



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Las Vegas Field Office
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In Reply Refer to:
6840, 8342 (NV-052)

Dear Interested Party:

The Environmental Assessment for the Transportation Plan in Selected ACECs Located in the Northeast Portion of Clark County is currently available for a 30 day public review. Comments must be submitted by September 13, 2007. It can be found online at the Las Vegas Bureau of Land Management website at www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/lvfo.html and is listed under the "In the Spotlight" section.

Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to withhold your name, address, phone, number, or e-mail address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, state this in the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law.

Questions can be directed to Marc Maynard 702-515-5292

Comments may be submitted electronically at: ACEC_Route_Designation@blm.gov

Or in writing at:

Las Vegas Bureau of Land Management
C/O Marc Maynard
4701 North Torrey Pines Drive
Las Vegas, NV 89130

Patrick Putnam
Acting, Assistant Field Manager

LAS VEGAS FIELD OFFICE

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
NV-052-2006-433
NEVADA

Transportation Plan
for
**Selected ACECs Located in the
Northeast Portion of the
Las Vegas BLM District**

PREPARED BY
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U.S.D.I. Bureau of Land Management
Environmental Assessment
EA Number:2006-433
Date: 07/20/07

TITLE / PROJECT TYPE: Transportation Plan for Selected ACECs Located in the North East Portion of Clark County within the Las Vegas BLM District

BLM OFFICE: Las Vegas Field Office
4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive
Las Vegas, Nevada 89130

LOCATION OF PROPOSED ACTION: -----Refer to Appendix 1-----

USGS TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS: The project area is located either completely or partially within the following USGS 7.5 min. Quadrangle maps, Mesquite AZ-NV, Hen Spring AZ-NV, Virgin Peak AZ-NV, Saint Thomas Gap AZ-NV, Azure Ridge AZ-NV, Iceberg Canyon AZ-NV, Jumbo Peak NV, Gold Butte NV, Devils Throat NV, Whitney Pocket NV, Riverside NV, Overton NE NV, Overton SE NV, Overton Beach NV, Lime Wash NV, Garrett Butte NV, Flat Top Mesa NV, Moapa Peak SE NV, Moapa Peak NV, Rox SE NV, Farrier NV, Wildcat Wash SE NV, Wildcat Wash SW NV, Arrow Canyon NW NV, Arrow Canyon SW NV, Dry Lake NW NV, Apex NV.

APPLICANT / PROPONENT: Las Vegas BLM District

INTRODUCTION

This document is prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Its purpose is to analyze the impacts of the proposed action, alternatives, and recommend mitigation measures that would eliminate or lessen environmental impact. The action is tiered off of the Las Vegas Field Office Bureau of Land Management Resource Management Plan (LVFO BLM RMP) and final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (October 1998) and is consistent with this document. The action is in conformance with the Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). The action is in conformance with the Desert Tortoise (Mohave Population) Recovery Plan.

PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE ACTION

The Bureau of Land Management Las Vegas Field Office (LVFO BLM) is proposing to

implement a transportation plan in selected Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) (Gold Butte A, B, and C, Mormon Mesa, Coyote Springs, and Virgin River) within Clark County. The purpose of this plan is to prevent the proliferation of user created routes (the word route is used throughout this document to cover all types of motorized paths that will be designated through this document (single track, ATV trails, two track roads, and bladed roads)), reduce road density, improve wildlife habitat (specifically desert tortoise), control the spread of noxious and invasive weeds, protect cultural resources, and mitigate desert tortoise habitat loss and fragmentation by creating a designated route system, while at the same time providing a reasonable route network to allow public lands users motorized access to remote areas of the Mohave desert in northeast Clark County.

Due to population growth in the Las Vegas valley and surrounding communities and the growing popularity of off highway and all terrain vehicles (OHV and ATV), use within these ACECs has increased. As a result, route proliferation is occurring. Because of this road proliferation, habitat for sensitive and endangered plant and animal species is being fragmented and destroyed, historic and prehistoric cultural resource sites are being threatened by increased use and vandalism, and noxious and invasive weeds are being spread throughout the desert. The LVFO BLM Resource Management Plan (RMP) calls for designating all roads and trails within the three desert tortoise ACECs (Coyote Springs, Mormon Mesa, Gold Butte Part A). The LVFO BLM RMP calls for designating existing roads and trails and navigable dry washes within three other ACECs (Gold Butte Part B and C and Virgin River) to the status of the routes as they existed in 1998 (traveled vs. not traveled at the signing of the RMP in 1998). The Las Vegas BLM RMP calls for managing the following ACECs in a manner that is consistent with the surrounding area management objectives, Gold Butte Townsite, Red Rock Spring, Whitney Pocket, and Devils Throat.

There are approximately 906 miles of routes located within the boundaries of Gold Butte part A, B, and C, Mormon Mesa, Coyote Springs, and Virgin River ACECs (the total mileage number has changed from the preliminary EA because there was some duplication of route coverage that was discovered in the inventory). Through this route designation, routes will be identified as open, closed, or administrative access. No specific type of recreation will be prohibited in this route designation. The only exception to the previous sentence is that motorized recreation will be limited to routes designated as open. Currently motorized recreation is limited to existing roads, trails, and dry washes. In the past ten years there has been a marked increase in routes resulting from motorized vehicles driving off of existing routes.

CONFORMANCE WITH LAND USE PLANS

The proposed action is in conformance with Federal regulations and BLM policies. The action is tiered off of the LVFO BLM RMP and final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (October 1998) and is consistent with this document. The action is in conformance with the Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). The action is in conformance with the Desert Tortoise (Mohave Population) Recovery Plan.

COMMONALITY STATEMENT

THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT IS COMMON TO THE PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE (ALTERNATIVE A) AND ALTERNATIVE B

The Bureau of Land Management Las Vegas Field Office is proposing to implement a transportation plan that would allow responsible OHV and ATV use in the affected areas of critical environmental concern while preventing the proliferation of user created routes and cross country travel.

The BLM has completed an extensive inventory of routes that were on the ground in the project areas in 1998 and again in 2004-05.

The route designations would be completed in a two part process. The first part would be an interim designation, the second part would be a final designation. The final designation would be approximately three years after the interim designation is put into effect. The entire route designation process would follow an adaptive management strategy, where problems could be addressed as they arise. This document addresses the interim designation phase of this project.

The first step in providing protection to the ACECs would be an interim designation of routes within the ACECs. There is a total of approximately 906 miles of routes that are located within these ACECs and would be impacted by a designation of either open, closed, or administrative access. The purpose of an interim designation would be to prevent resource destruction and the proliferation of new routes while data is being collected and analyzed. This data would provide support for the final designation of routes that travel through/in these ACECs. This will also create a route network that is able to be signed and enforced immediately, along with the ability to develop interpretive material for the areas, and the ability to develop a monitoring strategy. The public would be made fully aware that after an intensive monitoring program and extensive call for data that pertains to the affected areas, there may be additional route closures in sensitive habitat or culturally significant areas. Any additional route designations (open, closed, limited) would be preceded by a public process and public review.

There will be intensive cultural and biological surveys conducted in the Gold Butte ACECs during fiscal year 2006, 2007, and 2008. This data will be extremely important in identifying sensitive biological habitat and culturally significant areas.

Additional route designations in the final designation would be supported by a program called Ecosystem Management Decision Support (EMDS). This program and its associated programs (Netweaver and Criteium Decision Plus) allow the user to build a model that applies to a specific project. Pertinent data is then entered into the model and the program then returns a range of alternatives or suggestions to choose from. In the following two to three years after the interim designation, data would be collected on route use, biologically sensitive areas, culturally sensitive areas, and socio-economic values of areas. This data would then be used to make decisions as to which routes that pass through sensitive habitat or cultural areas would be designated closed, open, or for limited use.

In the interim designation, routes proposed to be open would be designated by a unique symbol

fixed to a fiberglass post. Routes proposed to be closed would be marked by a route closed sticker fixed to a fiberglass post. There will be signs posted at all entrance points to the ACECs with information about the symbol that is posted on designated routes. For routes designated as open, the fiberglass post would be placed at the disturbed edge of the roadbed. For routes designated as closed, the fiberglass post would be placed in the center of the roadbed. The official policy for the route designations within the ACECs would be “routes are closed unless designated and posted open”. This would prevent attempts of vandalism from confusing public land users as to the status of the routes. This is because an act of vandalism to a sign designating a route as open would in effect limit its use until the route is able to be resigned. While the official policy towards route designation will be “routes are closed unless designated and posted open”, closed routes will initially be posted as closed and the signage will be maintained, this policy will be used to deal with cases of extreme or frequent vandalism, and for cases of new routes that may proliferate after the designation.

Rehabilitation of the closed routes would involve raking out the tracks along with a process called vertical mulching and possibly planting live vegetation. In the event of a wildfire or another type of emergency, emergency personnel would be authorized to drive on any closed route if it would facilitate or expedite response to the emergency. Additionally, if there is a need for a fire line to stop the spread of a wildfire, firefighting personnel would be authorized to and it would be preferred to cut the fire line into a previously existing disturbance. In this case the existing disturbance would be a closed route. These actions would help to minimize new disturbances associated with fire suppression or emergency response. During the time period that the interim designation is in effect, BLM Law Enforcement Rangers may drive on a route that has been designated as closed if it is associated with pursuing a person who is in violation of the interim route designation or to patrol an area that has frequent violations of the route closures.

Kiosks would be installed at strategic areas in the ACECs. There would be eight kiosks installed to be used in conjunction with one previously existing kiosk. The kiosks area would consist of a small pullout and an interpretive board with a map of the area (ACEC) where the kiosk is located. There would also be brochures available at each kiosk. The brochures would contain a map of the transportation plan so that area users would be able to navigate the ACECs without becoming lost and/or deviating from the designated route system. Kiosk placement will be analyzed in a separate EA.

A monitoring program would be implemented after the interim designation of the routes in the ACECs. The monitoring program would consist of sign monitoring and maintenance, monitoring route use through strategically placed route use counters, and documentation of new off route trespasses. The monitoring program would be carried out by the BLM Roads Coordinator and volunteers from the local communities. Data from the monitoring program along with associated data of sensitive habitat areas would be used in making decisions for the final designation of routes.

In Wilderness areas, motor vehicles are prohibited. No routes would be proposed for OHV designation within wilderness in any alternative. Consistent with BLM policy for management of Wilderness Study Areas (WSA), all alternatives (except the no action alternative) would close

routes to motor vehicles within WSAs if they were not documented as motor vehicle routes (ways or roads) during the 1980 wilderness inventory. In the Virgin Mountain Instant Study Area (ISA) (ISAs are managed as WSAs), this would include closure of routes marked AA1 thru AA7. These routes would be closed at the closest point outside the Virgin Mountain ISA that would most easily facilitate a vehicle turnaround with minimum impact to adjacent resources. Use or maintenance by the grazing permittee may be authorized as needed to facilitate livestock movement. In the Million Hills WSA routes marked HH1 thru HH6, and HH9, would be closed. Routes marked BB1 thru BB10, CC1 thru CC5, DD1 thru DD6, EE1, FF1, GG1 thru GG3, HH7, HH8, II1, and JJ1 thru JJ9 would be closed. Routes marked A thru Z, A1 thru Z1, A2 thru Z2, A3 thru Z3, A4 thru Z4 and A5 thru C5 within Gold Butte A, B, C ACECs, Mormon Mesa ACEC, Coyote Springs ACEC, and Virgin River ACEC would be closed.

North and east of the junction of 93 and 168 there is a development called Coyote Springs that is currently being built out. The land that the Coyote Springs development is building on was conveyed to Aerojet General Corporation in the Nevada-Florida Land Exchange Authorization Act of 1988. Within these private lands is a portion of land that was reserved as public land to be leased to Aerojet General Corporation. The current lessee under the lease is Coyote Springs Investment LLC (CSI). The lands subject to the lease are closed to general public access pursuant to the terms of the lease. There were no reservations by the United States for the Old 93 segment located on the leased lands. Nevada Department of Transportation relinquished its interest in the Old 93 segment in 1971. Clark County relinquished its RS2477 claim to the Old 93 segment in 1990. Pursuant to terms of the lease, the lessee is obligated to prohibit the use of any recreational off-road and all terrain vehicles. At the request of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service CSI has agreed to (1) establish a resource management area encompassing all of the leased lands in Clark County; (2) close the resource management area to motorized traffic; and (3) close and rehabilitate the lands impacted by the Old 93/168 intersection. As a result of the terms of the lease and the resulting agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service the short branch routes that lead into the western portion of the Mormon Mesa ACEC would be designated as closed to avoid management conflicts on the leased lands. For connectivity purposes, Old Route 93 is shown on the maps. Old Route 93 will be closed to motorized vehicles in the future as a result of the previously described process. The following routes would be closed under the proposed alternative (Alternative A) and alternative B: routes labeled KK1 through KK7.

The maps of this route designation may show routes outside of the boundaries of the ACECs. This project is only designating routes within the boundaries of the ACECs. Additional routes are shown for connectivity purposes only and will not be designated through this process.

The following cultural ACECs would be managed according to the surrounding area management objectives: Gold Butte Townsite, Red Rock Spring, Whitney Pocket, and Devils Throat.

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE (ALTERNATIVE A)

This interim designation strategy would initially designate all routes that existed prior to 1998 as open. Exceptions to the 1998 interim strategy would include specific routes listed above in the “commonalities” statement with a double letter prefix followed by a number. The routes with a double letter prefix were selected for closure because either there was an extremely pressing resource concern that warranted the closure or because of policy that is in place that would prevent the BLM from designating these routes as open. This designation would be an interim step to provide protection to the ACECs while a landscape analysis model is being built and utilized. Alternative A would close approximately 94 miles of routes.

ALTERNATIVE B

This interim designation strategy would tier off of Alternative A in the designation of routes as they existed in 1998. Exceptions to the 1998 interim strategy would include specific routes listed above in the “commonalities” statement with a double letter prefix followed by a number. The routes with a double letter prefix were selected for closure because either there was an extremely pressing resource concern that warranted the closure or because of policy that is in place that would prevent the BLM from designating these routes as open. This designation would be an interim step to provide protection to the ACECs while a landscape analysis model is being built and utilized. Additional routes labeled 1 thru 33 would be closed in alternative B. The additional route closures would be located in the desert tortoise ACECs for the purpose of defragmenting desert tortoise habitat and effectively creating larger blocks of contiguous habitat for desert tortoise as well as other MSHCP covered species. Alternative B would close approximately 152 miles of routes.

NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

Under the no action alternative road designation would not take place and the affected ACECs would be left as they currently are.

ALTERNATIVES DROPPED FROM CONSIDERATION

During the public meetings held in June and July of 2006 there was an additional alternative being considered named Alternative C. Alternative C has been dropped from consideration because it was found to be not in conformance with the Las Vegas Field Office Bureau of Land Management Resource Management Plan and final Environmental Impact Statement (October 1998).

DESCRIPTION OF THE AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Critical Element	Affected?		Critical Element	Affected?	
	Yes	No		Yes	No
ACECs	X		Noxious Weeds	X	
Air Quality		X	Threatened & Endangered Species	X	
Cultural Resources	X		Wastes Hazardous / Solid		X
Environmental Justice		X	Water Quality		X
Farm Lands, Prime / Unique		X	Wetlands and Riparian	X	
Floodplains	X		Wildland Fires	X	
Nat. Amer. Religious Concerns		X	Wilderness	X	
			Migratory Birds		X

Affected Environment for the Proposed Action (Alternative A)

Wilderness

Four wilderness areas are located in the planning area: Jumbo Springs, Lime Canyon, Arrow Canyon, and Mormon Mountains Wilderness areas. Motor vehicles are prohibited in wilderness areas (with limited exceptions). Two Wilderness Study Areas are located in the planning area: Million Hills, and Virgin Mountain (Virgin Mountain is an Instant Study Area which is managed as a WSA). WSAs are managed so that their suitability for designation, by Congress, as Wilderness is not impaired. BLM’s Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review guides the management of those areas. Motorized and mechanized vehicles are only allowed within WSAs on existing ways. BLM does not establish new discretionary uses in WSAs that are incompatible with possible wilderness designation.

Several ways or roads present previous to 1998 were identified in the 1980 WSA inventory. However, several other routes present previous to 1998 were not identified as roads or ways. These routes are experiencing increasing motor vehicle use with the development and expanding

popularity of the ATV. In the Virgin Mountains, routes marked AA1 thru AA7 were originally established as several livestock routes; a range improvement to facilitate cattle moving through a steep and heavily vegetated area that was restrictive to grazing by cattle. These livestock routes were not constructed or maintained for the purpose of motorized vehicle traffic. At the time of the wilderness inventory of 1980, these routes were recognized as range improvements, not as vehicle ways or roads.

ACEC

This project encompasses six ACECs; Gold Butte A, B, and C, Mormon Mesa, Virgin River, and Coyote Springs. Contained within these larger ACECs there are four smaller ACECs named Gold Butte Townsites, Red Rock Spring, Whitney Pocket, and Devil's Throat. These smaller ACECs will be managed in a manner that is consistent with the surrounding areas. These areas have been designated as ACECs to protect cultural sites, biological and scenic values, natural hazards, and desert tortoise. These ACECs provide excellent opportunities for recreation in some of the more remote areas of the Mojave Desert. A wide variety of casual recreational activities are engaged by the public in these ACECs. The recreational activities that occur in these ACECs include but are not limited to the following, hiking, photography, ATV use, four wheeled drive vehicle use, off road motorcycle use, bird and nature watching, hunting, exploration of historic areas, and camping.

Cultural Resources

Cultural resources are the tangible remains of past human activities, identifiable through inventory, historical documentation, or oral history. Cultural resources include prehistoric and historic-period sites, features, and artifacts that can range in complexity from a single stone tool or bottle fragment to a large prehistoric village or historic period town site. The Las Vegas BLM District encompasses a unique region, being located at the interface of three distinct geographical zones: Colorado Plateau, Mojave Desert, and the Great Basin.

Each zone shows evidence of the distinctive cultural groups who adapted to the natural resources of the area. All prehistoric Native Americans employed hunting and gathering methods to acquire at least some of their foods; these resource collection practices are reflected in the archeological record. Seeds, nuts, roots, and pods were collected from a variety of plants, including cacti, agave, yucca, grasses, mesquite, and pinyon pine. Stone tools such as manos and metates used to grind the seeds and nuts, knives, sharpened stone flakes, and chopping tools are found in archeological site that record these plant procurement and processing activities.

Other types of prehistoric archeological sites include stone features such as rock rings and rock art locales. Rock art is defined as the modification of a rock face by pecking (petroglyphs) or painting (pictographs) figures or designs. Rock art panels are common in certain areas, generally near water sources, along game trails, or near resource procurement locations.

Historic use of southern Nevada began with the exploration of routes such as the Old Spanish Trail/Mormon Road (1844 to the early 1900's). Ranching was well underway by the late 1800s; completion of railroad construction in 1905 established Las Vegas as a vital Nevada community.

Historic foundations from mining sites, ranches, and quarries are found within the planning area. These site types are often difficult to identify and interpret; a trash heap and fragments of tent platforms are the only remnants of the mining tent town at Gold Butte. These historic have the potential to document adaptations and technological changes not often recorded in the archival record of this region.

Cultural resources may be found within any of the ACECs that are incorporated into this EA even though only one ACEC (Gold Butte part B) has been designated as such to protect historic and prehistoric archeological sites. Archeological resources that may be found in these areas are rock shelters and caves, roasting pits, campsites (historic and prehistoric), stone tools, projectile points, rock art, lithic scatters, pottery fragments, historic mining artifacts, historic mining towns, and historic mines.

There are two known historic routes that traverse these ACECs, they are the Old Spanish Trail and the Arrowhead trail. Throughout these ACECs there are historic mining townsites and camps.

Wetlands and Riparian

There are many springs and seeps located within the ACECs that are slated for route designation. Within the Virgin River ACEC the Virgin River flows out to Lake Mead. The Virgin River supports an extensive wetland/riparian area. This area provides habitat for many species including some species that are listed under the Endangered Species Act. Another extensive riparian is the Meadow Valley Wash. The water flows through this area are not as large as the Virgin River, but the riparian area associated with it provides habitat for many different species of wildlife. During dry years some springs may become noticeably smaller or may even be considered a seep. During wet years some springs will accommodate unusually high flows and seeps may swell with enough water to be considered springs. Also during wet years, areas that were previously dry may become wet or even flow with water and become seasonal riparian areas that can only be seen during extremely wet years. The winter rains of 2005 provided so much precipitation that the BLM and the public were able to see these seasonal riparian areas appear in unexpected areas.

Riparian areas and wetlands are very productive and valuable parts of the ecosystem. They act as transition zones between the aquatic and upland areas increasing benefits such as fish and wildlife habitat, erosion control, forage, late season stream flow, and water quality. Wetlands and riparian areas provide benefits by acting as reservoirs within the watershed regulating late season stream flow and increasing groundwater recharge. Since these areas generally have saturated soils, they are more vulnerable to soil compaction, making re-vegetation a difficult task.

The riparian area is the section of land and water forming a transition from aquatic to terrestrial ecosystems along streams and lakes, including wetlands, springs, seeps and floodplains. Riparian areas support high soil moisture and a diverse assemblage of vegetation and performs important ecological functions. They also act as a filtering system, stabilize banks, and regulate water quality. Riparian vegetation provides a buffer by slowing down water and settling out

sediment and nutrients. Strong root masses decrease surface erosion by stabilizing stream banks and absorbing floodwater without degrading during high stream flows. The vegetative cover in riparian areas provides a thermal break from radiant sunlight reaching the water surface. This keeps the water from increasing in temperature and reducing dissolved oxygen levels. Management activities within riparian areas directly impact stability, soil compaction and increasing sedimentation.

Minerals

Mining has occurred in the past within the ACECs that will be impacted by this EA. Currently there is one active mine located to the south and east of the historic Gold Butte townsite.

Wording in the Las Vegas RMP states the following regarding minerals and mining within these ACECs; Coyote Springs, Mormon Mesa, Gold Butte Part A- Closed to locatable minerals and solid leasables. Open to fluid mineral leasing subject to no surface occupancy stipulations. Allow mineral site ROW only within ½ mile of the centerline of Federal Aid Highways. Allow FUP (Free Use Permit) only within ½ mile of the centerline of federal and state highways and specified county roads. Issue FUP to government entities only. Gold Butte Part B- Closed to locatable minerals (a mineral subject to location under the 1872 mining laws such as gold, silver, copper), salables (such as rock, sand, and gravel), and solid leasables (minerals that may be acquired under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 such as coal, oil, gas, and geothermal resources). Open to fluid minerals subject to timing and special use constraints. Gold Butte Part C- Closed to locatable minerals, salables, and solid leasables. Virgin River- Close to locatable minerals, salables, and solid leasables. Open to fluid minerals subject to no surface occupancy stipulations.

Floodplains

Between the major banks of the Virgin River would be considered floodplains. The Virgin River seasonally will overflow its smaller banks and scour the surrounding landscape. This scouring can also occur any time of year during periods of high rainfall. The Virgin River is constantly changing within the wider banks of its large floodplains. These floodplain areas provide a very unique habitat with a very nutrient rich soil resulting from the organic material that gets deposited during high water events. The only area that floodplains would be affected by this route designation is where the Virgin River runs through or adjacent to the Virgin River ACEC.

Threatened and Endangered Species

This project encompasses six ACECs; Gold Butte A, B, and C, Mormon Mesa, Virgin River, and Coyote Springs. Gold Butte Part A, Mormon Mesa, and Coyote Springs ACECs are for the purpose of protecting desert tortoise habitat. Desert tortoise habitat elements are present in all of these ACECs, but to a lesser extent in the ACECs named Gold Butte Part B, and C, and Virgin River.

When basic habitat requirements are met the desert tortoise can survive and reproduce within the

varied vegetation communities of the Mojave region. These habitat requirements include sufficient suitable plants for forage and cover, suitable substrate for burrow and nest sites, and freedom from disturbance. Throughout most of the Mojave region, the desert tortoise occurs primarily on flats and bajadas with soils ranging from sand to sandy-gravel characterized by scattered shrubs and abundant inter-shrub space for herbaceous plant growth. Desert tortoise may also be found on rocky terrain and side slopes.

Factors causing the decline of desert tortoise are primarily human related and are listed as follows: Collection for pets, food, or commercial trade, vehicle collisions along roadways, increased predation by ravens, and habitat loss, fragmentation, and degradation resulting from development, cross country OHV travel, unauthorized dump areas, and an increase in raven perch sites to name a few reasons of habitat decline issues.

In the Virgin River and Mormon Mesa ACECs there is a potential for southwestern willow flycatchers to occur. If present, these birds would be found in the riparian areas of the Virgin River or the Meadow Valley wash. Route closures and restoration activities would not be occurring directly within the riparian areas of these systems.

Within the Virgin River, which borders the Virgin River ACEC there is an endangered fish species called the Virgin River chub. The Virgin River chub is native to both the Virgin River and the Muddy River, but is only considered endangered within the Virgin River. Route closures and restoration activities would not be occurring directly within the riparian or watercourse areas of the Virgin River.

Noxious Weeds

Noxious weeds are found throughout the Las Vegas Field Office. These weeds tend to out compete and displace native vegetation. Weeds are dispersed through a variety of methods such as cattle, wild animals, and humans moving through the landscape as well as wind and water. Weeds tend to establish along the disturbed edges of roadways and are very easily distributed further along the roadways by vehicle, and animal movement through these weed source population areas. Wind and water further distribute weed seeds away from source populations into areas that humans visit less often. As weeds displace native vegetation, both cover and food are lost to native animals found in those areas.

Wildland Fires

Historically, fire occurrence in the Mojave has been low. When fires did occur they were generally small. Small fire size was a result of large interstitial spaces between shrubs. In the past few years the Mojave region has seen an increase in both fire frequency and fire size. The year 2005 was a particularly bad year for the Mojave region, over 1 million acres were burned in fires throughout Southern Nevada alone. This increase in fire frequency and size has been primarily attributed to the proliferation of invasive annual grasses. These grasses provide a continuous fuel bed within the interstitial spaces between shrubs as well as growing very thickly within and immediately around shrubs. Red brome and schizmous grasses are the primary species that are effecting the increase in fires.

Environmental Impacts for the Proposed Action (Alternative A)

Wilderness

Proposed Action and Alternatives are consistent with management of Wilderness and WSAs. Those routes proposed for designation for continued OHV use in the WSAs were identified in the 1980 wilderness inventory. The proposal is consistent with BLM policy which allows designations of existing ways. In the Virgin Mountains, certain routes were originally established as a series of livestock routes, and were recognized as continuing to serve that purpose in the 1980 wilderness inventory. The closure of these routes to vehicle use is consistent with BLM policy of restricting vehicle use to ways identified in the wilderness inventory, and will prevent the impairment of the area's suitability for Congressional designation as Wilderness. This proposal would be consistent with, and not affect Wilderness areas.

ACEC

This plan does not dictate what recreational activities can or cannot be engaged in within the ACEC's. The purpose of this plan is not to restrict specific recreational activities conducted within these ACEC's. The purpose of this plan is to limit motorized travel to designated routes in order to protect the resources found in these areas from route proliferation. The route designations should have a positive impact on the ACECs by decreasing route density therefore decreasing impacts to threatened, endangered, or sensitive species that occupy these areas. This proposal would have a beneficial affect to the preservation of the ACECs.

Cultural Resources

The definition of impacts to cultural resources has a conceptual range from maximum to minimum disturbance. The maximum disturbance orientation defines impacts to cultural resources as limited to the destruction of those qualities that would qualify the resources as eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). In such cases, adverse impacts can be mitigated through consultation under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. For example, if cultural resources are destroyed through permitting a federal action, then a data recovery plan could presumably mitigate those impacts or effects.

The BLM guidelines for cultural resources inventory states that the effect of a proposed undertaking will be determined for each "significant property," that is, those cultural properties that are listed in or determined eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Any action that alters the characteristics of a significant property that qualify it for listing in the NRHP is considered an "effect." An "adverse effect" diminishes the integrity of a significant property's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association. "Adverse effects" include but are not limited to the physical destruction or alteration of the character of the property's setting such as the introduction of visual, audible, or atmospheric elements that are out of character with the property or its setting. Any action or undertaking that does not effect a property either directly or indirectly, or if the property is determined not eligible for nomination to the National Register, than the action may be determined to have "no effect."

Interim designations will provide protection to cultural resources by closing an additional number of roads that have proliferated since the 1998 inventory. With the exponential growth in southern Nevada, the location of significant cultural sites has spread by word of mouth. Many difficult to reach and rarely visited sites now have roads leading directly to them. These roads would be designated closed and provide law enforcement with ability to enforce the closure.

In contrast, interim designation will alter traffic patterns, which may effect cultural resources by increasing the amount of traffic on any particular road. Prior to the implementation of the final designation status, all section 106 requirements will be met unless otherwise stated in an agreement between the Nevada State BLM and the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Following implementation, an extensive monitoring program will be initiated to analyzed the effects of the transportation plan in the ACECs and determine where additional enforcement or signage is needed. This project should have a beneficial affect to cultural sites.

Wetlands and Riparian

Route designation in areas of wetlands or riparian systems would have a beneficial affect to these sensitive areas. Wetlands and riparian systems are relatively fragile systems in the Mojave Desert. They are small islands of relief and habitat for a wide variety of animal and plant species. For other animal species they are the only means to obtain water and survive in an otherwise inhospitable environment. Route designation would prevent further degradation of wetland and riparian resources by ensuring that vehicle users stay on designated routes and helping to prevent the creation of new routes within these areas.

Minerals

Currently there is one active mine located within these ACECs. The area within these ACECs are closed to future mineral claims. Any claims filed prior to the segregation of the ACECs has the ability to be validated. If there is a valid mineral claim in an area of the ACEC that is not accessible, either as a direct result of the route designation or because there was never access to the specific area, BLM could authorize construction of a new road to the claim pending validation of the claim. The previous sentence is not to say that all claims will eventually have a road to them, but that if it is a valid claim and all of the proper channels have been followed and everything is approved that the possibility exists of access being provided to the claim.

Access to a valid unpatented mining claim is a non-discretionary right of the miner and is not subject to a right of way permit. Under the mining regulations, the BLM has the authority to approve the route and method of access so as to minimize surface disturbance. A mineral patent issued under the mining laws does not invest the owners with a “legal right of way” to the patented mining claim across federal lands. Ingress and egress across public lands to a patented mining claim or other patented property does require a right of way permit.

There are currently 124 unpatented mining claims within the six ACECs. The breakdown of where these claims are located is as follows: Mormon Mesa ACEC – 6, Gold Butte ACEC Part A – 5, and Gold Butte ACEC Part B – 106. A review of the proposed route closures does not appear to conflict with any access issues at this time.

Floodplains

As there are no new roads being proposed within the floodplain, this plan should not have any adverse affect on the floodplains.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The impacts on threatened and endangered species that are associated with this project are expected to be positive ones. Closures of routes within these ACECs would defragment desert tortoise habitat. This should reduce the amount of desert tortoise that would be taken through either death, harassment, or taken for pets. Route closure and the associated informational sites should make people more aware of the desert tortoise which should help to lessen impacts on tortoise along routes that are designated as open. During rehabilitation activities a desert tortoise monitor would be on site to ensure that any possible negative effects to tortoise are mitigated. During rehabilitation activities tortoise mitigation would primarily involve avoidance of any desert tortoise encountered. Route designation and closures should have a beneficial affect on individual tortoises and desert tortoise population levels.

The Southwestern willow flycatcher and the Virgin River chub should not be negatively impacted by this proposal. Because the route designation is intended to benefit habitat if there are any impacts to these species they would most likely be positive ones. Some beneficial impacts to the Virgin River chub that may result from this proposal are decreased sediment loads in runoff that flows into the Virgin River. Some beneficial impacts to the Southwestern willow flycatcher that may result from this proposal are decreased harassment during the nesting and breeding season due to the fact that no off route travel will be permitted through this route designation. If any impacts were anticipated during the rehabilitation phase of this project they would be completely mitigated through timing restraints or other means. No impacts are expected to these species at this time because restoration activities are not expected to occur within critical habitat of either of these species.

Noxious Weeds

This route designation plan should reduce the spread of noxious weeds throughout the area by restricting vehicular access to designated routes. This should have a positive impact on the area by slowing habitat degradation resulting from the spread of noxious weeds throughout the landscape. It should also have an impact on the BLM budget by reducing the amount of money that needs to be spent on weed suppression because there should be less new outbreaks of noxious weeds.

Wildland Fires

In the Mojave region roads work as very effective fire breaks due to the fact that the vegetation is relatively low growing which results in shorter flame lengths than in a forested situation. When roads are closed in the Mojave region there is a high potential for them to be revegetated, at least initially by a thick bed of invasive grass. This would create a continuous fuel bed that may allow fires to spread into areas that may have been saved from burning if the road was not

vegetated. Allowing fire personnel to travel on roads that have been closed during emergency fire situations should help to alleviate some of the problems associated with fire and a roadbed that is revegetating.

Affected Environment for Alternative B

Wilderness

Four wilderness areas are located in the planning area: Jumbo Springs, Lime Canyon, Arrow Canyon, and Mormon Mountains Wilderness areas. Motor vehicles are prohibited in wilderness areas (with limited exceptions). Two Wilderness Study Areas are located in the planning area: Million Hills, and Virgin Mountain (Virgin Mountain is an Instant Study Area which is managed as a WSA). WSAs are managed so that their suitability for designation, by Congress, as Wilderness is not impaired. BLM's Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review guides the management of those areas. Motorized and mechanized vehicles are only allowed within WSAs on existing ways. BLM does not establish new discretionary uses in WSAs that are incompatible with possible wilderness designation.

Several ways or roads present previous to 1998 were identified in the 1980 WSA inventory. However, several other routes present previous to 1998 were not identified as roads or ways. These routes are experiencing increasing motor vehicle use with the development and expanding popularity of the ATV. In the Virgin Mountains, routes marked AA1 thru AA7 were originally established as several livestock routes; a range improvement to facilitate cattle moving through a steep and heavily vegetated area that was restrictive to grazing by cattle. These livestock routes were not constructed or maintained for the purpose of motorized vehicle traffic. At the time of the wilderness inventory of 1980, these routes were recognized as range improvements, not as vehicle ways or roads.

ACEC

This project encompasses six ACECs; Gold Butte A, B, and C, Mormon Mesa, Virgin River, and Coyote Springs. Contained within these larger ACECs there are four smaller ACECs named Gold Butte Townsites, Red Rock Spring, Whitney Pocket, and Devil's Throat. These smaller ACECs will be managed in a manner that is consistent with the surrounding areas. These areas have been designated as ACECs to protect cultural sites, biological and scenic values, natural hazards, and desert tortoise. These ACECs provide excellent opportunities for recreation in some of the more remote areas of the Mojave Desert. A wide variety of casual recreational activities are engaged by the public in these ACECs. The recreational activities that occur in these ACECs include but are not limited to the following, hiking, photography, ATV use, four wheeled drive vehicle use, off road motorcycle use, bird and nature watching, hunting, exploration of historic areas, and camping.

Cultural Resources

Cultural resources are the tangible remains of past human activities, identifiable through inventory, historical documentation, or oral history. Cultural resources include prehistoric and

historic-period sites, features, and artifacts that can range in complexity from a single stone tool or bottle fragment to a large prehistoric village or historic period town site. The Las Vegas BLM District encompasses a unique region, being located at the interface of three distinct geographical zones: Colorado Plateau, Mojave Desert, and the Great Basin.

Each zone shows evidence of the distinctive cultural groups who adapted to the natural resources of the area. All prehistoric Native Americans employed hunting and gathering methods to acquire at least some of their foods; these resource collection practices are reflected in the archeological record. Seeds, nuts, roots, and pods were collected from a variety of plants, including cacti, agave, yucca, grasses, mesquite, and pinyon pine. Stone tools such as manos and metates used to grind the seeds and nuts, knives, sharpened stone flakes, and chopping tools are found in archeological site that record these plant procurement and processing activities.

Other types of prehistoric archeological sites include stone features such as rock rings and rock art locales. Rock art is defined as the modification of a rock face by pecking (petroglyphs) or painting (pictographs) figures or designs. Rock art panels are common in certain areas, generally near water sources, along game trails, or near resource procurement locations.

Historic use of southern Nevada began with the exploration of routes such as the Old Spanish Trail/Mormon Road (1844 to the early 1900's). Ranching was well underway by the late 1800s; completion of railroad construction in 1905 established Las Vegas as a vital Nevada community.

Historic foundations from mining sites, ranches, and quarries are found within the planning area. These site types are often difficult to identify and interpret; a trash heap and fragments of tent platforms are the only remnants of the mining tent town at Gold Butte. These historic sites have the potential to document adaptations and technological changes not often recorded in the archival record of this region.

Cultural resources may be found within any of the ACECs that are incorporated into this EA even though only one ACEC (Gold Butte part B) has been designated as such to protect historic and prehistoric archeological sites. Archeological resources that may be found in these areas are rock shelters and caves, roasting pits, campsites (historic and prehistoric), stone tools, projectile points, rock art, lithic scatters, pottery fragments, historic mining artifacts, historic mining towns, and historic mines.

There are two known historic routes that traverse these ACECs, they are the Old Spanish Trail and the Arrowhead trail. Throughout these ACECs there are historic mining townsites and camps.

Wetlands and Riparian

There are many springs and seeps located within the ACECs that are slated for route designation. Within the Virgin River ACEC the Virgin River flows out to Lake Mead. The Virgin River supports an extensive wetland/riparian area. This area provides habitat for many species including some species that are listed under the Endangered Species Act. Another extensive riparian area is the Meadow Valley Wash. The water flows through this area are not as large as the Virgin River, but the riparian area associated with it provides habitat for many different

species of wildlife. During dry years some springs may become noticeably smaller or may even be considered a seep. During wet years some springs will accommodate unusually high flows and seeps may swell with enough water to be considered springs. Also during wet years, areas that were previously dry may become wet or even flow with water and become seasonal riparian areas that can only be seen during extremely wet years. The winter rains of 2005 provided so much precipitation that the BLM and the public were able to see these seasonal riparian areas appear in unexpected areas.

Riparian areas and wetlands are very productive and valuable parts of the ecosystem. They act as transition zones between the aquatic and upland areas increasing benefits such as fish and wildlife habitat, erosion control, forage, late season stream flow, and water quality. Wetlands and riparian areas provide benefits by acting as reservoirs within the watershed regulating late season stream flow and increasing groundwater recharge. Since these areas generally have saturated soils, they are more vulnerable to soil compaction, making re-vegetation a difficult task.

The riparian area is the section of land and water forming a transition from aquatic to terrestrial ecosystems along streams and lakes, including wetlands, springs, seeps and floodplains. Riparian areas support high soil moisture and a diverse assemblage of vegetation and perform important ecological functions. They also act as a filtering system, stabilize banks, and regulate water quality. Riparian vegetation provides a buffer by slowing down water and settling out sediment and nutrients. Strong root masses decrease surface erosion by stabilizing stream banks and absorbing floodwater without degrading during high stream flows. The vegetative cover in riparian areas provides a thermal break from radiant sunlight reaching the water surface. This keeps the water from increasing in temperature and reducing dissolved oxygen levels. Management activities within riparian areas directly impact stability, soil compaction and increasing sedimentation.

Minerals

Mining has occurred in the past within the ACECs that will be impacted by this EA. Currently there is one active mine located to the south and east of the historic Gold Butte townsite.

Wording in the Las Vegas RMP states the following regarding minerals and mining within these ACECs; Coyote Springs, Mormon Mesa, Gold Butte Part A- Closed to locatable minerals and solid leasables. Open to fluid mineral leasing subject to no surface occupancy stipulations. Allow mineral site ROW only within ½ mile of the centerline of Federal Aid Highways. Allow FUP (Free Use Permit) only within ½ mile of the centerline of federal and state highways and specified county roads. Issue FUP to government entities only. Gold Butte Part B- Closed to locatable minerals (a mineral subject to location under the 1872 mining laws such as gold, silver, copper), salables (such as rock, sand, and gravel), and solid leasables (minerals that may be acquired under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 such as coal, oil, gas, and geothermal resources). Open to fluid minerals subject to timing and special use constraints. Gold Butte Part C- Closed to locatable minerals, salables, and solid leasables. Virgin River- Close to locatable

minerals, salables, and solid leasables. Open to fluid minerals subject to no surface occupancy stipulations.

Floodplains

Between the major banks of the Virgin River would be considered floodplains. The Virgin River seasonally will overflow its smaller banks and scour the surrounding landscape. This scouring can also occur any time of year during periods of high rainfall. The Virgin River is constantly changing within the wider banks of its large floodplains. These floodplain areas provide a very unique habitat with a very nutrient rich soil resulting from the organic material that gets deposited during high water events. The only area that floodplains would be affected by this route designation is where the Virgin River runs through or adjacent to the Virgin River ACEC.

Threatened and Endangered Species

This project encompasses six ACECs; Gold Butte A, B, and C, Mormon Mesa, Virgin River, and Coyote Springs. Gold Butte Part A, Mormon Mesa, and Coyote Springs ACECs are for the purpose of protecting desert tortoise habitat. Desert tortoise habitat elements are present in all of these ACECs, but to a lesser extent in the ACECs named Gold Butte Part B, and C, and Virgin River.

When basic habitat requirements are met the desert tortoise can survive and reproduce within the varied vegetation communities of the Mojave region. These habitat requirements include sufficient suitable plants for forage and cover, suitable substrate for burrow and nest sites, and freedom from disturbance. Throughout most of the Mojave region, the desert tortoise occurs primarily on flats and bajadas with soils ranging from sand to sandy-gravel characterized by scattered shrubs and abundant inter-shrub space for herbaceous plant growth. Desert tortoise may also be found on rocky terrain and side slopes.

Factors causing the decline of desert tortoise are primarily human related and are listed as follows: Collection for pets, food, or commercial trade, vehicle collisions along roadways, increased predation by ravens, and habitat loss, fragmentation, and degradation resulting from development, cross country OHV travel, unauthorized dump areas, and an increase in raven perch sites to name a few reasons of habitat decline issues.

In the Virgin River and Mormon Mesa ACECs there is a potential for southwestern willow flycatchers to occur. If present, these birds would be found in the riparian areas of the Virgin River or the Meadow Valley wash. Route closures and restoration activities would not be occurring directly within the riparian areas of these systems.

Within the Virgin River, which borders the Virgin River ACEC there is an endangered fish species called the Virgin River chub. The Virgin River chub is native to both the Virgin River and the Muddy River, but is only considered endangered within the Virgin River. Route closures and restoration activities would not be occurring directly within the riparian or watercourse areas of the Virgin River.

Noxious Weeds

Noxious weeds are found throughout the Las Vegas Field Office. These weeds tend to out compete and displace native vegetation. Weeds are dispersed through a variety of methods such as cattle, wild animals, and humans moving through the landscape as well as wind and water. Weeds tend to establish along the disturbed edges of roadways and are very easily distributed further along the roadways by vehicle, and animal movement through these weed source population areas. Wind and water further distribute weed seeds away from source populations into areas that humans visit less often. As weeds displace native vegetation, both cover and food are lost to native animals found in those areas.

Wildland Fires

Historically, fire occurrence in the Mojave has been low. When fires did occur they were generally small. Small fire size was a result of large interstitial spaces between shrubs. In the past few years the Mojave region has seen an increase in both fire frequency and fire size. The year 2005 was a particularly bad year for the Mojave region. Over 1 million acres were burned in fires throughout Southern Nevada alone. This increase in fire frequency and size has been primarily attributed to the proliferation of invasive annual grasses. These grasses provide a continuous fuel bed within the interstitial spaces between shrubs as well as growing very thickly within and immediately around shrubs. Red brome and schizmous grasses are the primary species that are affecting the increase in fires.

Environmental Impacts for Alternative B

Wilderness

Proposed Action and Alternatives are consistent with management of Wilderness and WSAs. Those routes proposed for designation for continued OHV use in the WSAs were identified in the 1980 wilderness inventory. The proposal is consistent with BLM policy which allows designations of existing ways. In the Virgin Mountains, certain routes were originally established as a series of livestock routes, and were recognized as continuing to serve that purpose in the 1980 wilderness inventory. The closure of these routes to vehicle use is consistent with BLM policy of restricting vehicle use to ways identified in the wilderness inventory, and will prevent the impairment of the area's suitability for Congressional designation as Wilderness. This proposal would be consistent with, and not affect Wilderness areas.

ACEC

This plan does not dictate what recreational activities can or cannot be engaged in within the ACEC's. The purpose of this plan is not to restrict specific recreational activities conducted within these ACEC's. The purpose of this plan is to limit motorized travel to designated routes in order to protect the resources found in these areas from route proliferation. The route designations should have a positive impact on the ACECs by decreasing route density therefore decreasing impacts to threatened, endangered, or sensitive species that occupy these areas. This proposal would have a beneficial affect to the preservation of the ACECs.

Cultural Resources

The definition of impacts to cultural resources has a conceptual range from maximum to minimum disturbance. The maximum disturbance orientation defines impacts to cultural resources as limited to the destruction of those qualities that would qualify the resources as eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). In such cases, adverse impacts can be mitigated through consultation under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. For example, if cultural resources are destroyed through permitting a federal action, then a data recovery plan could presumably mitigate those impacts or effects.

The BLM guidelines for cultural resources inventory states that the effect of a proposed undertaking will be determined for each "significant property," that is, those cultural properties that are listed in or determined eligible for nomination to the NRHP. Any action that alters the characteristics of a significant property that qualify it for listing in the NRHP is considered an "effect." An "adverse effect" diminishes the integrity of a significant property's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association. "Adverse effects" include but are not limited to the physical destruction or alteration of the character of the property's setting such as the introduction of visual, audible, or atmospheric elements that are out of character with the property or its setting. Any action or undertaking that does not effect a property either directly or indirectly, or if the property is determined not eligible for nomination to the National Register, than the action may be determined to have "no effect."

Interim designations will provide protection to cultural resources by closing an additional number of roads that have proliferated since the 1998 inventory. With the exponential growth in southern Nevada, the location of significant cultural sites has spread by word of mouth. Many difficult to reach and rarely visited sites now have roads leading directly to them. These roads would be designated closed and provide law enforcement with ability to enforce the closure.

In contrast, interim designation will alter traffic patterns, which may effect cultural resources by increasing the amount of traffic on any particular road. Prior to the implementation of the final designation status, all section 106 requirements will be met unless otherwise stated in an agreement between the Nevada State BLM and the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Following implementation, an extensive monitoring program will be initiated to analyze the effects of the transportation plan in the ACECs and determine where additional enforcement or signage is needed. This project should have a beneficial affect to cultural sites.

Wetlands and Riparian

Route designation in areas of wetlands or riparian systems would have a beneficial affect to these sensitive areas. Wetlands and riparian systems are relatively fragile systems in the Mojave Desert. They are small islands of relief and habitat for a wide variety of animal and plant species. For other animal species they are the only means to obtain water and survive in an otherwise inhospitable environment. Route designation would prevent further degradation of wetland and riparian resources by ensuring that vehicle users stay on designated routes and helping to prevent the creation of new routes within these areas.

Minerals

Currently there is one active mine located within these ACECs. The areas within these ACECs are closed to future mineral claims. Any claims filed prior to the segregation of the ACECs have the potential to be validated. If there is a valid mineral claim in an area of the ACEC that is not accessible, either as a direct result of the route designation or because there was never access to the specific area, BLM could authorize construction of a new road to the claim pending validation of the claim.

Access to a valid unpatented mining claim is a non-discretionary right of the miner and is not subject to a right of way permit. Under the mining regulations, the BLM has the authority to approve the route and method of access so as to minimize surface disturbance. A mineral patent issued under the mining laws does not invest the owners with a “legal right of way” to the patented mining claim across federal lands. Ingress and egress across public lands to a patented mining claim or other patented property does require a right of way permit.

There are currently 124 unpatented mining claims within the six ACECs. The breakdown of where these claims are located is as follows: Mormon Mesa ACEC – 6, Gold Butte ACEC Part A – 5, and Gold Butte ACEC Part B – 106. A review of the proposed route closures does not appear to conflict with any access issues at this time.

Floodplains

As there are no new roads being proposed within the floodplain, this plan should not have any adverse affect on the floodplains.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The impacts on threatened and endangered species that are associated with this project are expected to be positive ones. Closures of routes within these ACECs would defragment desert tortoise habitat. This should reduce the amount of desert tortoise that would be taken through either death, harassment, or taken for pets. Route closure and the associated informational sites should make people more aware of the desert tortoise which should help to lessen impacts on tortoise along routes that are designated as open. During rehabilitation activities a desert tortoise monitor would be on site to ensure that any possible negative effects to tortoise are mitigated. During rehabilitation activities tortoise mitigation would primarily involve avoidance of any desert tortoise encountered. Route designation and closures should have a beneficial affect on individual tortoises and desert tortoise population levels.

The Southwestern willow flycatcher and the Virgin River chub should not be negatively impacted by this proposal. Because the route designation is intended to benefit habitat if there are any impacts to these species, they would most likely be positive ones. Some beneficial impacts to the Virgin River chub that may result from this proposal are decreased sediment loads in runoff that flows into the Virgin River. Some beneficial impacts to the Southwestern willow flycatcher that may result from this proposal are decreased harassment during the nesting and breeding season due to the fact that no off route travel will be permitted through this route designation. If any impacts were anticipated during the rehabilitation phase of this project they would be completely mitigated through timing restraints or other means. No impacts are

expected to these species at this time because restoration activities are not expected to occur within critical habitat of either of these species.

Noxious Weeds

This route designation plan should reduce the spread of noxious weeds throughout the area by restricting vehicular access to designated routes. This should have a positive impact on the area by slowing habitat degradation resulting from the spread of noxious weeds throughout the landscape.

Wildland Fires

In the Mojave region roads work as very effective fire breaks due to the fact that the vegetation is relatively low growing which results in shorter flame lengths than in a forested situation. When roads are closed in the Mojave region there is a high potential for them to be revegetated, at least initially by a thick bed of invasive grass. This would create a continuous fuel bed that may allow fires to spread into areas that may have been saved from burning if the road was not vegetated. Allowing fire personnel to travel on roads that have been closed during emergency fire situations should help to alleviate some of the problems associated with fire and a roadbed that is revegetating.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The ACECs that are incorporated into this route designation cover a large area in some extremely remote regions within the Mojave Desert. In the past mining and ranching were the primary activities within these areas. There are hundreds of abandoned mine sites that can be found within these ACECs. These sites are primarily concentrated in Gold Butte Parts B and C, but may be found scattered throughout the rest of the ACECs. Many of the historic roads in these areas were created to facilitate access to these mine sites. In certain areas, impacts from mining were large and evidence of these impacts can still be seen today in the form of open mining shafts, historic townsites, mine tailing piles, and historical garbage dumps. There is currently one active mining operation located within Gold Butte ACEC Part B in Cedar Basin. There are numerous existing mine claims located primarily within the Gold Butte ACECs. These mining claims have the potential to be validated upon request and review and could lead to further mining impacts to the area in the future.

Ranching occurred throughout these ACECs in the past. Within the ACECs ranching took the form of cattle grazing with the agricultural side of ranching occurring primarily in the lowland floodplains of the Virgin River, outside of the current boundaries of the ACECs and this projects scope. After the completion of the desert tortoise recovery plan the grazing permits for these areas were bought by Clark County. The buyout of the grazing permits occurred in the mid 1990's as a result of proposed conservation measures recommended for the recovery of the desert tortoise. Even though all of the grazing permits were bought by Clark County and

relinquished, grazing continues to occur within these ACECs (Mormon Mesa and Gold Butte Parts A, B, and C). All of the grazing that is occurring currently within these ACECs is in trespass except for a small strip of land along the Arizona/Nevada border located in Gold Butte Part C. This permit is administered out of the Arizona Strip BLM office and is a winter grazing allotment with little to no impacts to tortoise on the Nevada side of the allotment. Evidence of past grazing and current grazing in trespass can be seen in the form of old barbed wire fences crossing the landscape, historic corrals, and water improvements for cattle watering. Areas that are immediately surrounding water improvements are usually severely denuded of vegetation and/or the vegetation community is altered from many years of heavy use by cattle.

There are some current gas, power, and fiber optic Rights of Way (ROW) that bisect these ACECs along with planned future developments within ROW corridors. Currently there is an underground gas pipeline that bisects the Mormon Mesa ACEC in a general east to west direction. The vegetation that was disturbed in association with this gas line project has just begun to come back and is of a very different composition from the surrounding desert landscape. There is a planned development of another gas pipeline that would run parallel to the existing pipeline and disturb an additional swath of vegetation. There is also a large power line ROW that bisects the Mormon Mesa in a general east to west direction parallel to the gas pipeline. Within the Coyote Springs ACEC there is currently a power line, gas line, and fiber optic line bisecting the ACEC and running in a general north to south direction along the sides of highway 93. Congress has recently designated a half mile wide energy corridor that runs in the same north to south direction within the Coyote Springs ACEC. This corridor is expected to accommodate numerous power lines, fiber optic lines, and a water pipeline within the boundaries of the ACEC. Within the next 10 to 15 years this corridor will probably be full to capacity. There is also a railroad ROW that passes through the Mormon Mesa ACEC, it runs in a north to south direction in the meadow valley wash.

There are many different forms of recreation that people engage in while using these ACECs. A majority of the recreation that is occurring is in the form of casual use although there are a few permitted recreational events. When permitted events happen within these ACECs they are subject to time of year and vehicle cap restraints. Some of the recreational activities that people engage in are hiking, photography, ATV use, four wheeled drive vehicle use, off road motorcycle use, bird and nature watching, hunting, exploration of historic areas, target shooting, and camping. Out of all of these activities motorized recreation is having the largest impact on the landscape. A majority of people using motorized vehicles stay on existing roads, trails, and dry washes. The largest impact from motorized vehicles occurs when users stray from existing routes and drive across country and create new routes or push routes past the current route endpoints. Once these new paths have been driven on a few times they become well established and are considered routes that may be followed by even the most responsible motorized vehicle users. When motorized vehicles travel at fast speeds or travel off of an existing route there is a higher potential for a collision with desert tortoise due to the decreased visibility of the desert tortoise. On some weekends there may be more than 300 people that visit the Gold Butte ACEC. While visiting the Gold Butte area these people engage primarily in motorized recreational activities.

There are numerous areas within these ACECs that are being impacted by recreational target shooters. Specifically within Coyote Springs ACEC there are large areas that are denuded of vegetation, are littered with bullet casings, and have a large amount of trash left behind by the

target shooters.

Cultural resources are heavily impacted through visitor use in these ACECs. Many sites have routes that lead directly to them. These sites are being looted, vandalized (spray painted and shooting), and overused. This abuse is occurring primarily within the Gold Butte ACEC. Roads that lead directly to these cultural sites are the main vector for the overuse and abuse that these sites are receiving. There are probably well over 30 pre-historical sites that are currently negatively impacted within these ACECs and countless historical sites.

Fires have caused a major impact in the past few years within all of the ACECs. With the introduction and spread of non-native annual grasses fuel loads have increased and fires have been able to increase in size due to the increased fuel loading between shrubs. This has resulted in the loss of thousands of acres of desert habitat within the past few years in the ACECs that are included in this proposal alone. Fire damage to desert tortoise habitat throughout the entire Las Vegas Field Office and adjacent BLM field offices is much greater.

This route designation is designed to positively impact and mitigate some of the damage that is occurring within these ACECs. Through route closures the BLM will hopefully reduce the amount of vandalism that is occurring at sensitive cultural sites, improve desert tortoise habitat, and prevent recreational users from creating new routes.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

List of Preparers: *(40 CFR 1502.6)*

Marc Maynard, Wildlife Biologist / Project Lead
James Sippel, Wilderness Planner
Michael Johnson, Planning & Environmental Coordinator
Susanne Rowe, Archaeologist
Christina Lund, Botanist
Lisa Christianson, Air Quality Specialist
David Fanning, Geologist
Robert Wandel, Recreation Planner
Kevin Oliver, Fire Management Officer

Coordination:

Nevada Department of Wildlife
Lake Mead National Recreation Area
Ely BLM
Arizona Strip BLM
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Clark County

Appendix 1

3. Arrow Canyon

Total Acreage = 2,083.68
(Clark County)
(NVN 076867)

T. 14 S., R. 64 E.,

sec. 10,
sec. 11,
sec. 13,
sec. 14,
sec. 15,

NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$, unsurveyed;
SW $\frac{1}{4}$, unsurveyed;
All, unsurveyed;
N $\frac{1}{2}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$, unsurveyed;
NE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, unsurveyed.

T. 14 S., R. 65 E.,

sec. 7,

lots 3, 4, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$.

7. Coyote Springs Tortoise*

Approx. Total Acreage = 50,824.18
(Clark County)
(NVN 076871)

T. 13 S., R. 63 E.,

sec. 5,

700 Feet West of Right-of-Way Nev060729 (Hwy 93) Centerline to Fish & Wildlife (F&W) Management Boundary;

sec. 8,

700 Feet West of Right-of-Way Nev060729 (Hwy 93) Centerline to F&W Management Boundary;

sec. 17,

700 Feet West of Right-of-Way Nev060729 (Hwy 93) Centerline to F&W Management Boundary;

sec. 20,

700 Feet West of Right-of-Way Nev060729 (Hwy 93) Centerline and All South of Right-of-Way Nev065185 (Hwy 168) Centerline;

sec. 21,

All, South of Right-of-Way Nev065185 (NV Hwy 168) Centerline;

sec. 22,

All, South of Right-of-Way Nev065185 (NV Hwy 168) Centerline;

sec. 23,

All, South of Right-of-Way Nev065185 (NV Hwy 168) Centerline;

sec. 26,

NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, South of Right-of-Way Nev065185 (NV Hwy 168) Centerline;

sec. 27,

All;

sec. 28,

NE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, East of F&W Management Boundary;

sec. 29,

All, East of F&W Management Boundary;

sec. 33,

NE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, East of F&W Management Boundary;

sec. 34,

All;

sec. 35,

All.

T. 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ S., R. 63 E.,

sec. 33,

NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, East of F&W Management Boundary, unsurveyed;

sec. 34,

All, unsurveyed;

sec. 35,

All, unsurveyed.

T. 14 S., R. 63.,

sec. 2,

All, unsurveyed;

sec. 3,

All, unsurveyed;

sec. 4,

NE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, East of F&W Management Boundary, unsurveyed;

sec. 9,

E $\frac{1}{2}$, All, East of F&W Management Boundary, unsurveyed;

sec. 10,

All, unsurveyed;

sec. 11,

All, unsurveyed;

sec. 14,

All, unsurveyed;

sec. 15,

All, unsurveyed;

sec. 16,

NE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, East of F&W Management Boundary, unsurveyed;

sec. 21,

E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$, All, East of F&W Management Boundary, unsurveyed;

sec. 22,

All, unsurveyed;

sec. 23,

All, unsurveyed;

sec. 26,

All, unsurveyed;

sec. 27,

All, unsurveyed;

sec. 28,

E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, East of F&W Management Boundary, unsurveyed;

sec. 33,

E $\frac{1}{2}$ E $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, East of F&W Management Boundary, unsurveyed;

sec. 34,

All, unsurveyed;

sec. 35,

All, unsurveyed.

T. 15 S., R. 63 E.,

sec. 2,

All, unsurveyed;

sec. 3,

NE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, East of F&W Management Boundary, unsurveyed;

sec. 4,

All, East of F&W Management Boundary;

sec. 10,

NE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, East of F&W Management Boundary, unsurveyed;

sec. 11,

All, unsurveyed;

sec. 14,

All, unsurveyed;

sec. 15,

NE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, East of F&W Management Boundary, unsurveyed;

sec. 18,

SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, All, South of F&W Management Boundary, unsurveyed;

sec. 19, NW¼, S½, All, South of F&W Management Boundary, unsurveyed;
sec. 20, S½S½, All, South of F&W Management Boundary, unsurveyed;
sec. 21, S½SE¼, All, South of F&W Management Boundary, unsurveyed;
sec. 22, NE¼, E½NW¼, NE¼SW¼, SW¼SW¼, SE¼, All, East and South of
F&W Management Boundary, unsurveyed.

secs. 27 to 34, inclusive, unsurveyed.
T. 16 S., R. 63 E.,
secs. 3 to 10, inclusive;
secs. 15 to 22, inclusive;
secs. 28 to 33, inclusive.
T. 17 S., R. 63 E.,
secs. 7 to 9, inclusive;
secs. 16 to 21, inclusive;
secs. 28 to 31, inclusive;
sec. 32, lots 1, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, NW¼, NW¼SW¼, All, West of Powerline Right-of-
Way N53399 Centerline.

T. 18 S., R. 63 E.,
sec. 5, lots 4, 8, 9, 16, 17, SW¼NW¼, W½SW¼, All, West of Powerline Right-
of-Way N53399 Centerline;
sec. 6, All;
sec. 7, All;
sec. 8, lots 3, 5, 6, 13, 14, All, West of Powerline Right-of-Way N53399
Centerline;
sec. 17, lots 4, 5, 12, All, West of Powerline Right-of-Way N53399 Centerline;
sec. 18, lots 1 to 4, inclusive, 6, 7, NE¼, E½NW¼, E½SW¼, W½SE¼, All, West
of Powerline Right-of-Way N53399 Centerline;
sec. 19, lots 1 to 4, inclusive, 6, 7, 10, 11, W½NE¼, E½NW¼, E½SW¼, W½SE¼,
All, West of Powerline Right-of-Way N53399 Centerline;
sec. 29, lots 4, 22, All, West of Powerline Right-of-Way N53399 Centerline;
sec. 30, lots 1 to 4, inclusive, 6 to 8, inclusive, W½NE¼, E½NW¼, E½SW¼,
W½SE¼, All, West of Powerline Right-of-Way N53399 Centerline;
sec. 31, lots 7, 8, 9, 15, 18, NW¼NE¼, All, West of Powerline Right-of-Way
N53399 Centerline.

T. 19 S., R. 63 E.,
sec. 6, lots 9, All, West of Powerline Right-of-Way N53399 Centerline.

* The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Management Boundary that parallels Right-of-Way
Nev060729 (Hwy 93) is 500 feet west of the right-of-way boundary, or 700 feet from centerline.
This land was transferred to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service under P.L. 107-282.

9. Devil's Throat

Total Acreage = 640.00
(Clark County)
(NVN 076874)

T. 17 S., R. 70 E.,
sec. 26, All.

10. Gold Butte, Part A

Approx. Total Acreage = 185,670.52
(Clark County)
(NVN 076875)

T. 14 S., R. 69 E.,
secs. 24 to 26, inclusive;
secs. 34 to 36, inclusive.
T. 15 S., R. 69 E.,
secs. 1 to 3, inclusive,
sec. 9, All;
sec. 10, All;
sec. 11, N½, N½SW¼, SW¼SW¼, N½SE¼, SE¼SE¼;
sec. 12, All;
sec. 13, All;
sec. 14, NE¼NE¼, S½NE¼, NW¼NW¼, S½NW¼, S½;
sec. 15, All;
sec. 16, All;
secs. 21 to 28, inclusive;
secs. 33 to 36, inclusive.
T. 16 S., R. 69 E.,
secs. 1 to 5, inclusive;
secs. 8 to 17, inclusive;
sec. 18, SE¼SE¼;
sec. 19, E½;
secs. 20 to 28, inclusive;

secs. 33 to 36, inclusive.
T. 17 S., R. 69 E.
secs. 1 to 3, inclusive;
secs. 11 to 14, inclusive;
sec. 24, All;
sec. 25, All, Except Mineral Survey 4709 Patent;
sec. 36, All, Except Mineral Surveys 4709 and 4710 Patents;
T. 18 S., R. 69 E.
sec. 1, lots, 1,2, partial lots 3, 4, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$, Except Mineral Survey 4710 Patent.
T. 14 S., R. 70 E.
sec. 1, All;
secs. 10 to 36, inclusive.
T. 15 S., R. 70 E.
secs. 2 to 11, inclusive;
secs. 15 to 20, inclusive;
sec. 21, All, Except Mineral Survey 1988 Patent;
sec. 22, All, Except Mineral Survey 1988 Patent;
secs. 28 to 33, inclusive.
T. 16 S., R. 70 E.
secs. 4 to 11, inclusive;
secs. 13 to 36, inclusive.
T. 17 S., R. 70 E.
secs. 1 to 36, inclusive.
T. 18 S., R. 70 E.
secs. 1 to 6, inclusive, unsurveyed;
secs. 10 to 15, inclusive, unsurveyed;
secs. 22 to 27, inclusive, unsurveyed;
secs. 34 to 36, inclusive, unsurveyed.
T. 13 S., R. 71 E.
sec. 32, All;
sec. 33, W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, West of Range Improvement (Fence) 0101.
T. 14 S., R. 71 E.
sec. 4, lots 2, 3, 4, partial lot 1, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, West
Range Improvement (Fence) 0101;
secs. 5 to 8, inclusive;
sec. 9, W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, West of Range Improvement (Fence) 0101;
sec. 10, W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$, All, West of Range Improvement (Fence) 0101;
sec. 15, W $\frac{1}{2}$, All, West of Range Improvement (Fence) 0101;
secs. 16 to 20, inclusive;
sec. 21, N $\frac{1}{2}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, West of Range Improvement (Fence) 0101 (and CC 022455 Pipeline);
sec. 22, W $\frac{1}{2}$ W $\frac{1}{2}$, All, West of Range Improvement (Fence) 0101;
sec. 28, W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$, All, West of Range Improvement (Fence) 0101 (and CC 022455 Pipeline);
secs. 29 to 31, inclusive.
T. 16 S., R. 71 E.
sec. 19, All;
secs. 29 to 32, inclusive.
T. 17 S., R. 71 E.
secs. 4 to 10, inclusive, unsurveyed;
secs. 15 to 22, inclusive, unsurveyed;
secs. 27 to 34, inclusive, unsurveyed.
T. 18 S., R. 71 E.
secs. 3 to 10, inclusive, unsurveyed;
secs. 15 to 22, inclusive, unsurveyed;
secs. 27 to 34, inclusive, unsurveyed.
T. 19 S., R. 71 E.
sec. 3, All, unsurveyed;
sec. 4, All, unsurveyed;
sec. 9, All, unsurveyed;
sec. 10, All, unsurveyed;
sec. 15, All, unsurveyed;
sec. 16, All, unsurveyed;
sec. 21, All, unsurveyed;
sec. 22, All, unsurveyed;
sec. 27, All, unsurveyed;

of

sec. 28, All, unsurveyed;
 sec. 33, All, unsurveyed;
 sec. 34, All, unsurveyed.

11. Gold Butte, Part B

Approx. Total Acreage = 122,270.42
 (Clark County)
 (NVN 076876)

T. 17 S., R. 69 E.,

sec. 22, All;
 sec. 23, All;
 sec. 26, All, Except Mineral Survey 4709 Patent;
 sec. 27, All;
 sec. 34, All;
 sec. 35, All, Except Mineral Survey 4709 Patent.

T. 18 S., R. 69 E.,

sec. 2, lots 1 to 4, inclusive, All, Except Mineral Survey 4709 Patent;
 sec. 3, All;
 sec. 9, All;
 sec. 10, All;
 sec. 11, All, Except Mineral Survey 4710 Patent;
 sec. 12, All, Except Mineral Survey 4710 Patent;
 sec. 13, All;
 sec. 14, All, except MS 4710 patent;
 secs. 15 to 17, inclusive;
 secs. 20 to 29, inclusive;
 secs. 32 to 36, inclusive.

T. 19 S., R. 69 E.,

sec. 1, lots 1 to 4, inclusive, All, Except Mineral Survey 4707 Patent;
 sec. 2, lots 1 to 4, inclusive, All, Except Mineral Survey 4707 Patent;
 secs. 3 to 10, inclusive;
 sec. 11, All, Except Mineral Survey 4707 Patent;
 secs. 12 to 36, inclusive.

T. 20 S., R. 69 E.,

secs. 1 to 29, inclusive;
 secs. 33 to 36, inclusive.

T. 18 S., R. 70 E.,

secs. 7 to 9, inclusive, unsurveyed;
 secs. 16 to 21, inclusive, unsurveyed;
 secs. 28 to 33, inclusive, unsurveyed.

T. 19 S., R. 70 E.,

secs. 1 to 36, inclusive, unsurveyed.

T. 20 S., R. 70 E.,

secs. 1 to 11, inclusive, unsurveyed;
 secs. 14 to 22, inclusive, unsurveyed;
 secs. 27 to 34, inclusive, unsurveyed.

T. 19 S., R. 71 E.,

secs. 5 to 8, inclusive, unsurveyed;
 secs. 17 to 20, inclusive, unsurveyed;
 secs. 29 to 32, inclusive unsurveyed.

12. Gold Butte Townsite

Total Acreage = 160.00
 (Clark County)
 (NVN 076877)

T. 19 S., R. 70 E.,

sec. 17, S½NW¼, N½SW¼, unsurveyed.

15. Mormon Mesa Tortoise

Approx. Total Acreage = 146,702.28
 (Clark County)
 (NVN 076880)

T. 13 S., R. 63 E.,

sec. 25, SW¼NW¼, S½, All, South of Right-of-Way Nev065186 (NV Hwy 168)
 Centerline;
 sec. 36, All.

T. 13½ S., R. 63 E.,

sec. 36, All, unsurveyed.

T. 14 S., R. 63 E.,

sec. 1, All, unsurveyed.

T. 13 S., R. 64 E.,

secs. 1 to 5, inclusive, unsurveyed;
 sec. 6, E½, unsurveyed;
 sec. 7, NE¼, E½SE¼, unsurveyed;
 secs. 8 to 17, inclusive, unsurveyed;
 secs. 20 to 29, inclusive, unsurveyed;

sec. 30, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$, All, South of Right-of-Way Nev065015 (NV Hwy 168) Centerline, unsurveyed;

secs. 31 to 36, inclusive, unsurveyed.

T. 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ S., R. 64 E.,
secs. 31 to 35, inclusive, unsurveyed;

sec. 36, W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev060130 (NV Hwy 168), Centerline, unsurveyed.

T. 14 S., R. 64 E.,
secs. 2 to 6, inclusive, unsurveyed;
secs. 8 to 11, inclusive, unsurveyed;
sec. 15, All, unsurveyed;
sec. 16, All, unsurveyed.

T. 13 S., R. 65 E.,
sec. 1, lots 2 to 4, inclusive, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$, W $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$;
secs. 2 to 24, inclusive;
sec. 26, N $\frac{1}{2}$;
sec. 27, N $\frac{1}{2}$;
sec. 28, N $\frac{1}{2}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$;
sec. 29, All;
sec. 30, All;
sec. 31, lots 1 to 3, inclusive, partial lot 4, NE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev060130 (NV Hwy 168) Centerline;
sec. 32, All;
sec. 33, W $\frac{1}{2}$.

T. 13 S., R. 66 E.,
secs. 1 to 5, inclusive;
sec. 6, lots 1 to 4, inclusive, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$;
sec. 7 to 18, inclusive;
sec. 19, lots 1 to 4, inclusive, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$;
secs. 20 to 24, inclusive.

T. 13 S., R. 67 E.,
secs. 1 to 36, inclusive.

T. 14 S., R. 67 E.,
secs. 1 to 5, inclusive;
sec. 6, lots 1, 2, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$;
sec. 7, NE $\frac{1}{4}$;
secs. 8 to 11, inclusive;
sec. 12, N $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate-15) Centerline;
sec. 13, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate-15) Centerline;
sec. 14, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate-15) Centerline;
sec. 15, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate-15) Centerline;
sec. 16, All;
sec. 17, N $\frac{1}{2}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$;
sec. 20, E $\frac{1}{2}$;
sec. 21, N $\frac{1}{2}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate-15) Centerline;
sec. 22, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate-15) Centerline.

T. 13 S., R. 68 E.,
secs. 1 to 32, inclusive;
sec. 33, N $\frac{1}{2}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate-15) Centerline;
sec. 34, N $\frac{1}{2}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev 06475 (Interstate-15) Centerline;
sec. 35, N $\frac{1}{2}$ N $\frac{1}{2}$, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate-15) Centerline;
sec. 36, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate-15) Centerline.

T. 14 S., R. 68 E.,
sec. 4, partial lots 2, 3, 4, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate-15) Centerline;
sec. 5, lots 1 to 4, inclusive, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate-15) Centerline;
sec. 6, lots 1 to 7, inclusive, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate-15) Centerline;
sec. 7, partial lots 1, 2, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate-15) Centerline.

T. 13 S., R. 69 E.,

secs. 1 to 24, inclusive;	
sec. 25,	lots 1, 3, 12, 15, partial lots 4, 6, 8, 11, 14, N½, N½SE¼, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate 15) Centerline;
sec. 26,	lots 1, 5, 8, 10, 11, 14, partial lots 2, 4, 7, 9, 12, 15, 17, N½NE¼, SE¼NE¼, NE¼NW¼ All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate 15) Centerline;
sec. 27,	lots 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, partial lots 2, 4, 6, 10, 12, 16, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate 15) Centerline;
sec. 28,	lots 1, 3, 5, 8, partial lots 2, 4, 6, 9, 14, 16, N½N½, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate 15) Centerline;
sec. 29,	lots 1, 5, 8, 11, 13, partial lots 2, 4, 7, 10, 12, 14, N½NE¼, SW¼NE¼, NW¼, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate 15) Centerline;
sec. 30,	lots 5 to 10, inclusive, 12 to 16, inclusive, 18, 20, 23, 26, partial lots 11, 17, 19, 21, 24, 27, NE¼, NW¼SE¼, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate 15) Centerline;
sec. 31,	partial lots 8, 10, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate 15) Centerline.
<u>T. 13 S., R. 70 E.,</u>	
sec. 4,	SW¼NW¼, W½SW¼, All, West of Boundary Line;
sec. 5,	lots 7, 8, 9, 10, partial lots 5, 6, 11, 12, S½NE¼, S½NW¼, S½, All, West of Boundary Line;
sec. 6,	All;
sec. 7,	All;
sec. 8,	All, West of Boundary Line;
sec. 9,	NW¼NW¼, NW¼, SW¼SW¼NW¼, W½NW¼SW¼, All, West of Boundary Line;
sec. 17,	W½NE¼, W½, W½SE¼, All, West of Boundary Line;
sec. 18,	All;
sec. 19,	All;
sec. 20,	W½NE¼, W½, W½SE¼, All, West of Boundary Line;
sec. 29,	NW¼NE¼, NW¼, W½SW¼, All West of Boundary Line;
sec. 30,	lots 5, 6, 7, 9, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, partial lots 10, 13, NE¼, E½NW¼, NE¼SW¼, N½SE¼, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate 15) Centerline;
sec. 31,	partial lots 9, 11, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate 15) Centerline;
sec. 32,	lots 6, 9, partial lots 3, 4, 7, 10, All North of Right-of-Way Nev06475 (Interstate 15) Centerline and Boundary Line.

* * The “Boundary Line” as denoted in the above legal descriptions for the Mormon Mesa ACEC refers to the Eastern Boundary line of the ACEC, which follows closely the edge of the Mesa and Toquop Wash. However, the line is NOT the Mesa edge, nor Toquop Wash, but follows closely between the two. The “Boundary Line” denoted for the eastern boundary edge of the ACEC is shown on the 7.5” USGS Flat Top Mesa Topographic Map. This map is in the casefile.

18. Red Rock Spring

Total Acreage = 640.00
(Clark County)
(NVN 076883)

T. 17 S., R. 70 E.,

sec. 7,	SE¼;
sec. 8,	SW¼;
sec. 17,	NW¼;
sec. 18,	NE¼;

22. Virgin Mountain (Gold Butte, Part C)

Total Acreage = 37,090.18
(Clark County)
(NVN 076887)

T. 15 S., R. 70 E.,

sec. 1,	All;
secs. 12 to 14, inclusive;	
secs. 23 to 27, inclusive;	
secs. 34 to 36, inclusive.	

T. 16 S., 70 E.,

secs. 1 to 3, inclusive;	
sec. 12,	All.

T. 14 S., 71 E.,

secs. 32 to 34, inclusive.	
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T. 15 S., 71 E.,

secs. 3 to 10, inclusive, unsurveyed;	
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secs. 15 to 22, inclusive, unsurveyed;
secs. 27 to 34, inclusive, unsurveyed.
T. 16 S., 71 E.
secs. 3 to 10, inclusive;
secs. 15 to 18, inclusive;
sec. 20, All;
sec. 21, All;
sec. 22, lots 1,2, E $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$;
sec. 27, lots 2, 3, 4, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$;
sec. 28, All;
sec. 33, All;
sec. 34, All.
T. 17 S., 71 E.
sec. 3, All, unsurveyed.

23. Virgin River

Approx. Total Acreage = 6,312.82
(Clark County)
(NVN 076888)

T. 14 S., R. 69 E.,
sec. 11, SE $\frac{1}{4}$;
sec. 12, W $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$;
sec. 13, All Federal Land North of Gold Butte Back Country Byway Road;
sec. 14, N $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NW $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{2}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$;
sec. 15, SE $\frac{1}{4}$;
sec. 22, NE $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$;
sec. 23, All Federal Land North of Gold Butte Back Country Byway Road;
sec. 26, All Federal Land North of Gold Butte Back Country Byway Road;
sec. 27, All Federal Land North of Gold Butte Back Country Byway Road;
sec. 28, N $\frac{1}{2}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All Federal Land North of Gold Butte Back Country Byway Road;
sec. 29, S $\frac{1}{2}$;
sec. 32, N $\frac{1}{2}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$;
sec. 33, All Federal Land North of Gold Butte Back Country Byway Road.
T. 13 S., R. 70 E.,
sec. 27, lots 8, 10, 17, 19, 20, 21, partial lots 7, 9, 11, 13, 16, 18, All, South of Right-of-Way Nev065014 (Interstate 15) Centerline;
sec. 33, lots 1, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, partial lots 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, SW $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, South of Right-of-Way Nev065014 (Interstate 15) Centerline;
sec. 34, lots 1 to 4, inclusive, 6, 11, NW $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, All Federal Land South of Right-of-Way Nev065014 (Interstate-15) Centerline and North of Right-of-Way Nev07490 (NV Hwy 170) Centerline.
T. 14 S., R. 70 E.,
sec. 3, partial lot 4, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev07490 (NV Hwy 170) Centerline;
sec. 4, lots 2, 3, 4, partial lot 1, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev07490 (NV Hwy 170) Centerline;
sec. 5, lots 1 to 4, inclusive, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, SW $\frac{1}{4}$, N $\frac{1}{2}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev07490 (NV Hwy 170) Centerline;
sec. 6, lots, 1, 2, 6, 7, S $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, E $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$, SE $\frac{1}{4}$;
sec. 7, partial lot 2, 3, N $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{4}$, NE $\frac{1}{4}$ NW $\frac{1}{4}$, All Federal Land North of Right-of-Way Nev07490 (NV Hwy 170) Centerline and North of Gold Butte Back Country Byway Road;
sec. 8, All, North of Right-of-Way Nev07490 (NV Hwy 170) Centerline.

* The Gold Butte Back Country Byway is an RS2477 road authorization.

24. Whitney Pocket

Total Acreage = 160.00
(Clark County)
(NVN 076889)

T. 16 S., R. 70 E.,
sec. 23, SE $\frac{1}{4}$.

Attachments

Alternative A, B, and the No Action overview maps and inset maps