Chapter 9
Glossary

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GLOSSARY

100-year frequency flood. A flood event of such magnitude that it occurs, on average, every 100 years. This equates to a 1-percent probability of occurring in any given year.

Acre-foot. A measure of volume of water. The amount of water it would take to cover one acre of land to a depth of 1 foot; 325,851 gallons; 43,560 cubic feet.

Affected environment. Existing biological, physical, social, and economic conditions of an area subject to change, both directly and indirectly, as the result of a proposed human action.

Air quality. The cleanliness of the air as measured by the levels of pollutants relative to standards or guideline levels established to protect human health and welfare.

Alluvial fan. A broad, conical-shaped deposit of sediment typically found at the edge of mountain ranges, dissected by channels and composed of coarse-grained material, including sand, gravel, cobbles and boulders.

Alluvium. Any stream-laid sediment deposit.

Ambient. Surrounding or background conditions in the absence of an identifiable source.

Ambient air. That portion of the atmosphere, outside of buildings, to which the general public has access.

Ambient Air Quality Standards. Standards established on a state or federal level that define the limits for airborne concentrations of designated criteria pollutants (nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, particulate matter with aerodynamic diameters less than 10 microns [PM_{10}], ozone, and lead) to protect public health with an adequate margin of safety (primary standards) and to protect public welfare, including plant and animal life, visibility, and materials (secondary standards).

Aquifer. A body of rock that contains enough saturated permeable material to transmit groundwater and to yield significant quantities of groundwater to wells and springs.

Area of Critical Environmental Concern. A Bureau of Land Management designation for an area within public lands where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources, or other natural systems or processes, or to protect life from natural hazards.

Artesian. Refers to groundwater under sufficient hydrostatic head to rise above the aquifer containing it.

Assessment (Environmental). An evaluation of existing resources and potential impacts to them from a proposed act or change to the environment.

Attainment area. A region that meets the National Ambient Air Quality Standards for a criteria pollutant under the Clean Air Act.

Baseline. The initial environmental conditions against which the environmental consequences of various alternatives are evaluated.

Candidate species. Species for which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has on file sufficient information on biological vulnerability and threat(s) to support the issuance of a proposed rule to list but issuance of the proposed rule is precluded.

Criteria pollutant. Common air pollutant that the Environmental Protection Agency has established a maximum exposure standard based on scientific knowledge on the pollutant's health effects. Criteria pollutants include sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, particulate matter less than 10 micron in diameter, particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, and lead.

Cumulative impact. Cumulative impact is the environmental impact resulting from the incremental impact from a particular activity when added to other past, present, or future activities. Cumulative impacts may be individually insignificant, but collectively, the individually insignificant activities may become significant.

Detention basin. A basin designed to hold floodwaters.

Diagnostic remains. "Diagnostic" refers to the usefulness of the fossil with regard to obtaining information of scientific worth.

Direct effect. Beneficial or adverse impact that is caused by an action and occur at the same time and place.

Direct impact. Same as "direct effect".

Disposal boundary area. The land area within the boundary established by the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act of 1998, and as expanded by the Clark County Conservation of Public Land and Natural Resources Act of 2002.

Distance zones. A subdivision of the landscape as viewed from an observer position. The subdivision (zones) includes foreground-middleground, background, and seldom seen.

Endangered species. A plant or animal species that is threatened with extinction or serious depletion in its range and is formally listed as such by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Endemic environment. Plants or animals those are native to a particular region or country, the surrounding conditions, influences or forces that affect or modify an organism or an ecological community and ultimately determine its form and survival.

Environmental Impact Statement. A detailed written statement that helps public officials make decisions that are based on understanding of environmental consequences and to take actions that protect, restore, and enhance the environment.

Ephemeral. Lasting only a brief period of time.

Ephemeral stream. A stream or portion of a stream that flows only in direct response to precipitation.

Evapotranspiration. The loss of water from the soil both by evaporation and by transpiration from the plants growing there.

Fault. A fracture or fracture zone in the earth's surface along which there has been displacement of the sides relative to one another parallel to the fracture.

Floodplain. That portion of a river or stream valley, adjacent to the river channel, which is built of sediments and is inundated with water when the stream overflows its banks.

Form. The mass or shape of an object or of objects, which appear unified.

Fossil. The remains or traces of an organism or assemblage of organisms that have been preserved by natural processes in the earth's crust; exclusive of organisms that have been buried since the beginning of historical time.

Fossiliferous. Containing fossils.

Fugitive dust. Particulate matter composed of soil. Fugitive dust may include emissions from haul roads, wind erosion of exposed soil surfaces, and other activities in which soil is either removed or redistributed.

Geologic. Any natural process acting as a dynamic physical force on the earth; i.e. faulting, erosion, and mountain-building resulting in rock formations.

Groundwater. Subsurface water within the zone of saturation.

Groundwater recharge. Water that infiltrates the land surface and is not lost to evaporation or consumed by plants can percolate downward and replenish the groundwater aquifers. This deep percolation is called recharge.

Habitat. The region where a plant or animal naturally grows or lives. A specific set of physical conditions that surround a single species, a group of species, or a large community. In wildlife management, the major components of habitat are considered to be food, water, cover, and home range.

Hazardous waste. Wastes that are designated as hazardous by the Environmental Protection Agency or state regulations. Hazardous waste, defined under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, is waste from production or operation activities that poses a potential hazard to human health or the environment when improperly treated, stored, or disposed. Hazardous wastes that appear on special Environmental Protection Agency lists or possess at least one of the four following characteristics: ignitability, corrosivity, reactivity, or toxicity.

Human environment. The natural and physical environment and the relationship of people with the environment.

Hydrology. A science dealing with the properties, distribution, and circulation of water on and below the earth's surface and in the atmosphere.

Impact. The terms "impacts" and "effects" are synonymous as used in the National Environmental Policy Act. Impacts may be beneficial or adverse, and may apply to the natural, aesthetic, historic, cultural, and socioeconomic resources of the installation and the surrounding communities. Where applicable, impacts may be classified as direct or indirect.

Indirect impact. An indirect impact is caused by a proposed activity but is later in time or farther removed in distance, but still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect impacts may include land use changes or population density changes and the related effects these changes will have on air, water, and other natural or social systems.

Infiltration. Water that falls on the land surface that does not runoff but percolates into the ground. Some of this water evaporates, some is used by plants, and some percolates downward to the groundwater.

Intermittent stream. A stream that flows only at certain times when it receives water from springs or from a surface source.

Landform. A term used to describe the many types of land surfaces that exist as a result of geologic activity and weathering (e.g., plateaus, mountains, plains, and valleys).

Line. The path, real or imagined, that the eye follows when perceiving abrupt differences in form, color, or texture or when objects are aligned in a one dimensional sequence. Usually evident as the edge of shapes or masses in the landscape.

Lithic. Pertaining to stone or a stone tool (e.g., lithic artifact).

Locatable minerals. Traditional "hard rock" minerals such as gold, silver, lead, copper, zinc, and industrial minerals such as fluorspar, barite, and high-calcium limestone that occur in lode or placer deposits.

Long-term impacts. Long-term impacts are neither temporary nor reversible. They may occur either during the construction or operational phases of an activity. For example, the construction of a new building may create long-term impacts during both the construction and operational phases. Draining of a wetland for the construction of a new building will create long-term and permanent impacts on biological resources. Likewise, once operational, the new building may create additional long-term impacts such as increased population density, waste generation, etc.

Master Plan. A document (or set of documents) that sets forth goals and policies for guiding future land use and development in a community. Also known as a Comprehensive Plan.

Migratory. Birds, animals, or people that migrate, or move from one region or country to another.

Mineral resource. Any inorganic or organic substance occurring naturally in the earth that has a consistent and distinctive set of physical properties. Examples of mineral resources include coal, nickel, gold, silver, and copper.

Mitigation. Mitigation generally includes: avoiding the impact altogether by stopping or modifying the proposed action; minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation; rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment; reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action; compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Section 109 of the Clean Air Act requires the Environmental Protection Agency to set nationwide standards for widespread air pollutants. Currently, six pollutants are regulated: sulfur dioxide, carbon monoxide, PM_{10}, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, and lead.

National Register of Historic Places. A listing of architectural, historical, archaeological, and cultural sites of local, state, or national significance established by the Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and maintained by the National Park Service.

Native vegetation. Vegetation originating in a certain region or country.

Nitrates. A water-soluble molecule made up of nitrogen and oxygen. It is formed when nitrogen from ammonia or other sources combines with oxygenated water.

No impact. "No impact" implies that a particular activity creates neither a direct nor indirect impact, does not have long- or short-term implications, and is neither beneficial nor negative.

Nonattainment area. An area that has been designated by the Environmental Protection Agency or the appropriate state air quality agency as exceeding one or more national or state Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Non-point source. Source of pollution generally attributed to urban runoff from irrigating landscapes and golf courses, draining pools to streets, washing vehicles in streets, and hosing down driveways.

Off-highway vehicle. Any motorized vehicle designated for cross-country travel over any type of natural terrain.

Ozone (ground level). A major ingredient in smog. Ozone is produced from reactions of hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides in the presence of sunlight and heat.

Paleontology. The science that deals with the life of past geological ages through the study of the fossil remains of organisms.

Particulate. Fine liquid or solid particles such as dust, smoke, mist, fumes, or smog, found in air or emissions.

Patent. A government deed; a document that conveys legal title of public lands to whom the patent is issued.

Perennial. Lasting, or active through the whole year. May refer to rivers, streams, or plants.

Permeability. The measure of the ease with which a fluid can diffuse through a particular porous material.

Physiographic province. An area characterized by distinctive topography, geologic structure, climate, drainage patterns, and other features and phenomena of nature.

Pleistocene. The first geologic epoch during the Quaternary period, spanning from 1.8 million years ago to about 9000 BC, characterized by extensive continental glaciation in the Northern Hemisphere.

Point source. Any discernible, confined, and discrete conveyance, including, but not limited to any pipe, ditch, channel, tunnel, or conduit from

which pollutants are or may be discharged. This term does not include return flows from irrigated agriculture.

Quaternary. The geologic period following the Tertiary in the Cenozoic Era, beginning about 1.8 million years ago, composed of the Pleistocene and Holocene epochs, characterized by the evolution of Hominids into modern humans.

Range. A large, open area of land over which livestock can wander and graze.

Rare. A plant or animal restricted in distribution. May be locally abundant in a limited area or few in number over a wide area.

Record of Decision. A public document that explains which alternative will be selected for the area of concern.

Region. A large tract of land generally recognized as having similar character types and physiographic types.

Region of Influence. The geographical area to be addressed as the baseline from which to identify and evaluate environmental changes resulting from the proposed alternatives. The region of influence may vary for each resource area.

Right-of-way. Strip of land acquired by legal means, over which the power line and access roads would pass.

Riparian. The banks of a body of water.

Salable minerals. Common variety mineral materials such as sand, gravel, cinders, and building stone that are sold on a permit basis. Also referred to as mineral materials.

Scope. The range of actions, alternatives, and impacts to be considered in an environmental impact statement.

Sediment. Solid fragmental material, either mineral or organic, that is transported or deposited by air, water, gravity, or ice.

Sensitive species. Species whose populations are small and widely dispersed or restricted to a few localities; species that are listed or candidates for listing by the state or Federal government.

Sensitivity level. A measure of public concern for scenic quality based on various indicators of public concern.

Short-term impacts. Short-term impacts are temporary and either direct or indirect. Short-term impacts usually occur during the construction phase of the activity.

Significance. Significance requires consideration of the context and intensity of the impact or effect, under consideration. Significance can vary in relation to the context of the proposed action. Both short- and long-term effects may be relevant. Impacts may also be evaluated in terms of their intensity or severity.

Socioeconomic. Have or involving both social and economic factors. A given geographical area delineated for specific research.

Species. A group of individuals of common ancestry that closely resemble each other structurally and physiologically, and in nature interbreed producing fertile offspring.

Stratigraphic. Division of geology dealing with the definition and description of rocks and soils, especially sedimentary rocks.

Subsidence. The gradual settling or sinking of an area, usually due to the withdrawal of large amounts of groundwater.

Subsurface. A zone below the surface of the earth whose geologic features are principally layers of rock that have been tilted or faulted and are interpreted on the basis of drill hole records and geophysical (seismic or rock vibration) evidence. Generally, it is all rock and solid materials lying beneath the earth's surface.

Texture. The aggregation of small forms or color mixtures into a continuous surface pattern; the aggregated parts are enough that they do not

appear as discrete objects in the composition of the scene.

Threatened species. A species that is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant portion of its range.

Traditional Cultural Property. A location that is valued by some group, such as an ethnic group, because it is a place of cultural patrimony and an important place in the traditional cultural landscape.

Tributary. Any stream or wash that contributes water to another stream or wash.

Unemployment rate. The unemployment rate represents the number unemployed as a percent of the labor force.

View shed. Visible portion of the specific landscape seen from a specific viewpoint, normally limited by landform, vegetation, distance and existing cultural modifications.

Waters of the U.S. Water such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent streams).

Watershed. A region or area bounded peripherally by a water parting and draining ultimately to a particular body of water.

Wetlands. An area that is regularly saturated by surface water or groundwater and subsequently supports vegetation that is adopted for life in saturated soil conditions. To qualify as a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers jurisdictional wetland, it must have hydric soil, be saturated to the surface sometime during the growing season, and contain wetland plant species.