

| | | |
|------|---|----|
| I. | INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE AND NEED | 3 |
| | INTRODUCTION | 3 |
| | PURPOSE & NEED | 3 |
| | LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE STATEMENT | 3 |
| | RELATIONSHIPS TO STATUTES, REGULATIONS, AND OTHER PLANS..... | 4 |
| II. | PROPOSED ACTION/ALTERNATIVES..... | 6 |
| | PROPOSED ACTION..... | 6 |
| | ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT ANALYZED IN DETAIL..... | 9 |
| | NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE..... | 10 |
| III. | AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES..... | 11 |
| | SCOPING AND ISSUE IDENTIFICATION..... | 11 |
| | PROPOSED ACTION..... | 11 |
| | RESOURCES PRESENT AND BROUGHT FORWARD FOR ANALYSIS..... | 13 |
| | III. A. Migratory Birds..... | 14 |
| | III. B. Land Use, Access and Noise..... | 14 |
| | III. C. Soils..... | 16 |
| | III. D. Traffic..... | 16 |
| | III. E. Vegetation..... | 17 |
| | III. F. Visual Resource Management..... | 17 |
| | III. G. Wildlife | 18 |
| | NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE..... | 18 |
| | CUMULATIVE IMPACTS..... | 19 |
| | MONITORING..... | 19 |
| IV. | PERSONS, GROUPS, AND AGENCIES CONSULTED..... | 20 |
| | LIST OF PREPARERS..... | 20 |
| | PERSONS, GROUPS, OR AGENCIES CONSULTED..... | 20 |
| | REFERENCES | 21 |
| V. | APPENDICES, MAPS AND FIGURES | 22 |
| | APPENDIX A Hot Shot Crew Overview | 22 |
| | APPENDIX B BLM Sensitive Species Possibly Associated with the Project Area..... | 22 |
| | APPENDIX C Neo-tropical Migratory Birds, Species of Continental Importance..... | 22 |
| | APPENDIX D Traffic Review Report..... | 22 |
| | Map 1 Proposed Action Site Location..... | 22 |
| | Map 2 Alternative Site Locations..... | 22 |

Figure 1 Architectural Site Plan—A1 22

Figure 2 Photographs of existing BLM fire facilities 22

Figure 3 Building Elevations—A6 22

Figure 4 Building Elevations—A5 22

Figure 5 Architectural Rendering – Aerial View of BLM Phase I 22

Figure 6 Architectural Rendering – Elevation of BLM Phase I 22

I. INTRODUCTION/PURPOSE AND NEED

INTRODUCTION

The Bureau of Land Management Carson City District, Sierra Front Field Office (BLM) is proposing construction of a new fire facility in Carson City, Nevada. The new construction would provide office and support buildings for BLM wildland fire fighting resources and temporary housing for federal employees. The proposed site is located on BLM managed public land east of the corner of South Edmonds Drive and Koontz Lane in Carson City, Nevada (Map 1). Project construction would occur in two phases. Phase one would be the construction of the hotshot operational center (6,580 square feet) and two 4,290 square foot crew quarter buildings. Phase two would be the construction of a BLM Wildland Fire Station (5,018 square feet). Upon completion of both phases of the project, the facility would provide temporary housing for BLM and United States Forest Service (USFS) employees and operational centers for both BLM's type one interagency hotshot crew (Silver State Hotshots) and two or three BLM initial attack wildland engines. The initial planning process identified six potential sites in the Carson City area for this project. Construction of either phase is contingent upon appropriated funding.

Independent of the facility construction Carson City Public Works is proposing the construction and maintenance of a storm water sedimentation basin at the northeast corner of the intersection of Valley View Drive and South Edmonds Drive on BLM managed land.

PURPOSE & NEED

The purpose of the proposed fire facility is to enhance federal fire fighting capacity locally, regionally and nationally. Wildland fire fighting is seasonal and temporary by nature. Most employees are hired in the spring and laid off in the fall. It is very difficult to recruit employees to work for five months, a typical fire season, from outside the commuting area without being able to provide affordable seasonal housing. Having this facility available would aid in the recruitment and retention of highly qualified individuals. The need for the Proposed Action is created by the desire to increase initial attack response time, space limitations for equipment in the current federal facilities, and the inability to offer affordable housing to seasonal employees.

The proposed storm water sedimentation basin would help to capture sediment and debris, and would also help attenuate the peak flow rate during storm events. The storm water sedimentation basin would provide for added public safety for vehicles traveling on Edmonds Drive and would help to minimize Carson City Public Works maintenance efforts in the future.

LAND USE PLAN CONFORMANCE STATEMENT

The Proposed Action and alternatives described below are in conformance with the Carson City District Consolidated Resource Management Plan (CRMP May 2001), page LND-4 B, and the Carson City Urban Interface Plan Amendment (October 1996). These lands were designated for potential disposal to State and local government through the Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) Act. The State of Nevada and Carson City have not expressed any interest in future use of the subject land. Fire facilities are a use typically allowed under the R&PP Act and although BLM as a federal entity would not fall within the authority of that Act, the proposed use is consistent with the intent to devote these lands to

public facilities. Therefore, the Proposed Action is in conformance with the applicable resource management plan.

RELATIONSHIPS TO STATUTES, REGULATIONS, AND OTHER PLANS

The Interagency Federal Wildland Fire Policy states that, “Agencies will ensure their capability to provide safe, cost-effective fire management programs in support of land and resource management plans through appropriate planning, staffing, training, equipment, and management oversight.” The National Interagency Fire Center accomplishes this in part through the fire preparedness review process. Building the Carson Interagency Fire Facility would address deficiencies identified in the Fire and Aviation Preparedness Review.

The property proposed for the Carson Interagency Fire Facility and the City’s storm water sedimentation basin is designated Public/Quasi-Public on the Carson City Master Plan Land Use Map. Per the Master Plan adopted in 2006, lands designated Public/Quasi-Public are intended for primary uses such as fire stations, schools, government offices, facilities needed for essential public services, and other similar uses. The proposed facilities are consistent with the purpose of the Public/Quasi-Public master plan land use designation.

It is well established that state and local governments cannot require the Federal government or it’s contractors who are performing work on Federal projects located on Federal property, or on property under the control of the Federal Government, to obtain a building permit in order to construct a Federal Government facility. Specifically, Article VI of the US Constitution, also known as the “Supremacy Clause”, along with several Supreme Court cases dictate that the Federal Government is not subordinate to regulatory entities such as states, counties, cities or towns. (See *State of Arizona v State of California*, 283 US 423, *Leslie Miller Inc, v Arkansas*, 352 U.S. 187, or *Public Utilities Commissions of California v United States*, 355 U.S. 534) Furthermore, local government agents, such as building inspectors, have no authority to inspect work being performed on federally controlled property. The BLM is, however, subject to compliance with any federal laws which may be administered by local governments, such as health regulations or environmental regulations. These permits would be obtained in accordance with the Federal laws which govern them.

This environmental analysis (EA) was prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and is in compliance with applicable regulations and laws passed subsequently, including the President’s Council of Environmental Quality Regulations, US Department of Interior requirements, and guidelines listed in BLM Manual Handbook H-1790-1. The EA assesses the potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Action and reasonable alternatives and documents public participation as well as the decision-making process.

Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 The recently enacted Omnibus Public Land Management Act affects much of the federal lands within the boundaries of Carson City. Portions of the act provide for:

- conveyance of approximately 935 acres of Forest Service Land to Carson City for natural areas,
- conveyance of approximately 3,604 acres of Bureau of Land Management Land identified as the Silver Saddle Ranch and Carson River Area (which includes Prison Hill) to the City to be managed by the City to protect and enhance the Carson River, the floodplain and surround upland, and important wildlife habitat and to be used for undeveloped open space, passive

recreation, customary agricultural practices, and wildlife protection; subject to a conservation easement to protect, preserve and enhance the conservation values of the land, and

- conveyance of approximately 1,848 acres of Bureau of Land Management Land to Carson City for Parks and Public Purposes.

In addition, approximately 19,747 acres of public land within the urban interface of Carson City was permanently withdrawn from all forms of entry and appropriation under the public land and mineral laws for the purpose of removing the lands from future mineral development and other types of applications or claims that could result in non-discretionary development or conveyance of federal land into private ownership.

The proposed fire facility and storm water sedimentation basin are located on a 40-acre area of public land within the withdrawal area but otherwise not affected by the recent legislation. During a public review process that preceded passage of this act, the subject 40 acres was considered for conveyance to Carson City for parks and public purposes and not part of the Silver Saddle Ranch and Carson River Area to be conveyed to the City with a conservation easement. Prior to passage of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act, the 40- acre area was removed from further consideration for conveyance to the City to facilitate opportunities to further investigate use of the land for a fire facility. The legislation does not affect the BLM resource management plan designation for this 40-acre area of land which continues to reflect recreation and public purposes uses for state and local government.

II. PROPOSED ACTION/ALTERNATIVES

PROPOSED ACTION

This document analyzes two separate Proposed Actions. The first addresses BLM construction, operation, and maintenance of a seven-acre interagency fire facility; the second is construction and maintenance of a one-acre storm water sedimentation basin proposed by Carson City Public Works. These proposed projects are adjacent to each other and would be located on public land administered by the BLM between the intersections of Valley View Drive, South Edmonds Drive, and Koontz Lane. Both the Carson Interagency Fire Facility and the Carson City storm water sedimentation basin projects impact analyses are included in this environmental document. However, since the projects are independent of each other the BLM may approve or deny one or both projects under the Proposed Action.

The legal location for both projects is within T15N, R20 E sec. 28, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, MDM in Carson City, Nevada. Both proposed projects would be authorized under separate Federal Land Policy and Management Act Right-of-Way Grants.

The Carson City Fire Management Plan describes the Carson River Fire Management Unit. The Carson River Fire Management Unit consists of numerous developed and rapidly developing wildland urban interface areas, major valleys, a river corridor and portions of two mountain ranges located in Carson City, Douglas, Lyon and Washoe counties. Major wildland urban interface areas include Carson City, Virginia City, Silver City, Gold Hill, New Washoe City, Steamboat, Moundhouse, Dayton, Dayton Valley, Minden, Gardnerville, Dresslerville, Eastern Carson Valley, Holbrook Junction, Wellington, and Western Smith Valley. Many of the developing areas either border BLM managed public land or are enclaves surrounded or nearly surrounded by BLM lands. Locating the proposed Carson Interagency Fire Facility in the Carson Area would improve initial attack access due to the central location within the Carson River Fire Management Unit. Close proximity to both US Highway 395 and US Highway 50 would reduce response time during initial attack. Due to the numerous wildland urban interface areas, suppression response is aggressive, utilizing both air and ground resources. Wildland fire response is strategic and is not similar to county or city response which is managed as immediate emergency response.

The proposed interagency fire facility would provide a base of operations for a 20-member initial attack crew (Silver State Interagency Hotshots), a wildland fire station for two to three wildland fire engines and temporary housing for BLM and USFS employees. It is anticipated that the fire facility would be utilized primarily during the fire season which generally runs from April through November of each year. Typical daily operations would be from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Appendix A). Unlike city and county fire departments, wildland firefighters are not required to lodge as one unit. Typically, wildland firefighters work daily shifts unless on assignment. The hotshot crew is expected to be in residence approximately 60 days per year. The crew quarters would provide temporary housing for up to ten people in each building. Double occupancy may occur infrequently under emergency situations. The wildland fire station crew is expected to be in residence 160 days per year. The facilities would be occupied with reduced staff Monday through Friday, normal business hours, during the off fire season.

Daily operations for both crews when present could include:

- Preventive maintenance on all vehicles and equipment; 10-15 minutes of vehicle idling while checking the pumps and lights. Once every two weeks a quick muffled siren check occurs.
- Clean and refurbish chainsaws after fires or project work; start-up and run times of 15-20 seconds per chainsaw.
- Maintain landscaping; periodic use of lawnmowers, weed eaters, etc.
- Physical training; the crews would devote at least one hour a day to physical training (PT). This training could include calisthenics, steep hikes, weight lifting, and long-distance runs.

The facility would also be available for use by BLM and USFS field personnel during the off-season to support official business. The facility is managed under a code of conduct for federal employees, which includes a prohibition on the presence and use of alcohol.

Carson Interagency Fire Facility Construction – The facility would be constructed to existing approved BLM fire facility plans and specifications. Phase one of the proposed Carson Interagency Fire Facility is expected to include a 6,580 square foot Hotshot Operations Center and two 4,290 square foot Crew Quarter buildings (Figures 1-6). Phase two of the proposed Carson Interagency Fire Facility is expected to include the 5,018 square feet Wildland Fire Station. Refer to Figure 1, Architectural Site Plan—A1, and Figure 2, photographs of existing BLM fire facilities. The Carson City District (CCD) would send an inspector to the project site during construction to ensure conformance with BLM standards. Funding is being secured for future design and construction of a US Forest Service fire barracks for the 20-man Black Mountain Hot Shot crew or for other temporary employees. If funded, the USFS barracks could be included as part of phase one of the Proposed Action.

The Hotshots Facility would include the following components (Figure 3, Building Elevations—A6):

- The Hotshot Operations Center includes office and work space, enclosed vehicle and equipment storage, a briefing/training room and an exercise room.
- The structure would be a pre-engineered metal building, and would be designed in accordance with local building codes by the metal building manufacturer.
- The foundation would consist of a slab-on-grade floor and footings located at the building column locations.
- Exterior finish materials for the Hotshots facility are intended to be durable and long lasting while still fitting into the rugged, natural landscape which surrounds the building site. Wall panels would be the manufacturer's standard pre-finished panels in a natural color. The roof would be a pre-finished standing seam metal roof. A standing seam roofing system is appropriate for the location and for longevity. For cost considerations windows would be vinyl, combining both fixed and operable sections. Personnel doors and frames are painted hollow metal while the overhead doors are pre-finished steel.
- In addition to the main facilities, two small pre-manufactured structures would be included. The Saw Shop consists of a pre-cast concrete building. The small (8' x 10') Hazardous Materials Storage Building would be a pre-manufactured hazardous materials structure. This structure would house small quantities of flammable materials such as gasoline for chainsaws, diesel fuel, and paint. All hazardous materials stored at the facility would be managed according to state, local and federal regulations.
- The BLM Hotshot Operational Center design has three truck bays and is 6,580 square feet. If funding allows a fourth bay would be added to the Carson Hotshot Operational Center resulting in a 7,316 square foot building.
- No external public address system would be installed.

The Crew Quarter buildings would include the following components (Figure 4, Building Elevations—A5):

- The standard crew quarters design includes ten single occupancy bedrooms, kitchen, dining area, laundry and living area.
- The building construction would be wood frame with pre-engineered wood trusses. It would be designed in accordance with local building codes.
- It is anticipated that the foundation would be a continuous spread footing, however, final design would be based on recommendations provided in the geotechnical report.
- Exterior finish materials for the Crew Quarters would be slightly different from the Hotshot Operational Center due to the different structural system and residential nature of the building. The exterior finish material would be painted fiber-cement lap siding for low maintenance and durability. The roof would be a pre-finished standing seam metal roof to match the Hotshot Operational Center. Windows would be vinyl and doors would be hollow metal similar to the Hotshot Operational Center.

The Wildland Fire Station would include the following components:

- The BLM Wildland Fire Station design has two truck bays and is 5,018 square feet. The Wildland Fire Station is similar to the Hotshot Operation Center in that it also includes office and work space, enclosed vehicle and equipment storage, a briefing/training room and an exercise room.
- The building structure would be wood frame with pre-engineered wood trusses. It would be designed in accordance with local building codes.
- The foundation consists of a concrete slab-on-grade floor and reinforced concrete foundation walls and footings.
- The exterior finish materials would match the Hot Shot Operational Center and consist of pre-finished metal wall panels, a pre-finished standing seam metal roof, vinyl windows, painted hollow metal doors, and pre-finished steel overhead doors.
- If funding allows a third bay could be added resulting in a 5,754 square foot building.
- No external public address system would be installed.

Utilities – Utility connection points would be located adjacent to the proposed fire facility. Depending on where the facility is sited, trenches would be used for electrical service, natural gas, communications, water and sewer pipelines. Utility lines would be constructed and connections would be made according to Universal Building Code and industry standards. Connection to city and private utilities would be in accordance with specifications set by the utility companies and the city engineering department. Renewable energy would be considered for the Carson Fire Facility. A photovoltaic system (solar panels) would be easy to install and could be put in a number of locations. Solar panels are most commonly placed on the roofs of buildings or located on the ground, but others can be integrated into the building architectural design as window shades, awnings, etc.

Access - The entrance to the fire facility would be located off of Koontz Lane on the north side of the building site and could be paved. Security fencing would consist of eight foot cyclone fence with barbed wire on the top. Pedestrian access would be through the main entrance of the fire facility.

Landscaping – The landscape materials will include native/indigenous plants that would require minimal water use and maintenance. Xeriscape landscaping would be incorporated with locally

available shrubs and trees. The primary areas of the site would be framed with various deciduous and evergreen trees with a non-irrigated native seed mix planted throughout. Smaller planting beds at the entrances of all buildings would be planted with perennials, grasses and sculptural formed cacti. Trees would be arranged to provide filtered shielding for the fire facility infrastructure. The site would be landscaped to create and maintain the following: 1) a pleasant living area, 2) provide visual screening and sound barriers for adjacent residential development, and 3) prevent dust generation.

Lighting – All outdoor light fixtures would be constructed in such a manner that no light would be emitted above the horizontal plane of the fixture (full cutoff shielded lighting). To minimize sky glow, glare and light pollution, corner security floodlights would be photocell operated.

Storm Water Sedimentation Basin - The proposed storm water sedimentation basin would be approximately 100' by 100' in bottom area and 150' by 150' in top area. The basin would be cut into the existing grade to a maximum depth of 6', with side slopes ranging in steepness from 3H:1V (33%) to 5H:1V (20%). The basin would be fitted with an outlet pipe to allow storm water flows during normal precipitation events to be piped across South Edmonds Drive. Flows exceeding the capacity of the outlet pipe would be allowed to overflow the basin and surface flow across south Edmonds Drive. Following construction of the basin, the Carson City Public Works would contour and revegetate any areas of surface disturbance outside the basin utilizing a native vegetation mix provided by BLM. The basin area would be stabilized as needed to prevent erosion and dust generation. The basin would not be fenced. The basin would only be expected to hold water during an active precipitation event, and the side slopes would be flat enough to allow a person to safely evacuate the area when the basin starts to fill with water. (Figure 1, Architectural Site Plan—A1 Key Notes 12)

Cultural Resource Best Management Practices- Although no cultural resources are present, a professional archaeologist would monitor initial ground disturbance and any important cultural resources discovered prior to or during implementation of both projects would be avoided. As always, respect for all cultural resources would be maintained. In the case of human remains that may be inadvertently discovered in the process of conducting the proposed project, all appropriate Federal laws would be followed. If discovered human remains are encountered, treatment would be coordinated with the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California. Any cultural resource discovered by the contractor, or any person working on their behalf, on public land shall be left in place and immediately reported to the BLM. The contractor would suspend all operations in the immediate area of such discovery of human remains or cultural resources until written authorization to proceed is issued by the BLM. An evaluation of the discovery would be made by the BLM to determine appropriate actions to prevent the loss of significant cultural values.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT NOT ANALYZED IN DETAIL

Site Location - Internal planning has taken place over the past five years to identify locations to build the facility. The following considerations were taken into account for facility location: cost of construction, site preparations, and access, being free of mining and millsite claims, and distance to utilities. Locating the facility on federal land would minimize annual operating and maintenance budgets. Three sites in Carson City, one site in Douglas County, and two sites in Moundhouse, Nevada, were originally considered for the Proposed Action (Map 2).

The following rationale is described for alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis:

- Site 1: south of Arrowhead Drive and west of Goni Road (12 acres). The closest city sewer connection is 3,000 feet away and a septic system is not an option due to the soil type. The reason this site was eliminated from further analysis is the cost of infrastructure. Additional cost was estimated to be \$552,000.
- Site 2: the corner at the round-about of Fifth Street, Edmonds and Carson River Road at the north end of the Prison Hill Recreation Area (11 acres). This site was dismissed due to the preference of the city to manage as open space. Development would not be consistent with the BLM Carson City Urban Interface Plan Amendment (October 1996).
- Site 3: Immediately north of the Chocolate Factory on the East side of State Route 341 (six acres). Due to access deficiencies it would be prohibitively expensive to construct the facility in this location. Building on this site would require a deceleration lane with entrance approach for Highway 341. The estimated cost of a type-3 approach with one deceleration lane would be \$270,000 with an annual maintenance cost of \$10,000.
- Site 4: north side of US highway 50 1.3 miles east of the Carson City/Lyon County line in Moundhouse, Nevada (17 acres). Due to access deficiencies it would be prohibitively expensive to construct the facility in this location. This site is surrounded by private land on the north, east and west. The only access to this site is to the south from US Highway 50. Building on this site would require a deceleration lane with entrance approach for Hwy 50. The estimated cost of a type-3 approach with one deceleration lane would be \$270,000 with an annual maintenance cost of \$10,000.
- Site 6: west of Highway 395 between Jacks Valley Road and Topsy Lane. (30 acres) This is a US Forest Service managed parcel of federal land. This site was eliminated from further analysis due to the projected cost of infrastructure. Connecting to a sewer line was estimated to cost between \$263,000 and \$357,000. These lands have been identified by Douglas County for disposal to accommodate commercial growth in the area.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Action Alternative the BLM would not construct, operate or maintain a fire facility. The Silver State Hotshots and initial attack wildland firefighting resources would continue to work out of the Carson City District Office and temporary housing would not be available for federal employees.

Under the No Action Alternative Carson City Public Works would not construct or maintain the storm water sedimentation basin. Periodic seasonal storm water events would continue to deposit flood debris on South Edmonds Drive.

III. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This chapter identifies and describes the current condition and trend of elements or resources in the human environment that may be affected by the Proposed Actions or Alternative and the environmental consequences or effects of the actions.

SCOPING AND ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

The Carson City District fire management program staff identified the proposed facility and secured funding for construction and operation. The BLM interdisciplinary team reviewed the proposal and determined the issues and concerns concerning the resource issues for review.

Written communication concerning the proposed project went to the Chair of The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California requesting their comments and concerns regarding the Proposed Action occurred February 13, 2009. Consultation is ongoing.

All homeowners within .25 miles of the proposed site location were notified in writing regarding the proposed projects and invited to the Carson City Planning Commission meeting on February 25, 2009. Scoping comments were accepted via e-mail, fax, or written from February 18, 2009 to March 11, 2009.

The BLM issued a press release and posted information on the BLM web site about the Proposed Action on February 23, 2009. The BLM held a joint meeting with the Carson City Planning Commission on February 25, 2009. This joint meeting was attended by approximately 40 members of the public. A follow-up meeting with local government officials and the public occurred on April 20, 2009.

Concerns gathered in the scoping process

- Proposed Action will increase traffic on Edmonds Road
- Construction noise and increase in noise from daily operations
- Increase in dust brought about by Proposed Action
- Night lighting
- Hazmat storage
- Season of use; hours of operation; winter vs. summer use
- Property is currently restricted to foot and horse traffic
- Proposed Action would be located next to single family one acre residential
- Access to the freeway is over 1 mile
- Noise from siren and heavy equipment
- Existing BLM facility could expand
- Public access to Prison Hill

PROPOSED ACTION

General Setting

The project area is on the west side of Prison Hill in Carson City, Nevada. The terrain is rolling hills to valley bottom. The elevation is 4,750 feet on a west aspect. Slope is flat to gentle, less than 10 %. The average precipitation in Carson City is 11 inches per year. The Prison Hill Recreation Area is located

east and adjacent to the proposed project area. The proposed site location would be immediately adjacent to future US Hwy 395(Carson City Bypass), which is currently under construction (Map 1).

Supplemental Authorities

Appendix 1 of BLM’s NEPA Handbook (H-1790-1) identifies Supplemental Authorities that are subject to requirements specified by statute or executive order and must be considered in all BLM environmental documents. The table below lists the Supplemental Authorities and their status in the project area. Supplemental Authorities that may be affected by the Proposed Actions are further described in this EA.

| Supplemental Authority | Not Present * | Present/Not Affected * | Present/May Be Affected** | Rational |
|---|---------------|------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Air Quality | | X | | The project is not located in a federal air quality non-attainment area and since it is a small temporary construction project it is in a category of actions considered exempt from general conformity requirements. Any particulate material generated during construction would be temporary. Dust abatement would be utilized. |
| Areas of Critical Environmental Concern | X | | | Resource not present. |
| Cultural Resources | X | | | A survey was completed to determine if any cultural resources of concern were present. Based on the survey results no avoidance areas were identified. As stated in the Proposed Action mitigation, avoidance areas would be established if any cultural resources of concern are identified during implementation. |
| Environmental Justice | X | | | Resource not present. |
| Farm Lands (prime or unique) | X | | | Resource not present. |
| Floodplains | X | | | Resource not present. |
| Invasive, Nonnative Species | | X | | The existing site would be periodically inspected for the presence of noxious weeds. If noxious weeds are discovered, the site would be included in BLM’s annual weed treatment plan. |
| Migratory Birds | | | X | Carried through EA. |
| Native American Religious Concerns | | X | | Written communication including a description of the Proposed Action and a map was provided to The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California on February 13, 2009. Consultation is ongoing. |
| Threatened or Endangered Species | X | | | Resource not present. |
| Wastes, Hazardous or Solid | | X | | All hazardous materials used in the construction and operation of the fire station would be transported, stored, handled, used, and disposed of in accordance with manufacturers recommendations and all applicable Federal and State regulations and guidelines. |
| Water Quality (Surface/Ground) | X | | | Resource not present. |

| | | | | |
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| Wetlands/Riparian Zones | X | | | Resource not present. |
| Wild and Scenic Rivers | X | | | Resource not present. |
| Wilderness | X | | | Resource not present. |

**Supplemental Authorities determined to be Not Present or Present/Not Affected need not be carried forward or discussed further in the document.*

***Supplemental Authorities determined to be Present/May Be Affected must be carried forward in the document.*

Resources or Other Uses Other Than Supplemental Authorities

The following resources or uses, which are not Supplemental Authorities as defined by BLM’s Handbook H-1790-1, are present in the area. BLM specialists have evaluated the potential impact of the Proposed Actions on these resources and documented their findings in the table below. Resources or uses that may be affected by the Proposed Actions are further described in this EA.

| Resource or Issue | Present/Not Affected* | Present/May Be Affected** | The following rationale was used to determine that resources present in the area would not be affected as a result of implementation of the Proposed Action or Alternatives. |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| BLM Sensitive Species | X | | Because of the small size and close proximity to developed areas, sensitive species (Appendix B), such as eagles and bats would only be expected to occasionally use the area, mostly in the form of flying over the area; therefore, any impacts would not be expected. |
| Land Use, Access, & Noise | | X | Carried through EA. |
| Recreation | X | | Public recreation access to Prison Hill Recreation Area would be maintained by the current Koontz Lane and Clearview trailheads. The Proposed Action would not adversely impact recreation opportunities in the recreation area. |
| Soils | | X | Carried through EA. |
| Traffic | | X | Carried through EA. |
| Vegetation | | X | Carried through EA. |
| Visual Resource Management | | X | Carried through EA. |
| Wildlife | | X | Carried through EA. |

**Resources or uses determined to be Not Present or Present/Not Affected need not be carried forward or discussed further in the document.*

***Resources or uses determined to be Present/May Be Affected must be carried forward in the document.*

RESOURCES PRESENT AND BROUGHT FORWARD FOR ANALYSIS

The following resources are present in the area and may be affected by the Proposed Actions, and are carried forward for analysis.

III. A. Migratory Birds

Affected Environment

On January 11, 2001, President Clinton signed Executive Order 13186 (Land Bird Strategic Project) placing emphasis on conservation and management of migratory birds. The species are not protected under the Endangered Species Act, but most are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. Management for these species is based on Instruction Memorandum – IM 2008-050 dated December 18, 2007. The Intermountain West is the center of distribution for many western birds. Over half of the biome's Species of Continental Importance have 75% or more of their population here. Many breeding species from this biome migrate to winter in central and western Mexico or in the Southwestern biome (Beidleman 2000). The species of concern that could occur in the general project area are shown in Appendix C (BLM 2007).

There are no Important Bird Areas (IBA) associated with the general project area. There are no identified important wintering areas within the general project area (McIvor 2005).

Some migratory birds use the habitat within the project area. Historically this area was sage grouse habitat however, due to the encroachment and urbanization of Carson City; sage grouse no longer use the area.

Environmental Consequences

The Proposed Action would result in the loss of 8 acres of habitat, though as stated previously, the birds utilizing the area are species that readily habituate to human disturbance. The Proposed Actions would not create a significant change to migratory bird use or their habitat.

III. B. Land Use, Access and Noise

Affected Environment

Land Use

The Proposed Action would be located entirely on public lands administered by BLM. Existing land use authorizations located on or adjacent to the proposed project area include the following:

- ROW to Carson City for a buried water pipeline and access road associated with the water tank on adjoining land.
- ROW to Paiute Pipeline Company for natural gas transmission pipeline along Edmonds Drive.
- ROW to Carson City for Edmonds Drive.
- ROW to Nevada Bell for communication facilities along Edmonds Drive.
- ROW to Sierra Pacific Power Company for electric distribution line along portion of Edmonds Drive.
- ROW to Carson City for water line along portion of Edmonds Drive.
- Letters of Consent/Easement Deeds to Federal Highway Administration for Highway uses.

The public land associated with the Proposed Actions was permanently withdrawn from all forms of entry and appropriation under the public land and mineral laws. The proposed projects are located within a 40-acre area designated for disposal to state or local governments for recreation or public purposes.

Access

The project area has numerous dirt roads and trails. A major gravel road (east terminus of Koontz Lane) provides access to a municipal water storage tank and a recreational trail head, both located east of the project area. There are no other authorized roads in the project area. Unrestricted access to the public lands in the project area contributes to illegal dumping.

Noise

Currently there is ambient noise generated from the following sources:

- Motor vehicle traffic on South Edmonds Drive and Koontz Lane.
- Motor vehicle traffic on the gravel road section of Koontz Lane. This road segment is the primary recreation access for the Prison Hill Recreation Area.
- Unauthorized OHV activity.
- Residential activities

Ambient noise is greatest during day time hours.

Carson City does not currently have a specific noise ordinance to regulate the sounds generated from development. The City relies on a public nuisance ordinance to regulate noise.

Environmental Consequences

Land Use

The proposed facilities would be designed to reflect the presence of these authorized uses and no conflicts with those uses have been identified. The remaining acreage within the 40-acre area of public land would remain available for state or local recreation or public purpose uses which could be authorized under a right of way or cooperative management agreement. The BLM and Carson City have preliminary plans to develop a trailhead feature on the remaining acreage and to manage this area for passive recreation, thereby creating a buffer zone between the proposed fire facilities and the adjacent residential neighborhood.

The Proposed Actions are not prohibited or otherwise affected by the withdrawal. Devoting eight acres for the proposed facilities would not significantly impact future land uses within the 40-acre area (Map 1). No direct or indirect impacts to existing land use authorizations are anticipated.

Access

Access to the Prison Hill Recreation Area would remain open during and after construction of both the Proposed Actions. The only entrance to the fire facility would be along Koontz Lane and would be paved. Paving would be beneficial to reduce fugitive dust. A security fence would surround the seven acre proposed facility site to prevent unauthorized access. Illegal dumping and unauthorized motorized activity would be reduced in the area due to the physical presence of the proposed facility. No direct or indirect impacts to access would occur.

Noise

During construction of either proposed projects there would be temporary increase in noise levels. Normal day to day noise generated may be but not limited to: short periods of engine idling, vehicle back-up alarms, and small engine noise. The Carson District operates similar facilities in both Palomino

Valley, Nevada and Doyle, California. Both fire facilities are located in residential areas similar to this proposed site. To date no complaints have been received for loud or excessive noise from residents immediately adjacent to either fire facilities. Generally, wildland fire response is not life threatening and engine resources do not respond using red lights and sirens; nor do they leave the fire facility above the posted speed limits. No direct or indirect impacts from generated noise are anticipated.

III. C. Soils

Affected Environment

The principal soil map unit, covering approximately 5 acres in the northeast and central part of the project area, is the Indiano Variant gravelly fine sandy loam, 4 to 15 percent slopes. Another three acres in the southwest part of the project area is Haybourne sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes. These are moderately deep soils that are well drained and have a slight hazard of erosion.

Environmental Consequences

Surface disturbance associated with construction of the Proposed Actions would cause some temporary impacts to soils. Removing the native vegetation, preparing the building site, operating heavy equipment, and trenching the utility lines would make soils susceptible to accelerated erosion during construction. The potential for impacts would be mitigated by implementing best management practices specified in construction permits that would be obtained by the contractor. Once construction is completed, soil impacts would be greatly reduced because exposed areas would be covered by the facilities, pavement, rock mulch, and landscaping. There would be minor impacts to soils as a result of the Proposed Actions but they would not be expected to be significant.

III. D. Traffic

Affected Environment

Current traffic volume on South Edmonds Drive is reported to be 8,800 average daily trips in the vicinity of the facility per the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) Annual Traffic Report (Appendix D). In the year 2030 Carson City staff predicts that the average daily trip volume at this location would decrease to 4,400 due to changes in the area street network (completion of the Carson City Freeway). The proposed facility would generate up to 104 average daily trips and up to 23 average daily trips for the morning and evening peak hours during fire season (April – October) This represents a 1.2% ($104/8800 \times 100$) increase in current traffic at the site for approximately half the year. During the non-fire season, the proposed facility would generate 31 average daily trips.

Truck traffic on South Edmonds Drive is regulated under a Carson City ordinance. The truck ordinance allows local deliveries and truck traffic from businesses located in the area but restricts through truck traffic. The proposed facility would qualify as a “business located in the area” and therefore the fire truck traffic would be exempt under the ordinance. The ordinance also exempts Class C vehicles, such as crew carriers used by the Hotshot Crews. Data from NDOT indicates that local street traffic for two axel six tire trucks was 258 trucks per day. It is estimated that the four fire trucks associated with the

BLM Hotshot crew and Wildland Fire Station would generate up to 8 trips per day or 3% of the total two axle truck traffic during the in-residence period, representing approximately 15% of the year.

Environmental Consequences

BLM engaged the services of Solaegui Engineers Ltd., Civil and Traffic Engineers, to conduct a review of the traffic impacts associated with the proposed facility (Appendix D). The findings of their review disclosed that the operations of the proposed facility would have minimal impacts to traffic in the area, would not violate a local truck ordinance and would not generate sufficient trips to require a Traffic Impact Study per Carson City development policy.

III. E. Vegetation

Affected Environment

Prison Hill is representative of the Great Basin biome plant community. The vegetation on Prison Hill consists of primarily antelope bitterbrush, big sagebrush, and an understory of perennial and annual grasses and forbs.

Environmental Consequences

The construction of the Proposed Actions would require the removal and or damage to local vegetation. The affected area would be limited to 8 acres for the proposed project. Existing vegetation would be removed and replaced with buildings, parking areas, and landscaping on the majority of the 8 acre site. Landscaped areas would utilize native and non-native species. Impacts to the existing vegetation would be considered permanent. There would be minor impacts to vegetative plant communities as a result of the Proposed Actions but they would not be expected to be significant.

III. F. Visual Resource Management

Affected Environment

Public lands in the proposed project area are managed under a Class III Visual Resource Management (VRM) objective. The VRM Class III objective is to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape is allowed to be moderate. Management activities may attract attention but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Changes should repeat the basic elements found in the predominant natural features of the characteristic landscape.

Environmental Consequences

The site for the Proposed Actions occurs in a VRM Class III Area. A Key Observation Point for this action is the well-traveled north-south running Edmonds Drive situated approximately 500 feet west of the proposed site. From this distance the proposed fire facility would be in the foreground to middle-ground visually. Other notable observation points include Kootnz Lane and residential views located to the north, south and, to a lesser degree, west of the proposed project site.

The proposed visual screening (landscaping, fencing) should lessen the visual impact, especially if shrubs and trees are placed in a random pattern rather than in straight lines and fencing materials and/or color are consistent with nearby structures. Although travelers on Edmonds Drive and the Kootnz Lane

access road would pass directly by the facility, impacts should be minor since the facility would be an extension of the current forms presented by the existing residential area. For this reason the proposed facility should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Designing the facility, including vertical structures such as a flag pole and light posts in earth tones would lessen this impact further. There would be minor changes as a result of the Proposed Actions; however, these changes are allowable in a VRM Class III area.

III. G. Wildlife

Affected Environment

General wildlife habitat in the project area is Wyoming big sagebrush, associated grasses and other brush species including rabbitbrush and bitter brush. The area receives substantial disturbance from the existing road, and people traveling past the area to a trail head for hiking. Due to the proximity to houses and Edmonds Drive the only big game expected to use the area would be an occasional mule deer. Valley quail, short-horned lizards and passerine birds would utilize the habitat within the project area.

Environmental Consequences

The Proposed Actions would remove eight acres of wildlife habitat; however, due to the expansion and urbanization of Carson City only common species of wildlife that readily become habituated to human disturbances such as jackrabbits, cottontails, coyotes, valley quail and common passerine birds are found in the area. The project area disturbance would be primarily limited to the eight acres of development since the wildlife species utilizing the area are likely already habituated to human disturbances, such as traffic, homes, and hikers, therefore, additional impacts outside of the project area are not anticipated. The loss of the sparse native vegetation stands and the intermingled weed species is not expected to result in substantial changes to native vegetation communities on nearby areas or to wildlife habitat values on site.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the No Action Alternative, the Carson Interagency Fire Facility would not be constructed. No resource impacts or environmental consequences would occur. The Silver State Hotshots and initial attack wildland firefighting resources would continue to work out of the Carson City District Office and temporary housing would not be available for federal employees. The Carson City Public Works storm water sedimentation basin would not be constructed at the northeast corner of the intersection of Valley View Drive and South Edmonds Drive. During storm events sediment and other debris would continue to build up in the public roadway at South Edmonds Drive.

Reasonable foreseeable future actions on the adjacent BLM managed lands may include construction and operation of a recreation trailhead facility constructed and operated by Carson City Parks Recreation Department. Carson City has indicated that the existing municipal water supply tank located east of the proposed fire facility may be removed and replaced with a larger tank in a location south of the present tank. The BLM does not foresee any additional development immediately adjacent to the proposed fire facility footprint.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

All resource values together with reasonable foreseeable future actions have been evaluated for cumulative impacts. The geographic area identified referred to in this section consists of the 40-acre BLM managed lands identified on Map 1. It has been determined through the environmental analysis of the resources values that cumulative impacts would be negligible as a result of the Proposed Actions or alternative.

MONITORING

The monitoring described in the Proposed Action is sufficient for these actions.

IV. PERSONS, GROUPS, AND AGENCIES CONSULTED

LIST OF PREPARERS

Bureau of Land Management

| NAME | TITLE |
|-----------------|---|
| John Axtell | Wildlife Biologist |
| Keith Barker | Fire Ecologist |
| Arthur Callan | Recreation Specialist |
| James Carter | Archaeologist |
| Jo Ann Hufnagle | Realty Specialist |
| Daniel Jacquet | Community Liaison |
| Jim Schroeder | Hydrologist |
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| Desna Young | Planning & Environmental Coordinator |

PERSONS, GROUPS, OR AGENCIES CONSULTED

| NAME | AGENCY |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Waldo Walker, Chairman | The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California |
| Lee Plemel, Director | Carson City Planning Division |
| Mark Kimbrough, Chairperson | Carson City Planning Commission |
| Larry Werner, City Manager | City of Carson City |
| Various Agency Heads | Nevada State Clearinghouse |
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| Salvador Gurgiolo* | Carson City, Nevada |

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| Larry Hough* | Carson City, Nevada |
| Norman Chamberlin* | Carson City, Nevada |
| <p>During preparation of the EA, the public was notified of the Proposed Action by posting on the Sierra Front Field Office Internet Homepage on February 23, 2009. The process used to involve the public included direct mail and a local press release. Public scoping was also accomplished in conjunction with the Carson City Planning Commission and a follow up meeting with local government officials and the public held on April 20, 2009. A public comment period was held from April 13 through May 12, 2009.</p> <p>*Individuals that commented in writing during scoping or orally at the Carson City Planning Commission meeting.</p> | |

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V. APPENDICES, MAPS AND FIGURES

APPENDIX A Hot Shot Crew Overview

APPENDIX B BLM Sensitive Species Possibly Associated with the Project Area

APPENDIX C Neo-tropical Migratory Birds, Species of Continental Importance

APPENDIX D Traffic Review Report

Map 1 Proposed Action Site Location

Map 2 Alternative Site Locations

Figure 1 Architectural Site Plan—A1

Figure 2 Photographs of existing BLM fire facilities

Figure 3 Building Elevations—A6

Figure 4 Building Elevations—A5

Figure 5 Architectural Rendering – Aerial View of BLM Phase I

Figure 6 Architectural Rendering – Elevation of BLM Phase I