

# Mojave Desert Heritage and Cultural Association

## East Mojave Heritage Trail



### EMHT SEGMENT 4

### SUPPLEMENT GUIDE

Fenner to Needles

#### ABSTRACT

Segment 4 of the East Mojave Heritage Trail ventures into some of the farthest and least visited areas of the Mojave Desert. Mountain ranges, canyons, wide open desert vistas, and some of the roughest terrain are present in this, the fourth and final segment.

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**Mojave Desert Heritage and Cultural Association**  
**East Mojave Heritage Trail**  
**Reroutes and Guideline Supplement to the Four EMHT Guidebooks**  
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The East Mojave Heritage Trail created by Dennis Casebier in the 1980s is a comprehensive tour through some of the most remote portions of the East Mojave Desert. In its original form, the EMHT covered 660.0 miles with four guidebooks providing historical facts, information on local flora and fauna, detailed geographic descriptions, as well as cumulative mileage along the route. With the implementation of the 1994 Desert Protection Act, and establishment of the Mojave National Preserve, numerous Wilderness Areas cut the trail in at least 13 places impacting a minimum of 75 miles – thus rendering the guidebooks useless as navigational aids – still very useful for general guides and historical information.

A recent expedition remapped the EMHT to account for current wilderness boundaries and modern points of interest along or near the route. Fuel points remain the same as those called out in the book. In the interest of desert preservation and impact mitigation, in some areas the original trail was rerouted onto a more established trail where there is no meaningful difference in the overall experience. In some cases, the written supplements will recommend an optional path that may be less challenging. The EMHT gets extremely remote and rugged with multiple portions traversing little used areas of the desert. Follow all protocols and practices for travel and exploration in a remote hostile desert environment. All segments of the EMHT spend a high proportion of time in washes, flood basins, and on alluvials so pay close attention to, and continually monitor, weather conditions as sudden and severe flash flooding can occur without warning.

### ***Vehicle***

Vehicles should be appropriate for remote exploration and must have suitable tires (including at least one full size spare and tire repair capability), high clearance, 4WD with low range, at least one locking differential is highly recommended, and enough fuel to cover a 200-mile range in 4WD. It is not recommended that vehicles attempt the EMHT solo.

### ***How to Use This Supplement***

This supplement will serve as an insert to, and will need to be used in conjunction with, the EMHT guidebooks as it will reference the published mileage so the explorer will need to keep track of his/her own mileage during the route. In the written supplements, the term “EMHT Mile XXX.X” is referring to the mileage listed in the corresponding guidebook which will likely differ from your odometer reading. These are to be used as your reference points for keeping you on track and knowing where you are in the book and along the route. Note – using only the EMHT Guidebooks will result in a non-compliant and illegal route. You must follow the supplement directions whenever listed. In some cases, alternative or recommended routes are offered for you to make your own choice. If not listed as an alternative, then you **MUST** follow the directions in order to remain on the compliant route.

In this Supplement maps show the new required and/or alternate routes. **NOTE – the maps FOLLOW after the relevant text – in some cases the text appears on a different page than the image – but you are looking for the corresponding map AFTER the text.**

The EMHT Guidebooks also offer far more historical, geological, and ecological information on the areas you will be traversing and experiencing than you could ever hope to gain in a single resource on your own – they will greatly enhance your EMHT experience.

### **Downloads**

You may download a pdf document that contains links to the MDHCA store to purchase the original books, to download the Supplements as well as GPS tracks from this link: <https://bit.ly/EMHT-Summary>

Billy’s route file is also available from <https://www.onxmaps.com>

**NOTE** – The Guidebooks make reference to various markers – cairns, posts, terrain features. It has been more than 30 years since this route was established and decades since it was discontinued. As a result, many of those features and references are no longer present. You **MUST** navigate this route. There will be efforts to reestablish cairns and markers.

### **Supplement to EMHT Guidebook 4: Fenner to Needles**

Congratulations on completing Segment 3 of the EMHT. Segment 4 is your final leg. It is substantially shorter than Segment 3, and begins with some very nice hard packed sand two track and trail, but there are some areas where the track is very hard to identify forcing a slow pace over rough ground. There are multiple reroutes so, as in the previous three segments, following the Supplement Guide is not only critical, but required. This segment is only 141 miles long, short by EMHT standards, and does not contain any technical terrain – though it does contain terrain that you must be very careful with – so do not lose focus. This entire segment is south of I-40 and never crosses into NPS territory. While you are exclusively on BLM land, this segment will pass very near to Native American Reservation land and traverses numerous wilderness areas – remain on the trail. You will finish at the exact same point you started your EMHT journey on Segment 1 – in front of the El Garces train station in Needles CA.

### ***Logistics***

- ***How to Get There:***
  - I-40 exit Goffs Rd and proceed NORTH to the Gas Station. Not exactly the Fenner site, but nothing remains there anymore, so the gas station is your easiest point of reference. Consider this the Segment 3 end point and the Segment 4 beginning.
- ***Mileage:*** Original EMHT 151.7, Current EMHT 141
- ***Elevation:*** Min: 490' Max: 3576'
- ***Pace:*** While everyone's pace will vary, 2 full days should be considered adequate
- ***Difficulty:*** Intermediate: Uneven, rutted dirt trail with loose rocks, sand, erosion, and washes. Potential water crossings up to a foot deep, mud holes, and obstacles up to 18", including ledges and short, steep grades. Roads are typically one vehicle wide with places to pass.
- ***Terrain***
  - Typical desert hard-pack, sandy two track, ruts, mountain ranges, canyons, and a large area covered with strewn rocks making the going very slow and rough. There are no big ascents or descents to speak of, there are a few very short ones. Loose soft sand and lava rock – MIND YOUR SIDEWALLS. This segment contains some extremely washed out areas that are very long duration. This is also the lowest elevation area of the entire EMHT so it will be warmer on this segment than the others.
- ***Points of Interest***
  - Fenner site
  - West Well petroglyphs (on route)
- ***Fuel, Supplies, Lodging***
  - Fenner, CA – Fuel, Food (on route)
  - Needles, CA – Fuel, Food, Lodging (end of route)
- ***Side Trips***
  - Goffs Schoolhouse and Museum (side trip – 10 miles northeast on Goffs Rd)
  - Camp Clipper and Airfield (WWII)(see EMHT Guidebook 4 Page 46)
  - Lost Arch Inn (now fallen)
  - Close proximity to both Mohawk Spring and Mopah Spring (hikes – do your research)
- ***Camping***
  - This section does not have any established campgrounds, however it is nearly all BLM land so dispersed camping is plentiful
- ***What to Expect***

- Segment 4 starts off relatively smooth over hard packed sand traversing pretty mountain passes and canyons with interesting geologic formations, open desert areas with beautiful views, and more primitive lava rock strewn areas. This segment is in close proximity to a few well known hikes, as well as the Lost Arch Inn (now completely collapsed), petroglyphs, and of course Mailbox #4 (not the original – stay tuned for updates on this). Unless taking the alternate, the route becomes much more rugged and slow going after Mailbox #4 and will continue that way until crossing HWY95.

### ***Final Thoughts***

As a final note, having done this route, please take your time, enjoy the experience and watch for desert tortoise – particularly in Spring and Summer – as they travel on the trails quite a bit. They have the right of way. If you MUST physically move a tortoise for its own safety, do so extremely slowly and cautiously. Lift only as high as needed from the sides keeping it level and only move as far as necessary. If you scare a tortoise it will expel its water supply (think peeing on you) and it will then likely die due to dehydration. Also, please leave any artifacts you find where they are. Take a photo and keep a memory.

This segment contains sensitive sites of archaeological importance, they will require additional basic research on your part to locate them. Please do not disclose these locations to others and allow them the fun of searching and finding them on their own. We do not pinpoint archaeological sites. If you are patient and observant, you will run across them. Enjoy them, photograph them, respect them, but leave them as you find them. These are irreplaceable treasures that comprise a major portion of the Mojave Desert Heritage, as well as our national history. If you think you have located an unknown site or found damage or vandalism to an existing site, document/record its location and report it to one or more of the following:

- Bureau of Land Management, Needles CA
  - Email: [BLM\\_CA\\_WEB\\_NE@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_CA_WEB_NE@blm.gov)
  - Phone: +1 (760) 326-7000
- National Park Service: Mojave National Preserve
  - Email: [David\\_R\\_Nichols@nps.gov](mailto:David_R_Nichols@nps.gov)
  - Phone: +1 (760) 252-6145, +1 (760) 252-6100

*“I’ll look back on this and smile because it was life and I decided to live it.” - Unknown*

***Special Acknowledgement: This guide would not have been possible without the continual input of John Marnell and Larry Vredenburgh whose insights and embedded maps lend much needed clarity to this guide; along with Mike Ahrens of the Bureau of Land Management and David Nichols of the National Park Service for levels of cooperation and encouragement that few thought possible.***

### ***Disclaimer***

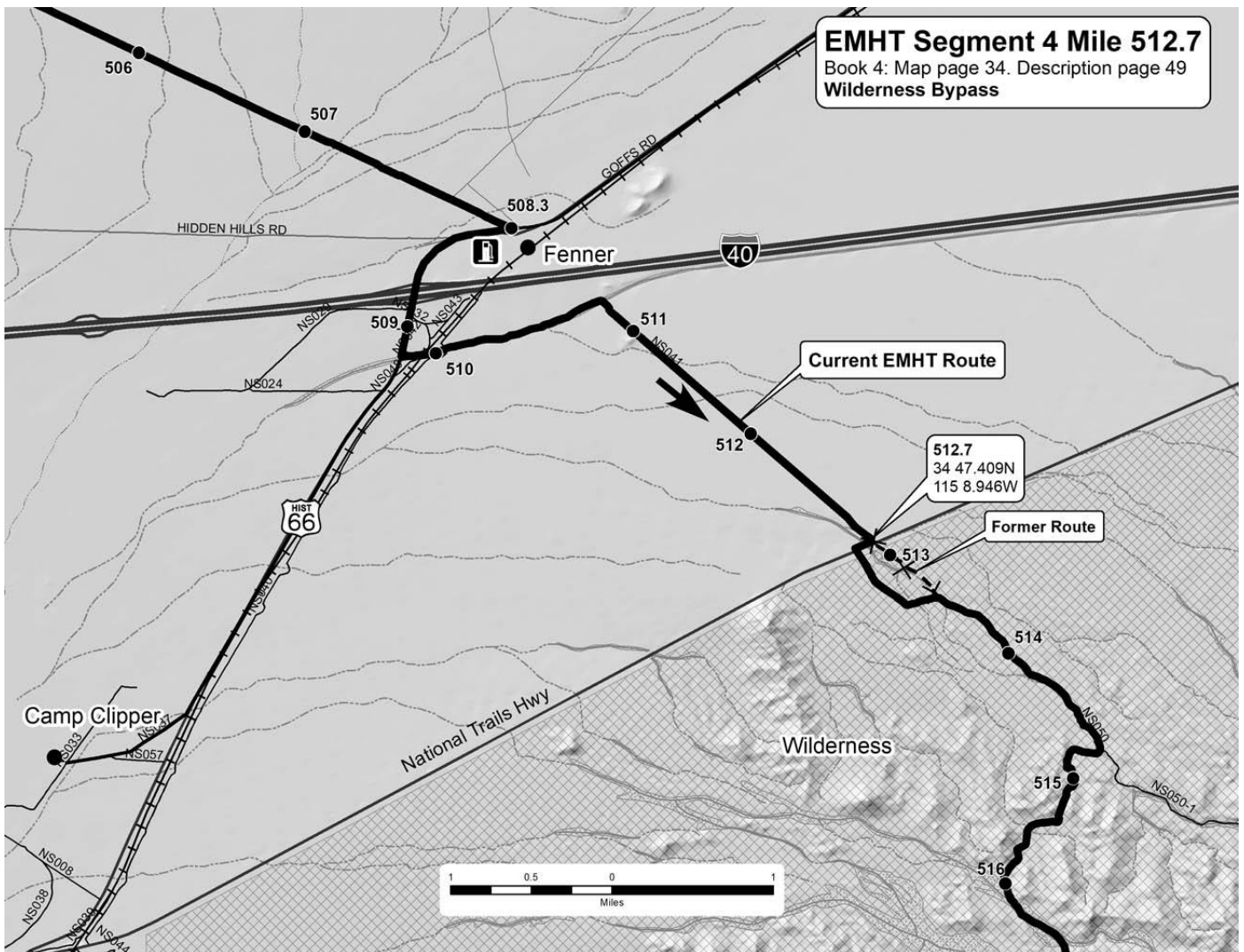
***No warranty is made as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data. MDHCA or the author(s), is not liable for any accidents, damage or injuries resulting from the use of this map or guide.***

## Supplement to EMHT Guidebook 4: Fenner to Needles

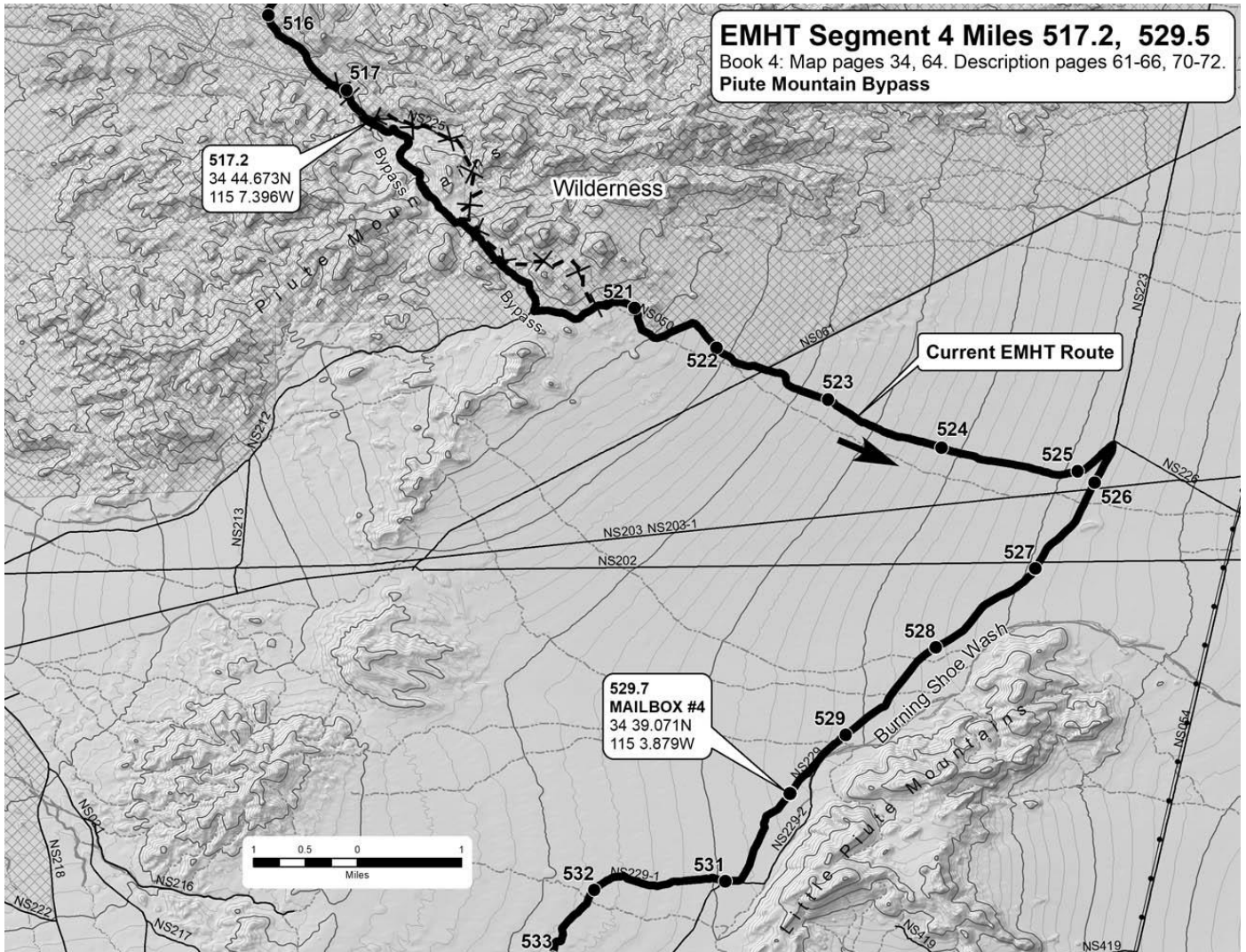
Congratulations on completing Segment 3 – you have completed 75% of the vaunted EMHT.

This fourth and final segment of the EMHT has multiple reroutes as well as some of the most remote and rugged terrain along the route.

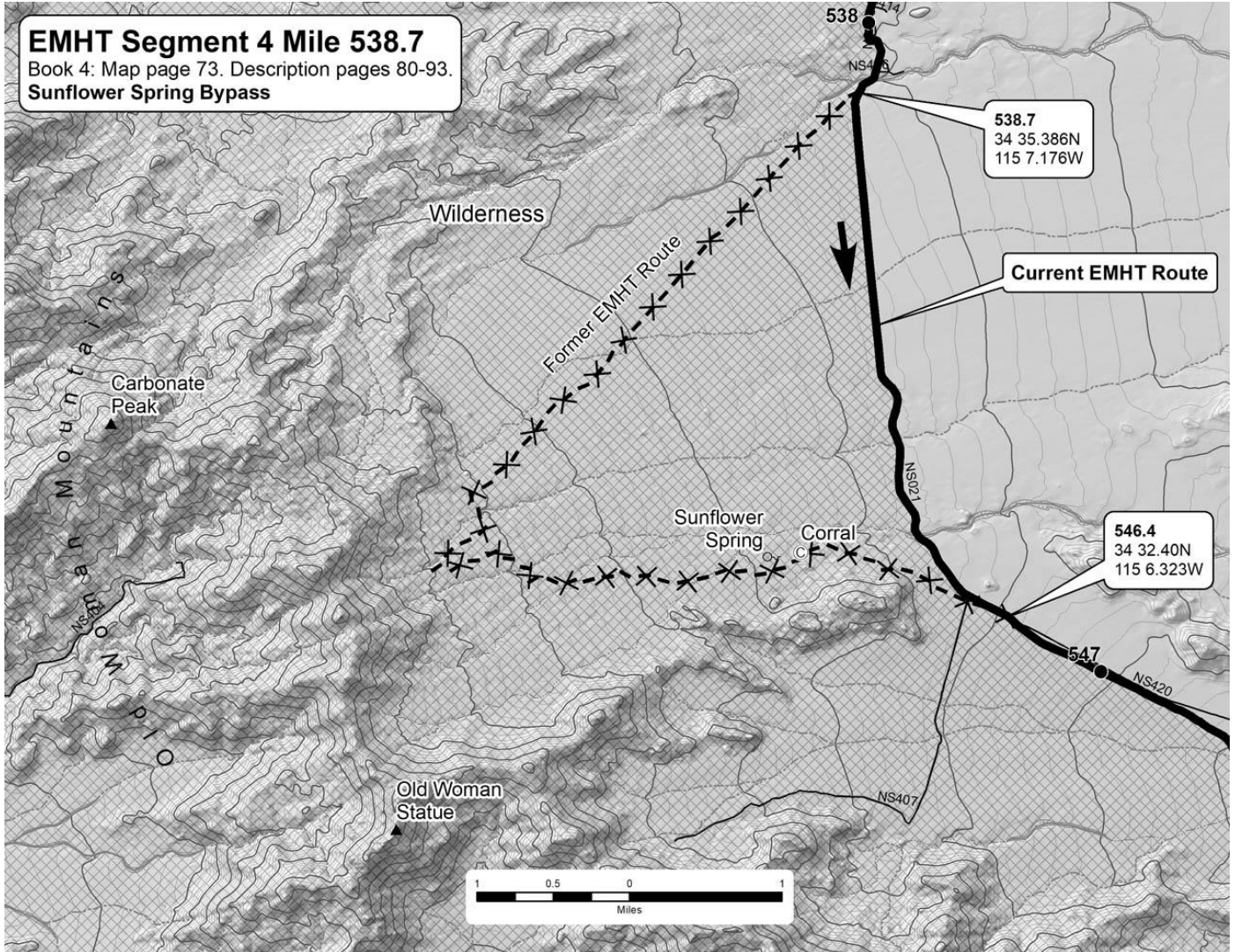
- EMHT Mile 512.7+ arrive at paved Route 66 – do NOT go straight across. You must TURN RIGHT and proceed for only .10 miles (~520') and Turn LEFT onto dirt trail



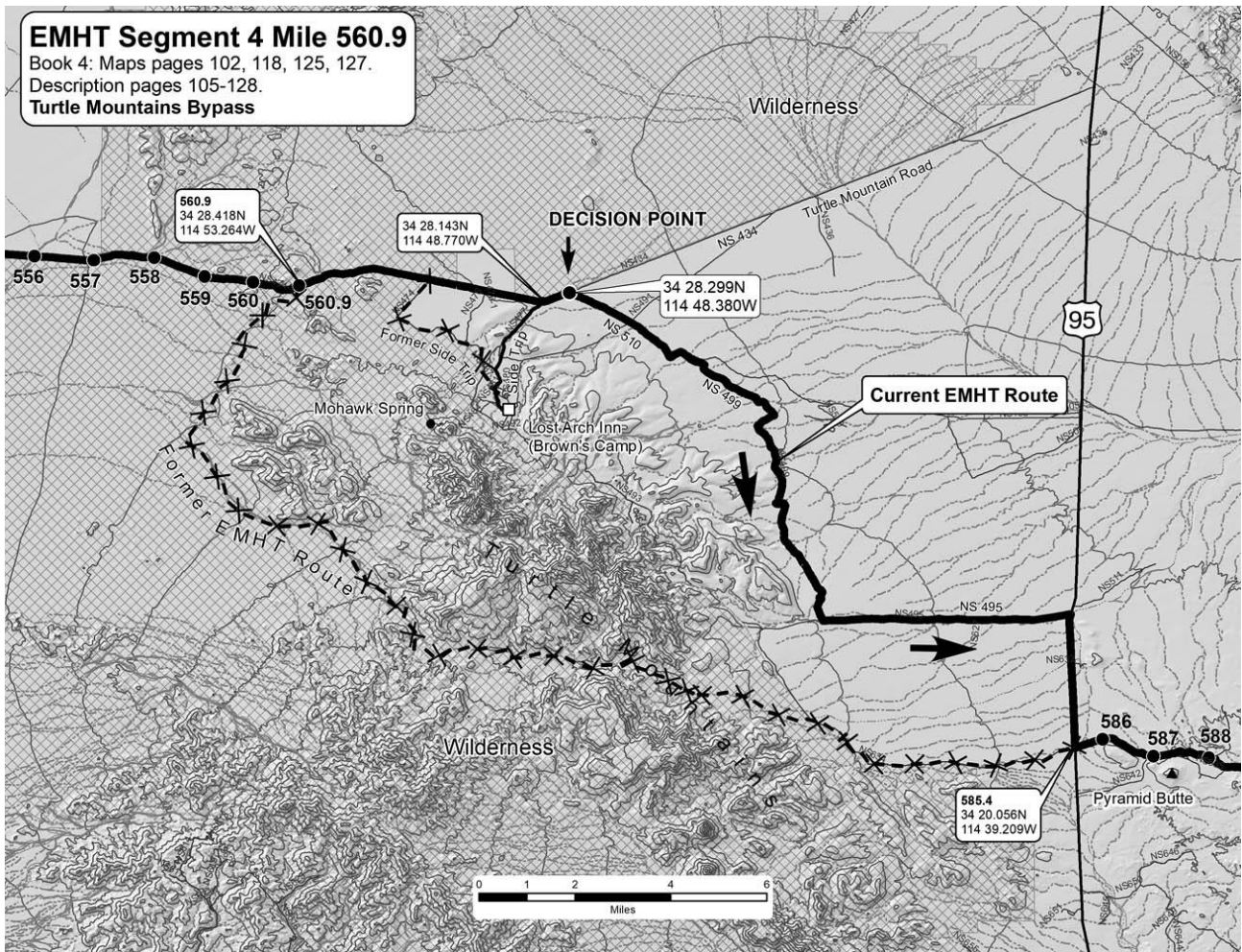
- EMHT Mile 517.2 Stay RIGHT through canyon rejoin EMHT at EMHT Mile 520.5
- EMHT Mile 529.7 Look for the newly relocated MAILBOX #4 on the right (west). Note: don't travel up Burning Shoe Wash, stay on the road.



- EMHT Mile 538.7 Bear LEFT continuing SOUTH to avoid Wilderness Area. Rejoin EMHT at EMHT Mile 546.1.



- **MAP below is for next TWO bullet points**
- EMHT Mile 560.9 Stay STRAIGHT to avoid Wilderness Area for approximately 4.86 miles. Arrive at the junction of BLM Roads NS 434 (Turtle Mountain Road) and NS 510 (Chemehuevi Valley West Rd.) at 34 28.299N, 114 48.380W.
- **DECISION POINT**
  - **MAPPED ROUTE:** Turn RIGHT on NS 510 (south) and continue down this trail for 14.1 miles. **NOTE – this trail is EXTREMELY rugged with no discernable trail in multiple areas and little to no smooth trail at all. This is a rock garden and multiple foot recces will be required.** Then Turn Right (south) on HWY 95 for 2.79 miles, then Turn LEFT (east) rejoining the EMHT at EMHT Mile 585.4
  - **OPTION:** A faster, smoother, well defined path is to: Continue Straight on Turtle Mountain Rd for an additional 10 miles, then Turn Right (south) on HWY 95 for 13.76 miles, then Turn LEFT (east) rejoining the EMHT at EMHT Mile 585.4.



- **NOTE – the eastern side of HWY 95 has far less rock, but washouts are plentiful. Be on the lookout for sudden drop offs and holes.**
- **There are no additional reroutes for the remainder of the segment**
- **CAUTION:** EMHT Mile 626.9 – 641.4 is a graded powerline road. It will be really tempting to go fast on this road, but **please be mindful of desert tortoise** as they are plentiful in this area.
- End segment 4 at EMHT Mile 660.0

Your actual mileage should be around 732.6 (+11% longer than original EMHT) pending the choices made.

**If you made it through all four segments of the EMHT: Congratulations - Well Done!!!!**