>



Figure 7: Son. Riparian/Leguminous Short-Tree Forest/Scrub

**Sonoran Reed Cattail Marsh:** Generally closed single-layer stands of tall perennial graminoids, bearing rhizomes or fibrous roots. Emergent communities may be more open than those in shallow water or around seeps. Drier habitats may have a lower layer of graminoid plants. Vegetation is 0.9–5 m in height. Total cover is 30–100%.<sup>1</sup>



Figure 8: Sonoran Reed Cattail Marsh

**Sonoran Creosotebush-Bursage Scrub:** Develops on level to gently sloping soils of generally silty or sandy texture. This vegetation lies in large patches crossed by desert washes and floodplains. Very open evenly spaced low diversity stands of shrubs 0.3–0.9-m tall, containing a few scattered trees and cactus species. Perennial cover is usually 10–20%, but in wet years annual plants may provide 100% cover.<sup>1</sup>



Figure 9: Sonoran Creosotebush-Bursage Sage

**Playa:** A flat gravelly area with minimal vegetation.<sup>1</sup>



Figure 10: Playa

<sup>1</sup> Description of Arizona Vegetation Represented on the GAP Vegetation Map, By: Peter S. Bennett, Michael R. Kunzmann, & Lee A. Graham. Biological Resources Division, U.S. Geological Survey

## North Gila Planning Area Background Study Vegetation

**Sonoran Creosotebush-Bursage-Paloverde-Mixed Cacti (wash):** Develops on rock piles and middle and upper bajadas where soils are well-drained and of a cobbly, gravelly texture. A diverse mixture of evergreen and deciduous trees, shrubs, and cacti with cover from 15 to 45 percent. The height of the trees range from 3 to 6 m, the cacti from 15 cm to 9 m, the shrubs 0.6 to 2 m, and the half-shrubs 0.2 to 0.6 m.<sup>2</sup>



Figure 11: Son. Creosote-Bursage-Paloverde Cacti (wash)

**Sonoran Creosotebush-Mesquite Scrub:** This vegetation is found on valley fill. The soils are erosion prone and silty. Such erosion has left the shrubs perched on low soil mounds. Shrub communities with perennial vegetation cover of 15–30%. Ephemeral herb cover may approach 100% in wet years. Shrub height, 0.2–1.5 m.<sup>2</sup>



Figure 12: Sonoran Saltbush-Creosote Bursage Scrub

**Sonoran Paloverde Mixed Cacti-Sonoran Creosote Bursage:** A diverse mixture of evergreen and deciduous leguminous trees, shrubs, and cacti with cover from 15 to 45 percent. The height of the trees ranges from 3 to 6 m, the cacti from 15 cm to 9 m, the shrubs 0.6 to 2 m, and the half shrubs 0.2 to 0.6 m.<sup>2</sup>



Figure 13: Son. P.V. Cacti-Creosote Bursage

**Sonoran Riparian/Leguminous Short-Tree Forest/Scrub:** Found along drainages in the southern half of the state, 90% of this vegetation has been cut or is in poor condition. They are of particular interest because they are highly diverse and have high value to wildlife. Closed stands of deciduous broadleaf trees and short trees with lower shrub layers can also be found. Total cover is between 70 and 100%.<sup>2</sup>



Figure 14: Son. Riparian/Leguminous Short-Tree Forest/Scrub

<sup>2</sup> Description of Arizona Vegetation Represented on the GAP Vegetation Map, By: Peter S. Bennett, Michael R. Kunzmann, & Lee A. Graham. Biological Resources Division, U.S. Geological Survey

## North Gila Planning Area Background Study Vegetation & Soil

The two common soil types in the privately owned portion of the Planning Area include Holtville, Gadsden, and Kofa Clay which are very similar soil types. Which are best characterized as deep, nearly level, well drained soils on flood plains and low terraces. These soil types are well suited for irrigated crops. Because of slow permeability and high shrink-swell potential of these soils, there are challenges in developing sanitary and community facilities on these soils.<sup>3</sup>

Two types of vegetation predominate the portions of the Planning Area where native vegetation has not been replaced with agricultural production. Sonoran Creosotebush-Bursage Scrub is the most common vegetation type in the Laguna Mountains. This type is characterized by sparsely spaced creosote bushes. In the Mittry Lake area, Sonoran Riparian/Mixed Riparian Scrub is the most common type of vegetation. This is riparian area characterized by very dense vegetation.<sup>4</sup>

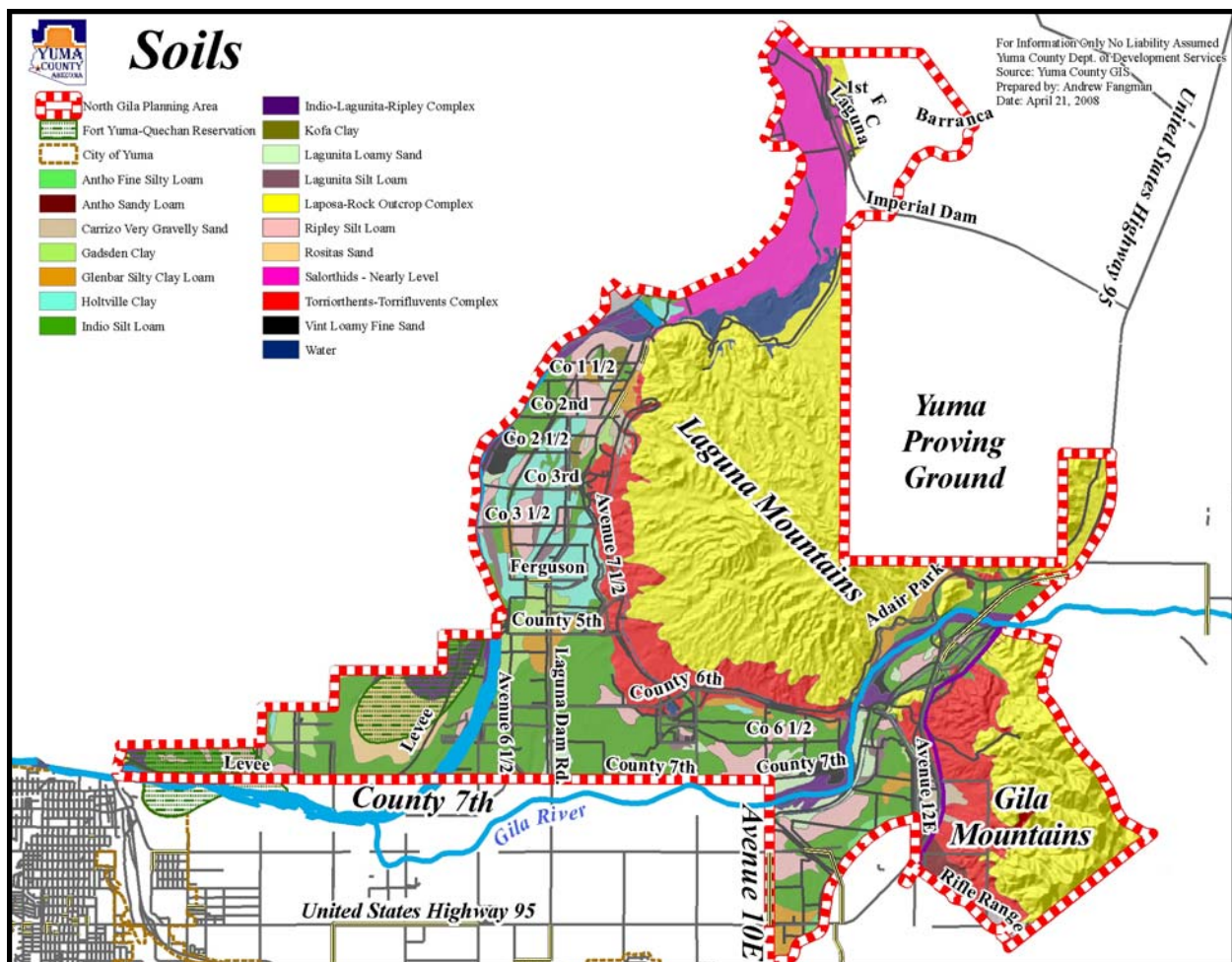


Figure 15: Soil Type

<sup>3</sup> Soil Survey of the Yuma-Wellton Area. United States Department of Agriculture

<sup>4</sup> As measured at Yuma. Western Regional Climate Center

**North Gila Planning Area Background Study**  
**Mittry Lake State Wildlife Area**

Most of Mittry Lake Wildlife Area is within the floodplain of the Colorado River. Habitat types consist of wetlands, marsh, open waters, and desert upland. In 1971, the U. S. Department of Interior gave the Arizona Game and Fish Department administrative authority over 3,575 acres of land and water at the lake for the management of fish and wildlife, including migratory birds. Management emphasis on Mittry Lake Wildlife Area is to optimize the wildlife habitat potential for present and future generations for public hunting and other wildlife-oriented recreation. The management emphasis is based on the 1951 lease and cooperative agreement, which allows for the establishment of a public shooting area, waterfowl resting ground, and provisions to improve conditions for the propagation of fish.<sup>5</sup>

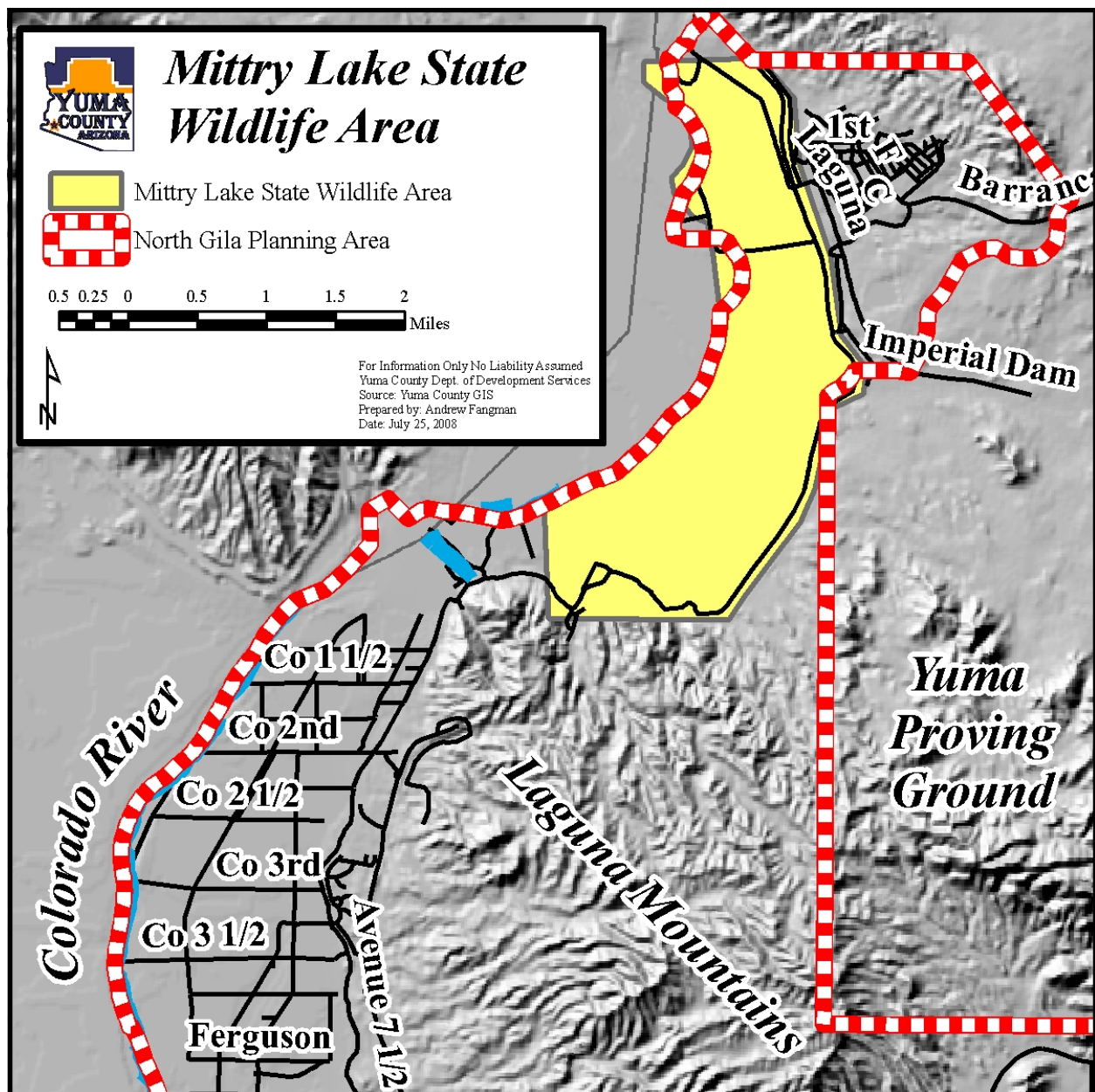


Figure 1: Mittry Lake State Wildlife Area

<sup>5</sup> Arizona Department of Fish and Game “Mittry Lake State Wildlife Area.”  
[http://www.azgfd.gov/outdoor\\_recreation/wildlife\\_area\\_mittry\\_lake.shtml](http://www.azgfd.gov/outdoor_recreation/wildlife_area_mittry_lake.shtml)

## North Gila Planning Area Background Study Yuma Proving Ground

The North Gila Planning Area is bounded by the Yuma Proving Ground (YPG), to the north and the east. The Yuma Proving Ground is a U.S. Army facility that covers approximately 1,400 square miles and serves as a general-purpose desert environmental test facility. Currently, there are approximately 550 people living at YPG, about the same number of residents in all of the North Gila Lake Planning Area. Though the residential portion of YPG is located within the boundary of the Planning Area, its population is excluded from statistics in this report because Yuma County had no planning jurisdiction over YPG. The Yuma Proving Ground is the largest employer in Yuma County, employing approximately 3,000 civilian employees and military personnel.<sup>6</sup>

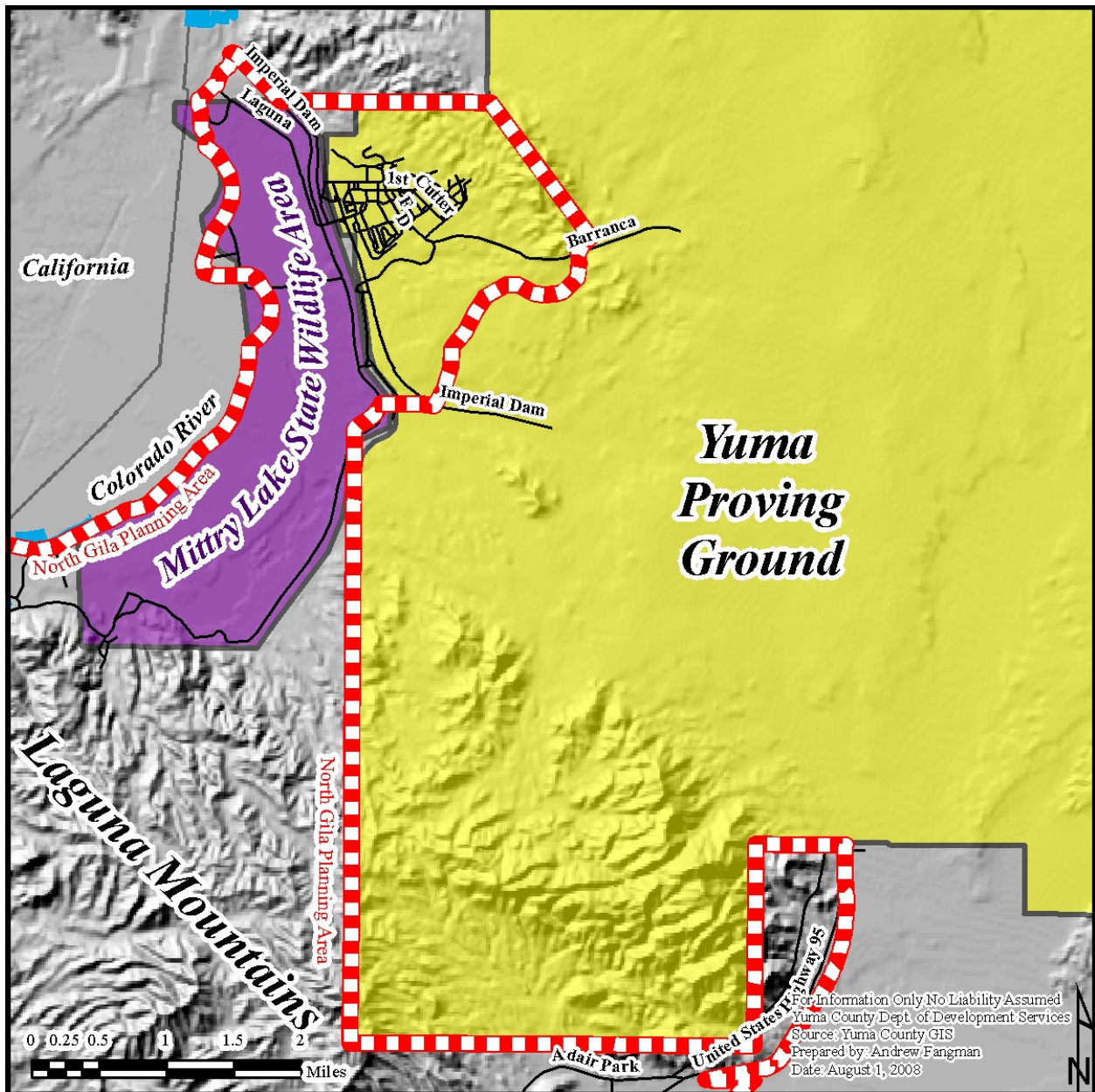


Figure 17: Yuma Proving Ground

<sup>6</sup> Yuma Proving Ground. "Learn More About YPG." [http://www.yuma.army.mil/chub\\_what.shtml](http://www.yuma.army.mil/chub_what.shtml)

## North Gila Planning Area Background Study Demographics

The North Gila Planning Area has a very low overall population density, with 15 persons per square mile over the 60.5 square miles that compose the planning area. However 75% of the planning area population lives in quarter square mile area bound by Canyon Rd, Avenue 9E, County 6th Street and Buckshot Road. With this area and its population excluded, the population density of the planning areas is 3.73 people per square mile.<sup>7</sup>

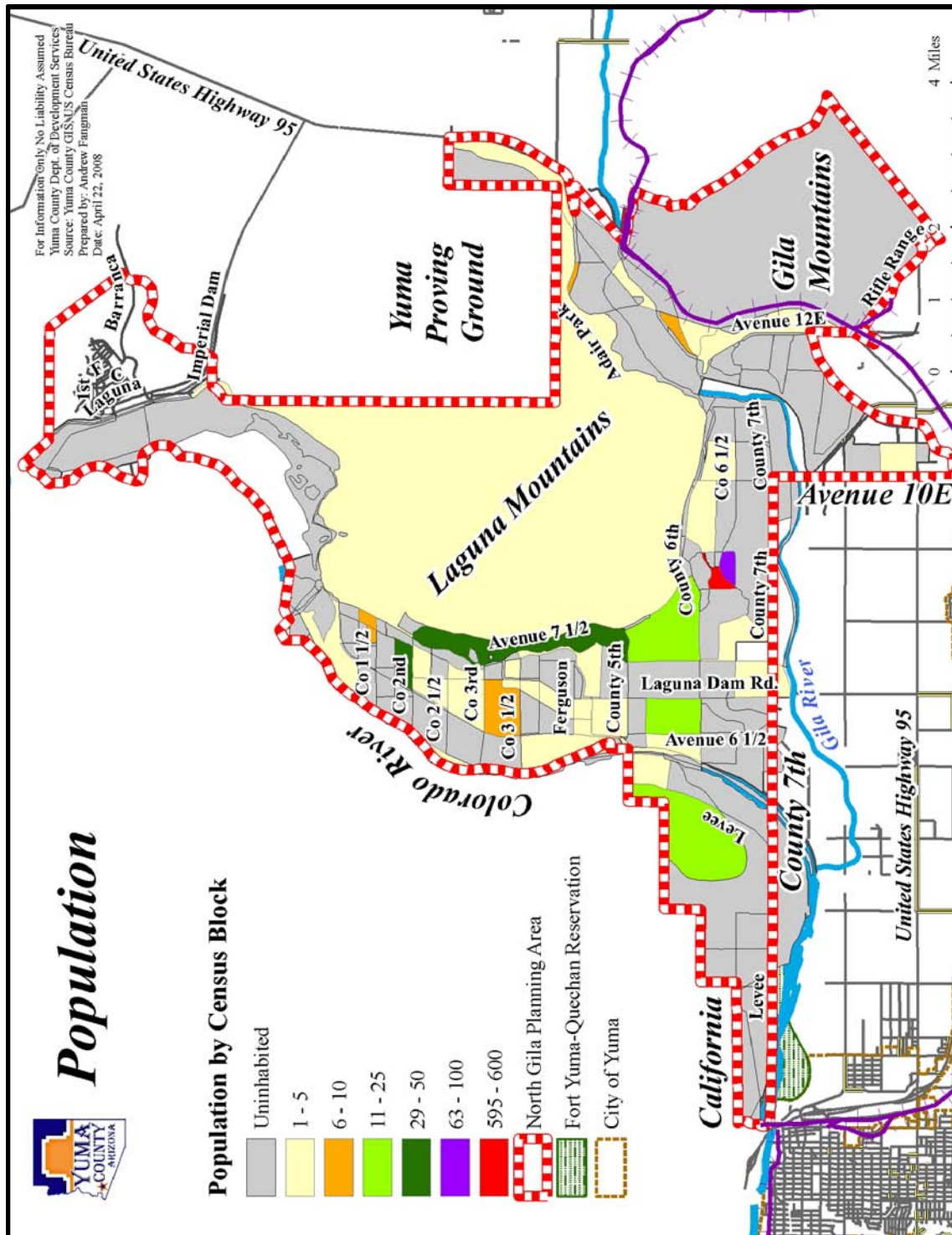


Figure 18: Population by Census Block

<sup>7</sup> 2000 United States Census

**North Gila Planning Area Background Study**  
**Demographics**

The total population of the North Gila Planning Area is 903, of which 53.6% classify themselves as White-Non Hispanic. This is 9.3% more than the percentage of Yuma County as whole. 43.4% of people in the planning area classify themselves as Hispanic 8%, less than the County as a whole.

	North Gila	Yuma County	Arizona
Total Population	903	160,026	5,130,632
White, Non-Hispanic	484	70,956	3,274,258
Hispanic	384	80,772	1,295,617
African-American	14	3,136	149,941
American Indian	6	1,819	233,270
Other	15	3,343	177,546

Table 2: Population, Race, and Ethnicity<sup>8</sup>

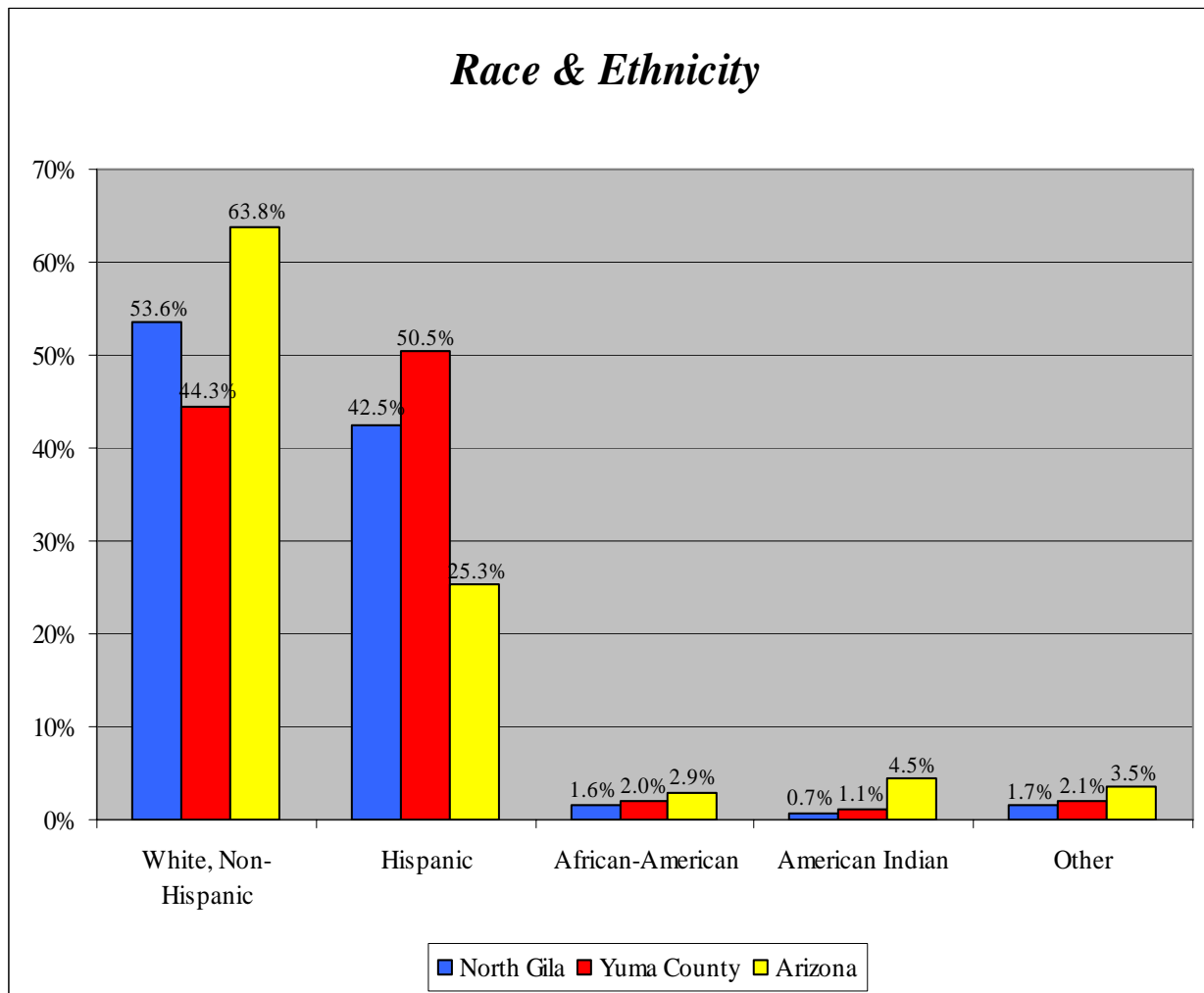


Figure 19: Population, Race, and Ethnicity<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> 2000 United States Census



**North Gila Planning Area Background Study**  
**Demographics**

<b>Ages</b>	<b>#</b>
Under 5 years	56
5 to 9 years	73
10 to 14 years	120
15 to 19 years	43
20 to 24 years	29
25 to 29 years	29
30 to 34 years	48
35 to 39 years	73
40 to 44 years	87
45 to 49 years	55
50 to 54 years	36
55 to 59 years	34
60 to 64 years	77
65 to 69 years	53
70 to 74 years	49
75 to 79 years	24
80 to 84 years	11
85 years and over	6

Figure 30 depicts the percentage of the planning area’s population in five-year age segments. When compared to Yuma County and the State of Arizona as whole, the North Gila Planning Area has a much different profile as seen in Figure 30. A much larger proportion of planning area residents are in the 10 to 15, 45 to 49, and 60 to 64 age cohorts than in the County and the State as a whole. Because these three age cohorts are all about 20, years apart the larger proportions in these age cohorts could be explained by large, multi-generational families. A much smaller proportion of the Planning Area population is in the age cohorts covering 15 to 39 year olds. This possibly indicates that many planning area residents are leaving the planning area when they come of age.<sup>9</sup>

<b>Arizona</b>	<b>Yuma County</b>	<b>North Gila</b>
3.18	3.27	3.29

Table 3: Population by Age Groups  
 North Gila Planning Area<sup>9</sup>

Table 4: Average Family Size<sup>9</sup>

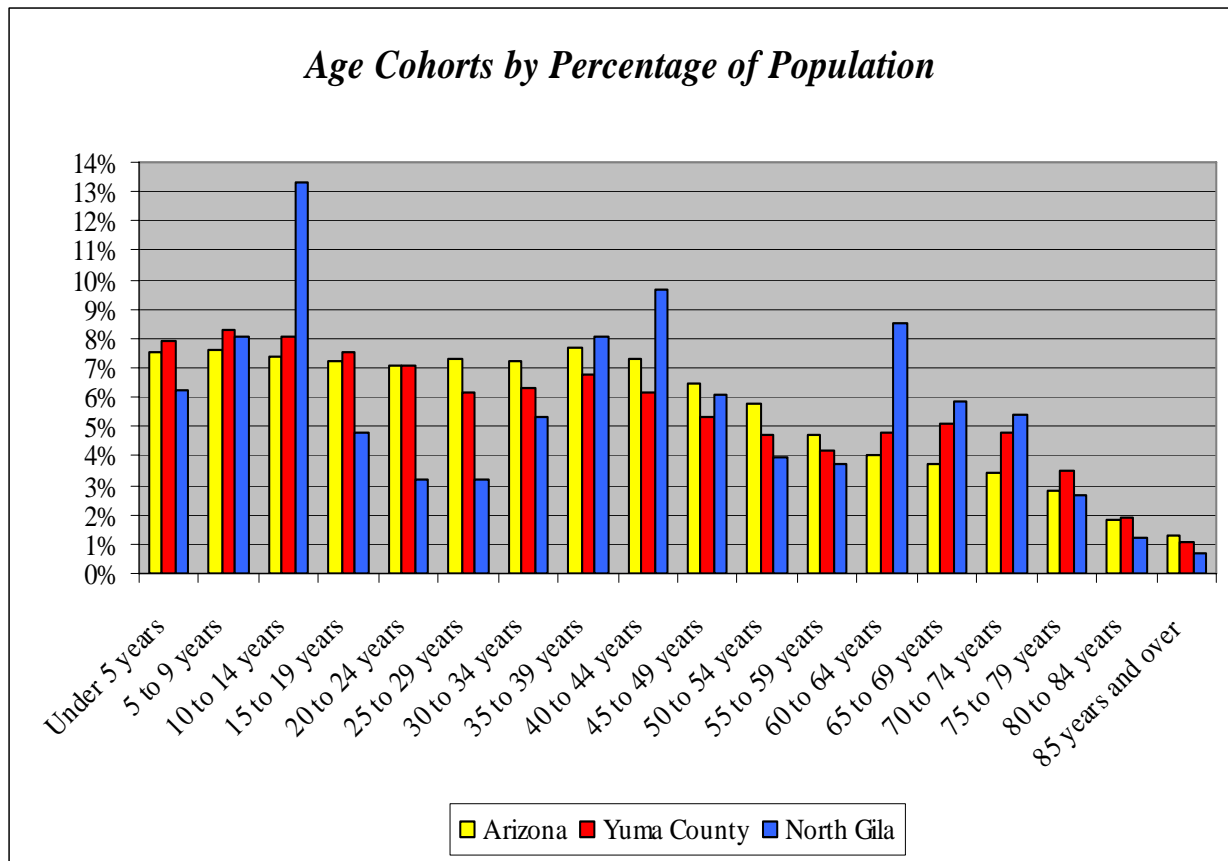


Figure 30: Percent of Total Population by Age Cohort<sup>9</sup>

<sup>9</sup> 2000 U.S. Census

**North Gila Planning Area Background Study**  
**Housing**

The housing in the North Gila Planning Area is of a different nature than found elsewhere in the County. It is an area dominated by vacation homes. This fact greatly influences the type of issues and needs facing the Planning Area.

A total of 594 housing units in the North Gila Planning Area were reported in the 2000 Census. Of these, 319 were classified as occupied, which gives the Planning Area a vacancy rate of 54%. This is a significantly higher vacancy rate than is found in Yuma County or Arizona as whole, which have occupancy rates of 73% and 87%, respectively. The Planning Area has higher rate owner occupancy 83%, than does the State and County as whole, 72% and 68% respectively. Figure 21 and 22 depict both

Of the 275 vacant housing units in the planning area, 97.1% are classified as vacation homes. The Census Bureau defines vacation homes as housing units used or intended for use only in certain seasons, for weekends, or other occasional use throughout the year. The majority of these vacation homes are likely located within Hidden Shores Village, which is located with the planning area near Imperial Dam.

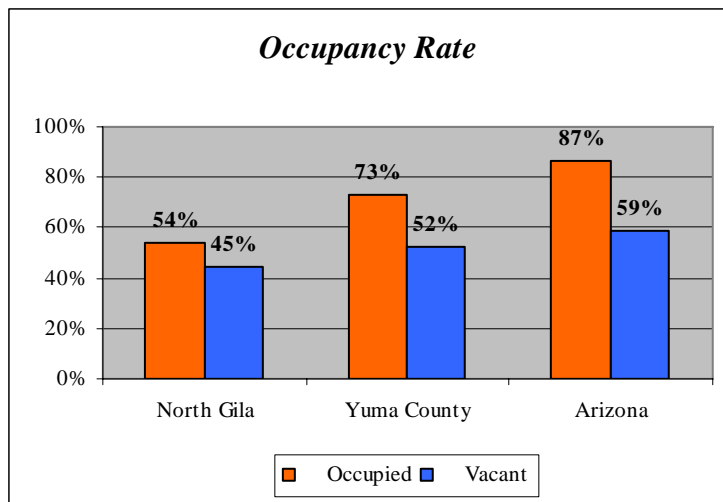


Figure 21: Full Time Occupancy Rate of Housing Units<sup>10</sup>

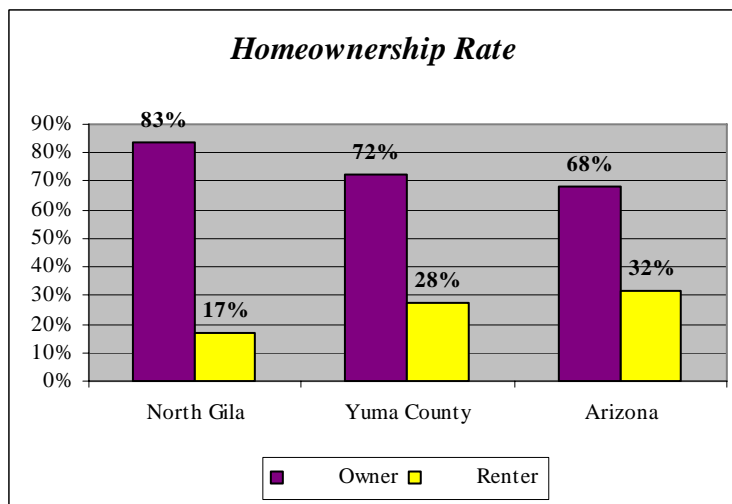


Figure 22: Types of Vacancies<sup>10</sup>

	North Gila	Yuma County	Arizona
Total Housing Units	594	74,140	2,189,189
Occupied	319	53,848	1,901,327
Owner	266	38,911	1,293,556
Renter	53	14,937	607,771
Vacant	275	20,929	287,862
For Sale	0	719	27,775
Vacation Homes	267	11,662	141,905
Other	8	5,467	56,341

Table 5: Status of Housing Units<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup>2000 U.S. Census

**North Gila Planning Area Background Study**  
**Land Ownership**

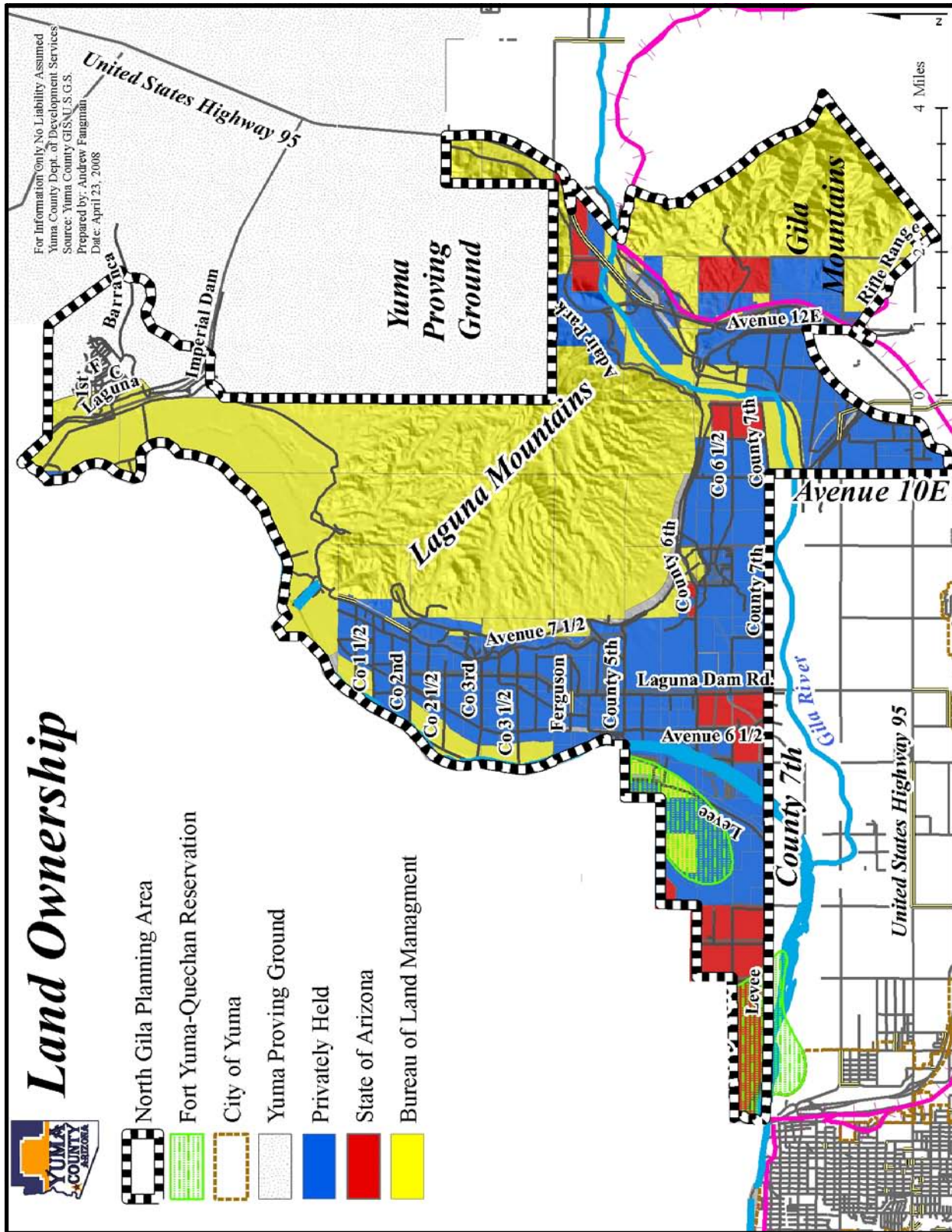


Figure 23: Land Ownership

**North Gila Planning Area Background Study**  
**Land Ownership**

The North Planning Area is comprised of 38,715 acres. Privately owned land makes up 36% of the planning area. The remaining 64% is government owned. The federal government owns 60% of the planning area, and the Arizona State Land Department owns 4% of the planning area, as can be see in Figure 24/

There are 561 privately owned parcels in the planning area; 40% of these parcels, by number of parcels are smaller than two acres. However, by size, parcels of less than two acres comprise only .8% of privately owned land. There are 181 (22.2%) parcels that are 20 acres or larger in size; by size these parcels account for 90.7% of privately owned land as illustrated in Table 7. These statistics highlight the fact that the overwhelming majority of privately owned land is being used for large scale agricultural purposes.

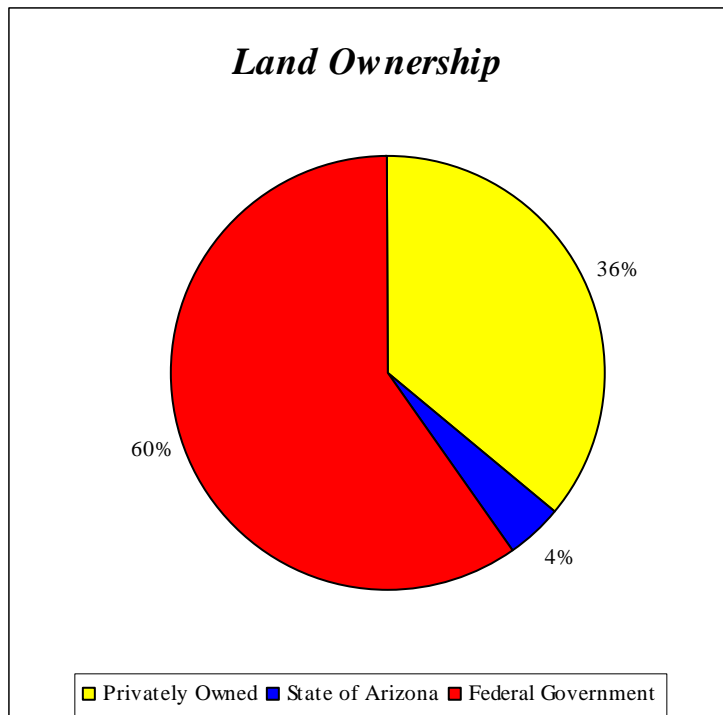


Figure 24: Land Ownership

Ownership	Acres
Privately Owned	13,772
State of Arizona	1,639
Federal Government	22,764
<b>Total</b>	<b>38,175</b>

Table 6: Land Ownership



Mitty Lake State Wildlife Area

Parcel Size	# of Parcels	% of Parcels	Acres	% of Acres
Larger Than 40 Acres	100	17.8%	9,883	71.8%
40 Acres to 20 Acres	81	14.4%	2,605	18.9%
20 Acres to 10 Acres	40	7.1%	549	4.0%
10 Acres to 5 Acres	55	9.8%	401	2.9%
5 Acres to 2 Acres	60	10.7%	213	1.5%
2 Acres to 1 Acres	51	9.1%	72	0.5%
Less Than 1 Acre	174	31.0%	43	0.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>561</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>13,766</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 7: Size of Privately Owned Parcels

**North Gila Planning Area Background Study  
Land Use Designations**

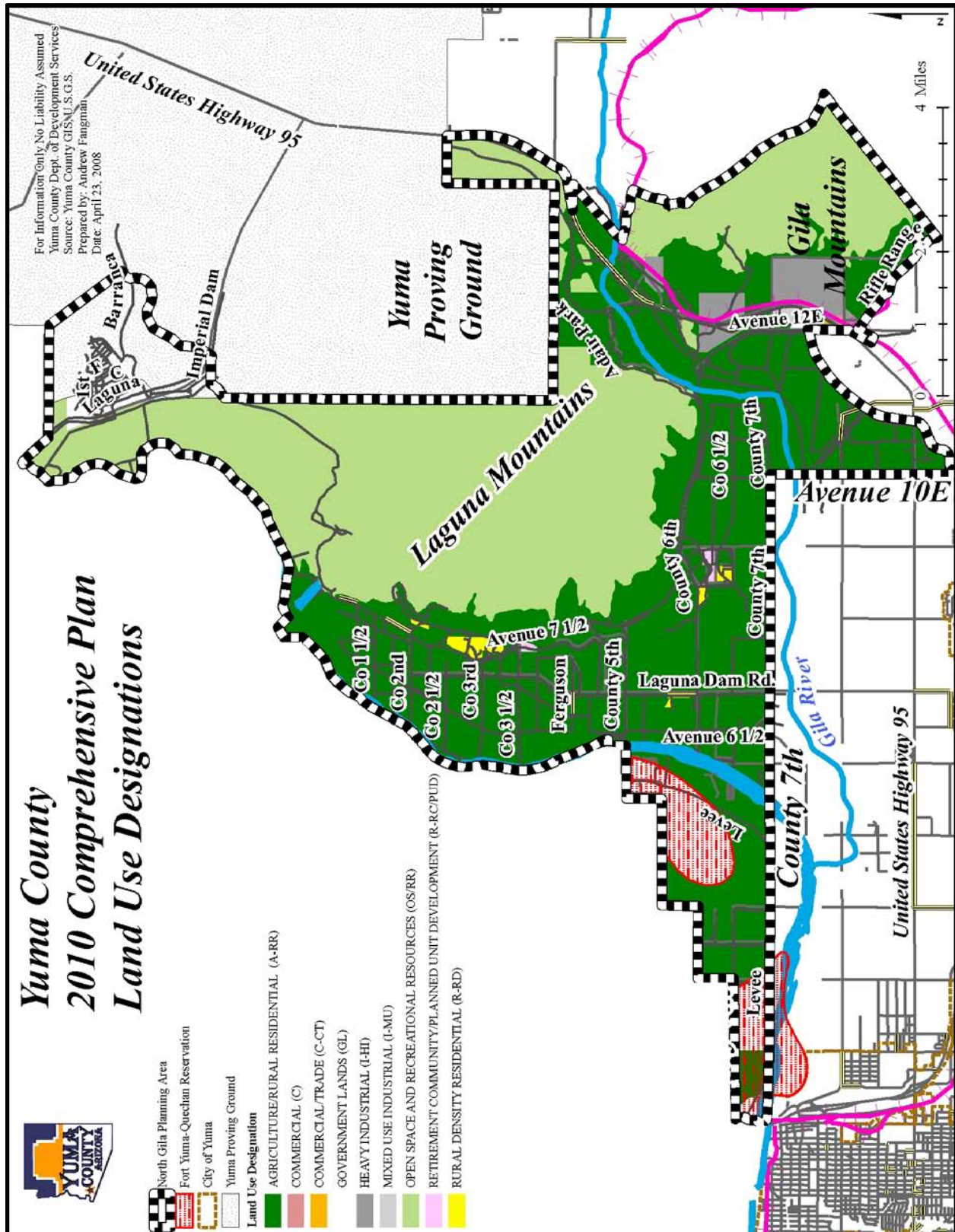


Figure 25: Land Use Designation

**North Gila Planning Area Background Study  
Land Use Designation Changes**

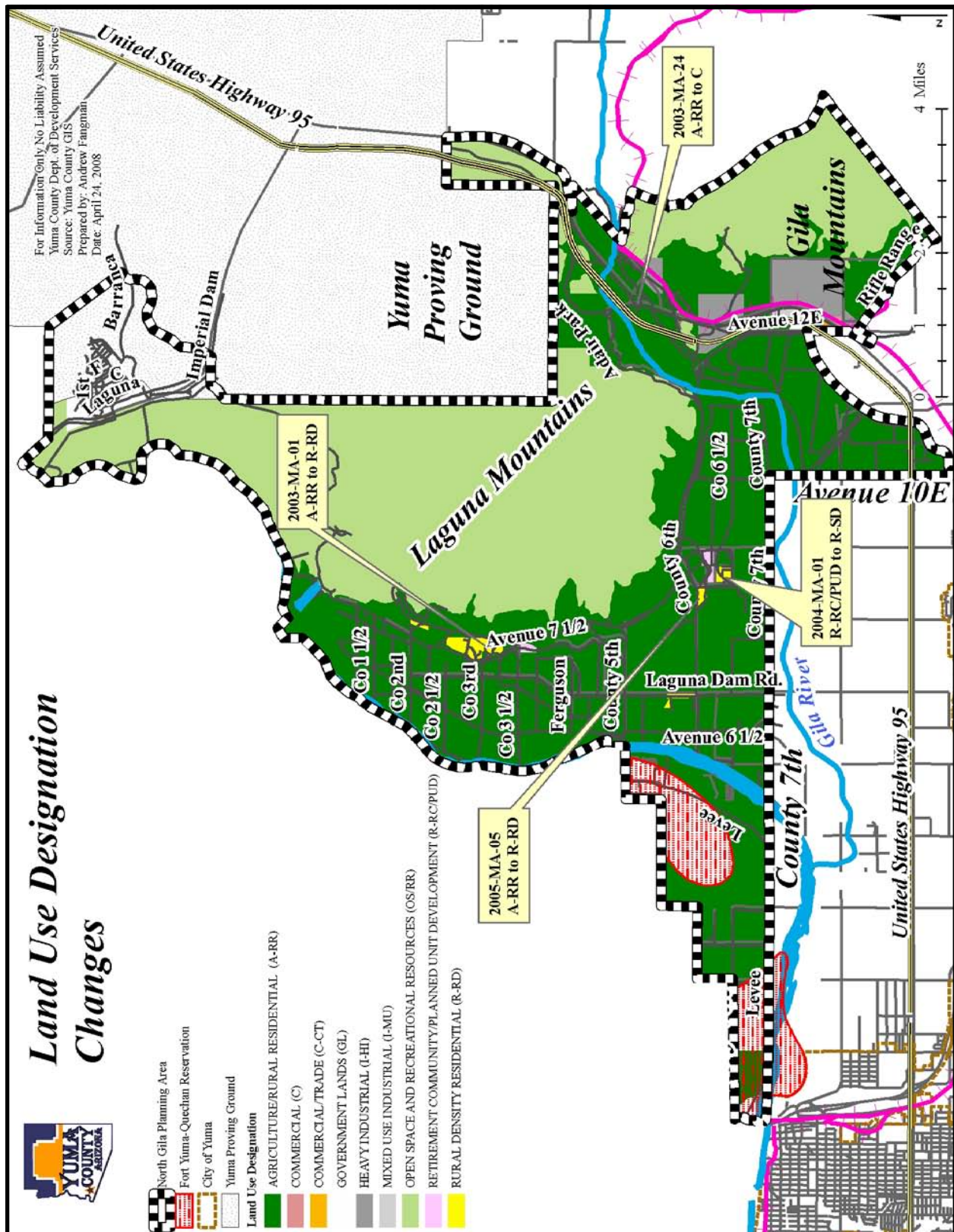


Figure 26: Changes to Land Use Designation

**North Gila Planning Area Background Study**  
**Land Use Designations**

Land designated as Agriculture/Rural Residential makes up 47.8% of the planning area. This mostly represents the portion of the planning area that is irrigated and actively farmed. Land with an Open Space and Recreational Resources designation makes up 40.8% of the planning area, as seen in Figure 27. Almost all of this is comprised of federal owned mountainous land in the Laguna and Gila Mountain ranges. The portion of Yuma Proving Ground that is within the boundaries of the planning area is designated as Government Land and accounts for 8% of the total planning area.

Since 2002 there have only been four amendments to the Comprehensive Plan that changed land use designation in the North Gila Planning Area, see Table 8. Three of the amendments were on land previous designated as Agriculture/Rural Residential; however, none of this land was being used for active agricultural purposes. Three of the amendments were to residential classification with a very low density. The general development trend in this area is for very low density residential occurring on non-farmable land that is in close proximity to irrigated and farmed land.

Amendment	Acres	Date	Previous Designation	Current Designation
2003-MA-01	36.54	January 29, 2004	Agriculture/Rural Residential (A-RR)	Rural Density Residential (R-RD)
2003-MA-24	1.90	April 1, 2004	Agriculture/Rural Residential (A-RR)	Commercial (C)
2004-MA-01	13.64	April 19, 2004	Retirement Community/Planned Unit Development (R-RC/PUD)	Suburban Density Residential (R-SD)
2005-MA-05	20.26	January 31, 2006	Agriculture/Rural Residential (A-RR)	Rural Density Residential (R-RD)

Table 8: Changes in Land Use Designation in the North Gila Planning Area (2002 to 2008)

Land Use Designation	Acres
Agriculture/Rural Residential (A-RR)	18,495
Commercial (C)	12
Commercial/Trade (C-CT)	54
Government Lands (GL)	3,114
Heavy Industrial (I-HI)	870
Low Density Residential (R-LD)	16
Mixed Use Industrial (I-MU)	72
Open Space and Recreational Resources (OS/RR)	15,802
Retirement Community/Planned Unit Development (R-RC/PUD)	70
Rural Density Residential (R-RD)	210

Table 9: Land Use Designations

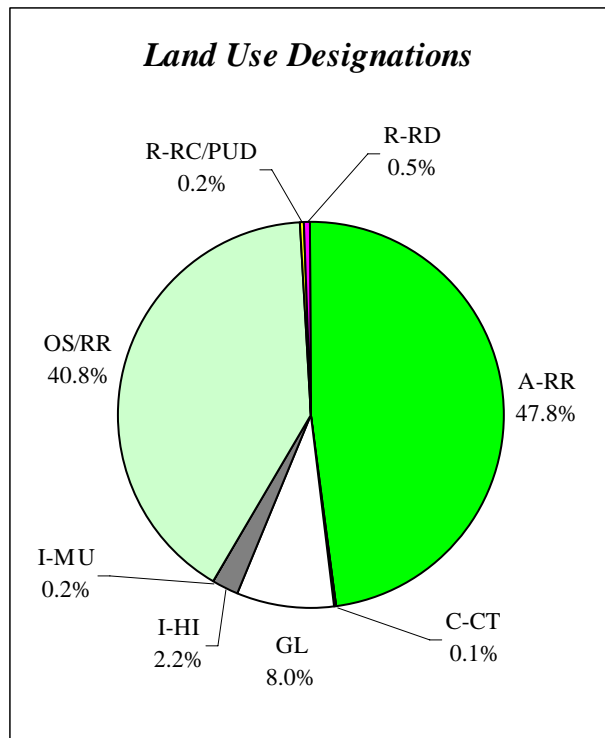


Figure 27: Land Use Designations

**North Gila Planning Area Background Study**  
**Zoning Districts**

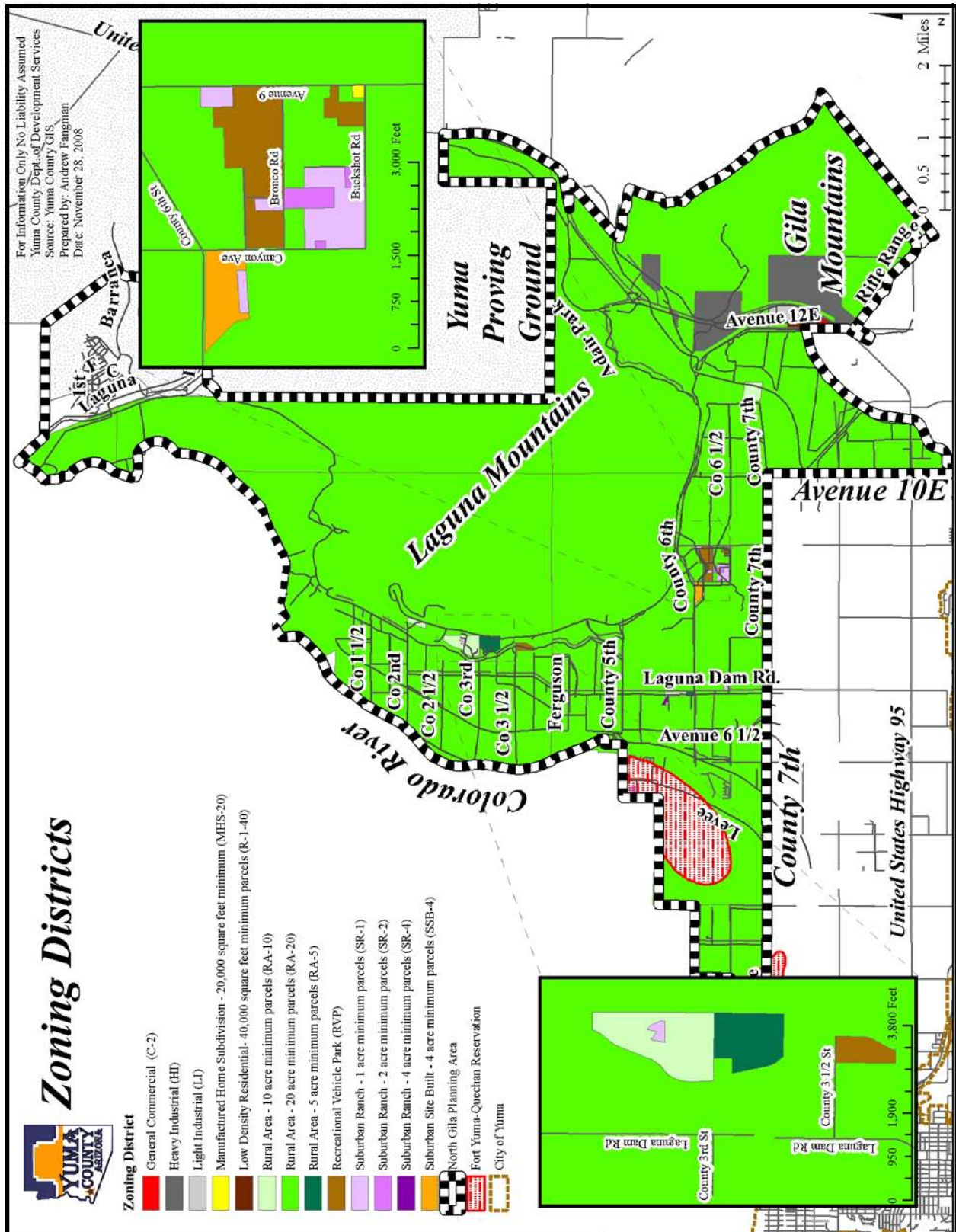


Figure 28: Zoning Districts



**North Gila Planning Area Background Study**  
**Zoning Districts**

In the North Gila Planning Area 96.7% of land is zoned Rural Area - 20 acre minimum parcel (RA-20). Land with this zoning is either privately-owned irrigated farmland or government owned vacant desert or mountains. There are 271 acres, .07% of the Planning Area, with a residential zoning. Of this total, all but 40 acres allow for the placement of manufactured or mobile homes. Residential zoning is concentrated in two areas; an area bound by Canyon Rd, Avenue 9E, County 6th Street and Buckshot Rd, and in the vicinity of County 3rd Street and Gila Gravity Main Canal. There are 863 acres with a heavy industrial zoning located along U.S. Highway 9; these lands are largely used for sand and gravel type operations, as shown in Table 10.

Since 2000, the Board of Supervisors approved seven rezoning applications in the North Gila Planning Area. Five of these rezoning occurred in the area bound by Canyon Rd, Avenue 9E, County 6th Street and Buckshot Road. All but one of the rezonings were to a residential zoning district, most often to Suburban Ranch - 1 acre minimum parcels (SR-1), and all but one were rezoned from Rural Area - 20 acre minimum parcel (RA-20) as shown in Figure 29. However, none of the rezoned lands were previously being used for active agricultural purposes, but rather were unfarmed land located on the fringes of the agricultural areas. A major goal of the Yuma County 2010 Comprehensive is preservation of prime farmland in the Planning Area; this goal has been achieved.

Zoning District	Abbreviation	Acres
General Commercial	C2	55
Heavy Industrial	HI	863
Light Industrial	LI	77
Low Density Residential- 40,000 square feet minimum	R-1-40	16
Manufactured Home Subdivision - 20,000 square feet	MHS-20	46
Recreational Vehicle Park	RVP	63
Rural Area - 20 acre minimum parcels	RA-20	37,449
Rural Area - 5 acre minimum parcels	RA-5	44
Suburban Ranch - 1 acre minimum parcels	SR-1	35
Suburban Ranch - 2 acre minimum parcels	SR-2	23
Suburban Ranch - 4 acre minimum parcels	SR-4	4
Suburban Site Built - 4 acre minimum Parcels	SSB-4	40

Table 10: Zoning Districts

Case	Location	Acres	Zoned From	Zoned To	Year Rezoned
RZ00-07	6389 S. Ave. 8 1/2E	2	SR-2	SR-1	2000
RZ00-16	6120 S. Ave. 9E	1.28	R-1-20	SR-1	2000
RZ01-52	Ave 9E & Buckshot	0.68	RA-20	MHS-20	2001
RZ02-43	County 3rd St. & Laguna Dam Rd.	36.54	RA-20	RA-5	2002
RZ03-36	Highway 95 & Co. 5th Street	1.918	RA-20	C-1	2003
RZ05-15	County 6th Street and Avenue 8 1/2 E	20.26	RA-20	SSB-4/SR-1	2005
RZ06-47	Bronco Rd.	1.19	RA-20	SR-1	2006

Table 11: Rezoning (2000 to 2008)

North Gila Planning Area Background Study  
Zoning Districts

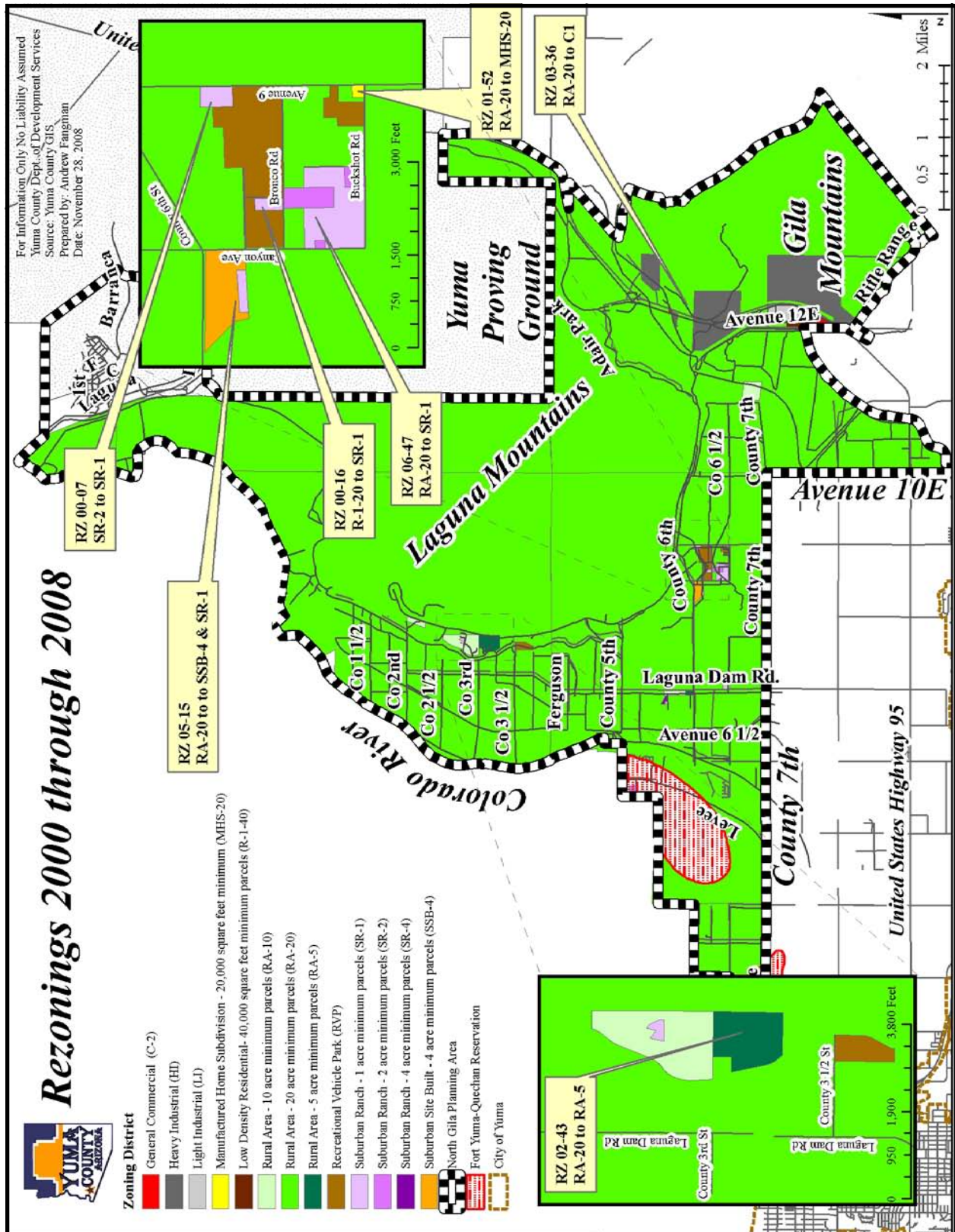


Figure 29: Rezonings

**North Gila Planning Area Background Study**  
**Building Permits**

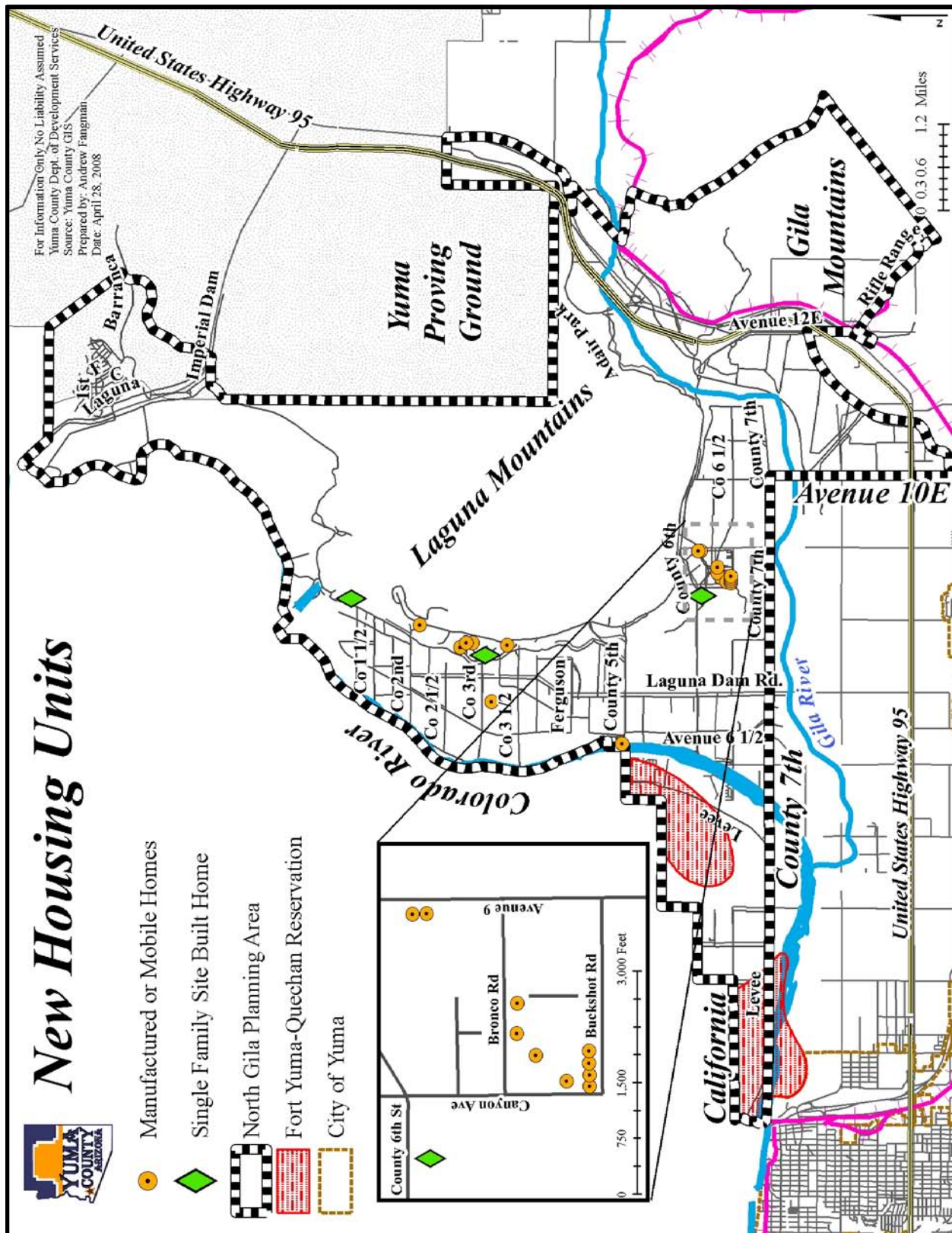
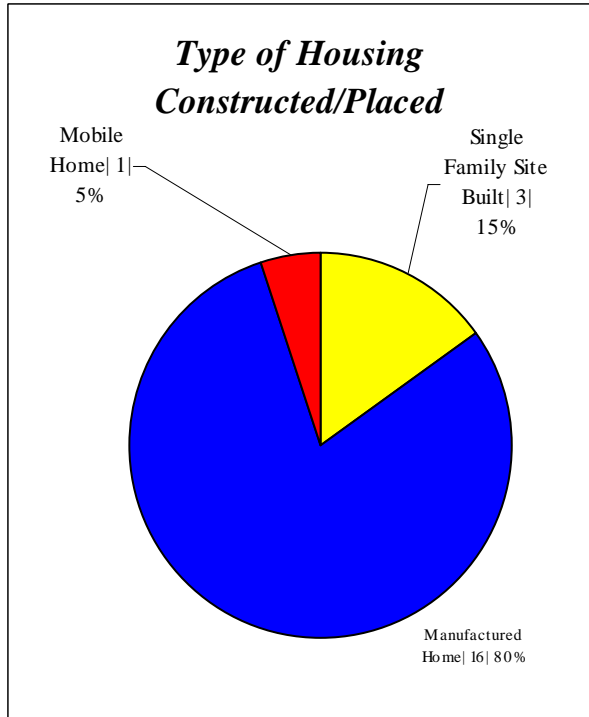


Figure 30: Hosing Units Added: 2000 to 2007

**North Gila Planning Area Background Study  
Building/Placement Permits**



Between January 1, 2000, and August 31, 2007, 20 housing units were constructed or placed in the Planning Area. Of these 80% were manufactured homes, 15% were single family site built homes, and 5% were mobile homes (Figure 31). Mobile homes are defined as structures built on or prior to June 15, 1976, on a permanent chassis, but do not include recreational vehicles and factory built buildings.

Nearly all building/placement permits were in two relatively concentrated areas, one bounded by Canyon Rd, Avenue 9E, County 6th Street and Buckshot Rd and in the vicinity of County 3rd Street and Gila Gravity Main Canal. No housing until has been added to the planning area since the end of 2006.

Figure 31: Type of Housing Constructed/Placed

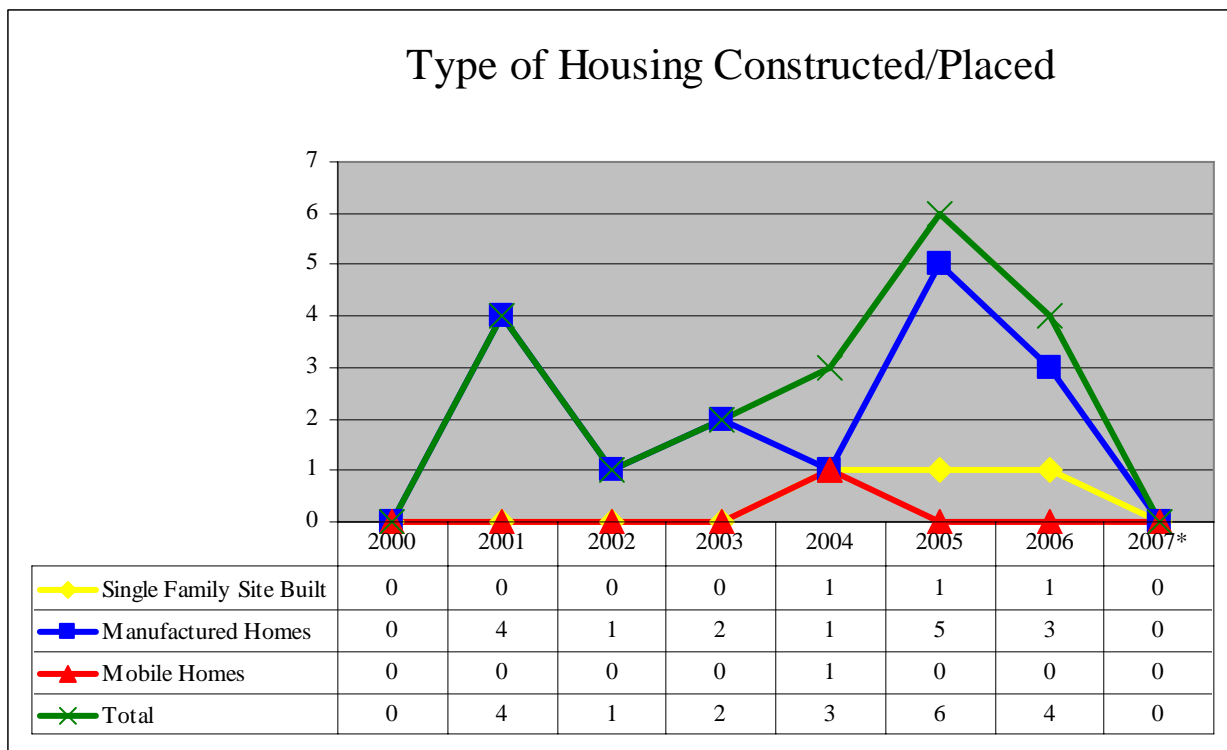


Figure 32: Type of Housing Constructed/Placed 2000 to 2007\*

\* January 1st through August 31st

## ***North Gila Planning Area Background Study*** **Summary**

A major goal of the Yuma County 2010 Comprehensive Plan is sustaining the agriculture and rural character of the North Gila Planning Area. With this in mind land use designations in the Planning Area were designed to preserve agricultural lands in the Gila Valley. A quick examination of changes to land use designations, zoning districts, and housing units added since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan shows that this goal has been met.

Since 2002, there have only been four amendments to the Comprehensive Plan that changed land use designation in the North Gila Planning Area. Three of the amendments were on land previously designated as Agriculture/Rural Residential, however none of this land was being used for active agricultural purposes. Three of the amendments were to residential classification with a very low density. The general development trend in this area is for very low density residential occurring on non-farmable land that is in close proximity to irrigated and farmed land.

In the North Gila Planning Area 96.7% of land is zoned Rural Area - 20 acre minimum parcel (RA-20). Land with this zoning is either privately owned irrigated farmland or government owned vacant desert or mountains. There are 271 acres, .07% of the Planning Area, with a residential zoning. Of this all but 40 acres allow for the placement of manufactured or mobile homes. Residential zoning is concentrated in two areas, an area bound by Canyon Rd, Avenue 9E, County 6th Street and Buckshot Rd and in the vicinity of County 3rd Street and Gila Gravity Main Canal. Since 2000 the Board of Supervisors approved seven rezoning in the North Gila Planning Area. Five of these rezoning occurred in the area bound by Canyon Rd, Avenue 9E, County 6th Street and Buckshot Road. All but one of the rezonings were to a residential zoning district, most often to Suburban Ranch - 1 acre minimum parcels (SR-1), and all but one were rezoned from Rural Area - 20 acre minimum parcel (RA-20). However none of the rezoned lands were previously being used for active agricultural purposes, but rather were unfarmed land located on the fringes of the agricultural areas. A major goal of the Yuma County 2010 Comprehensive Plan is perseveration of prime farmland, in the Planning Area this goal has been achieved.

Between January 1, 2000, and August 31, 2007, 20 housing units were constructed/placed in the Planning Area. Of these 80% were manufactured homes, 15% were single family site built homes, and 3% were mobile homes. Nearly all building/placement permits were in two relatively concentrated areas, one bounded by Canyon Rd, Avenue 9E, County 6th Street and Buckshot Rd and in the vicinity of County 3rd Street and Gila Gravity Main Canal. No housing unit has been added to the planning area since the end of 2006.



Figure 33: Gila River & the McPhaul Bridge