UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Las Vegas Field Office
4701 North Torrey Pines Drive
Las Vegas, Nevada 89130-2301

JULY 2004

RECORD OF DECISION FOR THE APPROVED NEVADA TEST & TRAINING RANGE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN AND FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

NEVADA TEST AND TRAINING RANGE
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
and
RECORD OF DECISION

The approval of this Record of Decision (ROD) for the Nevada Test and Training Range Resource Management Plan (RMP)/Final Environmental Impact Statement, completes the planning and environmental analysis process for this planning effort. The Nevada Test and Training Range RMP provides management guidance and identifies land use decisions to be implemented for management of approximately 2.2 million acres of withdrawn public lands in Clark, Lincoln and Nye Counties.

The approved RMP, which is incorporated by reference and displayed in Attachment A, consists of the proposed decisions described in the Proposed Nevada Test and Training Range RMP. This plan is consistent with the plans, policies of other federal, state, and local government agencies, as well as those of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

This Record of Decision for the Nevada Test and Training Range RMP, fulfills the requirements of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 (43 CFR 1600) and the Military Lands Withdrawal Act of 1999, Public Law 106-65. This document meets the requirements for a Record of Decision as provided in 40 CFR 1505.2.

Based on extensive coordination with Nellis staff, it is also my decision to vacate the existing 1974 Cooperative Agreement between the BLM the United States Air Force, in favor of the management identified and agreed to in this approved RMP.

Although decisions described in this record of decision are not appealable in accordance with BLM regulation 43 CFR 1610.5-2(b), citizens are encouraged to participate during implementation of these decisions. For additional information, contact:

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Approved by: Robert V. Abbey
NEVADA STATE DIRECTOR

7-1-04
DATE

INTRODUCTION

The Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR) Resource Management Plan (RMP) provides a comprehensive framework for managing approximately 2.2 million acres of withdrawn public lands administered by the Las Vegas Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). This RMP replaces the Approved Nellis Air Force Range Resource Plan, dated February 21, 1992. This new plan will guide the management of the resources for the next 20 years (see Figure 1-1). Resource and program emphases in the plan include but are not limited to: threatened and endangered species, wildlife habitat, special status species, riparian areas, livestock grazing, wild horse management, air, soil, water, fire, hazardous materials management, rights-of way, cultural resources and minerals. It is important to note that the decisions in this plan are based on the primary use of the withdrawn area for military training and testing, as required by planning criteria A (PL 106-65) and consistency with the Wild Horse and Burro Act of 1971 (WHBA).

An interdisciplinary team developed the Proposed Resource Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement, often referenced herein as The Plan. The Plan is based primarily on Alternative B presented in the Draft Resource Management Plan (September 2001), and in response to public and internal comments received during the first seven steps of the planning process.

The development of this land-use plan began in 2000 when the public was invited to become involved through participating in several scoping meetings. Over the next year and a half, a Draft Plan and Environmental Impact Statement was developed. It was published and sent to the public for review in September of 2001. Following BLM review of 25 short form letters supporting Alternative B, 4 comment letters and 5 comments from public meetings on the Draft, the Proposed Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement was developed and sent to the public for the 30 day protest period May of 2003. The BLM received one letter of protest that was properly submitted to the BLM Director. The BLM Director dismissed the protest in full. A copy of the protest letter and BLM's response letter addressing specific points of protest are available for public review at the BLM Las Vegas Field Office.

The Plan consists of a combination of management directions, allocations, and guidelines that will direct where actions may occur, the resources conditions to be maintained, and use limitations required to meet management objectives.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PLANNING AREA

The NTTR, formerly known as the Nellis Air Force Range (NAFR), military withdrawal area comprises approximately 3 million acres (Figure 1-1). It is a complex assembly of lands managed or regulated by numerous agencies, federal, state and local. The U. S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), U. S. Air Force, U. S. National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA), U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Nevada Division of Wildlife (NDOW), Nevada Division of Environmental Protection

(NDEP), Nye County, Lincoln County, Clark County Department of Air Quality Management, Clark County Comprehensive Planning and Clark County Regional Transportation Commission all have responsibilities to public resource management or public health and safety on the NTTR. Administratively the NTTR is divided into a North Range and a South Range component, which are largely separated by the NNSA's Nevada Test Site (NTS). The North Range contains the BLM's Nevada Wild Horse Range (NWHR), and the Department of Energy's (DOE) Tonopah Test Range (TTR). Congress withdrew most of the South Range for the joint uses of the USFWS as the Desert National Wildlife Range (DNWR) and the Air Force. The planning area described in this RMP, and shown on Figure 1-1, includes only those public lands in Nevada withdrawn from multiple use under BLM management by P.L. 106-65.

ALTERNATIVES INCLUDING THE PROPOSED ACTION

Four alternatives (A, B, C, and D), including "No Action" (Alternative A) were analyzed in the Draft Resource Management Plan. The alternatives were developed specifically to respond to issues identified by the public, as well as cooperating agency input, during the initial scoping process. Although no single alternative satisfies all concerns expressed, the concerns are addressed in various ways in the four alternatives.

The alternatives were prepared with the one major constraint; all resources are potentially available for meeting the requirements of the Air Force's military mission. Nevertheless, all alternatives are legally feasible and technically possible. The alternatives present a balance between legal requirements to protect, restore, and enhance natural resource values in order to achieve a thriving ecological balance and the requirements of the Air Force.

Alternatives Considered but Dropped from Detailed Analysis

The public identified two areas where they wanted to graze livestock, which were not previously grazed by livestock. Public Law 106-65 specifically states grazing could continue where permitted on the date of enactment of the law. The Air Force indicated that livestock grazing in the areas requested would not be consistent with the military mission. Therefore, this alternative was dropped from further consideration.

Alternatives Considered in the Draft Resource Management Plan

Since the NTTR is not open to public access and is, in essence, a protected area, the planning team did not see a need to prescribe different management under each alternative for each resource, other than wild horses.

The fact that the alternatives are essentially the same for all resources and programs other than wild horses is a function of the purposes of the withdrawal. Air Force requirements include operational areas, target arrays, plus critical safety and security provisions. Maintaining the

wild horse herd must be compatible and supportive of the mission operations, the safety of the range staff, and allowing the Air Force to provide necessary security.

The entire planning area has restricted access for safety and national security reasons. Entry is permitted only for individuals with appropriate security clearances and a need to be on the NTTR. Training and testing missions often close areas of the NTTR for extended periods. For this reason, BLM resource managers must work closely with Air Force personnel to plan for and coordinate access to meet resource program needs. Unplanned or emergency access requests, such as those related to fire suppression activities or wild horse health conditions are given high priority and handled on a case-by-case basis. In some instances, it is possible that BLM resource managers may be denied access to NTTR.

Alternative A

This alternative represents the management objectives and directions contained in the approved BLM 1992 Nellis Air Force Range Resource Management Plan and would allow wild horses in the same management area as that established in the 1992 ROD (Figure 2-1of the Draft Plan). This alternative is the basis for comparison between the other alternatives. Management of all resources would be accomplished with decisions and objectives contained in this plan.

Alternative B (Agency Preferred)

Alternative B addresses the full spectrum of resources to be managed in the planning area. It provides for habitat improvements, control/eradication of weeds and noxious plant species, protection of sensitive plant and animal species, protection and enhancement of riparian zones, management of vegetation resources through prescribed burns, livestock grazing management, and cultural resources management. BLM's interpretation of available data was used to identify the area for management of the wild horses as the entire north range of the NTTR, with a core area containing approximately 474,370 acres. See (Figure 2-2 of the Draft Plan) with an Appropriate Management Level (AML) of 600-1000 horses.

Alternative C

Other than for wild horses, all resource management objectives in Alternative C are the same as those for Alternative B. With respect to wild horses, Alternative C represents the area where the wild horses can be managed to minimize conflicts with the Air Force mission. This proposed HMA encompasses an area of approximately 325,220 acres (Figure 2-3 of the Draft Plan). Horses would be allowed to move outside the HMA provided they do not establish permanent home ranges outside of the HMA. The Air Force would be able to request removal horses outside the HMA.

Alternative D (Environmentally Preferred)

Other than for wild horses, all management objectives in Alternative D are the same as those for the other alternatives. Alternative D proposes complete removal of wild horses (Figure 2-4 of the Draft Plan). This would also eliminate any potential for contamination of springs and seeps caused by over use by horses, and eliminate any potential for horses to consume naturally contaminated and potentially hazardous spring or seeps.

Changes from Draft to Final Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

This section is included to describe the changes made in the content of the plan due to public, cooperating agency and other state or Federal agency comments and concerns, as well as BLM management review to ensure consistency with laws and regulations.

Based on extensive coordination with the Nellis staff, the BLM and Nellis agreed to reduce the Appropriate Management Level as stated in Alternative B from 600-100 to 300-500 horses. Reducing the number of horses from 600-100 to 300-500 will ensure adequate water and forage are available for wildlife and wild horses even during drought conditions. In addition, reduced horse numbers will decrease conflicts with critical Air Force mission operations and decrease the probability of wild horse impacts to the safety of military personnel.

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Design of the Proposed Plan was guided by the need to provide for a limited range of land uses on the one hand, and the need for environmental safeguards to protect fragile and unique resources as well as meeting the military training and testing requirements. The environmentally preferred alternative (Alternative D above) thus was *not* selected because it did not meet the required need to ensure a viable herd of wild horses would remain on the range in a thriving ecological balance with the environment. Environmental safeguards adopted in the Proposed Plan are designed to provide effective conservation of cultural resources, riparian areas, desert tortoise, special status species, and wildlife habitat. Thus, all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm were incorporated into the Proposed Plan.

Rationale for the Decisions

Readers and users of Nevada Test and Training Range RMP should be aware that the land management objectives and directions adopted conform to the principles of multiple use and sustained yield, as well as protection of unique resources as directed in FLPMA. However, multiple use management does not imply or allow all uses on all areas. Management of some resource values affects the conditions under which other resources can or cannot be utilized or developed.

The emphasis of the Nevada Test and Training Range RMP is management of the wild horse, while protecting unique habitats for threatened, endangered, and special status species, unique military training opportunities, limited recreation, as well as other resource uses. Even though habitat is limited, the BLM is committed to provide the desert tortoise with the highest possible quality of habitat. However, it must be noted that management of specified natural resources is secondary to the military mission.

MITIGATION AND MONITORING

Air Quality in the Las Vegas Valley

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will direct any future applicants to the Clark County Department of Air Quality Management (CCDAQM) to obtain the required permit or authorization either a Section 17 Standard Dust Control Permit or a Section 12 Pre-construction Permit Review for New or Modified Stationary Sources based on the type of action, prior to approval of any ground disturbing activities on withdrawn public land within the Las Vegas Non-attainment Area. The BLM will terminate or suspend any applicants land use authorization where the holder is not in compliance with the CCDAQM regulations.

The CCDAQM will identify the required mitigation measures on a case-by-case basis using the best available control measures (BACM) for temporary construction and/or the best available control technology (BACT) for actions such as sand and gravel operations. These measures would include but not be limited to use of non-toxic chemical soil stabilizers, water spraying on exposed soil, paving of gravel roads, gravel apron beds at construction sites and track clean grate systems. As technological advances in control of dust and carbon monoxide occur, these methods will be recommended, in full coordination with the CCDAQM, to ensure conformance with the State Implementation Plans (SIPs).

Plan Monitoring and Implementation

Land use actions would be implemented after the State Director approves The Plan's Record of Decision. The Plan's decisions become final with issuance of the Record of Decision. Actions immediately effective with the State Director's signature include reducing the wild horse herd to the Appropriate Management Level (AML) as specified by The Plan.

BLM will monitor RMP progress through annual tracking of all approved actions and identify needed changes to the RMP. Minor changes in data not requiring changes in land use allocations, restrictions, or uses will be documented in supporting records. Public involvement will not be necessary to perform plan maintenance unless there is appreciable public interest.

BLM will involve the public and county governments in any plan amendment or substantive modification of this RMP. Any change to land use allocations, restrictions or uses will be

effected through a formal plan amendment or revision prepared in conformance with BLM planning regulations found in Section 1610.6 of Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Agencies, organizations, and individuals with an expressed interest in the Nevada Test and Training Range RMP, will be informed of any proposed changes and will be provided an opportunity to participate in the amendment process.

The implementation phase of an approved Resource Management Plan is centered on close coordination, cooperation and consultation with those interested in the management of public lands. The Las Vegas Field Office staff is committed to working with and involving those who are interested in how the public lands will be administered. Within 90 days after Resource Management Plan approval, a specific Implementation Plan will be developed to identify program priorities for the Plan's decisions and to determine the sequence and costs associated with their implementation. Site-specific environmental assessments will be prepared prior to initiating resource projects or activity plans to analyze potential environmental impacts of associated actions. Mitigation measures will be developed and incorporated as special stipulations into authorization permits. The implementation and monitoring plan will be available as a focus document to assist managers in assigning staff and tracking progress towards full implementation of the RMP.

Public Involvement

The public participation process began in May 2000 with the publication of a Notice of Intent to revise the Nellis Air Force Range Resource Plan and EIS a.k.a. (NTTR), in the *Federal Register* (Volume 65, No. 74, Monday, April 17, 2000, page 20483).

The first Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register mainly to announce the preparation of the Nellis Plan and scoping meetings. Once the planning criteria were completed and the final determination of all cooperating agencies was made, an additional notice was published in the Federal Register that identified all required information per regulation, *Federal Register* (Vol. 66, No. 64/Tuesday, April 3, 2001, pages 17729-17730).

Scoping meetings were held the week of May 1, 2000, in Las Vegas, Amargosa Valley, Pahrump, Beatty, Tonopah and Alamo. The purpose of those meetings was to involve the public in development of resource issues on the NTTR, within the scope of the authority of the BLM. There are decisions and management directions within the existing management plan that need to be reviewed and possibly changed based on public input. All parties involved in this process are aware of the following restriction set forth in P.L. 106-65: The entire NTTR is closed to public use of any road, trail, or other portion of the lands withdrawn, for safety and national security reasons.

Meetings were also held November 27, 2001, November 29, 2001, December 4, 2001 and December 6, 2001, in Beatty, Pahrump, Alamo and Las Vegas respectively.

Protest Issues and Responses

The Director of the BLM received one protest of the NTTR RMP/FEIS from the Nevada Department of Wildlife. The following is a summary of the issues and responses from the Directors office. The issues on concern include the following: 1).The plan fails to substantiate the expansion of the Herd Area by relying on insufficient and incorrectly interpreted information. 2). Management of a core area does not comport with the Wild Free-Roaming Horse and Burro Act of 1971. 3). AML's are never validated using vegetation monitoring data. Further, AML is not validated in this RMP. 4). The Bureau was largely dismissive of the Division's professional positions regarding wild horse management on the NTTR and the impacts upon wildlife and habitat.

Summary of response to issue #1). The Bureau assessed all available data, including analyses provided by previous managers throughout the planning process. The WH&B Act provides the basis to make a reasonable assumption about horse distribution. The BLM must ensure that the wild horses on the NTTR are provided with adequate habitat to meet their needs for the entire year. The NTTR RMP provides for the needs of all animals.

Summary of response to issue #2). Management for the proposed core area is consistent with the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 and the Act does not preclude the use and application of a core area concept. The core area is similar to a "key management area" as defined on page 54 of TR 4400-7, which states that "A key management area is an area of land that influences or limits the use of the land surrounding it. A key management area is the key area that overrides the indicators of the other key areas within the management unit. Management actions are based on the key management area.

Summary of response to issue #3). During the planning process, BLM evaluated the Air Force's requirements for military personnel safety and mission operations, as well as the carrying capacity of the water resources to establish a recommended, lower AML of 300 to 500 animals.

Summary of response to issue #4). The development of this PRMP must adhere to a number of Federal laws and regulations that allow for ample opportunities for public involvement and comment and state agency consultation. The Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 requires that in making "such determinations the Secretary shall consult with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, wildlife agencies of the State or States wherein wild free-roaming horses and burros are located . . . [(Sec. 3 (b)(1).]." The Bureau complied with that requirement, and extensively consulted with the NDOW throughout the planning process.

ATTACHMENT A

NEVADA TEST AND TRAINING RANGE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Objective and management directions for air, soil, water, and riparian resources that are impacted by other resource programs are included in those program sections. To avoid redundancy those objectives and management directions are not repeated in the air, soil, water and riparian sections. Each section is numbered as depicted in the Proposed Plan to reduce any potential confusion.

2.6.1 Air Resource Management

Objective:
Ensure that actions in the planning area do not violate local, state, tribal and Federal air quality laws, regulations, and standards.

Management Direction:
Ensure that the planning process addresses air quality considerations by incorporating objectives and actions into resource activity plans, such as Allotment Management Plans, Habitat Management Plans, and Watershed Management Plans. Where applicable, include "conformity" demonstration in site-specific activity plans and/or National Environmental Policy Act documentation.

Permit only those activities on the withdrawn lands that are consistent with Federal, State, and local air quality standards and regulations. Require that all appropriate air quality permits for land use actions are obtained before BLM and/or Air Force approval the action.

Where applicable, demonstrate how proposed management actions comply with local, state, tribal and Federal air quality laws, regulations, and standards (Conformity; per 40 CFR 93.100 et seq).

2.6.2 Soil Resource Management

Objective:
Assess erosion conditions and reduce erosion and sedimentation while maintaining or where possible enhancing soil productivity through the maintenance and improvement of watershed conditions.

***Management Direction*:**
On watersheds that exhibit good potential for recovery, implement protective and or restoration measures.

2.6.3 Water Resource Management

Objective:
Maintain the quality of waters presently in compliance with state and/or federal water quality standards.

Management Direction:
Use Best Management Practices, as identified by the State of Nevada, to minimize contributions from both point and non-point source pollution.

Objective:
Insure availability of adequate water to meet management objectives including the recovery and/or re-establishment of Special Status Species.

Management Direction:
Determine water needs to meet management objectives. File for appropriative water rights on public lands in accordance with the State of Nevada water laws. By terms of the land withdrawal (PL 106-65) there are no federally reserved water rights on the NTTR.

2.6.4 Riparian Resource Management

Objective:
Maintain a desired plant community that provides vegetation and habitat for wildlife, fish, and watershed protection; ensure that all riparian areas are in proper functioning condition by achieving an advanced ecological status, except where resource management objectives require an earlier successional stage. Manage vegetation consistent with vegetation management objectives.

Management Directions:
Complete a Proper Functioning Condition assessment on all riparian areas, and include a description of actions necessary to achieve Proper Functioning Condition on all areas identified as functioning at risk or non-functioning.

Improve riparian areas, giving priority to areas "Functioning at Risk" with a downward trend. Implement measures to protect riparian areas, such as fencing and/or alternate water sources away from the riparian area.

Use integrated weed management techniques, such as burning, chemical, biological or mechanical treatments, to control and eradicate tamarisk and other noxious weeds in areas where potential for treatment is good. Rehabilitate the area with native species to help reduce

the potential for re-establishment, and to improve ecosystem health.

2.6.5 Vegetation Resource Management

Objective:
Maintain or improve the condition of vegetation on withdrawn public lands to a Desired Plant Community or to a Potential Natural Community.

Management Direction:
Manage to achieve a Desired Plant Community or a Potential Natural Community.

Objective:
Restore plant productivity for desired species on disturbed areas.

Management Directions:
Rehabilitate, reclaim, or revegetate areas subjected to surface-disturbing activities, where feasible. When rehabilitating disturbed areas, manage for a desired plant community by seeding native species, except where non-native species are more appropriate.

Remove noxious and invasive weeds from public lands consistent with the integrated weed management techniques for removal. Ensure close coordination with state, county, tribal and other federal agencies, including but not limited to the USFWS, and the Air Force, on control efforts.

2.6.6 Visual Resource Management

Objective:
Maintain the integrity of visual resources in the natural areas.

Management Direction:
Ensure all actions initiated or authorized by BLM are in compliance with visual resource management (VRM) guidelines

Objective:
Protect visual resources in the planning area while allowing for development.

Management Direction:
Manage the Groom Mountain Range addition for VRM Class III and IV values, and the Timber Mountain Caldera National Natural Landmark as VRM Interim Class II, with the remainder of the planning area as VRM Interim Class IV (Figure 2-2).

2.6.7 Fish and Wildlife Management

Objective:
Support viable and diverse wildlife populations by providing and maintaining sufficient quality and quantity of food, water, cover, and space to satisfy needs of wildlife species using habitats on withdrawn public land.

Management Directions:
Maintain and improve bighorn sheep habitat by maintaining existing water developments, judicious use of prescribed fire, constructing additional water developments, and protecting/improving springs, seeps and riparian habitat, consistent with BLM policy. Evaluate discretionary activities proposed in bighorn sheep habitat on a case-by-case basis. Grant authorization if the proposed actions are consistent with goals and objectives of the *Rangewide Plan for Managing Desert Bighorn Sheep Habitat on Public Lands* (U.S. Dept. of Interior, BLM 1988) and other applicable policies.

Maintain and improve mule deer and antelope habitat based on the forage and water needs of each species.

Protect sage grouse habitat from ground disturbing activities and coordinate with appropriate state and federal agencies prior to habitat disturbance.

Protect water sources that may benefit or harm wildlife by providing a minimum buffer for permitted activities, consistent with the military mission of the withdrawal.

Protect and improve key nesting areas, migration routes, important prey base areas, and concentration areas for birds of prey.

Protect and improve important non-game resting/nesting habitat in riparian areas and other important habitat types. Discourage projects that may adversely impact the water table supporting these plant communities.

Objective:
Evaluate wildlife habitat quality and quantity on the NTTR and where appropriate re-establish appropriate native fauna (including naturalized species) to historic use areas, and/or increase population numbers in current use areas.

Management Direction:
Cooperate with state and federal wildlife agencies in implementing introductions, re-introductions, and augmentation releases of native and/or naturalized species (such as desert bighorn sheep, and chukar), and as appropriate, capture of these species for relocation and stocking purposes. Design water developments for wild horses and livestock to reduce potential conflicts with bighorn sheep and/or other wildlife. Animal damage control activities may be allowed to meet management directives for wildlife species.

2.6.8 Special Status Species

Objective:
Manage habitat for special status species at the potential natural community or the desired plant community, according to the need of the species. Manage habitat to maintain and/or increase the total number of populations of federally listed species and/or the number of individuals in existing populations, so the requirements for de-listing or down-listing species under the Endangered Species Act will be achieved. Manage habitats for non-listed special status species to support viable populations so that future listing would not be necessary.

Management Direction:
Enter into conservation agreements with the USFWS and the State of Nevada in consultation with Air Force to reduce the necessity of future listings of the species of concern. Conservation agreements may include, but not be limited to, the following: Merriam bearpoppy, and white-margined penstemon.

Objective:
Manage desert tortoise habitat to achieve the recovery criteria defined in the *Tortoise Recovery Plan* (USFWS, 1994) and ultimately to achieve delisting of the desert tortoise. When the population in a recovery unit meets the criterion as outlined in the *Tortoise Recovery Plan*, it may be considered recovered and eligible for delisting. (For a complete criteria listing see the *Tortoise Recovery Plan,* USFWS, 1994.)

Management Direction:
Ensure desert tortoise habitat conditions are consistent with the direction identified in the vegetation objectives and management directions.

2.6.9 Forestry Management

The sale of forest products are not authorized in the planning area. See Section 2.6.19 for recommended fire suppression techniques and management direction.

2.6.10 Livestock Grazing Management

Objective:
Provide for continued grazing of domestic livestock (cattle), from March 1 to February 28 on only the withdrawn portion of the Bald Mountain Allotment. The Naquinta Springs Allotment and the remainder of the planning area will remain closed to all livestock grazing.

Management Directions:
Manage the rangeland resource consistent with the phenological and physiological requirements of key perennial species.

Ensure forage utilization by livestock is consistent with appropriate Standards and Guidelines and allotment-specific objectives.

For perennial forages on the Bald Mountain Allotment, provide for increased plant vigor and reproductive capability through livestock grazing management.

Maintain static trend or achieve upward trend for key perennial forage species through livestock grazing management.

Allow the permitee to place salt and mineral supplements a minimum of one mile from water.

Objective:
Establish a grazing management system that may include rest rotation, deferred rest rotation, or other management approaches to meet specific resource management objectives.

Management Directions:
Include the availability of water for all resources (e.g., riparian, livestock, and wildlife) as part of any grazing system.

Construct rangeland developments, as needed, to create a more uniform distribution of livestock consistent with management objectives.

Incorporate appropriate Standards and Guidelines into all livestock use authorizations, grazing systems, and management plans to ensure rangeland health is improved or maintained.

Objective:
Manage allotments open to grazing with the "selective management" approach (i.e., maintenance (M), improve (I), or custodial (C)).

Management Direction:
Maintain the Bald Mountain Allotment as an "M" category allotment.

2.6.11 Wild Horses and Burro Management

Objective:
Manage for healthy, genetically viable herds of wild horses in a natural, thriving ecological balance with other rangeland resources.

Management Directions:
Restrict the active management of wild horses to the Herd Management Area (HMA) identified in Figure 2-1 and adjust the existing Appropriate Management Level (AML) based on military operations mission, data in Appendix F and other uses of the water resources to 300-500 horses within the HMA.

In the future, adjust the AML when monitoring data determine that management objectives for wild horses, vegetation, forage production, water, riparian, and other resources are not being met, including the military mission and safety considerations.

Limit forage utilization by all herbivores to 50 percent of the current year's above-ground primary production for key grasses, and 45 percent for key shrubs and forbs. Construct up to seven exclosures to help assess resource conditions.

Maintain dependable water sources to allow better distribution of wild horses throughout the core area. Develop three to four water wells in the area identified for determining AML (core area).

Objective:
Maintain the wild, free-roaming character of the wild horses on the withdrawn public lands.

Management Direction:
Wild horses will be removed when animals permanently reside on lands outside the AML core area (i.e., use is more than seasonal drift), or if the total horse population exceeds the AML for the HMA.

2.6.12 Cultural Resource Management

Objective:
Identify and protect cultural and paleontological resources in conformance with applicable legislation and BLM and Air Force policy and guidance.

Management Direction:
BLM and Nellis will follow specific guidance stated in the Nellis Air Force Base Cultural Resource Management Plan. (Copies available for review at the Las Vegas Field Office, BLM and Nellis Air Force Base)

2.6.13 Lands Management

Objective:
Lands are not available for disposal within the withdrawn area. Continue to make the withdrawn lands available for land use authorizations.

Management direction:
The Secretary of the Interior may issue a lease, easement, right-of-way, or other authorization with respect to the nonmilitary use of lands only with the concurrence of the Secretary of the Air Force or his designee.

2.6.14 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Objective:
Change the boundary of the Timber Mountain designated ACEC to reflect PL106-65, and protect that ACEC.

Management Direction:
Work closely with the Air Force to ensure any changes in management within the Timber Mountain ACEC are fully considered prior to their enactment.

2.6.15 Recreation Management

Continue to allow hunting on the 26-square-mile area on Stonewall Mountain. Access restrictions on the NTTR preclude all other unrestricted recreational opportunities in the planning area.

2.6.17 Wilderness Management

The NTTR planning area does not contain any land that meets the minimum criteria for consideration as a wilderness study area. No areas will be recommended for management as wilderness.

2.6.18 Minerals Management

Objectives:
Provide for the orderly extraction of sand and gravel by the Air Force for use within the NTTR.

Provide the BLM with an annual production report of the amount of free use material removed from each borrow pit on the NTTR.

Use appropriate environmental standards to allow for the preservation and enhancement of fragile and unique resources.

2.6.18 Hazardous Materials Management

Objective:
Prevent hazardous materials contamination and support environmental restoration and groundwater characterization activities.

Management Directions:
Minimize releases of hazardous materials through compliance with current regulations and existing hazardous waste management plans (a copy of NAFB Plan 12, Hazardous Waste Management Plan is available at the Las Vegas Field Office or through Nellis Air Force

Base).

Evaluate all actions for hazardous materials, waste minimization and pollution prevention.

2.6.19 Fire Management

Objective:
Provide for fire management as well as prescribed fire for fuel reduction and resource enhancement purposes, following guidelines in the National Fire Plan.

Management Directions:
Provide fire suppression efforts commensurate with resource and adjacent property values at risk.

Prevent human-caused fires through an aggressive education, investigation, and public outreach effort.

Provide for maximum fire protection through a comprehensive fire detection system using a multi-agency approach.

Use the BLM approved fire suppression techniques in areas of concern for habitat, cultural resources, threatened and endangered species, the designated ACEC, and rural/wildland interface zones.

For fire suppression, follow specific guidance in the Fire Management Action Plan.

Determine site-specific potentials and prescribed fire priorities, based on survey data of expansion rates of pinyon-juniper forests and understory fuel loads.

Control infestations by noxious or invasive species, especially in relation to disrupting their reproductive potential in conjunction with prescribed fire.

Implement control activities within the constraints of the existing budget.

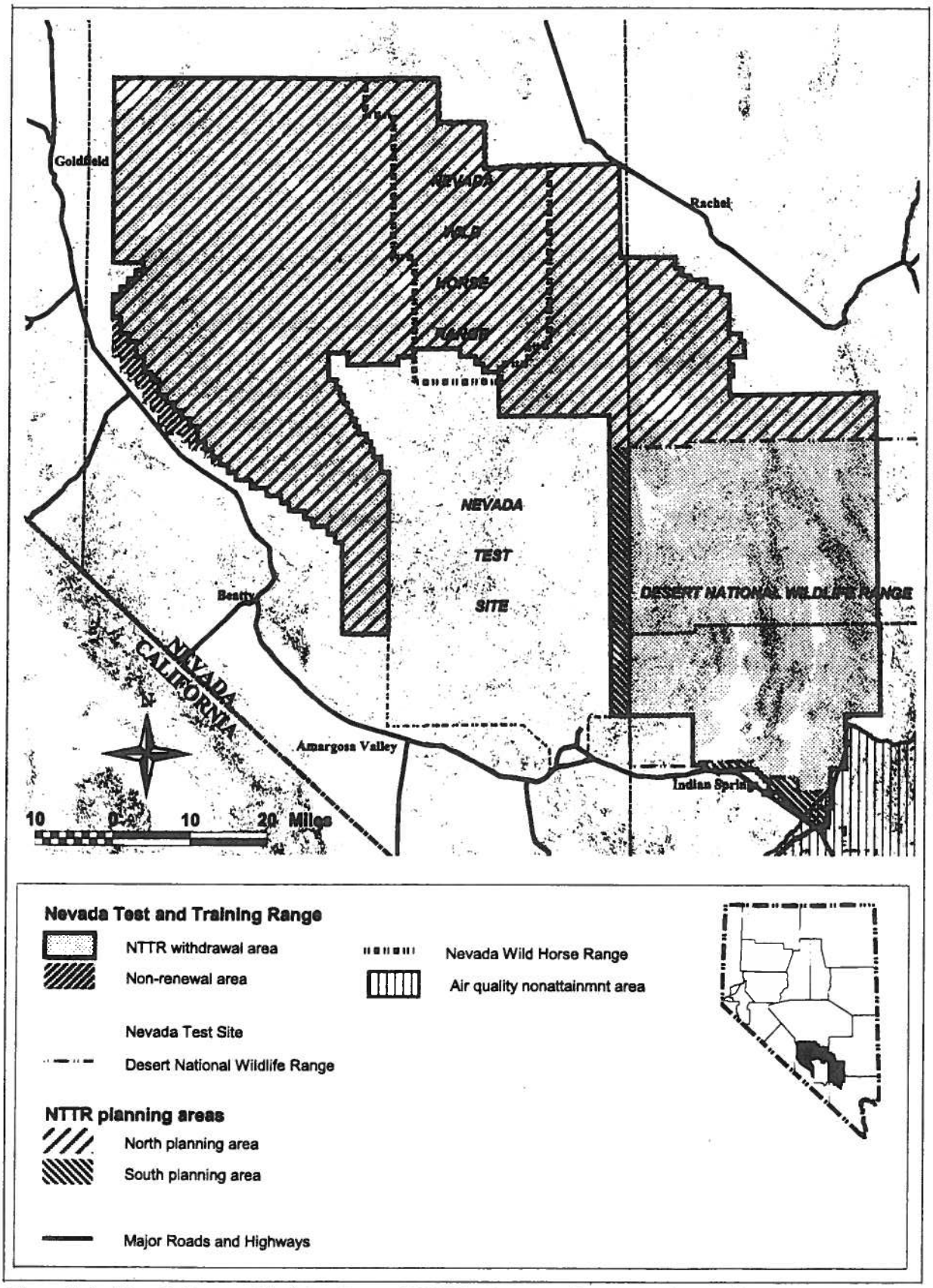

Figure 1-1. Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR). Areas on the NTTR that overlap the Desert National Wildlife Range are not part of the Planning area.