

Sonoran Desert Network Vegetation Mapping



Trip Summary Report
Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument
12/09/2012

Purpose: To briefly summarize the 2012 Vegetation Mapping field season at Gila Cliff Dwellings National Monument.

Contacts: Please direct any questions about our vegetation monitoring program to project manager Sarah Studd, at (520) 343-8845; sarah_studd@nps.gov

Vital signs and other parameters sampled during this visit

- Vegetation cover: dominant and common species are listed within multiple height layers, less common species are noted. Data indicates the characteristic species combinations and relative abundances of vegetation communities that repeat across the landscape.
 - Soil surface cover, erosion features, and landscape-scale observations on landform, aspect, and slope position are recorded for each mapped area.
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Sampling Results

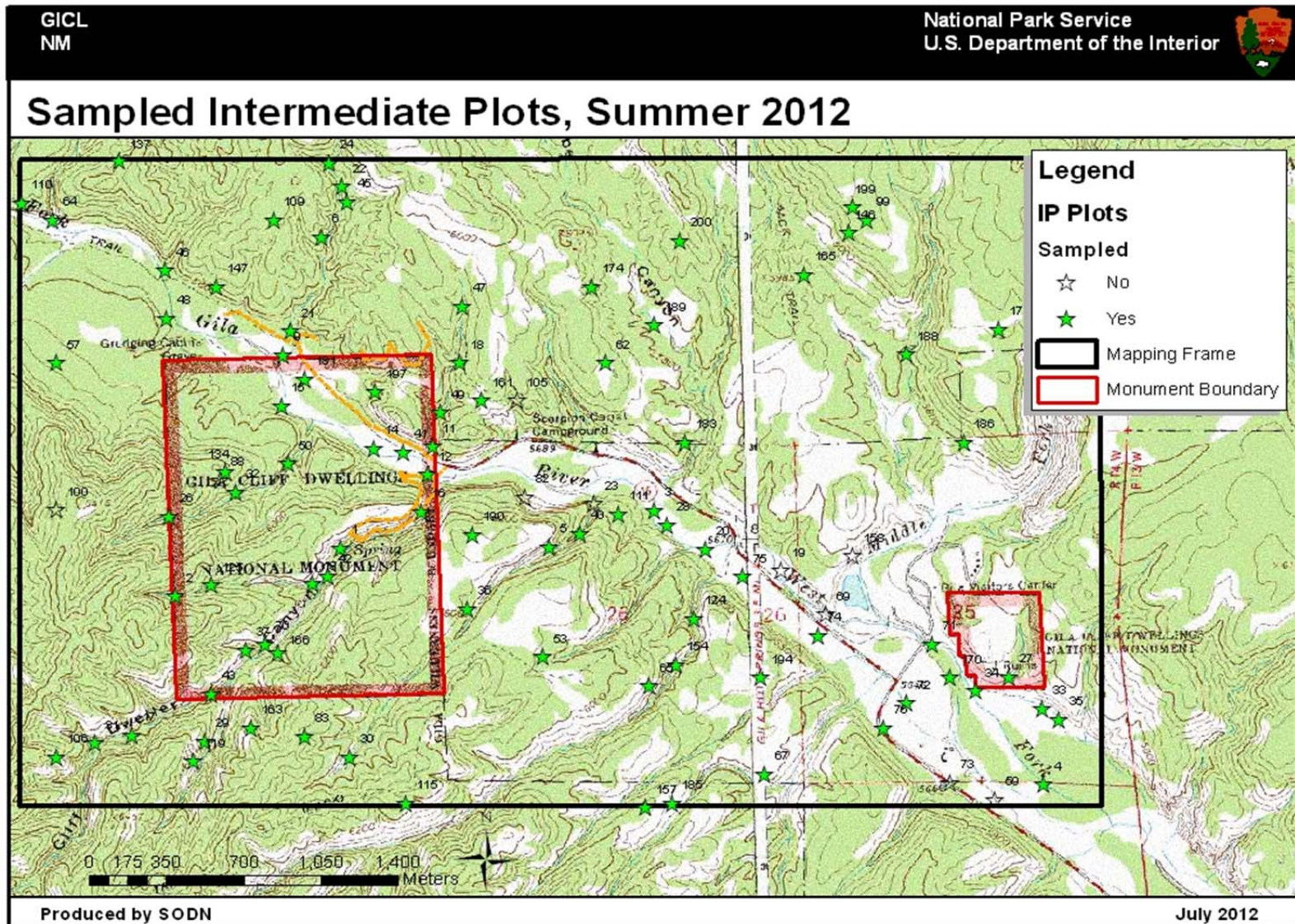
- This field effort represents the first season of sampling at GICL. The mapping frame encompasses a rectangular polygon (4.8×3 km) covering an area of 15 km^2 . This area includes both units of the monument, portions of the Heart Bar Wildlife Area, and adjacent U.S. Forest Service lands.
 - Survey crews sampled a total of 89 intermediate plots (IPs) throughout the mapping frame, including 22 in the Cliff Dwelling unit, 1 in the TJ unit, and 66 outside the monument (Map A). An additional 8 plots were not sampled due to time constraints, all of them were outside the monument.
 - Survey crews created a total of 91 polygons, covering 53% (7.9 km^2) of the mapping frame (Map B). This included all of the Cliff Dwelling unit, the TJ Ruins unit, and the riparian corridor that connects them.
 - Incidental to vegetation mapping surveys, field crews documented 11 occurrences of 5 non-native species (Map C). Most notable of these incidentals were two occurrences of *Tamarix chinensis*, one near the mouth of Adobe Canyon and one along the Gila River just east of the Heart Bar Wildlife Area. Both occurrences contained only a single, mature individual.
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What's ahead?

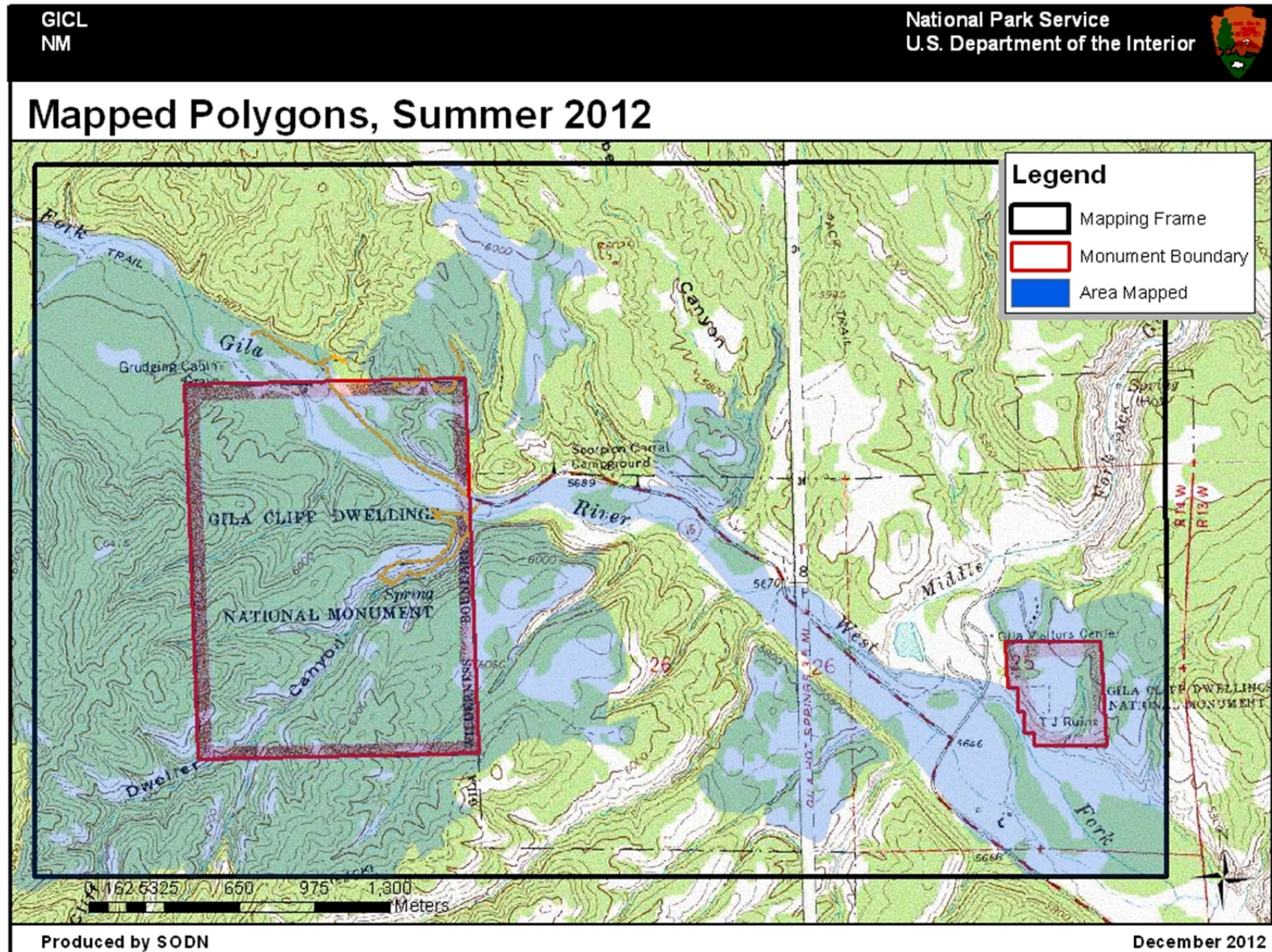
By the end of May 2013, we will complete draft community type descriptions for all the vegetation associations encountered during our initial mapping effort. These type descriptions identify the dominant species and less common associated species in each vegetation type.

During June and July 2013, we plan to complete the remaining 47% of the mapping frame, and, if deemed necessary, sample any outstanding IPs.

Appendix A: Map of Intermediate Plot Locations.



Appendix B: Map of Polygon Locations.



Appendix C: Map of Incidental Exotic Plants Detections.

