

# **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Yuccachucker Motorcycle Race

**EA-NV-040-08- 19**

Bureau of Land Management

Ely Field Office

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Ely, NV 89301

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February 2008

I.

## **Background Information**

### **Introduction**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responding to an application by J.R. Zannoth with the Yuccachucker Motorcycle club for a special recreation permit to hold a competitive motorcycle race.

The BLM prepared this environmental assessment (EA) pursuant to the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The EA analyzes the site specific impacts of the proposed action and alternative actions to prevent undue and irreversible impacts to the resources found on BLM managed public land. This EA will address two alternatives; the proposed action and a no action alternative. The analysis of the proposed action contained in this EA would be sufficient for subsequent relevant events until the proposed action and/or land management issues change as to require new NEPA analysis.

### **Brief Description of the Proposed Action**

The proposed action is in response to a request for application to grant a special recreation permit to J.R. Zannoth with the Yuccachuckers to hold a race on March 29-30 2008 and varying dates between the months of February and July for years to come. This event is sanctioned by the Motorcycle racing association of Nevada (MRAN) would provide an organized racing opportunity for the public and club members. The proposed course is approximately 58 miles long (see Appendix A). The proposed course is located on predominantly BLM managed public land in Lincoln County, with small sections of the proposed course crossing through private land. For the portions of course which cross private land, the proponent is required to obtain permission letters from affected private land owners. It is required by the BLM that the proponent supply a copy of any permission letters to the BLM before a permit is issued for the event. The proposed course is located on prior course segments analyzed in previous Environmental Assessments. It has been determined that an updated analysis of the proposed action was necessary to proceed with issuing this permit. All portions of the course are on existing roads, trails and washes. No cross country travel will be authorized.

### **Purpose and Need for Proposed Action**

The purpose of the proposed action would be to evaluate permitting the use of public lands to allow a permitted use by J.R. Zannoth and the Yuccachucker M/C club to hold an annual event as well as provide an organized racing opportunity for the public under appropriate terms and conditions needed to minimize impacts to other resource values and uses. The need for this action is to fulfill a demand for a competitive organized racing opportunity.

## **Conformance with Land Use Plan**

The proposed action is in conformance with the Caliente Management Framework Plan decision 3.1 of the (MFP) and the more current Caliente Management Framework Plan Amendment and Record of Decision for the Management of Desert Tortoise Habitat. On page 46 within the desert tortoise amendment, under the heading “Outside ACECs”, section labeled “Organized OHV Use”, it states: “Allow speed and non-speed competitive events to occur on existing roads and vehicle trails, no off-road use is permitted”. The proposed race course is located within non ACEC identified desert tortoise habitat as well as non desert tortoise habitat. All proposed routes are located on existing roads and vehicle trails. No off-road use would be authorized.

The proposed action is consistent with the Lincoln County Public Land and Natural Resource Management Plan. This states that “Off-road races and other events are reviewed by the ORV committee and it is mandatory that any race, plans for a race or other event be reviewed and recommended by them to the County Commission for approval or disapproval.”

## **Scoping and Issues**

### Scoping

Scoping was done internally with environmental resource specialists and posted on the BLM website for 30 days for public review and comments.

### Issues

Issues with the proposed action were identified during the internal and external review process. These issues include:

- Location of routes within identified desert tortoise habitat. Ensuring conformance with land use plans and stipulations related to Off Highway Vehicle events.
- Preventing the introduction and spread of invasive weeds. The seed of such weeds could be introduced or spread by participants using the proposed course.
- Reducing the level of erosion occurring on segments of existing trails to be used by the race course. Additional use of these trails within and after a competitive event could increase the level of erosion of these steep and unstable/highly erosive trails.
- Archeological resource protection (avoidance).

## **II. Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives**

### **No Action**

Under the No Action alternative the application for a special recreation permit to hold a competitive motorcycle race would be denied. The race would not occur. But the demand for a motorcycle event in the area would continue.

### **Proposed Action**

Under the proposed action, the BLM would grant the permit holder a special recreation permit to hold an organized motorcycle race on March 29-30 2008 and varying dates between the months of February and July for years to come. The proposed course would be approximately 58 miles in total length and would use existing roads and vehicle trails (see Appendix A). All or parts of the routes identified in this environmental assessment would be used for future events on the condition that the potential impacts of such an activity would be similar enough to this proposed action as to warrant issuance of a permit without further analysis. In addition, the use of these routes for future proposed actions would be directly dependant upon the condition that environmental factors present during this Environmental Assessment have not changed significantly as to warrant additional review. The proposed course is located in Lincoln County near the town of Alamo NV. The primary visitor concentration would be on the fairground facilities or near the landing strip directly west of the fairgrounds near the town of Alamo. This area would be used for camping for participants and would serve as the main pit area during the event. (see Appendix A for locations). The race would start in the vicinity of the fairgrounds on the west side of Alamo or on public lands near the fairgrounds. The proposed course extends southwest and northwest from the pit area.

This event would be a competitive race. The proponent expects 200-300 riders would participate in the one day event and approximately 300 spectators. The riders would be split into several classes. These classes range from beginner to expert and would start and finish from the same locations. The mini class would be a modified version of the main course to accommodate the young riders. See Appendix A.

Participants and spectators would camp on the fairgrounds and public lands directly adjacent to the fairgrounds during the event. The race permittee would be responsible for all clean-up efforts and any restoration measures needed at the camping, pit areas and along the course. Post event monitoring would be done to ensure compliance as described in the stipulations. The permittee would provide portable toilets for use by spectators and participants. Emergency medical services and communication would be provided by the Lincoln County ambulance which would be located on site. Additional communication services would be provided by satellite and cell phone service.

As part of the operations plan the proponent/permit holder would be required as identified in the race stipulations, to ensure that participants wash their equipment prior to beginning the race to reduce the potential for the spread of noxious and invasive weed species.

A Cultural Resource Needs Assessment would be completed prior to the event in coordination with the cultural specialist to ensure no cultural resources would be affected by this event. A Class III Cultural Resource survey would be completed for any sections of course not previously inventoried to ensure archeology resources are protected through avoidance.

This event would be monitored in accordance with Ely District SRP policy to ensure impacts resulting from this event in regards to weeds and soils would be mitigated. Pre-and post-event inspections would be done of the course and photo monitoring points would be taken to document the impacts.

Included as part of the proposed action are the applicable BLM permit conditions checked on the reverse side of Special Recreation Permit form 2930-1 and special stipulations attached which are made a part of the race permit. The permit and stipulations, including the special stipulations regarding OHV events in desert tortoise habitat are attached as Appendix B to this environmental assessment and have been incorporated as mitigating measures inherent to the proposed action for purposes of this environmental assessment.

### **Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Detailed Analysis**

No other alternatives are necessary in order to respond to unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources. No other alternatives could fill the purpose and need of the proposed action as the proposed course utilizes the only existing roads and trails that would meet the needs of race participants and the permit applicant.

## **III. Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences**

### **General Setting**

The subject area contains a combination of vegetation communities existing between approximately 3,000 feet and 5,000 feet in elevation. The area is composed of mostly sandy type soils which generally support the following plants which are also the primary vegetation found along the proposed course: mixed Forbs and Grasses, various cactus species, various Yucca and Cholla species, Creosote scrub, Joshua trees and Utah juniper. The proposed course is primarily used by OHV recreationists for trail riding purposes.

Based on the review of existing baseline data, BLM specialists have identified the following resources for further analysis:

- Cultural Resources
- Noxious Weeds and Invasive, Non-Native Species
- Wildlife
- Special status species
- Visual Resource Management
- Soils
- Recreation
- Livestock Grazing
- Vegetation

The following elements of the human environment are not present or would not be affected by the proposed action; therefore no impacts to these elements are likely and they are not discussed further in this EA: Areas of Critical Environmental Concern,

environmental justice, ground or drinking water, floodplains, hazardous or solid waste, Native American religious concerns, land use authorizations, paleontological resources, minerals, prime or unique farmlands, , woodland resources, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, wetlands, Wild Horses.

## **Cultural Resources**

### **Affected Environment**

The potential for cultural resources in the region is moderate/high. Several sites are known to occur at or near the riparian areas near Alamo. Any off-road traffic in areas where cultural resources occur would likely cause impacts to any cultural resource site or sites adjacent to the course.

### **Environmental Consequences**

#### No Action Alternative

Under this alternative the trail ride would not be held. The possibility of cultural resources being disturbed from this event would be eliminated and the resources would remain in their current state.

#### Proposed Action

The proposed course is adjacent to some eligible and potentially eligible sites. A cultural needs assessment has been completed for this proposed action for all sections of the proposed course. A needs assessment quantifies the risk posed to known cultural sites as it relates to a proposed action. If it is determined that a cultural site is threatened by a proposed action, mitigating actions are taken to eliminate the threat to the identified cultural site or sites. Some sections of the proposed course have been inventoried for cultural resources. All sections of the proposed course are located on previously disturbed routes including, developed roads, roads and trails where use has created surface disturbance at least 2 meters wide. Because of this, a Class III inventory would not be needed for the proposed routes. Class III inventory may be needed in certain locations if unrecorded cultural site or sites are found near the proposed course.

Mitigation measures identified to eliminate the threat of damage to identified cultural sites include: Avoidance of any routes which would directly damage cultural resources. Where avoidance of existing routes which may pose a threat to cultural sites is not possible, creation of a barrier next to the route to prevent deviation from the route into the cultural site or sites would be done. In addition, implementing stipulations agreed upon between the BLM and the permit holder that define the consequences of damaging a cultural site would be done. If damaged, the permit holder would be subject to the associated penalties. The discovery of any potential unrecorded cultural site during the event would require analysis by an archeologist to determine eligibility. If the cultural site or sites discovered are potentially eligible, stopping and or re-routing the event would be necessary.

## **Noxious Weeds and Invasive, Non-Native Species**

### **Affected Environment**

The BLM defines a weed as a non native plant that disrupts or has the potential to disrupt or alter the natural ecosystem function, composition and diversity of the site it occupies. A weed's presence deteriorates the health of the site, it makes efficient use of natural resources difficult, and it may interfere with management objectives for that site. It is an invasive species that requires a concerted effort (manpower and resources) to remove from its current location, if it can be removed at all. "Noxious" weeds refer to those plant species which have been legally designated as unwanted or undesirable. This includes national, state and county or local designations. No field surveys were completed for this project. Instead, the Ely District weed inventory data was consulted. There are no known weed infestations along the race route. However, the following non-native species are found in the surrounding areas:

<i>Acroptilon repens</i>	Russian knapweed
<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>	Russian olive
<i>Lepidium draba</i>	Hoary cress
<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	Tall whitetop
<i>Onopordum acanthium</i>	Scotch thistle
<i>Tamarix spp.</i>	Salt cedar

Cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), red brome (*Bromus rubens*), Russian thistle (*Salsola kali*), halogeton (*Halogeton glomerus*), and tumble mustard (*Sisymbrium altissimum*) more than likely occur along portions of the course.

## **Environmental Consequences**

### No Action Alternative

Under this alternative a permit would not be issued for the trail ride. Possible transmission of weed populations from the proposed event would not occur.

### Proposed Action

A Noxious and Invasive Weed Risk Assessment was completed for this event, resulting in a moderate rating, included in (see appendix C). A moderate rating indicates that "possible adverse effects on sites and possible expansion of infestation within the project area" is expected to occur" and that "preventative management measures for the proposed project to reduce the risk of introduction or spread of noxious weeds into the area" is required.

Due to the nature of the event and the tendency for vehicles to carry seeds from other sources, there is a moderate risk of areas along the course becoming infested by noxious or non-native invasive weeds. The primary concern for this project is the potential introduction of Sahara mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*) into the area from Las Vegas. Most of the participants will be coming from the Clark County area which is heavily infested with this noxious weed. Vehicles **must** be properly cleaned prior to racing to prevent spreading the infestation into Lincoln County.

Mitigation measures and BMPS listed in the Noxious and Invasive Weed Risk Assessment would reduce this likelihood as outlined in the event stipulations in Appendix B.

## **Wildlife**

## **Affected Environment**

The major wildlife populations within the event area include: reptile populations, including a variety of lizards such as the chuckwalla, leopard lizard (*Gambelia wislizenii*) and a variety of snakes. Small mammal populations exist including antelope ground squirrels (*Ammospermophilus leucurus*), kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys* sp.), coyotes (*Canis latrans*), and desert kit fox (*Vulpes macrotis*). Populations of mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) and pronghorn antelope (*Antilocapra americana*) may be scattered throughout other portions of the race area that provide yearlong habitat, with greater numbers likely near water sources. Upland birds, such as chukar (*Alectoris chukar*) and Gambel's quail (*Callipepla gambelii*), as well as a variety of migratory birds are found in this area. Several wildlife water developments exist between five and eight miles from the event area.

## **Environmental Consequences**

### No Action Alternative

Under this alternative a special use permit would not be issued for the trail ride. No impacts to wildlife resources from this event would occur.

### Proposed Action

Noise associated with the trail ride may temporarily disperse wildlife from watering sources. There would also be a limited possibility that a vehicle rider may collide with any of these wildlife species which could cause injury or death to the rider or wildlife species. Some wildlife may be separated and dispersed from watering sources and out of wash bottoms which may expose them to a higher risk of predation by carnivores. No impacts are expected to migratory birds because of the temporary disturbance to wildlife associated with the event. Significant impacts to wildlife species in the race area are not anticipated due to the short-term nature of the event.

## **Special Status Species**

### **Affected Environment**

There are some special status species which exist near or within the area where the proposed course is located. Special status reptile species near or within the proposed course include: the federally threatened desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), BLM sensitive species chuckwalla (*Sauromalus obesus*), and BLM sensitive Gila monster (*Heloderma suspectum*). Approximately 30 miles of the 58 mile proposed course is located within identified desert tortoise habitat. None of the proposed course is located within an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) designated in the Caliente desert tortoise land use plan amendment to more effectively manage desert tortoise habitat for the protection of the desert tortoise. A BLM sensitive species, desert bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*), may be found in and near the event course. The Western Yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus occidentalis*), a federal candidate bird species, is also identified as being present near the event area. There are no identified sensitive plant species in the area of the proposed event.

### **Environmental Consequences**

### No Action Alternative

Under this alternative a special use permit would not be issued for the trail ride. No chance of impacts to special status species would occur from this event.

### Proposed Action

Noise associated with the trail ride may temporarily disperse any sensitive species present in the area of the event. There would also be a limited possibility that a vehicle rider may collide with one of these sensitive species which could cause injury or death to the rider or sensitive species. Any sightings and or collisions with desert tortoises would be reported and handled by personnel certified to handle desert tortoises. Routes used for the event within desert tortoise habitat would be monitored to ensure that participants stay on the designated route to prevent the loss of any desert tortoise habitat. Sightings or contact with any of the other sensitive species would be reported to the proper personnel.

## **Visual Resource Management**

### **Affected Environment**

The proposed course is located within an area that has been visually impacted by mineral exploration, road development, OHV recreation and installation of communications equipment and aircraft landing facilities. The affected area is in an area with a VRM classification 3 and 4.

### **Environmental Consequences**

#### No Action Alternative

Under this alternative the trail ride would not be permitted. No visual impacts related to the event would occur.

#### Proposed Action

The proposed action would stay within the visual resource management criteria for the area based upon mitigation measures and design. Every attempt should be made to minimize the impact of these activities through careful location and minimal visual disturbance.

## **Soils**

### **Affected Environment**

The project area occurs within MLRA 29, Southern Nevada Basin and Range which exhibits sharp contrasts in topography, soil, precipitation and vegetation types. Soils in the race area bordering mountain ranges contain a preponderance of various sized fragments derived from decomposed sedimentary and tertiary volcanic rocks. Soil in washes and valley floors consist of sand, silt, clay, sand, small rock fragments and some boulders. Most of the soils contain large amounts of sand (See Chart); however there are some silt loams and contrasting inclusions of other soil types. Slopes are nearly level to strongly sloping on the valley floor with moderately steep drainages. Slopes on the mountains are steep to very steep. Some of these soils are prone to erosion, especially in areas that are moderately steep to very steep and areas of fine sandy loams, silt loams and finer soils.

## **Environmental Consequences**

### No Action Alternative

Under this alternative the trail ride would not be held. Erosion would continue through its natural process on the existing roads, trails, and washes and would not be accelerated from the trail ride.

### Proposed Action

New erosion channels may be created by motorcycle and vehicle traffic on the route in some locations. Areas such as valley bottoms with finer soil textures may become very soft and powdery during and after the event. Compaction of the soils will occur, especially in finer textured soils. If the course is raced while wet erosion and compaction could be increased further. Implementation of the special stipulations (see Appendix B) would allow for rehabilitation of any negative impacts related to the event.

## **Recreation**

### **Affected Environment**

Opportunities within the event area for recreation are medium to high. This area is popular among OHV users. The affected area is used by recreationists primarily for recreational and some competitive OHV riding. Some use occurs related to cultural tourism and hunting seasons for game birds and big game species.

## **Environmental Consequences**

### No Action Alternative

Under this alternative the trail ride would not be held.

### Proposed Action

There would be positive impacts to OHV recreation users. The trail ride would provide an opportunity to help meet the demand for organized non-competitive OHV events. The event would also provide an opportunity for a group camping experience for event attendees.

Mitigation measures related to recreation activities such as hunting and tourism include requiring the special recreation permit holder to rehabilitate any routes used during the event to a suitable condition to allow for adequate public access to areas where recreation activities may occur.

## **Livestock Grazing**

### **Affected Environment**

Livestock have historically grazed throughout the event location. The proposed action lies entirely within the Pahranaagat West Grazing Allotment. This Allotment is active, being used for cattle during winter and summer grazing seasons.

## **Environmental Consequences**

### No Action Alternative

Under this alternative the trail ride would not be held. Livestock in the area would remain undisturbed by the event.

### Proposed Action

Under the proposed action there would be a potential for cattle to be temporarily disturbed and displaced from water sources. There would also be a chance of riders colliding with cattle which could kill or mortally injure both the animal and/or the rider. The permit holder and the BLM will be responsible for coordinating with the livestock permittee to mitigate livestock damage. Damage of roads used by ranchers is also possible.

Mitigation measures related to livestock operations include requiring the special recreation permit holder to rehabilitate any routes used during the event to a suitable condition to allow for adequate access of the area for the public as well as the livestock permittee.

## **Vegetation**

### **Affected Environment**

Vegetation in the event area consists of mixed forbs, grasses, various cactus species, various Yucca and Cholla species, Creosote scrub, Joshua trees and Utah juniper. These vegetation communities vary in composition and density related to natural processes as well as human uses such as livestock grazing, recreation and permitted actions such as power lines.

### **Environmental Consequences**

#### No Action Alternative

Under this alternative the trail ride would not be held. Vegetation would not be damaged by the proposed event.

#### Proposed Action

Vegetation growing within existing roads and vehicle trails used during this event would be affected by the passage of motorcycles. Riders tend to avoid large shrubs. The primary impact to vegetation would be trampling of shrubs, grasses and forbs growing directly on the existing routes used for this event.

Mitigation measures associated to vegetation include permitting vehicle travel on existing roads and vehicle routes only. The permit holder is required to mark the route adequately as to prevent riders from leaving the designated course.

## **IV. Cumulative Impacts**

According to the BLM handbook Guidelines for Accessing and Documenting Cumulative Impacts (1994), the analysis can be focused on those issues and resource values identified during scoping that are of major importance. The issue and resource values of major importance or public concern, which would be analyzed for

cumulative impacts, include Cultural Resources, Noxious Weeds and Invasive, Non-Native Species, Wildlife, Special status species, Visual Resource Management, Soils, Recreation, Livestock Grazing, Vegetation.

Cumulative impacts result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts could result from individually minor, but collectively significant actions, taking place over a period of time (Council on Environmental Quality, Regulations for Implementation of NEPA, 1508.7).

The cumulative effects study area is a five mile radius around the area where the proposed action would take place. A general discussion of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions follows:

### **Past Actions**

This area has been used for thirteen short term events both competitive and non-competitive since 1990. Some portions of the proposed course were used on various years during some of these events, the most recent being the 2006 Yuccachucker race. Authorized course located within a five miles of the proposed course was also used during the thirteen events. This area has also been used for grazing, recreation activities, cultural tourism and various lands actions. Some of these lands actions include the creation of an air strip near Alamo used by civilian and military personnel for landing and launching aircraft, as well as various actions such as phone and power lines.

### **Present Actions**

Currently grazing and various recreation activities such as OHV riding, hiking, cultural tourism, hunting and trapping are the main actions taking place within the event area. There is continued motorized and non-motorized recreation occurring within the area.

### **Reasonably Foreseeable Actions**

Various motorized and non-motorized recreation activities within the area will continue to increase as the communities grow. OHV recreation and permitted OHV events would continue to be held within the Ely BLM district. Other multiple use activities would continue to take place in the area in the future. BLM land use planning documents anticipate an increase of use in this area related to recreation activities due to the growing population centers of Coyote Springs and the Pahrnatag valley. Reasonable Foreseeable actions include: preparation and completion of planning documents directed by the new Ely BLM district Resource Management Plan, which will direct and influence how the public can use the Pahrnatag valley area regarding recreation, development, and land sales and transfers into the future. Other reasonably foreseeable actions include power lines and other utility related actions associated with the growing communities in the valley and the selling and or transfer of ownership of public lands to private land.

Based upon past, present and reasonable foreseeable actions, this proposed action would not provide a large incremental effect from recreation and other actions in the Pahranaagat Valley.

#### V. **Proposed Mitigation**

Mitigation measures incorporated into the proposed action are sufficient. Based on the analysis of environmental consequences no additional mitigation is proposed.

#### VI. **Suggested Monitoring**

Monitoring measures incorporated into the proposed action are sufficient, based on the analysis of environmental consequences and the stipulated rules agreed upon by the applicant and the BLM, no additional monitoring is proposed.

#### VII. **Consultation, Coordination, and List of Preparers**

##### **Consultation and coordination**

BLM Specialists assigned and consulted with regarding the proposed action include:

Kari Harrison, Soil, Air and Water Quality  
Shirley Johnson, Rangeland Management Specialist  
Bonnie Waggoner, Noxious & Non-Native, Invasive Weeds  
Alicia Styles, Wildlife Biologist  
Lynn Wulf, Archeologist  
Dave Jacobson, Wilderness  
Dave Jeppesen, VRM and Recreation  
Elvis Wall, Tribal Coordination  
Joe David, NEPA Specialist

##### **Public Involvement**

This document was released for public comment and review on the BLM website for 30 days.

#### VIII. **References**

Desert Tortoise Amendment to the Caliente Management Framework Plan, 2000

Lincoln County Public Land and Natural Resource Management Plan, 1997

Comments from the resource specialists listed above.

United States Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Decision Record  
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT  
DECISION RECORD  
Yuccachucker Motorcycle Race  
Environmental Assessment  
NV-040-08-19  
Permit Number  
NV-040-08-06

**Introduction**

The proposed action is in response to a request for application to grant a special recreation permit to J.R. Zannoth with the Yuccachuckers to hold a race on March 29-30 2008 and varying dates between the months of February and July for years to come. This event is sanctioned by the Motorcycle racing association of Nevada (MRAN) would provide an organized racing opportunity for the public and club members. The proposed course is approximately 58 miles long (see Appendix A). The proposed course is located on predominantly BLM managed public land in Lincoln County, with small sections of the proposed course crossing through private land. For the portions of course which cross private land, the proponent is required to obtain permission letters from affected private land owners. It is required by the BLM that the proponent supply a copy of any permission letters to the BLM before a permit is issued for the event. The proposed course is located on prior course segments analyzed in previous Environmental Assessments. It has been determined that an updated analysis of the proposed action was necessary to proceed with issuing this permit. All portions of the course are on existing roads, trails and washes. No cross country travel will be authorized.

**Finding of No Significant Impact**

I have reviewed Environmental Assessment (EA) NV-040-08-19, dated February, 2008. After consideration of the environmental impacts as described in the EA, and incorporated herein, I have determined that the proposed actions with the standard operating procedures as described in the EA will not significantly affect the quality of the human environment and that an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not required to be prepared. This finding and conclusion is based on my consideration of the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) criteria for significance (40 Code of Federal Regulations 1508.27), both with regard to the context and the intensity of impacts described in the EA. I have determined the proposed action is in conformance with the Desert Tortoise Amendment to the Caliente Management Framework Plan.

Context:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has the authority under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 United States Code 1701 et seq.) (FLPMA)

Intensity:

1) Impacts that may be both beneficial and adverse:

No significant impacts were noted after the completion of similar OHV events. The proposed action will result in improved economics and tourism of the surrounding communities. Any negative effects caused by the proposed action are thought to be short term and temporary. Negative effects such as damaged roads are required to be repaired

as part of the special stipulations that the permit holder agrees to.

2) *The degree to which the proposed action affects public health or safety:*

The proposed action will not have significant negative effects to public health and safety. Coordination with county entities and stipulations to minimize any negative effects to the public health and safety of the area are agreed upon by the permit holder. The spread of invasive, non-native species would be minimal and not significant as identified by the weeds risk assessment completed for this event. Stipulations requiring the permittee to implement practices to prevent the spread of noxious weeds would be attached to the permit, and field inspectors would ensure that the stipulations are followed.

3) *Unique characteristics of the geographic area such as proximity to historical or cultural resources, parks lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, or ecologically critical areas:*

The project area is representative of the Great Basin and Mojave systems. No significant impacts are anticipated from the proposed action to floodplains, wetlands, and riparian areas; wilderness values, ACECs, and wild and scenic rivers; Visual Resource Management; cultural, Paleontological, and historical resource values; prime or unique farmlands; environmental justice; water quality (drinking/ground); Native American religious concerns; or migratory birds

4) *The degree to which the effects on the quality of the human environment are likely to be highly controversial:*

The effects of organized events such as this are well known and documented and are not highly controversial. Stipulations are agreed upon by the permit holder to enable any negative effects from the event to be minimized and rehabilitated.

5) *The degree to which the possible effects on the human environment are highly uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks:*

There are no known effects of the proposed action which are considered uncertain or involve unique or unknown risks.

6) *The degree to which the action may establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects or represents a decision in principle about a future consideration:*

The proposed action does not establish a precedent for future actions with significant effects and does not represent a decision in principle about a future consideration. All future similar events would be subject to the same environmental assessment standards and independent decision making.

7) *Whether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant, but cumulatively significant impacts:* Based on the conditions set forth in this Finding of No Significant Impact, no significant impacts will occur due to the proposed action. The subsequent land use would be regulated by local, state, and federal regulations as applicable; therefore, no significantly cumulative impacts are anticipated.

8) *The degree to which the action may adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places or may cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historic resources:*

The proposed action will not cause the loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural or historical resources. A cultural needs assessment was completed for this event to determine the threat the proposed action would pose to cultural and historical resources. Mitigation actions identified to ensure cultural or historical resources would not be damaged include avoidance through rerouting the proposed course and barriers to prevent off-road travel into any cultural sites near the proposed routes.

9) *The degree to which the action may adversely affect an endangered or threatened species or its habitat that has been determined to be critical under the Endangered Species Act of 1973:*

The EA has identified that no significant or adverse impacts would result to a threatened or endangered species from implementing the proposed action.

10) Whether the action threatens a violation of Federal, State, local or tribal law or requirements imposed for the protection of the environment: This action is consistent with federal, state, local, and tribal laws and other requirements for the protection of the environment. The proposed action will not violate or threaten to violate any Federal, State, or local law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.

### **Decision Record**

I have reviewed Environmental Assessment (EA) NV-040-08-19, dated January, 2008. I have determined the proposed action is in conformance with the approved Desert Tortoise Amendment to the Caliente Management Framework Plan. It is my decision to implement the proposal as described, subject to the attached permit conditions, special stipulations. I hereby approve this proposal which was mitigated through route planning procedures, and requirements contained in permit conditions and special stipulations which are included as part of this decision.

#### Rationale for Decision

Approval of this proposal will allow the applicant to conduct the race, which is a legitimate, multiple use activity that will result in no significant impact to important resource values.

#### Public Involvement

This document was made available for public review for 30 days on the BLM Ely district website.

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Jeffrey A. Weeks  
Assistant Field Manager  
Non-Renewable Resources

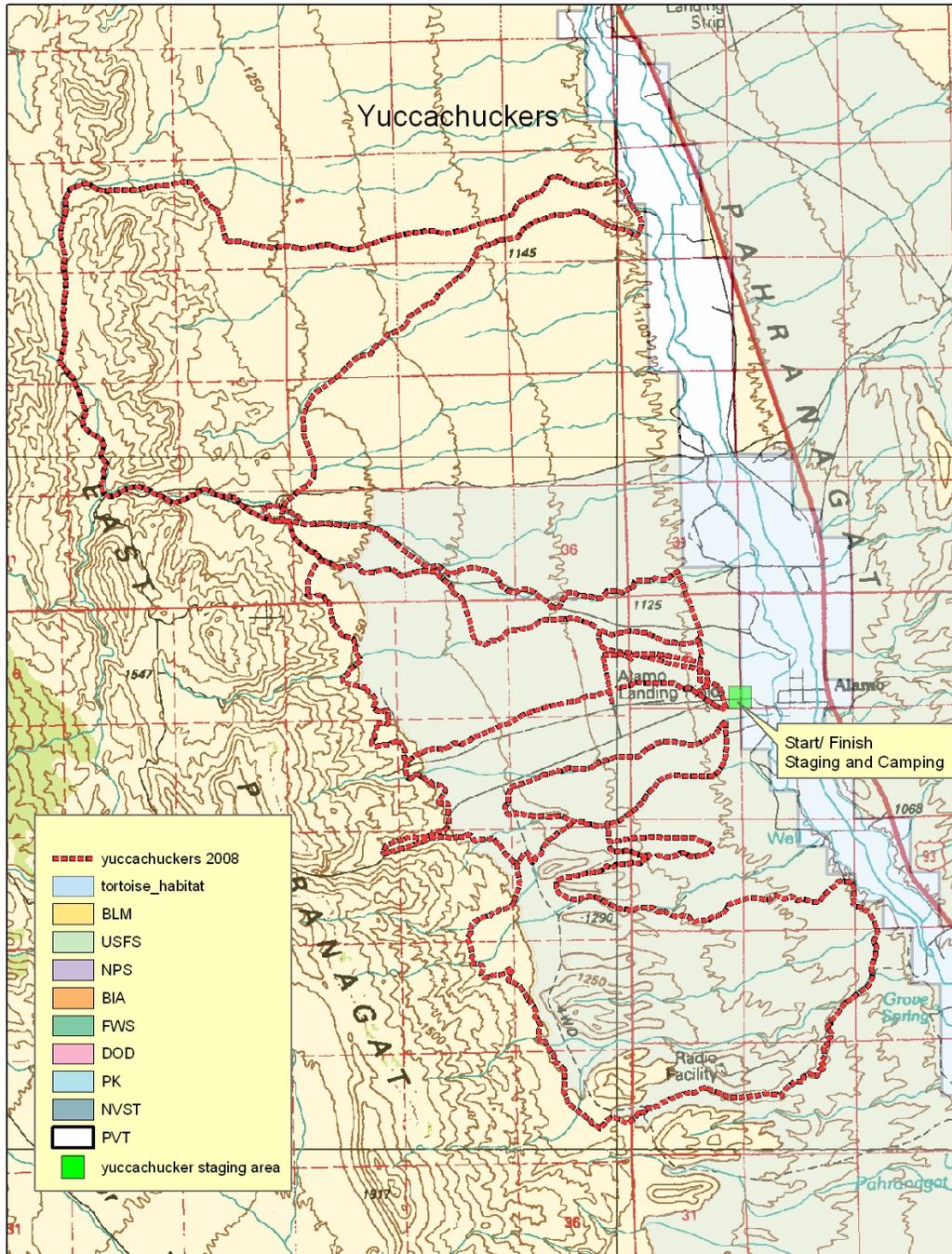
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Date

## Appendix A – Maps

These maps are intended to provide representational information only. Detailed maps are available for public review at the Bureau of Land Management, Ely Field Office.

Map 1



APPENDIX B - Stipulations

Stipulations #1-16 are located on the back side of the SRP Permit (form 2930-1).

17. Painting or marking of rocks or vegetation will not be allowed; the establishment of permanent markers for monitoring or course relocation purposes may be authorized by the AO. **The approved race course must be clearly defined and plainly marked prior to the event.** The permittee shall mark the course, with flagging colors other than green or blue, at sufficient intervals so that race participants can clearly follow the approved route.

18. The permittee shall be responsible for the supervision of all participants, spectators, and other persons associated with the event, and will be responsible for ensuring public safety in the event area.

19. The permittee will be responsible for keeping race contestants on the designated race course approved by the AO. The permittee shall take appropriate steps to ensure that the course width doesn't exceed the established width of roads, trails or washes, or 10 feet, whichever is narrower.

20. The permittee must contact and receive concurrence or license, where required, from all other federal, state, county, and local governmental agencies having jurisdiction, concern, or interest in the race or over any portion thereof.

21. This permit does not give permission to cross over or use any private lands during the event. The permittee will be fully responsible for all trespass on, or damages to, private land which results from the conduct of the event.

22. The use of BLM administered roads and unimproved trails on public land are permitted. The permittee must ensure that sufficient numbers of personnel are present at checkpoints to prevent racers from colliding with other vehicles that may be in the area. Checkpoint personnel must be in position prior to the first racer passing their assigned locations, and the race will not start or will be halted until checkpoint personnel are ready to perform their duties.

23. The permittee shall do everything possible to ensure that participants and spectators do not willfully or maliciously harass livestock, wild horses or wildlife. No cutting of fences or damage to other range developments is authorized for purposes of this race. All fences, gates and other range developments damaged during the course of this event will be repaired to a condition equal to the condition of the development prior to the event.

24. Permittee shall not cut any timber on the public lands without prior written permission from the authorized office. Hazardous tree limbs or small trees may be cut and removed to provide for the safe passage of race vehicles.

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25. The permittee is responsible for ensuring that adequate toilet facilities are provided for use by race personnel, participants, pit crews and spectators at all pit locations.

26. Permittee shall provide for sufficient first aid services to ensure that after an accident a victim can be located, treated, and promptly evacuated. The permittee will contact medical personnel in the area to advise them to prepare for potential emergency services. A sufficient number of personnel with portable two way radios will be located along the course to assist in promptly responding to emergencies.

27. The permittee will do everything reasonable, both independently and/or upon the request of the AO, to prevent and suppress fires caused by the race or related activities on public lands utilized during this event. Compensation may be required to be paid by the permittee for expenses incurred by Federal, State, or private entities expended in fire suppression and rehabilitation expenses that

may result from this event. Approved spark arresters (certified manufacturer equipment or .023 inch or smaller mesh metallic screen) will be required on all 4-stroke motorcycles.

28. The permittee will inspect all race vehicles to ensure they have been cleaned prior to the race. This, in an effort to prevent the introduction of any new weed populations. Any race vehicle not cleaned before the race will be subject to penalty and/or disqualification. The permittee will also make an honest effort to encourage those at the race to wash all vehicles at the nearest washing facility.

29. All check point personnel shall be required to have in their possession, as a minimum, one shovel and two gallons of water for fire suppression in their assigned area. The permittee will ensure that a sufficient number of multi-fuel fire extinguishers are available at pit areas in order to control any gasoline fires that may occur.

30. Stakes, flagging materials, equipment, temporary facilities, and all other event-related materials must be removed by the permittee from the course within 15 calendar days after the event. Trash and litter left on public lands by spectators and checkpoint/pit personnel associated with this OHV event will be cleaned up immediately following the race. All trash, litter and refuse must be disposed of at an approved dump facility.

31. There will be no cross-country vehicular use allowed by participants or spectators in the area of the race course during the race weekend. Any pre-race vehicle use must be confined to existing roads or approved pit locations. The race sponsor may use vehicles during marking of the course, and for conducting a pre-race sweep patrol to move wildlife out of the area and insure that markers have not been removed.

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32. The permittee will establish a sufficient number of race course checkpoints to prevent short-coursing (travel off of the approved route) by race participants.

**33. Any unnecessary and undue damage resulting from the event including, but not limited to, eroded areas where vehicle barricades, road grading, water bars or recontouring are required, or denuded areas needing revegetation, will be rehabilitated by the permittee in a manner specified by the AO.** The use area will be inspected by the AO or designated representative (in conjunction with the permittee, if possible) in order to determine needed reclamation or reseeding. The permittee will ensure completion of this work within a mutually agreed to time frame, or in accordance with a time frame established by the AO. If this work is not completed in a timely manner, it may be performed by the BLM or contract personnel with the express and implied agreement by the permittee to pay for these rehabilitation costs.

34. The permittee may be required to pay costs of restoration and repair of cultural resources that are damaged by race participants outside of the approved race course or pit areas.

35. Any concession activity located on public lands that is associated with this race event is authorized under this race permit as long as concession revenues are included in the gross receipts reported on the post use form. No concessions selling alcohol will be allowed or authorized.

36. The permittee must complete the post-race portion of the permit form and return it to the Ely BLM office **no later than 30 calendar days after completion of the event.** The permittee will be responsible for providing documentation as to the total number of race participants and the gross receipts from participant entry fees, concessions or any other source of permit revenue.

37. The permittee agrees to pay, in response to a billing provided by the AO, a sum which is the greater of \$90.00 minimum fee, \$4.00 per race participant or 3 percent of the gross receipts derived on public lands as a result of this event.

38. Permittee shall conduct a mandatory drivers meeting in the form of a mass meeting to inform participants of the permit stipulations.

39. Permittee is required to contact counties, county road departments, county and state law enforcement agencies, livestock permittees, right-of-way holders, patented land owners, private land owners, and utility companies prior to the event.

**Terms and Conditions of the Biological Opinion for Implementation of Proposed Actions in the Caliente Management Framework Plan Amendment and Record of Decision for the Management of Desert Tortoise Habitat**

To be exempt from the prohibitions of section 9 of the Act, the proponent must comply with the following terms and conditions, which implement the reasonable and prudent measures described above. These terms and conditions are non-discretionary.

To implement Reasonable and Prudent Measure Number 3, the proponent shall fully implement the following terms and conditions to reduce impacts to desert tortoise and its habitat from management of recreation activities:

- a. All ACECs will be closed to speed-competitive events and speed-based portions of OHV events.
- b. For all events: Recreation Use Permits shall be required for all non-speed OHV events with 26 or more vehicles within Desert Tortoise ACECs and 50 or more vehicles outside desert tortoise ACECs. Following the findings of Clark County's Rural Roads Adaptive Management Program, this restriction may be modified in the future to require permits for 50 or more vehicles both inside and outside ACECs. Events that originate or proceed into adjoining districts will default to the restrictions established in those districts provided the limitations identified in this biological opinion for the Ely District are not exceeded. For example, no events or segments of events may occur in the planning area that involve over 300 vehicles although up to 400 may be allowed in the Arizona Strip District.
- c. All permitted events within ACECs will occur only on designated corridors. Events that occur on the Carp/Elgin, Halfway Wash, and East Halfway Wash corridors will comply with terms and conditions of the biological opinion issued for the Las Vegas District RMP (File No. 1-5-98-F-053, as amended or reinitiated); events that occur on the Littlefield corridor will comply with terms and conditions of the biological opinion issued for the Arizona Strip District RMP (File No. 2-21-96-F-132, as amended or reinitiated); and events that enter Utah will comply with terms and conditions of the biological opinion issued for the Dixie RMP (File No. 6-UT-98-F-005, as amended or reinitiated). Events that occur entirely within the Ely District on the Kane Springs Road corridor, shall comply with the terms and conditions of this biological opinion.
- d. Within ACECs: No organized events will be permitted from March 15 to June 15, and August 31. These dates may vary up to three days to allow a full weekend (i.e., Saturday and Sunday) for an event. Outside of these times, a maximum of 15 events (non-speed events, non speed portions of speed events, or non-competitive events) may be permitted to pass through ACECs on roads designated open to organized OHV use. No more than 300 vehicles of any type will be allowed on any one event. Each event will consist of no more than one pass through the ACEC.
- e. For speed events: Minors and responsible adults participating in events shall be informed that they shall not ride their ATVs or motorcycles in the desert after they finish an event. This includes the open desert as well as roads and trails. Failure to comply with this condition by any child associated with a particular rider shall result in the disqualification of that rider.
- f. For speed events, including non-speed sections: If a vehicle breaks down, it will be moved to the side of the racecourse, avoiding damage to vegetation to the extent possible. Participants who stop to rest will pull over onto side roads or areas devoid of perennial vegetation, if possible. Riders who voluntarily retire from the

event will either wait along the course for their crew to pick them up, or travel along the course to a pit area. Chase crews will be limited to retrieving vehicles that are broken down along the course. All chase vehicles must have a pit pass, retrieval pass or other form of access permission from the Bureau.

- g. For speed events: No spectators or spectator areas will be allowed in ACECs. Spectator vehicles will be allowed in designated spectator areas only. Spectator areas shall be confined to existing disturbed areas or new areas selected in coordination with the Service. Spectator areas are established for viewing purposes only and vehicles will be prohibited. The promoter will be required to mark the boundaries of the spectator area so that spectators can readily tell where the boundary is located. Rope or wire with warning triangles or other similar sturdy materials shall be used. A monitor will be placed at each spectator area to ensure spectators remain within the designated boundary. Anyone found outside of the designated area will be subject to citation by a Bureau law enforcement officer.
- h. For speed events: Pit crews will use only authorized pit areas. Pits shall be confined to existing disturbed areas, unless otherwise approved by the Service. Pit areas will be marked with a sign stating that a pit pass is required. A maximum of 10 pit passes will be issued to each entrant; however, in unusual cases the Bureau may authorize issuance of additional passes to meet the specific needs or conditions. Under no circumstances will the issuance of additional passes create or contribute to expansion of designated pit areas. Pit passes should be identified by color or unique number, the name and date of event, and distinguish the pit to which the pass applies (i.e., main pit or course pit), and will be affixed to the windshield of each vehicle. Vehicles in the pit area without pit passes will be towed at the owners' expense. Unauthorized duplication of pit passes will result in disqualification of the entrant and this shall be stated on each pass.
- i. For speed events including non-speed sections: All event-related activities will be confined to authorized vehicle routes, pit areas, spectator areas, and the course itself, and will not stray into vegetated areas. All major access routes leading into restricted areas will be monitored, or marked closed and bannered off. Personnel shall be stationed at these areas, as appropriate, to enforce access restrictions. Directional signs to spectator and pit areas will be posted at all main access points. "Race-in-progress" signs will be posted at each location where the race crosses another road. Other disqualification or hazard zones will be monitored periodically during the event.
- j. For all events in ACECs BLM staff will be present to check for compliance with stipulations of the race permit. The importance of staying on the racecourse will be stressed to all participants by the Bureau and promoter.
- k. For all events: A sufficient number of Bureau rangers, monitors, and crowd control officials, as determined by the Bureau in coordination with the Service, will be required to enforce compliance with stipulations of the event permit. Monitors may be Bureau or proponent personnel and shall be stationed at all disqualification or hazard areas to record any violations. As a general guideline, the Bureau will provide one law enforcement officer per 50 participants, to enforce terms and conditions of this biological opinion, control unauthorized vehicular travel off existing roads, and ensure that habitat damage does not occur. The number of law enforcement officers present may be increased or decreased based on the event proponents past history of event management and stipulation compliance, the estimated number of spectators, geographic setting of the event, or experience gained from previous similar events, at the discretion of the Bureau's authorizing officer.
- l. For all events: Permittees shall be responsible for trash and litter clean-up along the course and in spectator and pit areas. Stakes, flagging materials, temporary facilities, litter, and all other event-related materials shall be removed from the course and pit, parking, and spectator areas. The race courses and parking areas shall be restored, at a minimum, to pre-event conditions within 15 days after the

event. Garbage and food will be removed from the site of the event at the end of each day and will be disposed of in authorized sanitary landfills.

- m. For all events including non-speed sections: To reduce casual use within the vicinity of courses, on a case-by-case basis, race areas may be legally closed to casual use on the day of the event. The determination as to whether to close the event area will be made after reviewing the type of event, number of spectators and pit crews expected, location, ability to access the event area and history of similar events. If an area is closed, the promoter will be required to station monitors and/or post signs at road intersections, prohibiting public access, where the general public is likely to access the race course. If the promoter does not control access, the Bureau will perform this function and bill the promoter for costs. A Federal Register notice providing authority to close race areas in the Ely and Las Vegas Field Offices will be issued. This will allow Bureau law enforcement officers to enforce regulations. A legal notice will be published in the *local newspapers*, or other appropriate publication, before the permitted events take place.
- n. For all events: Any desert tortoises found on or adjacent to the event course shall be moved into undisturbed desert within 1,000 feet by Bureau personnel experienced or trained in the handling of tortoises, or Bureau contractors experienced and trained in the handling of tortoises according to current Service-approved protocol. Currently, the Service-approved protocol is, "Guidelines for Handling Desert Tortoises During Construction Projects (Desert Tortoise Council 1994, Revised 1998)." Tortoises shall be deliberately moved solely for the purpose of moving them out of harm's way. Desert tortoises shall not be placed on lands not under the ownership of the Bureau without the written permission of the landowner. All personnel involved in tortoise capture shall obtain appropriate permits from NDOW prior to handling any desert tortoise. All road repair and course cleanup crews shall be accompanied by Bureau personnel or their designee to ensure that no tortoises or tortoise burrows are harmed during repair operations.
- o. For speed events: Publicity runs will not occur within ACECs, and all event-related vehicular activity will be confined to authorized routes and the course itself and will not stray into vegetated areas.
- p. For all events: To the extent possible, the event course shall be cleared of all unauthorized vehicles and personnel prior to each event.
- q. For all events: Participants in each event who violate any stipulation for that event shall be disqualified from the event. Additionally, failure to comply with the above stipulations by any member of the support team or spectators associated with a particular driver or rider shall result in the disqualification of that driver or rider.
- r. For all events: Participants will be informed that passing will be limited to the disturbed areas of roads, trails, and washes and will not occur in vegetated areas adjacent to the course.
- s. For speed events: To help control spectators, the event promoter will station at least one person at the primary entrance to the spectator area for at least 2 hours before the start of the race and 1 hour after the start of the race. This individual will stop all cars coming into the area, give the occupants information on the limits of the spectator area, and advise them where they can and cannot park.
- t. For non-speed portions of speed events in ACECs: Participants will be escorted through the ACEC at a speed of no greater than 25 mph.
- u. For organized non-OHV events within the ACECs: The event will be surveyed for desert tortoise immediately prior to the event. If desert tortoise or sign of is observed, the event will be moved to a different location or set up in such a way as to avoid adverse effects to desert tortoise.

- v. Horse endurance rides will be limited to existing roads and trails. Horse endurance rides are considered speed events and will not be permitted in desert tortoise ACECs.

### **Standard Operating Procedures**

1. Entrants, pit crew members, crowd control officials, race monitors, checkpoint personnel, and clean-up crews shall be informed, either through a presentation or a pamphlet, of the occurrence of desert tortoises in the race area, and the threatened status of the species. All such personnel shall be advised of the definition of “take”, the potential for impacts to the desert tortoise, and the potential penalties (up to \$25,000 in fines and 6 months in prison) for taking threatened species in a manner not permitted in the incidental take statement. The permit holder shall provide a written statement for signature acknowledging receipt of information regarding the desert tortoise and any special stipulations in place for tortoise protection from all entrants. All race monitors and check-point personnel shall be provided the race stipulations and the procedures for reporting permit violations.
2. All event-related vehicular activities will be confined to authorized vehicle routes and the course itself, and will not stray into vegetated areas. All major access routes leading into restricted areas will be monitored, or marked closed and bannered off. Road markers, vehicle barricades, or signs will be installed either the day of the race or the day before the race. Promoter shall station personnel at these areas, as appropriate, to enforce access restrictions. Directional signs to spectator and pit areas will be posted at all main access points. Race-in-progress signs will be posted at each location where the race crosses another road. Other disqualification or hazard zones will be monitored periodically during the event.
3. Terms and conditions e, f, k, l, n and Standard Operating Procedures 1, 4 and 5 shall apply to publicity runs outside ACECs.
4. A representative shall be designated who will be responsible for overseeing compliance with the reasonable and prudent measures, terms and conditions, reporting requirements, and reinitiation requirements contained in the BO. The designated representative shall provide coordination among the permit holder, the bureau and the USFWS.
5. All road repair and course cleanup crews shall be accompanied by Bureau personnel or their designee to ensure that no tortoises or tortoise burrows are harmed during repair and cleaning operations.
6. Participants will be informed that passing on buggy, ATV, and motorcycle courses will be limited to the disturbed areas of roads, trails, and washes and will not occur in vegetated areas adjacent to the course.
7. Additional stipulations or modifications may be required on terms and conditions in the biological opinion issued for a particular event (or programmatic opinion valid at the time of the event).

*\*Non-compliance with any above permit stipulation will be grounds for denial of future permits, and/or race cancellation.*

### **Performance evaluation, violations, and penalties:**

#### **Performance will be based upon:**

- 1) Stipulation and Operating Plan Compliance;

- 2) Protection of Resource Values; and
- 3) Quality and safety of services provided to the public.

**Performance levels are:**

A= Acceptable: Permittee is in compliance with permit stipulations; has taken prompt steps to rectify any performance issues and complaints; does not repeatedly violate conditions, or show a disregard for stipulations.

P= Probationary: Where there has been repeated violations or a disregard for permit stipulations, the permittee will be placed in probationary status.

U= Unacceptable: Permittee willfully and/or repeatedly violated permit conditions to provide substandard service to the public. Conduct is lacking in reasonableness or responsibility to the point that it becomes reckless or negligent.

**Violations and Penalties**

A= Complaints and issues may be discussed over the phone or in writing. When due dates or completion dates are established, the permittee will be afforded a 15 day grace period, unless otherwise specified.

P= A notice on Noncompliance (Notice) will be issued by the Authorized Officer specifying in what respect the permittee has failed to comply, the terms of the probationary status, and the consequences of further noncompliance.

U= Permit privileges would be revoked for one to three years.

A notice of Noncompliance and Decision to Terminate permit privileges would be issued by the Authorized Officer. The permittee would be allowed the opportunity to appeal the decision under Title 43 CFR, Part 4.

Critical Standards - a breach of critical standards can lead directly to administrative penalties, suspension or revocation of a permit. Critical standards are necessary for the health and welfare of the public and protection of resources.

The permit shall be suspended or revoked if required State or local licenses pertaining to public health and safety are revoked.

Violation of mandatory Federal or State safety requirements will result in probationary status or loss of permit privileges.

The conviction of a violation of any Federal or State law or regulation concerning the conservation or protection of natural resources, the environment, endangered species or antiquities that is related to permit operations will result in probationary status or loss of permit privileges.

I HAVE READ, UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THESE PERMIT CONDITIONS AND SPECIAL STIPULATIONS. I HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO OBLIGATE THIS ORGANIZATION TO THE ABOVE REQUIREMENTS.

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE



**RISK ASSESSMENT FOR NOXIOUS & INVASIVE WEEDS**

**2008 Yuccachucker Motor-cross Race  
Lincoln County, Nevada**

On January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2008 a Noxious Weed Risk Assessment was completed for the 2008 Yuccachucker race in Lincoln County, NV. The Yuccachucker M/C group is proposing to hold their annual club M/C on March 29-30, 2008. They would be traveling entirely on pre-approved, existing roads and trails. The course is located directly west of Alamo Nevada. The club will be congregating, pitting, starting and finishing on private land. The course proposed for use is 58 miles in length. Of the 58 miles, approximately 30 miles of the course is located within identified desert tortoise habitat. The course will be run three times to gain the mileage needed for the race. The number of people expected for this event is around 150-250 riders and approximately 300 event participants and spectators.

No field surveys were completed for this project. Instead, the Ely District weed inventory data was consulted. There are no known weed infestations along the race route. However, the following non-native species are found in the surrounding areas:

<i>Acroptilon repens</i>	Russian knapweed
<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>	Russian olive
<i>Lepidium draba</i>	Hoary cress
<i>Lepidium latifolium</i>	Tall whitetop
<i>Onopordum acanthium</i>	Scotch thistle
<i>Tamarix spp.</i>	Salt cedar

Cheatgrass (*Bromus tectorum*), red brome (*Bromus rubens*), Russian thistle (*Salsola kali*), halogeton (*Halogeton glomerus*), and tumble mustard (*Sisymbrium altissimum*) more than likely occur along portions of the course.

**Factor 1 assesses the likelihood of noxious/invasive weed species spreading to the project area.**

None (0)	Noxious weed species are not located within or adjacent to the project area. Project activity is not likely to result in the establishment of noxious weed species in the project area.
Low (1-3)	Noxious weed species are present in the areas adjacent to but not within the project area. Project activities can be implemented and prevent the spread of noxious weeds into the project area.
Moderate (4-7)	Noxious weed species located immediately adjacent to or within the project area. Project activities are likely to result in some areas becoming infested with noxious weed species even when preventative management actions are followed. Control measures are essential to prevent the spread of noxious weeds within the project area.
High (7-10)	Heavy infestations of noxious weeds are located within or immediately adjacent to the project area. Project activities, even with preventative management actions, are likely to result in the establishment and spread of noxious weeds on disturbed sites throughout much of the project area.

For this project, the factor rates as Moderate (4) at the present time. Due to the nature of the event and the tendency for vehicles to carry seeds from other sources, there is a moderate risk of areas along the course becoming infested by noxious or non-native invasive weeds. The primary concern for this project is the potential introduction of Sahara mustard (*Brassica tournefortii*) into the area from Las Vegas. Most of the

participants will be coming from the Clark County area which is heavily infested with this noxious weed. Vehicles **must** be properly cleaned prior to racing to prevent spreading the infestation into Lincoln County.

**Factor 2 assesses the consequences of noxious weed establishment in the project area.**

Low to Nonexistent (1-3)	None. No cumulative effects expected.
Moderate (4-7)	Possible adverse effects on site and possible expansion of infestation within the project area. Cumulative effects on native plant communities are likely but limited.
High (8-10)	Obvious adverse effects within the project area and probable expansion of noxious weed infestations to areas outside the project area. Adverse cumulative effects on native plant communities are probable.

For this project, the factor rates as High (8). Most of the race route is considered to be weed-free. Any new weed infestations in this area could have adverse effects on the native vegetation. If cheatgrass or red brome become heavily established it could alter the fire regime of the area.

**The Risk Rating is obtained by multiplying Factor 1 by Factor 2.**

None (0)	Proceed as planned.
Low (1-10)	Proceed as planned. Initiate control treatment on noxious weed populations that get established in the area.
Moderate (11-49)	Develop preventative management measures for the proposed project to reduce the risk of introduction of spread of noxious weeds into the area. Preventative management measures should include modifying the project to include seeding the area to occupy disturbed sites with desirable species. Monitor the area for at least 3 consecutive years and provide for control of newly established populations of noxious weeds and follow-up treatment for previously treated infestations.
High (50-100)	Project must be modified to reduce risk level through preventative management measures, including seeding with desirable species to occupy disturbed site and controlling existing infestations of noxious weeds prior to project activity. Project must provide at least 5 consecutive years of monitoring. Projects must also provide for control of newly established populations of noxious weeds and follow-up treatment for previously treated infestations.

For this project, the Risk Rating is **Moderate (32)**. Based on this risk rating, preventative management measures are needed for this project. Preventative measures to help mitigate the possible effects of the race on the native plant communities include:

Preventative measures: Take before and after observation photos of key impact and possible weed vector areas, as required by our OHV monitoring report. These photo points are repeated as the course is used in following years.

Active measures: Insure the promoter knows about and promotes the stipulation requiring the racers to wash there race vehicle before the event. Racers who do not comply will be subject to penalty and/or disqualification.

Reactive measures: Notify the proper weed control agency concerning treating any populations of noxious weeds observed following the race. Establish photo point sites at key locations (as outlined in the BLM rangeland guide) in relation to course impacts and existing or possible weed populations along the course. Revisit these monitoring points for three years to monitor any changes related to weeds. Monitor any known infestations and do follow up treatments as necessary.

In addition to these measures the following Ely District BMPs will be followed:

- Prior to entering public lands, the contractor, operator, or permit holder will provide information and training regarding noxious weed management and identification to all personnel who will be affiliated with the implementation of the project. The importance of preventing the spread of weeds to non infested areas and importance of controlling existing populations of weeds will be explained.
- To eliminate the transport of vehicle-borne weed seeds, roots, or rhizomes all vehicles and heavy equipment used for the completion, maintenance, inspection, or monitoring of ground disturbing activities or for authorized off-road driving will be free of soil and debris capable of transporting weed propagules. All such vehicles and equipment will be cleaned with power or high pressure equipment prior to entering or leaving the work site or project area. Cleaning efforts will concentrate on tracks, feet and tires, and on the undercarriage. Special emphasis will be applied to axels, frames, cross members, motor mounts, on and underneath steps, running boards, and front bumper/brush guard assemblies.

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Bonnie Waggoner  
Ely District Noxious & Invasive Weed Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

