

### 3.13 CULTURAL RESOURCES

The cultural resources of the Salt Wells area have an important role in the Native American, archaeological, and public communities in the region. This category typically includes objects, general locations, discrete sites, structures, and buildings. Here, the category is expanded to include Native American resources, discussed below. Many sites have and continue to contribute significant information to scientific inquiry and to provide vital connections to the traditional knowledge and practices of the aboriginal peoples who still call the area home. In fact, the foundations of much of western Great Basin prehistory and ethnology were developed in this region. The area of potential effect (APE) for cultural resources encompasses the surface area and depths to which the proposed action and facilities operation could disturb cultural resources. These dimensions are elaborated upon further below under "Survey History." It is extended to an indirect APE to include any traditional cultural properties (TCPs), sacred sites, or historic properties that could be indirectly affected by the proposed action.

While sites in the region played a seminal role in the development and understanding of regional prehistory, the historical record has proved just as rich. Regional historic-era developments, initially peripheral to emigrant goals in California, became nationally important with the discovery of the Comstock Lode in 1859. The region is crossed by historic-era corridors that carried people, mail, and goods from eastern cities to growing mining, agricultural, and commercial centers of California, and later to the mining towns and agricultural settlements of western Nevada. Although there are several historic trails in this region managed and protected under the National Trails System Act, none are within close proximity to the APE. The Pony Express route and an early version of the Overland Stage Route pass about 1.5 miles south of the southernmost drill site. A later version of the stage line went through Stillwater, about 12 miles north of the APE.

The *Cultural Resource Overview, Carson District, West Central Nevada* (Pendleton et al. 1982) presents a detailed background of regional prehistoric and historic-era research and sites. Although this 1982 overview provided an almost complete inventory of prehistoric and historic sites found within the Carson City BLM District and a comprehensive history of research, more than two decades of time and anthropological research and theory have passed since its publication. Much of this research has been presented in survey reports developed as a result of commercial development in the area (Far Western 2004; MACTEC 2007a). The following discussions are based on these documents.

#### ***Prehistoric Context***

The Salt Wells region is rich in prehistoric archaeological sites, with rock shelters, caves, petroglyphs (rock carvings), hunting blinds, quarries, and open-air occupation and temporary camps among the archaeological site types represented. The size, location, and complexity of these sites vary with changes in resource availability, population, and environment that have occurred in the region since its initial occupation.

The archaeological patterns observed in the area parallel those over much of the western Great Basin. The following is a generalized chronological discussion and synthesis developed from these patterns.

*Terminal Pleistocene/Early Holocene.* The planning area has been used by people at varying intensities since the end of the Pleistocene 12,000 to 14,000 years ago. The Terminal Pleistocene and Early Holocene archaeological record is typically marked by various forms of leaf-shaped, lanceolate, and often fluted points, and various stemmed points, that make up the “Western Pluvial Lakes Tradition” of Bedwell (1970, 1973). Milling equipment, although occasionally present in Terminal Pleistocene and Early Holocene components, is rarer than in later time periods.

The adaptive strategy pursued by these early inhabitants of the Great Basin has been described as Paleoarchaic (Jones and Beck 1999) or Pre-Archaic (Elston 1986). Both labels emphasize similarities to the generalized Archaic strategies of the later Holocene. Site density is relatively low, probably due to low populations and high residential mobility (Elston 1986, 2002; Elston and Zeanah 2002; Willig and Aikens 1988). Sites of this period are found in diverse environments but are often situated to take advantage of shallow lake/marsh systems. During this time, the diversity of obsidian source locations manifest in Great Basin Stemmed-series projectile points is higher than during any subsequent period (Jones et al. 2003; McGuire 2002), suggesting that the foraging ranges of their makers were comparatively large.

*Early Archaic Period.* Mazama Ash (ca. 7,000 BP) is the primary stratigraphic marker for the beginning of this period. Evidence of Early Archaic cultural activity in the western Great Basin is widespread, represented by various split-stem projectile points (e.g., Gatecliff, Bare Creek, Martis). In addition to these are numerous flake tool scrapers, bifacial knives, heavy core tools, and, for the first time, abundant ground and battered stone milling equipment. Although few single component Early Archaic sites have been investigated, nearly every major cave deposit and many open-air sites contain at least some Early Archaic material (Elston 1982; Pendleton et al. 1982; Beck 1995). Even more numerous in the region are hundreds of small Early Archaic upland camps.

The Early Archaic period witnessed an overall increase in archaeological site density, a pattern that accelerates in the subsequent Middle Archaic period. Ameliorating climatic conditions at the end of the Middle Holocene (ca. 7,200 to 3,440 BP) may have played a role in this transition, although it is not immediately clear how local environmental changes might have affected specific plant and animal resources. The increased archaeological visibility may also be due to increasing population densities, with the exception of apparent decreases prior to 4,500 BP. Within this framework, the Early Archaic period witnessed the initial rise of settlement hierarchies in this region of the Great Basin, corresponding to the archaeological equivalents of base camps, field camps, and task stations. It has been suggested that adaptive strategies during this period involved water sources, such as rivers and springs, and that substantial occupations were focused on these locations. This may have been a result of the comparatively drier and warmer climate.

*Middle Archaic Period.* The Middle Archaic period (ca. 4,500 to 1,300 BP) in the western Great Basin witnessed the accelerated elaboration of logistically well-organized adaptive behavioral patterns, marked by increasing cultural complexity (Elston 1982, 1986; Thomas 1982), possibly spurred by the wetter and cooler Late Holocene (3,440 BP to present) climate. This

is manifested in the archaeological record through an amazing richness and variety of textiles and other perishable remains, an explosive increase in rock art, and an increasing range of site types. In the western Great Basin, the Middle Archaic is characterized by its distinctive and elaborate material culture, long distance trade and exchange relationships, and overall settlement complexity. Occupations at Gatecliff Shelter, short-term camps at the James Creek and South Fork shelters, and activities at the Tosawihi quarries all increased during the Middle Archaic.

Middle Archaic times also saw the continued development of an unprecedented phase of biface manufacture associated with major basalt, obsidian, and other toolstone quarries (Elston and Raven 1992; Gilreath and Hildebrandt 1995; Hall 1983; McGuire 2002; McGuire and Bloomer 1996). The sizes, locations, and assemblages of Middle Archaic sites suggest that they served many different purposes, with use as long-term residential bases, smaller serially reoccupied camps, communal hunting/butchering localities (Pendleton and Thomas 1983), quarries and stone-working camps (Bloomer 1997), and hunting and gathering stations. Large settlements of Middle Archaic age have been reported throughout western Nevada. Middle Archaic adaptations throughout the western Great Basin (building on changes initiated during the Early Archaic) may have been less residentially mobile, at least compared to the more free-ranging settlement patterns of earlier times. However, expansive exchange networks and long-range, logistically organized forays by male hunting parties appear to have undergone continued elaboration during this period.

*Late Archaic Period.* Most researchers now agree that the Late Archaic period (ca. 1,300 to 700 BP) was a time of profound cultural change in the western Great Basin induced by severe drought, population increases, resource imbalances, ethnic displacements, changes in technology, social conflict, or some combination of these.

In keeping with the adaptive changes witnessed during the Middle Archaic Period, Late Archaic occupations in the western Great Basin show increasing settlement centralization (Clay 1996; Rosenthal 2000) and subsistence intensification, and a decrease in the area over which groups foraged. Late Archaic deposits marked by Rose Spring and Eastgate-series projectile points are ubiquitous throughout the region and occur in a wider range of settings than do earlier sites. Coinciding with these changes in settlement pattern are numerous technological shifts. House structures become smaller and less substantially built (McGuire 2002), caches are fewer and less elaborate, and many types of perishable artifacts seem to all but disappear from the record (Elston 1982, 1986; Pendleton et al. 1982). The bow and arrow replace the *atlatl* (a device used for throwing a spear or dart) as the principal weapon during the Late Archaic, contributing to a major reorganization of flaked stone technologies. Bifaces decrease significantly in size, abundance, and morphological formality and are often simply replaced by numerous flake tools. Ground stone milling equipment shows a similar trend toward unshaped artifacts that were rarely cached. On balance, the shift to more expedient technologies—disposable tools that were less adaptable to varied circumstances—suggests that Late Archaic populations were less mobile and foraged more intensively over a limited area, obviating the need to transport or cache more reliable and specialized tools. In sum, Late Archaic settlement-subsistence adaptations appear to have decreased dramatically

in the area over which groups foraged, coinciding with a marked increase in settlement centralization and resource intensification, but with little change in social organization.

*Terminal Prehistoric Period.* Terminal Prehistoric (ca. 700 BP to AD 1820) In fact, a generally sparse archaeological record with respect to settlement patterns. Where they occur, Terminal Prehistoric habitation sites are often situated in entirely different locations than previous settlements. Sites and components dating to this time often have a stand-alone quality; they are usually represented by a single house structure found in an isolated context, not tied to larger middens or residential complexes. House construction techniques are very informal, often leaving no more than shallow, circular zones of soil discoloration suggestive of very short-term, single- or several-season occupations. Their floor assemblages are correspondingly low-density, but heterogeneous, reflecting a range of male- and female-related domestic and subsistence-related tasks consistent with a family band occupation.

None of these changes in settlement strategies seem to have been accompanied by significant changes in technology, raw material use patterns, or size of the areas over which people foraged. Quarrying activities at Tosawihi increased and villages were established in less hospitable environments, such as high altitudes, which may signify an expansion of a surplus population. However, if settlement patterns are any indication, Terminal Prehistoric socioeconomic organization underwent a major transformation. Earlier band-like groups residing in large villages seem to have been replaced by family or household units living in independent camps, much like those reflected in the ethnographic record.

### ***Ethnographic Overview***

The Native American group whose evidence is most commonly found in the region is the Northern Paiute; a subgroup known as the Toi Ticutta (also referred to as Toidikai) or Cattail-Eaters retain close ties to the project area. The Northern Paiute are a Uto-Aztecanspeaking group that ranged over western Nevada and the Owens Valley portion of eastern California. The Northern Paiute were semi-nomadic, moving between environmental zones to take advantage of resources as they became available (BLM 2001b). Fowler (1992) provides extensive background and detailed accounts of lifeways among the Toi Ticutta, who are known to have visited and lived around the Salt Wells Basin.

Lifeways varied according to type and abundance of resources available within a group's territory. The wetland environments of Carson Lake and surrounding basins allowed a more centralized settlement and subsistence strategy than that of neighboring bands. However, the annual round was somewhat consistent from group to group. Winters were spent in multifamily villages, composed of three to ten houses. Winter houses included a conical pole framework built around a shallow depression and covered with tule mats. During spring and summer, small groups moved away from the winter village. They roamed widely, residing in camps located near resource concentrations. Plants provided most of their subsistence, although in some locations, fishing was important. Later in the fall, some groups traveled to areas where pine nuts could be collected. Fall also was the preferred hunting season. Mountain sheep and deer were hunted, and antelope were taken in communal drives. With the onset of winter, groups once again congregated and lived off stores assembled over the summer and fall (BLM 2001b).

In the 1820s, British and American fur trappers began penetrating the Great Basin, which includes northern and western Nevada. In 1830, Peter Skene Ogden was the first documented non-Indian to enter the Carson City BLM District and encounter Native American populations there (Fowler 1992; d'Azevedo 1986). While there is no direct way to determine when the people first occupied the area, it is clear that by 1830 they were well established and had been in the area for many years. By the 1850s, land acquisitions, ecological changes, and cultural disruptions caused by non-Indians immigrating into the region were curtailing traditional lifeways of the Northern Paiute to the extent that they were becoming dependent on non-Indian communities (Malouf and Findlay 1986).

### ***Native American Resources***

Native American resources are defined under various authorities, including FLPMA, the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, EO 13007, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, and the NHPA. Under these authorities, federal agencies have the responsibility for managing Native American resources by, in part, considering them in land use planning and environmental documentation and mitigating, where possible, impacts on places or resources important to contemporary Native Americans and federally recognized tribes.

Slight differences in definitions among the authorities notwithstanding, these resources can be generally defined as places or resources, such as plants and animals, associated with cultural practices or beliefs of a living community that are rooted in a tribal community's oral traditions or history, and are important in maintaining the continuing cultural identity of the community. In practice this means identifying, evaluating, and managing ethnohistoric sites and resources, traditional use areas, sacred and ceremonial sites, and TCPs.

Since tribal heritage resources are defined culturally by the people and groups that value them, these resources can be identified and managed only in consultation with the people infusing them with cultural value. In the final analysis and decision-making, a federal agency has the legal authority to determine how these resources will be managed and what, if any, mitigation will be used to avoid undue and unnecessary impacts on these resources.

Ethnographic information indicates that Northern Paiute occupied the Salt Wells area, and their way of life is characterized by the concept of living in harmony with the natural environment. Rituals and ceremonies ensure that plants, animals, and physical elements flourish. The continued welfare of the people depends on these rituals and ceremonies being performed properly and the resources being available. The manner of performing the rituals and ceremonies, the places at which they are performed, and perhaps even the time of their performance are often prescribed.

Religious expression takes several primary forms, including ceremonies, individual prayer, and use of power spots for vision questing, curing, and doctoring. The most frequent form of expression is the individual prayer. Prayers are made to the spirits and were especially important in connection with places where spirits may live or places regarded as power spots.

The concept of *Spirit Power* (*Puba*, in Northern Paiute) and its impact on places, people, or events provides the basis for understanding the nature and distribution of places important to Northern Paiute people in the Salt Wells area. As described in Fowler (1992 and d'Azevedo 1986) the Northern Paiute believe that the universe is a living thing, in which everything has differing amounts of *Spirit Power*. The amount or intensity of *Spirit Power* can change through time and across space in ways that cause events, or allow individuals or groups to do things. Important events happen at particular places because those places have more *Spirit Power* than others. Important people arise because they have high *Spirit Power* relative to others, and important groups arise because they have relatively high *Spirit Power*. Conversely people and places can lose *Spirit Power* and fall into obscurity. *Spirit Power* can also be dangerous, and ordinary people do not casually seek it (Fowler 1992). It can come to people against their wishes and transform them into either good or evil shamans.

The belief in *Spirit Power* is also the basis for the tribal argument that all lands and resources are sacred. While this argument is meaningful to tribes, it is rarely useful in land use planning. Therefore the preparers of this EA have focused on places where ethnographic literature and past consultation suggest that high levels of *Spirit Power* have created especially significant places and resources and that these need specific management attention. These places include ethnohistoric sites, traditional use areas, and sacred sites. There is obvious overlap in the site types, and a place can be reasonably put into any or all of them. However, in this EA, each place or resource is placed in only one category.

*Ethnohistoric Sites:* Tribal ethnohistoric sites are most familiar to non-Indians because they are similar to the kinds of site generally considered to be of historic interest. Ethnographic sites may include those that could also be considered sacred or ceremonial and ethnohistoric. This is because these sites are primarily defined by their prominence in living oral history and are recognized by elders as most important for physically mapping tribal history and culture. As summarized in Bengston (2003) for the Northern Paiute, important ethnohistoric sites include those that are sacred or used for habitation, trails, ceremonial locations, battle sites, and burials.

*Traditional Use Areas:* Any traditional lifeway, such as ranching, or ethnographic lifeway that depends directly on natural resource extraction, will over time develop places that are particularly important for their resources and history of resource extraction. Eventually, these areas assume significant roles in defining and maintaining the traditional lifeway. These traditional use areas become even more significant when the traditional lifeway is threatened by uncontrollable external changes. Contemporary tribal identity and lifeways are developed and maintained by intergenerational use of traditional use areas.

In contrast with many other types of tribal heritage resources, associated with general tribal activities, traditional use areas can be associated with individuals. In addition, what non-Indians regard as identical resources in identical places (e.g., any pinyon tree or grove is the same as any other) may in fact be very different because they have varying amounts of *Spirit Power* and may be used by a particular family or individual because of a special connection, through *Spirit Power*, between the place and the person. As summarized in Bengston (2003) for the Northern Paiute, important traditional use areas include: pinyon gathering locations;

basketry material sites; medicinal plant and mineral gathering sites; and group hunting (rabbit, antelope, or sheep drives) and fishing locations.

*Sacred Sites:* As defined in EO 13007, sacred site means any specific, discrete, narrowly delineated location on federal land that is identified by an Indian tribe, or Indian individual determined to be an appropriately authoritative representative of an Indian religion, as sacred by virtue of its established religious significance to, or ceremonial use by, an Indian religion. As summarized in Bengston (2003) for the Northern Paiute, important sacred sites include sacred geography—places that figure prominently in tribal mythology, such as origin locations, or prominent geographic points, such as mountain peaks, waters, especially lakes, rivers, and hot springs, and ceremonial sites.

*Sacred Geography:* Mountain ranges incorporate mountain peaks and caves and these allow mountains to gather and hold *Spirit Power* and are important tribal heritage resources throughout the Salt Wells region. Mountains host resources, such as pinyon and stream origins, that are essential to survival. All mythological origin points and creation sites of the region are found at mountain peaks (Fowler 1992). Shamans, doctors and others seeking supernatural power would find it in mountain caves, and ordinary people went to caves to leave offerings soliciting supernatural help (Fowler 1992). Mountain peaks considered most sacred to Northern Paiute include Job's Peak and Mount Grant (Bengston 2003).

*Waters:* Since *Spirit Power* flows through the earth and all living things, water (also a scarce resource in a desert ecosystem) is sacred to both the Northern Paiute (Fowler 1992). Water figures prominently in origin stories and other mythology. Lakes, rivers, major springs, and especially hot springs are centers for shamanistic, medicinal, and ceremonial activities. Shamans, mythological heroes, and mythological villains travel along water (*Spirit Power*) networks and use them to communicate with the spirit world. People also make offerings at springs and other waters to gain favor with spirit beings (Fowler 1992).

Water babies are small very powerful spirit beings who inhabit deep water sources, such as major springs, rivers, and lakes (Fowler 1992). They are a source of power for doctors and shamans but can hurt ordinary people (Fowler 1992). Water babies make water flow and an active water source will dry up if they abandon it (Fowler 1992). As water baby habitat, Lake Tahoe and Pyramid, Walker, Soda, and Mono Lakes are sacred, as are the Truckee, Carson and Walker Rivers (Fowler 1992). Because the water in hot springs is heated deep within the earth, hot springs are water baby habitat and thus considered sacred by the Northern Paiute. Marshes and small seeps and springs are too shallow to support water babies and are generally not considered to be strong *Spirit Power* sources.

*Ceremonial Sites:* Among the Northern Paiute (Fowler 1992; Bengston 2003) there are places with high *Spirit Power* where shamans and healers do their work and where ordinary people go to connect with the supernatural (Bengston 2003). Such places include rock art sites, caves and springs where individuals gain *Spirit Power*, dance sites, doctor (or medicine) rocks, hot and cold springs, and places where objects have been ritually placed (Bengston 2003). Some of these places contain physical evidence of use, others do not. Shamanistic rock sites are of particular importance to Northern Paiute and are used as prayer/offering places to

seek medicinal relief or supernatural favors (Fowler 1992). The rocks themselves usually have numerous cupules pecked into them and have small offerings (coins, bullets, notes, buttons, etc.) left on or near them. Among the ceremonial sites recorded for the Northern Paiute are rock art sites, which have been of interest to archaeologists for decades.

*Traditional Cultural Properties:* The term TCP was coined in National Register Bulletin 38 to refer to a property that may be eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) because of its association with cultural practices or beliefs of a living community that are rooted in that community's history and that are important in maintaining the continuing cultural identity of the community. This was further clarified in a 1992 amendment to the NHPA that stated, "properties of traditional religious and cultural importance to an Indian tribe may be determined to be eligible for inclusion on the National Register." Although the term TCP is not found in the NHPA or its implementing regulations, it has become important for determining eligibility and compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA.

There are regulatory limitations on the NRHP eligibility that limit its value in a general planning context. Because of this, the concept of TCP is used here only when tribes have specifically identified a resource as a TCP. This is not to say that the resources discussed here are not eligible for the NRHP and thus not subject to Section 106 of the NHPA; they may well be eligible even if not identified as a TCP by a tribe and subject to Section 106.

### ***Historic Context***

Researchers have developed four periods or themes, as described in MACTEC (2007a), in which the Historic Period of the lower Carson River and Salt Wells Basin can be discussed: Exploration, Emigration and Settlement, Development, and Modern (Pendleton et al. 1982; Elliot 1987).

*Exploration.* Euro-American fur trappers and traders made their first forays into the central Great Basin during the Exploration period (AD 1820 to 1850), amid competition from British and American firms to exploit the Humboldt River trapping grounds and other regional streams. Between 1826 and 1830, both Jedediah Smith of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company and Peter Skene Ogden of the Hudson's Bay Company led expeditions across modern-day Nevada. However, fur-trapping potential was always marginal in the Great Basin, and expeditions ended in the early 1840s. As fur trapping declined, official government mapping and exploration expeditions were expanded into the Great Basin, partially to establish an American presence in what was, until 1848, Mexican territory. The Walker expedition in 1833 and the John C. Fremont expeditions between 1843 and 1853 are likely the most notable. Fremont's expeditions produced comprehensive maps and descriptions of the region, providing invaluable resources for later settlement and development.

*Emigration and Settlement.* The Emigration and Settlement Period (AD 1840 to 1880) encompasses the phases of westward migration to and the settlement of California, the California Gold Rush of the late 1840s, and the settlement and development of the Comstock following the 1859 silver strikes. The first reservations for the Northern Paiute

were identified and occupied in 1859 at Walker Lake and Pyramid Lake (although they were not established by Congress until 1874).

The Bidwell-Bartleson group was the first emigrant party to make the trans-Sierran journey to California, following the Humboldt River through Nevada in 1841 and crossing the Sierra Nevada at Sonora Pass. They were followed in 1844 by the Stevens party that established an alternative route along the Truckee River, crossing the Sierra instead at Donner Pass. The trickle of settlers and gold-seeking emigrants increased during the 1840s and 1850s. The Carson River Route of the California Trail eventually became a major thoroughfare.

Some of the earliest permanent settlements were established along the route as supply points. These included Mormon Station, or Genoa, in Carson Valley in 1850 and Ragtown, 20 miles northwest of the project area on the Carson River. Ragtown, with its seasonal camps of merchants, was the first freshwater source emigrants would have encountered after crossing the Forty Mile Desert. A permanent post was established in 1854.

Comstock silver strikes in 1859 brought additional prospectors to the Virginia Range, approximately 55 miles west of the project area. Industrial development of lode mining and milling there created an expanded, relatively urbanized population in Virginia City, Gold Hill, and Silver City. Farming and ranching expanded along the Carson River and nearby valleys to support the new population centers. Other previous metal discoveries and urban development followed across central Nevada, although such instances were often short-lived. Some of these mineral discoveries were close to the project area and included salt deposits at San Springs and borax along the western edge of Eight Mile Flat. Salt was an important component of nineteenth century ore processing and borax an important commodity in and of itself.

The new population centers and mineral discoveries gave rise to regional wagon road networks connecting markets to supply points and mineral sources to mills. Of these freight roads, the Reese River Road passes just north of the project area, and the Fort Churchill to Sand Springs Road is just south of the project area. Many of the initial roads ran east-west for delivery to California, but with the completion of the transcontinental railroad along the Humboldt River corridor in 1869, freight roads running north-south linking railheads with interior mining districts began to be established. One of these roads was the Wadsworth and Columbus Freight Road, which runs through the project area.

*Development.* Evolution of agriculture and transportation along the lower Carson River east of the project area characterize the Development Period (AD 1880 to 1941). However, much of that evolution had little direct impact on the Salt Wells Basin or the neighboring Bunejug Mountains. Extensive areas of the Carson Desert became irrigated and Fallon was developed as an urban center as a result of the National Reclamation Act of 1902 and construction of the Newlands Project. Some wagon road networks were expanded and developed into Nevada's federal highway system. The Reese River Road north of the project area became the Lincoln Highway and was renamed in the 1920s to US Highway 50.

The importance of mining in Nevada's economy faded between 1880 and 1900 as no new discoveries were made and areas that had been developed in connection with mining declined. The "Central Route," south of the project area, faded in importance and was gradually abandoned during the mining depression. Tonopah and Goldfield produced a boom in the early 1900s, and smaller districts, closer to the project area, such as Wonder (1906), Fairview (1906), Rawhide (1908 to 1920), and Westgate (1915), also contributed to mining and milling and energized the local freighting networks.

*Modern.* The Modern Period (AD 1941 to present) has experienced continued agricultural growth in the Fallon area, even though the Newlands Project is limited in the amount of land that can be irrigated. Fallon Naval Air Station was established just southeast of Fallon in 1942 in support of World War II efforts. It was deactivated for a time after World War II but was reopened as a Navy Auxiliary Air Station in 1951. The base provides training facilities for Navy and Marine Corps pilots and ground crews. One flight path to the base landing strip passes directly over the project area.

The last Northern Paiute reservation was established at Bridgeport in 1972 (Clemmer and Stewart 1986). The Northern Paiute had land claims adjudicated through either the Federal Indian Claims Commission or the Federal Court of Claims. These settlements were accepted by the tribe decades ago, and there are no outstanding claims to be adjudicated.

## ***Inventories***

### **Survey History**

MACTEC conducted a Class III cultural resources survey to cover the entirety of the current project area in October and November 2006. This inventory included archival research, pedestrian survey, and eligibility evaluation of prehistoric and historic sites around the proposed drill sites, cold water well, and along a corridor straddling any proposed access roads. The APE for the proposed project was defined by MACTEC as a 500-by-500-foot area around each drill site, a 100-foot buffer zone in all directions around the cold water well, a 100-foot corridor along the centerline of proposed new access roads, and a fifty-foot wide corridor on each side of existing roads, measured from the road edge (MACTEC 2006 and 2007a). During the course of the inventory, proposed access roads and drill sites were relocated by Vulcan Power whenever possible to avoid archaeological sites. MACTEC also surveyed new roads and drill sites established as part of avoidance efforts. If archaeological sites were identified within these areas, the road or drill site was again relocated so as to avoid the sites.

Previous surveys in the project area primarily included small archaeological surveys associated with geothermal exploration within the Salt Wells lease area, road access, and Nevada Department of Transportation gravel extraction (York 1976; Hattori and McLane 1980; Hattori 1984; Far Western 2004).

### **Findings**

The records search and field survey resulted in the identification of a total of seven sites within the APE of the proposed drill sites, access roads, and cold water well. Six of these are

newly discovered sites, and one is a previously recorded site revisited during the survey. In addition, three previously recorded sites are historic debris scatters closely associated with the Wadsworth and Columbus Freight Road and have been subsumed under that resource. The total includes three prehistoric sites, one historic-era site, and three mixed-component sites. None of the sites are listed on the NRHP. Three are recommended eligible for the NRHP (MACTEC 2007a) and include the Wadsworth and Columbus Freight Road. Drill sites and roads have been relocated to avoid all NRHP-eligible sites, with the exception of the freight road.

**Native American Resources**

Cultural resources are considered Native American Resources (see previous section). Based on the ongoing consultation with the Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, prehistoric cultural resources identified during the Class III survey would be avoided. In the event of an inadvertent discovery, the tribe would be contacted. Consultation would be ongoing with the tribe until completion of the project.