4-1

# 14.CUMULATIVE EFFECTS AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL<br/>CONSIDERATIONS

#### 3 4.1 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

#### 4 4.1.1 Introduction

According to CEQ regulations, the cumulative effects analysis of an EIS should consider the potential environmental impacts resulting from "the incremental impacts of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions" (40 CFR 1508.7).

Cumulative effects may occur when there is a relationship between a proposed action 10 or alternative and other actions expected to occur in a similar location or during a 11 12 similar time period. This relationship may or may not be obvious. The effects may then be incremental and may result in cumulative impacts. Actions overlapping with or in 13 close proximity to the Proposed Action or alternatives can reasonably be expected to 14 have more potential for cumulative effects on "shared resources" than actions that may 15 be geographically separated. Similarly, actions that coincide in the same timeframe 16 tend to offer a higher potential for cumulative effects. 17

In this LEIS, the Air Force has made an effort to identify actions on or near the proposed 18 19 withdrawal areas that are under consideration and in the planning stage at this time. These actions are included in the cumulative effects analysis to the extent that details 20 regarding such actions exist and the actions have a potential to interact with the 21 proposed alternatives outlined in this LEIS. Although the level of detail available for 22 those future actions varies, this approach provides Congress with the most current 23 information to evaluate the consequences of the alternatives. The LEIS addresses 24 cumulative impacts to assess the incremental contribution of the alternatives to impacts 25 on affected resources from all factors. 26

The analysis first discusses past actions, events, and circumstances that are relevant to the environments associated with the NTTR land withdrawal alternatives. Following is a discussion of other actions that, when combined with military test and training actions and conceptual construction activities, may result in incremental impacts.

#### 31 4.1.2 Relevant Past and Present Actions

The relevant past and present actions associated with the impacts of the Proposed Action include continued use of the NTTR for military test and training activities, plus nearby development and infrastructure improvements such as roads, pipelines, and power transmission lines. Past and present actions in and around the action areas associated with these activities may have cumulative effects on the local environment.

## 4-2 DECEMBER 2017

Nellis Nevada Test and Training Range Wildland Fire Management Plan Final 1 **Report.** A Wildland Fire Management Plan was prepared for unimproved lands that 2 present a wildfire hazard on the NTTR. Wildland fires pose a significant threat to 3 training missions, weapons testing, structures, infrastructure, and natural and cultural 4 resources on USAFWC lands on the NTTR. In addition, wildfires that start on the NTTR 5 could spread to neighboring private and public lands, threatening homes in the wildland 6 urban interface/intermix and causing damage to natural and cultural resources. Flares 7 used during aerial training activities within the MOAs have the potential for 8 unintentionally igniting a wildland fire on lands within and outside of the NTTR. 9

The Wildland Fire Management Plan guides the full range of fire management-related activities for the NTTR. As a component of the NTTR INRMP, the Wildland Fire Management Plan provides the framework for fire management, wildland fire suppression, burned area emergency rehabilitation, emergency stabilization, and fuel treatment activities to support the military mission and safely accomplish the resource protection and ecosystem management objectives of the INRMP.

Management of the NTTR is the responsibility of the 99th Air Base Wing (99 ABW) and 16 NTTR personnel working through the USAFWC, which do not have trained or gualified 17 personnel to protect the NTTR from damage or loss by wildland fires. The USAFWC 18 has established an agreement with the DOE that allows each agency to share 19 personnel and assets in fighting brush and range fires. While this agreement is a 20 positive step forward, it must be understood that both agencies have severe limitations 21 on the type and level of support that each can offer at any given time. Nellis AFB and 22 the BLM have signed a Memorandum of Agreement to address each agency's roles and 23 responsibilities for brush and range fires on the NTTR. However, BLM is the primary 24 force for fighting wild land fires on the NTTR. 25

Fire Management for the Cedar Peak Area on the Nevada Test and Training Range 26 Final Environmental Assessment. Nellis AFB prepared 27 an Environmental Assessment to identify and evaluate potential environmental impacts from the proposed 28 implementation of the NTTR Wildland Fire Management Plan. An important military 29 communications asset is located at the summit of Cedar Peak. To protect this asset 30 from wildland fire, a 300-foot radius (6-acre area) around the asset would be clear-cut 31 and an additional 900-foot radius (96-acre area) would be thinned of trees. Trees would 32 be felled by hand, piled, and burned onsite under winter conditions to limit potential 33 impacts to onsite soils, the canopies of nearby trees, and the military asset of concern. 34

In addition to outlining fire suppression, fuels management, and rehabilitation 35 techniques, the Wildland Fire Management Plan also discusses routine safety practices, 36 training, and maintenance measures that are currently implemented at the NTTR and 37 consistent with operation and maintenance requirements covered under existing NEPA 38 documentation. These measures and additional administrative components of the 39 Wildland Fire Management Plan may not directly impact existing resources or would not 40 have any further impact if implemented as discussed in the Wildland Fire Management 41 Plan. Adhering to these measures would reduce the potential likelihood of a devastating 42

4-3

wildland fire, decrease the adverse effects caused by a potential wildland fire, and serve
 as BMPs to reduce potential significant adverse effects, as defined by NEPA.

Three discrete planned fuels reduction projects, as described within the Wildland Fire Management Plan, would reduce the potential risk to high value military assets located across the NTTR. However, only the fuels reduction project planned for Cedar Peak has been completed.

F-35 Force Development Evaluation and Weapons School Beddown, Nellis Air
Force Base, Nevada, Final Environmental Impact Statement. In 2011, the Air Force
signed a Record of Decision for the F-35 Force Development Evaluation and Weapons
School Beddown at Nellis, AFB (U.S. Air Force, 2011) (the "F-35 beddown EIS"). The
proposed action involved basing 36 F-35 aircraft at Nellis AFB with 12 aircraft for the
Force Development Evaluation program and an additional 24 for Weapons School
training.

Arrival of aircraft was based on a phased approach contingent on manufacturing progress and other elements of F-35 deployment; the first aircraft arrived in 2012 and the last is scheduled for 2020. It was anticipated that the additional aircraft would conduct an additional 17,280 annual airfield operations at Nellis AFB by 2020 and an additional 51,840 annual sortie-operations in NTTR. In addition, F-35 pilots would practice ordnance delivery on approved targets and release of flares in approved airspace.

In addition to the planned operations, there will be construction, demolition, or modification of a variety of base facilities to support the F-35 programs, particularly along the flightline. Table 4-1 provides a list of the proposed construction and demolition activities.

Project	Area (square feet)	Base Area	Start Date Year	Demolish Building #
A-10 Thunder Aircraft Maintenance Unit (AMU)	11,000	В	FY11	
6-Bay F-35 Hangar/AMU	80,988	В	FY11	265, 268, 269
Aircraft Washrack Addition, 1-bay to Building 271	9,551	В	FY11	
B10425 Munitions Facility Addition at Building 10425	3,000	MSA	FY11	
25-mm Munitions Storage Facility Addition at M81	3,000	MSA	FY11	
Munitions Trailer Facility	10,000	MSA	FY11	
2 Munitions Storage Area (MSA) Loading Docks	1,000	MSA	FY11	
Precision-Guided Missile Bay Addition at Building 10439	3,000	MSA	FY11	
Parking/landscape Areas	15,656	В	FY11	
Flight Test Instrumentation Facility	4,650	В	FY11	
422 Test Evaluation Squadron Operations Facility	20,300	В	FY11	
Flight Simulator Facility	20,000	В	FY11	
Fiscal Year 2011 (FY11) Subtotal	182,145			
Aerospace Ground Equipment (AGE) Complex	45,000	А	FY12	
Engine Shop Addition	9,000	С	FY12	
53rd Wing Test Squadron Operations Building	20,000	С	FY12	

#### Table 4-1. Proposed Construction and Demolition Actions for the F-35 Beddown

Project	Area (square feet)	Base Area	Start Date Year	Demolish Building #
FY12 Subtotal	74,000			
Parking/landscape Areas	190,301	В	FY13	
Weapons School Addition at Building 282	10,000	В	FY13	
Alternate Mission Equipment Storage Facility	25,285	А	FY13	
Fuel Cell Hangar Addition	16,300	В	FY13	
Munitions Maintenance Facility Addition	6,000	MSA	FY13	
FY13 Subtotal	247,886			
Weapons Release Building	15,000	В	FY14	441
Parts Store	40,000	В	FY14	413, 415
East Ramp/Airfield Pavement	495,140	D	FY14	
Live Ordnance Loading Area (LOLA) Expansion	167,322	D	FY14	
Bomb Build-Up Pad	30,000	MSA	FY14	
Low Observables (L/O) Composite Addition	11,018	В	FY14	
4-Bay F-35 Hangar/Strike AMU	31,000	В	FY14	258
L/O Corrosion/Wash 3-Bay Hangar	15,800	В	FY14	250
Parking/landscape Areas	96,486	В	FY14	
Fuel Cell Hangar	50,250	В	FY14	
FY14 Subtotal	952,016			
Total	1,572,829			

#### Table 4-1. Proposed Construction and Demolition Actions for the F-35 Beddown

Goldfield Historic District. The Goldfield Historic District was designated a Historic 1 District and listed in 1982 on the NRHP. It is located in the center of Goldfield, Nevada, 2 in Esmeralda County. The description of the designation includes an area bounded by 3 5th Street and Miner, Spring, Crystal, and Elliott Avenues. The District contains roughly 4 200 acres of the unincorporated area and approximately 120 buildings, most dating 5 from the time of Goldfield's initial mining boom from 1904 to 1909. During this 6 timeframe, Goldfield became a regional epicenter during Nevada's 20th century mining 7 boom. 8

9 SolarReserve Crescent Dunes Solar Energy Facility. SolarReserve's Crescent Dunes Solar Energy Facility located in Tonopah, Nevada, is a utility-scale facility that offers advanced molten salt power tower energy storage capabilities. The project delivers enough electricity from solar energy to power 75,000 homes in Nevada during peak demand periods, around the clock regardless of weather conditions. The project, which entered into commercial operation in late 2015 and delivers 110 megawatts (MW) of electricity plus 1,100 megawatt-hours of energy storage.

The Crescent Dunes plant is a success story for U.S.-developed technology. The plant produces more than 500,000 megawatt-hours of electricity per year, twice the generation of an equivalent-sized photovoltaics or direct steam solar thermal facility. It also utilizes dry cooling technology in a hybrid design to minimize water use well below conventional power projects. The storage technology developed by SolarReserve also

eliminates the need for any backup fossil fuels, such as natural gas, which are needed

4-5

with other solar technologies to keep the system operating during times of reduced solar
 resource.

During the construction of the plant, the Crescent Dunes project created over 3 4,300 direct, indirect, and induced jobs, with more than 1,000 construction workers 4 onsite during peak construction. Sixty percent of the project subcontractors were 5 Nevada-based, and 40 full-time, permanent jobs for operations and maintenance were 6 7 created. The project also generated in excess of \$750 million in capital investment in Nevada. Tax revenues are forecasted to be more than \$73 million in local and state tax 8 revenues over first 20 years of operation. During the 30-year operating life, the project 9 will expend more than \$10 million per year in salaries and operating costs, much of this 10 spent in the region. 11

## 12 **4.1.3 Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions**

In addition to future Air Force actions, some reasonably foreseeable actions are outside of the control of the Air Force, such as regional development projects that may contribute incrementally to impacts associated with Air Force alternatives addressed in the LEIS. Projects that the Air Force considers of limited scope (e.g., building of a courthouse annex, improvements to roadways for pedestrians) are not considered cumulatively significant and, therefore, were not included in the cumulative impacts analysis.

Nellis AFB Capital Improvements Program Environmental Assessment. Nellis AFB 20 proposes to initiate updates to the Capital Improvements Program (CIP) that would 21 include construction, demolition, renovation, and maintenance activities at the base. By 22 taking a comprehensive approach to planning and implementing facilities and 23 infrastructure improvements over a multi-year period, Nellis AFB would ensure that 24 limited funds, energy conservation, and operational goals are maximized. Proposed 25 improvements would comply with the Department of Defense's (DoD's) direction to 26 design and build Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED<sup>®</sup>) certified 27 facilities and decrease energy consumption on military installations. 28

The projects described in the CIP are derived from the Base Comprehensive Asset 29 Management Plan (BCAMP). The BCAMP lists all of the proposed projects that have 30 been identified as a true need by the individual proponents of each action. These 31 projects are reviewed by the Civil Engineering Facility Review Board and approved by 32 the 99 ABW Commander based upon factors including mission requirements, quality of 33 life, degradation of existing facilities, etc. While the CIP includes hundreds of projects, 34 funding for all of the projects to be completed in the next five years is not feasible 35 because of the limited amount of funds available. These funding limitations are due to 36 worldwide deployments and contingency operations, competing funding requests from 37 every other military installation, new missions such as the F-35A beddown, and general 38 budget reductions for civil engineering projects. As a result, only a small percentage of 39 the projects can be funded within one fiscal year. In addition to the proposed action, the 40 Air Force analyzed the no-action alternative. 41

# 4-6 DECEMBER 2017

Since the overall funding amount available to execute CIP projects is unknown, two 1 construction scenarios were developed to place reasonable limits on the analysis. 2 Scenario 1 involves light construction and describes demolition of an unspecified 2,000-3 square-foot existing building and construction of representative 30,000-square-foot 4 facility, including parking up to 3 acres. The vast majority of the CIP projects combined 5 together would be an aggregate size less than that described for Scenario 1. Scenario 2 6 triples the size of the demolition and construction up to 10 acres; only the largest or 7 combination of several smaller new construction projects would reach this limit. Other 8 large projects could be implemented if aspects of Scenario 2 would not be implemented. 9 such as roadway projects where there would be no demolition or facility construction, 10 but would be looked at on a case-by- case basis. 11 Creech AFB Capital Improvements Program Environmental Assessment, Creech 12 AFB has proposed to formally update their CIP, which continually evolves, but the last

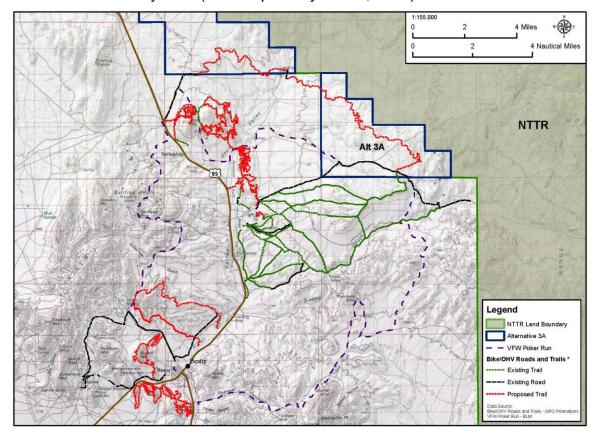
AFB has proposed to formally update their CIP, which continually evolves, but the last formal proposal that resulted in NEPA documentation was during the 2008 update of the Creech AFB General Plan. The mission changes at Creech AFB are substantive enough to require an update of the CIP projects list. Restoration/Modernization and Sustainment projects would provide the base with up-to-date facilities by repairing, remodeling, or replacing older facilities to modern standards. Also, these outdated facilities demand considerable energy, and replacing them with new energy-efficient, updated facilities would yield considerable savings for the base and would conform to

21 DoD guidelines for LEED<sup>®</sup> facilities.

The projects described in the CIP are derived from Creech AFB's BCAMP, which lists 22 all of the proposed projects that have been identified as a true need by the individual 23 proponents of each action. Like the Nellis AFB CIP projects, these projects are 24 reviewed by the Civil Engineering Facility Review Board and approved by the 99 ABW 25 Commander based upon factors including mission requirements, quality of life, 26 degradation of existing facilities, etc. Due to the funding uncertainties that drove the 27 28 analysis in the previously described Nellis AFB CIP Environmental Assessment, the Creech AFB CIP Environmental Assessment also evaluated two Scenarios: Scenario 1 29 includes light construction plus demolition of an unspecified 2,000-square-foot existing 30 building and construction of representative 30,000-square-foot facility, including parking 31 up to 3 acres, and Scenario 2 triples the size of the demolition and construction up to 32 10 acres. 33

The Air Force also analyzed the no-action alternative. Baseline conditions as reflected by the no-action alternative provide a comparison to the environmental impacts of the proposed action.

Mountain Bike Trails, City of Beatty, Nye County. Mountain biking activities continue to be developed north and west of Beatty, Nevada, which lies to the southwest of the NTTR. Figure 4-1 displays some of the existing (shown as green lines) and proposed trails (red lines). A non-profit corporation, STORM-OV (Saving Toads thru Off-Road Racing, Ranching and Mining in Oasis Valley) was formed to create 300 to 500 miles of off-road, multi-use trails for mountain biking, hiking running and horseback. Its plans are for the trails to eventually link Beatty to Death Valley, Rhyolite, and other regional trails. The trails would run through federal lands and private lands whose owners are willing to grant permission for its use for the trails. According to the Regional Director of the International Mountain Biking Association, the trails could bring \$25 million to \$42 million to the Beatty area (Pahrump Valley Times, 2015).



5

6 **Figure 4-1. Existing and Proposed Mountain Bike Trails in the Beatty, Nevada, Area, 2016** Source: (GRO Trails and Race Consulting, 2016)

Off-Highway Vehicle Trails, Nye County. Recreational activities within the proposed 7 withdrawal area associated with Alternative 3A include but are not limited to hunting, 8 9 hiking, camping, bird-watching, target shooting, and OHV activities. As of April 2017, there are no restrictions on target shooting, with the exception of the standard 10 guidelines (no glass targets, 1,000 feet from roads and houses, etc.). Public lands not 11 closed to OHV usage are commonly limited to existing roads, trails, and dry washes, 12 with the exception of dry lakes, which are open to all OHV activities. Recreation areas 13 are further limited to designated roads and trails (U.S. Air Force, 2017a). The Oasis 14 Valley and Oasis Mountain areas northeast of Beatty and directly adjacent to the NTTR 15 are popular areas for hiking, mountain biking, and OHV activities. A few of the primary 16 users include: Trails-OV (www.trails-ov.org), which helps to develop, promote and 17 maintain a series of trail systems for mountain biking, trail running, equestrian use and 18 rock climbing including the Spicer Ranch Trail System and Transvaal Flats Trail 19 System; Beatty VFW (www.beattyvfw.com), which holds Jeep/4-wheel drive vehicle 20 events like the "Run Through the Desert" Fun Day and the Annual Bullfrog Historical 21

# 4-8 DECEMBER 2017

1 Mining District Poker Run; and Best in the Desert Racing Association (www.bitd.com)

2 "Vegas to Reno" off-road race.

<sup>3</sup> Proposed bike trails are in the early stages of planning with the BLM office in Tonopah.

Coyote Springs Nevada LLC, Lincoln County. Coyote Springs Nevada LLC (CSN) 4 acquired the former Aerojet Nevada lands on the Clark County line along U.S. Highway 5 93. CSN owns an estimated 42,000 acres in the area. A development agreement and 6 planned development code was approved by Lincoln County in June 2005 for these 7 lands. A density of 5 units per acre was approved by the county. Development has 8 commenced on the Clark County side of this project. CSN is proposing to develop a 9 "new community" to include various forms of housing, golf courses, commercial centers 10 and industrial sites. This "new community" would include 42,000 acres and has 11 completed their Multi-Habitat Species Plan in both Clark and Lincoln Counties. CSN is 12 competing construction on a wastewater treatment plant as well as a water treatment 13 plant. This proposal will be implemented through a planned unit development of 14 159,600 units. Offsite flood control detention basins will be completed in 2017 and 15 homes are anticipated for sale in early 2018. 16

Lincoln County Industrial Park. In the Alamo, Nevada, area, Lincoln County is expecting a direct sale of public lands from BLM for 217 acres to develop an industrial park along U.S. Highway 93 south of Alamo. A production well has been drilled on the site and pump-tested. Ample water of high quality is available at the site. Design engineering studies have been completed, and the site is awaiting disposal by sale/auction through BLM in the spring of 2007. Studies are also underway to provide the site with power and other utilities.

24 Solar Reserves Sandstone Project. The Sandstone project will be a solar power plant complex with up to 10 solar thermal towers, with a 24-hours-per-day, seven-days-per-25 week baseload solar technology. Each tower will be 150 to 200 MW, with storage and 26 fully dispatchable, each producing about 700,000 megawatt-hours per year. Multiplying 27 the 10 towers' baseload will provide up to 2,000 MW of total power capacity and 28 7,000,000 megawatt-hours of annual output. Each tower will have approximately 29 10 hours of full-load energy storage, totaling 20,000 megawatt-hours of energy storage 30 capability for the entire project. Sandstone will be built in Nye County, Nevada. 31

Pahrump Valley Desert Tortoise Habitat Conservation Plan. Nye County is 32 proposing a Pahrump Valley Desert Tortoise Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) to 33 address the urban development of land within the limits of the Town of Pahrump and 34 adjacent lands designated for disposal and sale by the BLM (Nye County Planning 35 Department, 2009). The scope, or Permit Area, of this plan is 92,489 acres and includes 36 the private land in Pahrump and 6,022 acres of public land administered by BLM and 37 identified for disposal. The HCP estimates that up to 1,000 acres of desert tortoise 38 habitat may be lost as a result of urban development within the Permit Area over the 39 next 10 years. The HCP has been prepared to support an application for a Section 40 10(a)(1)(B) Incidental Take Permit (Permit) under the federal ESA for the incidental take 41 of the desert tortoise, a species listed as threatened under the ESA on 1,000 acres of 42 private land or BLM disposal lands, upon transfer of ownership to a non-federal entity, in 43 the Pahrump Regional Planning District (i.e., the Planning Area). The request for the 44

incidental take of desert tortoises is based on tortoise surveys conducted by the BLM, 1 Nye County, private land owners and others that indicate tortoises occur in relatively low 2 densities in the Planning Area. The HCP is intended to support the issuance, by the 3 USFWS of a Section 10(a)(1)(B) incidental take permit under the ESA, which would 4 allow the "take" of the threatened desert tortoise resulting from otherwise lawful 5 activities on non-federal property within the Planning Area. Subsequent to the issuance 6 of a permit, the Pahrump Valley Desert Tortoise HCP will be implemented to minimize, 7 mitigate, and monitor the impacts of incidental take of desert tortoise. 8

9 Clark, Lincoln, and White Pine Counties Groundwater Development Project. The Southern Nevada Water Authority submitted a right-of-way application to the BLM for 10 construction and operation of a groundwater development project that would allow them 11 to develop and transport water from Clark, Lincoln, and White Pine Counties to southern 12 Nevada. The proposed project consists of approximately 306 miles of buried pipelines, 13 five pumping stations, six regulating tanks, three pressure reducing stations, one buried 14 storage reservoir, one water treatment facility, and approximately 323 miles of power 15 lines with seven electrical substations. Construction is anticipated to take place between 16 2011 and 2022, depending on approvals and phasing. 17

Lincoln County Land Act Groundwater and Utility Right-of-Way Project. The 18 Lincoln County Water District submitted a right-of-way application to the BLM for 19 20 construction and operation of a groundwater development project. The right-of-way would authorize the Lincoln County Water District to construct infrastructure required to 21 pump and convey groundwater resources in the Tule Desert and Clover Valley to help 22 meet future municipal water needs in newly urbanizing areas. The proposed project 23 consists of a 47-mile main transmission pipeline and 54 miles of collection/lateral 24 pipelines, up to 30 production wells, water storage tanks, booster stations, access 25 roads, 138-kilovolt (kV), 22.8-kV, and 4.16-kV transmission lines, a power substation, a 26 natural gas pipeline, underground telephone lines and a telemetry system utilizing a 27 fiber optic line. Construction would begin upon acquisition of necessary permits, 28 approvals, and grants. 29

Kane Springs Valley Groundwater Development Project. The Lincoln County Water 30 District submitted a right-of-way application to the BLM for construction and operation of 31 a groundwater development project that would authorize the District to construct 32 infrastructure required to pump and convey groundwater resources in the Kane Springs 33 Valley. The proposed project consists of groundwater production and monitoring wells, 34 water collection pipelines, one main water transmission pipeline, one terminal storage 35 tank, one forebay storage tank, electrical distribution lines, electrical substations, and a 36 telemetry system using fiber optic lines. Project construction would occur in three 37 phases with one to three years between phases. Construction of Phase 1 would begin 38 upon acquisition of necessary permits, approvals, and grants. 39

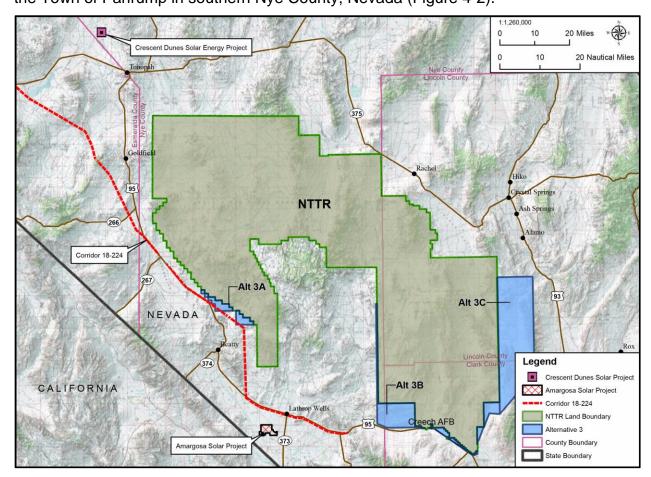
Section 368 Utility Corridor 18-224. On August 8, 2005, the President signed the Energy Policy Act of 2005 (P.L. 109-58) into law. Section 368 directed the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Energy, and the Interior to designate corridors for oil, gas, and hydrogen pipelines and electricity transmission and distribution facilities on federal lands in the 11 contiguous western states. Congress also directed the agencies

# 4-10 DECEMBER 2017

to perform any environmental reviews that may be required to complete the designation
 of the corridors and incorporate the corridors into land use plans.

On January 14, 2009, the DOI approved a Record of Decision to designate 3 approximately 5,000 miles of corridors which included amendments to 92 land use 4 plans in 11 western states. The USFS issued a Record of Decision on January 14, 5 2009, which amended 38 national forest land management plans and designated 6 approximately 990 miles of corridors in 10 states. The Decisions included Interagency 7 Operating Procedures, or BMPs, for the Section 368 corridors. The Interagency 8 Operating Procedures can be found on BLM's website. The BLM and USFS decisions 9 relied upon the analysis in the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, 10 Designation of Energy Corridors on Federal Land in the 11 Western States (DOE/EIS-11 0386) (PEIS), issued by the DOE, BLM, USFS, and DoD in 2008. 12

13 Corridor 18-224 extends northwest-southeast from east of Carson City to northwest of 14 the Town of Pahrump in southern Nye County, Nevada (Figure 4-2).



15

16

Figure 4-2. Utility Corridor 18-224

Federally designated portions of this corridor are entirely on BLM-administered land, with a 10,560-foot-wide section from Milepost (MP) 0 to MP 89.0 for 83.6 miles and a

- <sup>19</sup> 3,500-foot-wide section for 161.8 miles from MP 89.0 to MP 256.2. It is designated as a
- 20 multi-modal corridor that can accommodate both electrical transmission and pipeline

DECEMBER 2017

projects. The corridor spans a 256.2-mile distance, with 244.2 designated centerline 1 miles. The designated area is 171,986 acres (269 square miles). This corridor is within 2 Mineral, Esmerelda, and Nye Counties in Nevada and within the jurisdiction of BLM's 3 Battle Mountain, Carson City, and Southern Nevada District Offices. While the majority 4 of this corridor is in Priority Region 5, the focus of this review is Priority Region 1, which 5 encompasses the extent of MP 215.7 (approximately 8 miles southeast of Beatty, 6 Nevada) to MP 256.2 (approximately 10 miles north of Pahrump) in southern Nye 7 County within the Southern Nevada District Office. 8 Standup and Beddown of a Tactical Air Support Squadron, Nellis Air Force Base, 9

Standup and Beddown of a Tactical Air Support Squadron, Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada. The Air Force proposes to stand up the Tactical Air Support Squadron (TASS) at Nellis AFB (U.S. Air Force, 2017o). The new TASS would be an integral element of the CAS Integration Group (CIG), and would be integrated into the existing 57th Operations Group at Nellis AFB. The action would transfer/assign up to 16 Fourth Generation F-16C aircraft (14 Primary Aircraft Inventory and two Backup Aircraft Inventory) to the TASS.

Personnel at Nellis AFB would increase by a total of 123 Air Force and government 16 17 support positions and 170 contract maintenance positions. The 123 positions include billets for the TASS, minor additions to the CIG Staff, munitions personnel, and base 18 operating support personnel. All contract maintenance personnel would arrive by the 19 end of fiscal year 2018; of the 123 government personnel, 57 would be expected to 20 arrive in fiscal year 2018 and the remainder the following year. Several military 21 construction (MILCON) and operations and maintenance (O&M) projects would be 22 required to support the beddown. 23

The east side of the existing ramp space would be expanded by approximately 24 11.5 acres to accommodate aircraft displaced by the 16 F-16s, which will be parked on 25 the west ramp. The live ordnance loading area (LOLA) would also be expanded by 26 approximately 7 acres. A new 9,225- square-foot support facility at the LOLA would be 27 constructed. These actions would also require that the existing O'Bannon Road be 28 relocated to accommodate the apron and LOLA expansions. The TASS/CIG HQ would 29 be a new 27,300-square-foot building and would be constructed adjacent to Freedom 30 Park on the west side of the airfield. A new maintenance hangar and Aircraft 31 Maintenance Unit (AMU) facility would require demolition of Building 295 and new 32 construction on-site. The new Maintenance Hangar/AMU would be 55,000 square feet. 33

These projects would be expected to require 12 to 18 months to complete and would be phased over a four-year period beginning with the O&M projects in late calendar year 2017. Approximately 20 to 50 construction personnel would be on-site during the construction period, particularly during the peak construction action when concrete is being delivered.

The TASS, when fully operational, would be expected to fly approximately 2,700 annual sorties as part of the CAS training mission. Of these, about 300 (or approximately 11 percent) are expected to be flown at night between 10:00 PM and 7:00 AM. The aircraft would depart Nellis AFB and transit to the NTTR using restricted airspace (R-2508) and the NTTR MOAs.

4-11

## 4-12 DECEMBER 2017

Aircraft carrying live munitions always depart to the north, away from downtown Las Vegas. Use of the NTTR is accomplished by an internal scheduling and prioritization of requests within Nellis AFB and Creech AFB user groups; numerous requests for range time result in intense competition for NTTR land and airspace. NTTR test and training schedule blocks are managed to 15-minute intervals for each airspace and range area to ensure efficiency. TASS operations would represent only a negligible increase, but would exacerbate the existing conditions, requiring even further coordination.

## 8 4.1.4 Cumulative Effects Analysis

9 Cumulative effects are assessed for each of the resources 10 presented in Chapter 3. For this analysis, the past, 11 present, and future actions would be the sum of all the 12 activities associated with the Proposed Action, the No For the Native American perspective on information in this section, please see Appendix K, paragraph 4.1.4.

13 Action Alternative, and the other actions described in this chapter.

#### 14 **4.1.4.1 Airspace Use and Management**

With the exception of the addition of the F-35 to Nellis AFB, none of the past, present, 15 or reasonably foreseeable projects identified in Section 4.1.2 and Section 4.1.3 would 16 affect airspace utilization. For any of the proposed alternatives, there are no proposed 17 physical changes (external boundaries, dimensions, altitudes, etc.) to any airspace 18 currently controlled by the NATCF. As such, any changes will be limited to how the 19 airspace is used, particularly with introduction of the F-35. Although additional airspace 20 is not required, certain airspace may be utilized more extensively, while use of other 21 airspace units may decrease. Therefore, the utilization of the current airspace would 22 likely be modified. The result could potentially change the noise levels, patterns, and 23 dispersal over how it is currently used. (See Section 4.1.4.2, Noise, for more details on 24 potential cumulative noise impacts.) Changes in utilization of the airspace could 25 potentially change the air quality within the affected airspace (See Section 4.1.4.3, Air 26 Quality, for more details on potential cumulative air quality impacts.) 27

## 28 **4.1.4.2** Noise

Cumulative noise impacts consist of the combined potential effects resulting from the Proposed Action and applicable past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects described in Section 4.1.2 and Section 4.1.3. Potential cumulative effects of noise on the surrounding communities, wildlife, and cultural resources would be associated with construction and other noise-generating activities, operation of new facilities, and increased aircraft, munitions, and vehicle use.

Several projects would involve construction of Air Force facilities, housing, industrial facilities, and recreational areas. In addition, noise could be generated during fire management activities, installation of a solar energy project, and placement of pipeline and other infrastructure related to groundwater and utility projects (including Utility Corridor 18-224 and Corridor 223-224).

#### DECEMBER 2017

The majority of the relevant past and present actions considered as part of the 1 cumulative impacts in Section 4.1.2 and Section 4.1.3 involve construction of a new 2 facility or demolition or renovation of an existing facility. Construction noise is 3 temporary, lasting only for the duration of the construction project, and is typically 4 limited to normal working hours (7:00 AM to 5:00 PM). However, construction noise would 5 be noticeable to persons living and working nearby and may cause additional 6 annoyance. Noise impacts associated with these projects are expected to be limited to 7 the immediate areas surrounding the individual projects and would be insignificant both 8 separately and cumulatively. 9

For Alternative 1, operations and, therefore, noise levels would remain at existing 10 baseline levels, which have existed for many years or even decades. For Alternatives 2 11 and 3, subsonic and supersonic aircraft noise levels, as well as munitions use, troop 12 movement, and emitter functions, would increase very slightly (typically less than 1 dB), 13 and these levels are not likely to be considered by the public to be adverse. Cumulative 14 impacts would occur wherever noise impacts from proposed increased NTTR activities 15 overlap with noise impacts resulting from other reasonably foreseeable actions planned 16 to occur in the NTTR region. 17

Other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects may also have associated 18 long-term noise, such as operational noise from an industrial facility, aircraft, munitions, 19 or increased transportation. For capital improvement projects and other military projects 20 at Nellis AFB, Creech AFB, and NTTR, the AICUZ program would influence project 21 planning and implementation by providing data and land use recommendations to 22 ensure public safety, health and welfare, while still supporting the Air Force's mission of 23 national defense. These data are also intended for use by local citizens and 24 governmental officials involved in land use planning and community development and 25 would help guide appropriate implementation of other regional projects in order to 26 ensure land use compatibility and minimize cumulative effects on sensitive receptors 27 28 and the surrounding communities overall. Because of the incremental nature of the noise impacts associated with the Proposed Action and through application of 29 appropriate planning measures, implementation of the Proposed Action and other past, 30 present, and future actions is unlikely to result in significant noise impacts. 31

## 32 4.1.4.3 Air Quality

Cumulative effects to air quality consist of the combined potential effects resulting from the Proposed Action and applicable past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects described in Section 4.1.2 and Section 4.1.3. These projects would result in direct emissions of criteria pollutants and GHGs. Potential cumulative effects to air quality would be associated with combustion of fossil fuels during construction, transportation, operation of new facilities, and increased groundwater use.

39 Several projects including those in the Nellis AFB and Creech AFB CIPs would involve

40 construction of Air Force facilities, housing, industrial facilities, and recreational areas.

- In addition, air emissions would result from fire management activities, installation of a
- solar energy project, and placement of pipeline and other infrastructure. For some of

4-13

# 4-14 DECEMBER 2017

1 these projects, air emissions would cease once the initial construction phase is complete, such as the groundwater and utility corridor projects. Others, such as 2 housing development projects, would result in minimal increased long-term emissions, 3 such as those associated with residential heating and transportation. Projects such as 4 the solar energy projects would have a large beneficial impact on regional air quality 5 through reduction in the need for fossil fuel combustion and other electricity-generating 6 processes associated with criteria pollutant and GHG emissions. Likewise, many of the 7 Air Force capital improvement program projects at Nellis AFB and Creech AFB would 8 replace outdated, inefficient facilities with modern LEED-certified facilities, which would 9 also likely have a net beneficial impact in the long term. Further, any projects that would 10 include larger emissions-generating sources would be subject to permitting 11 requirements under NSR/PSD and/or Title V Air Construction or Air Operation permits. 12 With implementation of permit requirements and appropriate management practices, the 13 cumulative amount of emissions resulting from the Proposed Action and other past, 14 present, and future actions is unlikely to significantly affect regional air quality. 15

Table 4-2 provides estimated annual air emissions for projects described in Sections 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 for which such quantitative estimates were available. For other projects described in those sections, analysis in the appropriate NEPA documentation was

19 qualitative in nature or otherwise unavailable.

Source	Pollutant (tons/year)							
Source	CO	NO <sub>x</sub>	<b>PM</b> <sub>10</sub>	PM <sub>2.5</sub>	SOx	VOC	CO <sub>2</sub> e	
NTTR Land								
Withdrawal	1,493.63	4,013.61	1,068.16	824.26	196.94	247.55	767,193	
(Alts 1, 2, and 3)								
Nellis CIG TASS EA								
(2019)	19.99	-25.04	-3.26	-3.65	0.01	-3.68	225	
Creech CIP EA								
(Scenario 2)	8.5	20.8	66.53	7.53	0.35	1.35	1,844	
Nellis CIP EA								
(Scenario 2)	8.5	20.8	66.53	7.53	0.35	1.35	1,844	
F-35 Force								
Development EIS								
(2019)	114.83	164.09	45.34	43.99	8.41	8.86	107,929	
Amargosa Farm								
Road Solar EIS	4 4 9 9 9	100.10	54.50	45.40	0.07	40.0		
(Construction)	149.00	138.40	54.50	15.40	0.37	19.6	-	
Coyote Springs								
Initiative Vehicle	2 0 2 4 0 0	075 00	452.00	00.00	2.00	201.00		
Traffic (year 10)	2,084.00	275.00	453.00	90.00	3.00	201.00	-	
Crescent Dunes								
Solar Energy Project	20.20	44 50	20.00	20.00	1 15	7 10	0.406	
EIS (Construction)	38.30	44.50	39.00	39.00	1.45	7.10	9,496	
Crescent Dunes								
Solar Energy Project	2.26	2.07	7 57	7 57	0.01	0.22	042	
EIS (Operation)	3.26	2.97	7.57	7.57	0.01	0.22	942	

#### Table 4-2. Cumulative Air Emissions

Source	Pollutant (tons/year)						
Source	CO	NOx	<b>PM</b> <sub>10</sub>	PM <sub>2.5</sub>	SOx	VOC	CO <sub>2</sub> e
TOTAL (Proposed							
Action plus past,							
present, and	3,920.01	4,655.13	1,797.37	1,031.63	210.89	483.35	889,473
foreseeable project							
emissions)							
ROI Baseline	398,567	53,433	69,705	17,576	7,417	501,115	12,179,548
Percent of ROI	0.98%	8.71%	2.58%	5.87%	2.84%	0.10%	7.30%

#### Table 4-2. Cumulative Air Emissions

In totaling all of these projects along with implementation of the NTTR land withdrawal 1 extension or expansion to include Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 such that all potential areas 2 are withdrawn and a 30 percent increase in operational intensity is implemented, annual 3 air emissions are still not shown to exceed 10 percent of the annual ROI emissions. It 4 should be noted that these emissions are not cumulative in this manner in reality. 5 Emissions are affected by many climatological forces such that pollutants are dispersed 6 and broken down by natural processes. However, any quantitative regional air quality 7 dispersion and concentration study to include all federal, state, municipal, and private 8 activities that contribute to regional air quality would be a multi-year, multi-million dollar 9 effort and is well beyond the intent of the NEPA regulation and the scope of this 10 document. 11

For Alternative 1, the Proposed Action would remain at the current operational levels 12 and would, therefore, not contribute to regional cumulative impacts more than current 13 14 conditions. For Alternatives 2 and 3, the Proposed Action would incrementally contribute air pollution emissions during construction activities and would allow for 15 increased air pollutant emissions thereafter associated with increased aircraft and 16 munitions operations, troop movements, maintenance, and emitter use. This 17 contribution would relate to regional air quality goals and attainment standards. The 18 contribution from the Proposed Action would be negligible on a regional scale, as 19 20 construction and demolition impacts are very minor and would be short term, ending when the projects are completed. Aircraft, munitions, troop movement, and emitter 21 emissions would be ongoing and would be a permanent change in annual air emissions. 22 However, the air emissions are expected to have a slight net increase from these 23 ongoing sources of emissions. Air emissions associated with the project represent a 24 small percentage of the Clark, Lincoln, and Nye County annual emissions. Project 25 emissions would not contribute to other county emissions in any appreciable manner. 26

27 As discussed above, air emissions from the majority of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects would be temporary, intermittent, and minor, and some would have 28 29 a net beneficial effect on the overall regional air quality. As a result, the Air Force does not expect long-term adverse cumulative impacts to regional air quality associated with 30 31 air emissions from the Proposed Action and the relevant past, present, and reasonably foreseeable regional development and other projects. Therefore, ambient air quality 32 standards would not be exceeded by the cumulative impact of project-related emissions 33 and emissions from other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable projects. 34

## 4-16 DECEMBER 2017

#### 1 **4.1.4.4 Land Use**

2 Cumulative impacts to land use (primarily recreational 3 resources) consist of the combined potential effects 4 resulting from the Proposed Action and applicable past, 5 present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects For the Native American perspective on information in this section, please see Appendix K, paragraph 4.1.4.4.1.

described in Section 4.1.2 and Section 4.1.3. Of these projects, only the mountain bike
 and OHV trails development in Nye County, CSN development, and the Amargosa
 Farm Road Solar Energy Project would impact recreational use and resources in the
 area surrounding the NTTR.

The Amargosa Farm Road Solar Energy Project (approximately 6,320 acres) along with 10 the Proposed Action Alternatives 3A, 3B, and 3C (approximately 300,000 acres) would 11 result in additional access restrictions to currently accessible lands and the cumulative 12 loss of recreational opportunities. Recreational activities were reduced when the CSN 13 lands were transferred from public lands to private lands in the 1980s, and additional 14 15 development could prevent access of OHV vehicles from CSN private lands to adjacent BLM lands to the east. However, existing (golf course) and planned recreational 16 facilities, such as an amusement park, parks, sports fields, and planned trails could 17 open up a limited amount of new recreational space to the public. 18

The existing and planned mountain biking and OHV trail system being developed in Nye County in the Oasis Valley area also provide additional recreational opportunities on private and BLM-managed lands. However, portions of the existing (about 4.5 miles) and planned (14.7 miles) bike/OHV trail system would be impacted by the Alternative 3A withdrawal. Under Alternative 3A-1 the potential impact to the existing and planned trails would not occur. Also, over the next five years, Trails-OV plans to develop up to 300 miles of trails and usable routes in the Oasis Valley area (www.trails-ov.org).

It is possible that the loss of existing recreational opportunities from the Alternative 3A, 26 3B, and 3C withdrawals could result in the increased use of adjacent and nearby 27 recreational areas including other wilderness areas. Many of the recreational areas 28 within the DNWR would remain open and overall visitation would not be expected to 29 substantially increase to the point where adverse impacts would occur. However, the 30 31 extent of the potential impact on nearby recreational areas is indeterminable at this time and would be highly speculative without a thorough understanding of the usage of the 32 Alamo's area and the potential shift of recreational activity. Based on information 33 presented in Appendix F, Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas, and not including 34 the existing areas proposed for wilderness within the DNWR, there are over 1.4 million 35 acres of land that contain wilderness qualities within and surrounding the NTTR ROI, 36 consisting of both Wilderness Areas and WSAs. 37

Other foreseeable future actions would be consistent with current activities in the area and would not precipitate changes in land use patterns, ownership, or management practices. Within a 100-mile radius of the NTTR project area, there are numerous opportunities for public recreational use, including county and city parks, private OHV parks, and state and federal lands open to motorized and nonmotorized uses. Therefore, only minor cumulative impacts are expected to land use (i.e., recreational use) when considered in conjunction with other applicable past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects.

#### 3 Visual Resources

There are several present actions and reasonably foreseeable future projects within the 4 vicinity of the NTTR that would involve the construction of new facilities, adding 5 anthropogenic elements to the landscape and possibly contributing to light pollution. 6 Projects that occur within areas where human-made elements already dominate the 7 landscape, such as the construction and demolition activities that are a part of the F-35 8 beddown at Nellis AFB, conform to the visual expectations of viewers and to the existing 9 10 landscape character and, therefore, are of low sensitivity and impact. Other projects, such as the capital improvements at Nellis AFB and Creech AFB, have the potential to 11 have a positive impact on light pollution through the conformance to LEED design 12 specifications on exterior lighting that minimize light trespass and glare. The projects 13 that do not affect the physical environment will not affect visual resources; these 14 projects are limited to the Pahrump Valley Desert Tortoise HCP and the Goldfield 15 Historic District. 16

Projects such as the mountain bike trails (City of Beatty, Nye County) and OHV trails 17 (Nye County) have the potential to introduce some new elements to the landscape, 18 such as small signage or fencing. However, as long as trails run along existing roads, 19 new ground disturbance could be minimal, and, therefore, there would be little change 20 to the existing visual environment. There are no large-scale construction elements 21 associated with these projects that would introduce sources of light pollution or 22 obtrusive elements to the landscape. Visually, the trails would be consistent with current 23 management plans of the area and viewer expectations. 24

The projects that could have the greatest cumulative effects are those that create 25 development in areas with few existing human features. Areas of concentrated 26 development, such as the Lincoln County Industrial Park, Amargosa Farm Road Solar 27 Energy Project, and the CSN (Lincoln County), will involve relatively dense construction 28 and development. In contrast, the new elements associated with the Clark, Lincoln, and 29 White Pine Counties Groundwater Development Project or the Lincoln County Land Act 30 Groundwater and Utility Right-of-Way Project would be dispersed throughout the 31 landscape. Where new facilities are more densely concentrated, the viewer would 32 perceive the landscape as more urbanized, whereas dispersed facilities are less visually 33 intrusive but affect a larger area. Both types of projects have the potential to change the 34 regional landscape from one that is relatively untrammeled and remote to an 35 increasingly urbanized and human-dominated area. Due to the additive character of 36 37 light pollution and its propagation over large distances, the radiance footprints from various developments could accumulate and merge, contributing light pollution and sky 38 glow into a region currently noted for natural dark skies. 39

The No Action Alternative, Alternative 1, and Alternative 4, would not contribute to cumulative impacts to visual resources due to the limited introduction of new development and light sources, as well as their consistency with current visual resource management objectives. Alternatives 2 and 3 have the potential to incrementally change

# 4-18 DECEMBER 2017

the visual characteristics over the largest region when considered with projects identified in Section 4.1.2 and Section 4.1.3, through new development and light sources introduced into previously untrammeled areas. Development on NTTR in any of the alternatives or in projects in the surrounding area may be visible from the remaining publicly accessible proposed wilderness and recreation areas, creating a transboundary issue where the scenic quality of those areas is degraded (Kelson & Lilieholm, 1999).

### 7 4.1.4.5 Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas

Analysis of cumulative effects to wilderness considers the combined potential impacts 8 from the Proposed Action and applicable past, present, and reasonably foreseeable 9 future projects to the four wilderness qualities defined in Section 3.5.1.1 (Description of 10 Resource). The only past, present, and future actions that may impact wilderness 11 include fire management activities associated with the Nellis AFB Wildland Fire 12 Management Plan and aircraft operations associated with the F-35 beddown and the 13 standup and beddown of the TASS at Nellis AFB. All other projects described in Section 14 4.1.2 and Section 4.1.3 would not occur within Wilderness Areas, areas proposed for 15 wilderness in the South Range, or WSAs associated with the NTTR ROI and, therefore, 16 they are not discussed further in this section. 17

Implementation of fire management activities from the Nellis AFB Wildland Fire 18 Management Plan would be consistent with ongoing management strategies of the 19 20 NTTR. These activities would be conducted in concert with other ecological management actions associated with the Nellis AFB INRMP that support natural 21 resource conservation and promote the preservation of the untrammeled and natural 22 qualities of wilderness. Therefore, combining these activities with the Proposed Action 23 would not result in significant cumulative impacts to wilderness qualities within the 24 NTTR ROI. 25

The F-35 beddown at Nellis AFB increased aircraft operations over Wilderness Areas 26 and WSAs underlying NTTR airspace units. The noise analyses presented in Section 27 3.2.2.3 for Alternative 2 and Section 3.2.2.4 for Alternative 3 considered the 28 29 approximate increased aircraft operations planned for the NTTR in future years. Results from these analyses indicated that noise level increases are not expected to be 30 discernible over baseline conditions. In addition, the increased number of annual sorties 31 associated with TASS operations would represent only a negligible increase over 32 33 baseline conditions. Therefore, incremental impacts from these activities would not be significant. As discussed in Sections 3.5.1.3 (Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas) 34 and Section 3.5.2.3 (Alternative 2 - Extend Existing Land Withdrawal and Provide 35 Ready Access in the North and South Ranges), baseline aircraft operations generate 36 noise levels that may result in annovance of potential visitors to Wilderness Areas, 37 areas proposed for wilderness, and WSAs within the NTTR ROI. Therefore, noise levels 38 generated by future F-35 aircraft and TASS operations associated with these beddowns 39 would similarly affect the solitude qualities of wilderness, because signs of human 40 activities within and outside these areas would be detectable on a regular basis. 41 Combining these activities with the Proposed Action may contribute to cumulative 42 impacts to the solitude or primitive and unconfined recreation quality of wilderness, but 43

1 not to a significant level. There would be no cumulative or incremental effects from 2 aircraft operations to untrammeled, natural, and undeveloped qualities of wilderness.

Adverse impacts to the undeveloped quality of wilderness within the NTTR land 3 boundary are anticipated under Alternatives 2 and 3, and adverse impacts to the 4 solitude and/or primitive and unconfined recreation guality are expected under 5 Alternatives 1, 2, and 3. However, in the absence of any identified past, present, or 6 7 foreseeable future action that would have a significant impact on wilderness qualities to Wilderness Areas and WSAs in the region, combining these activities with any of the 8 action alternatives associated with the Proposed Action would not result in an 9 associated cumulative or incremental impacts. Furthermore, none of the projects 10 described in Section 4.1.2 and Section 4.1.3 would result in a change of land 11 management in the region. Therefore, changing the land use management under 12 Alternatives 2 and/or 3 would not result in an associated cumulative or incremental 13 impact. 14

#### 15 4.1.4.6 Socioeconomics

16 Cumulative effects to socioeconomic resources consist of the combined potential effects 17 resulting from the Proposed Action and applicable past, present, and reasonably 18 foreseeable future projects described in Section 4.1.2 and Section 4.1.3. All of these 19 projects would have a cumulative economic impact. Potential cumulative effects would 20 involve an in- or out-migration of people to the area, which would create a cumulative 21 impact on population, housing, economic activity, recreational use, educational facilities 22 and staffing, and public and base services.

Any reduction in PILT payments associated with the Proposed Action would result in 23 decreased funds for fire and police protection and other services that PILT payments 24 Decreased funds for fire/police and emergency services, coupled with support. 25 activities conducted on the NTTR associated with the Proposed Action, could present 26 cumulative impacts to socioeconomic resources from wildfire hazards on and 27 surrounding the NTTR. Past and present activities, such as implementation of 28 29 measures in the Nellis AFB Wildland Fire Management Plan and the Fire Management for the Cedar Peak Area Environmental Assessment on the NTTR, could minimize 30 cumulative effects to socioeconomic resources from potential wildfire hazards. 31

Other relevant past and present actions, such as the TASS beddown and the F-35 beddown at Nellis AFB would provide long term economic value to the local area, while operation of the SolarReserve Crescent Dunes Solar Energy Facility and Amargosa Farm Road Solar Energy Project would provide additional beneficial cumulative impacts as well.

Construction activities typically provide a beneficial economic impact on the area but are short term, only lasting for the duration of the project. However, many short-term projects occurring throughout the year provide a cumulative beneficial economic impact over the long term, depending on the scope of the project. Employment opportunities in the region would contribute to positive economic growth in the area.

# 4-20 DECEMBER 2017

The combined operations of the F-35 and TASS beddown would increase personnel by 1 691 and add 53 million in additional earnings (U.S. Air Force, 2011; 2017o). The 2 Crescent Dunes Solar Energy Facility and Amargosa Farm Road Solar Energy Project 3 have a combined operational employment of up to 220 full time employees and an 4 economic impact of more than 22.7 million per year from operations either directly or 5 indirectly (Tonopah Solar Energy, 2010). 6 7 Reasonably foreseeable future actions, such as the mountain biking and the OHV trails, would provide beneficial cumulative impacts to socioeconomic resources from tourism 8 and recreational use in the areas adjacent to the NTTR. Any potential restrictions or 9 limitations to recreational areas, such as an OHV race route, or a decrease in the areas 10 available for recreational use would have an adverse cumulative effect on 11 Strategies to minimize adverse cumulative effects to socioeconomic resources. 12 socioeconomics could include implementation of comprehensive plans, capital 13 improvement plans, transportation plans, and other plans and coordination efforts that 14

11 guide future development activities such as the Nellis AFB CIP and the Creech AFB
 16 Capital Improvements Program.

17 Implementation of the Proposed Action would enable the NTTR to continue as an important economic contributor to the region from employment and income associated 18 with training activities. Other reasonably foreseeable future actions that would involve 19 construction and development in the area would have a positive cumulative impact on 20 the area from continued increases in population, housing, and employment and 21 economic activity such as military and general aviation, energy industries, and 22 agriculture in the area. Additional military training in the area would contribute to the 23 local economy through continued employment and earnings. However, additional and 24 continuing military operations could create further conflicts between military users and 25 the general public and land use compatibility. Coordination between the military and 26 local and regional planning departments would minimize potential conflicts. Therefore, 27 28 implementation of the Proposed Action combined with the past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects would not result in significant impacts within the ROI. 29

#### 30 4.1.4.7 Environmental Justice

Cumulative effects to environmental justice populations consist of the combined 31 potential effects resulting from the Proposed Action and applicable past, present, and 32 33 reasonably foreseeable future projects. Past and present actions that analyzed potential environmental justice impacts include the F-35 beddown EIS (2011) and the Tonopah 34 Solar Energy, LLC Crescent Dunes Solar Energy Project EIS (Tonopah Solar Energy, 35 2010) (the "Crescent Dunes EIS"). The F-35 beddown EIS determined that there would 36 be an increase in the number of people in the vicinity of Nellis AFB that would be 37 affected by noise levels within 65 dB DNL or greater. The number of minority would 38 increase from 30,257 to 42,272 and the number of those residents identified as low-39 income would increase from 5,406 to 6,673. However, both the F35 beddown EIS and 40 the Solar Reserve EIS determined that there were no disproportionate impacts as a 41 result of the proposed actions with implementation of such mitigations as noise 42 attenuation features, which are required for all new residential construction in areas 43

affected by noise levels of 65 dB DNL or greater, noise abatement procedures, and consultation between government agencies and Nevada SHPO. Under the Proposed Action, subsonic and supersonic aircraft noise, munition noise, and ground disturbance noise would not add measurably to the overall noise environment and would not only impact a particular segment of the population and, therefore, no disproportionately high and adverse cumulative impacts to environmental justice communities would be anticipated from the proposed action combined with past and present projects.

Reasonably foreseeable actions such as those described in the Nellis CIP EA and the 8 Creech CIP EA would not impact environmental justice communities since the proposed 9 actions would occur in restricted access areas within the boundary of the associated 10 base. Any reasonable foreseeable action that would generate a range of economic and 11 fiscal benefits such as an increase in economic activity, jobs, income, and public 12 services would benefit all members and residents of the community. These benefits 13 also favorably affect minority and low-income populations. Beneficial economic 14 changes can also be coupled with adverse impacts particularly to areas with a growing 15 population, lack of housing, and underfunded public resources, such as the case with 16 the unincorporated town of Alamo in Lincoln County. 17

Potential community improvements such as those identified in the Lincoln County 18 Master Plan (Lincoln County, 2015), which would result in an increase in affordable 19 housing and an increase in funding for recreational parks, trails, and tourism provide 20 benefits throughout the community for all residents, including environmental justice 21 communities. A greater number of facilities and improved facilities at key recreational 22 areas at such areas as those identified in Section 2.3.3.4 could benefit everyone 23 residing in the region, including environmental justice communities. Improved 24 recreational experiences and opportunities associated with new mountain biking trails 25 and OHV trails described in Section 4.1.3 also off-set any adverse impacts from 26 implementation of Alternative 3 in which public access would be restricted. Closures of 27 28 recreational areas could result in overcrowding in other key recreational areas or a loss of income associated with any reduction in the number of recreational users from 29 restricted access. Data on the extent of any loss of income associated with recreational 30 closures is not available at this time but may affect residents in the region, including 31 environmental justice communities. 32

No significant impacts to noise, safety, land use, cultural, air quality, airspace, and water 33 resources would be anticipated as a result of the Proposed Action. Furthermore, any 34 potential impacts from the Proposed Action associated with these and other resource 35 areas considered would equally affect everyone residing in the region and would not be 36 anticipated to disproportionately affect any one group or locality. 37 Since no disproportionately high and adverse impacts to environmental justice communities or 38 disproportionately high and adverse environmental health and safety impacts to children 39 would be anticipated under the Proposed Action, there would be no cumulative impacts 40 to environmental justice anticipated. 41

## 4-22 DECEMBER 2017

#### 1 4.1.4.8 Biological Resources

2 Cumulative impacts consider the effects of past, present, and future actions, described in Section 4.1.2 and Section 4.1.3, on biological resources on a regional level, specifically 3 those resources that may be considered rare or limited. In addition to projects 4 associated with continued use the NTTR, potential current and future projects in the 5 region include construction of Air Force facilities (including projects on Nellis AFB and 6 Creech AFB), residential development, industrial facilities, installation of a solar energy 7 project, placement of pipeline and other infrastructure related to groundwater and utility 8 9 projects, and development of recreational areas. In addition, ground disturbance would occur during fire management activities. The total area of ground disturbance 10 associated with projects described in Section 4.1.2 and Section 4.1.3 and for which 11 such information is available is nearly 26,000 acres (most of which is attributed to the 12 13 planned Coyote Springs LLC development), although quantitative data are not available for some of the projects. 14

15 Potential cumulative effects to biological resources would be associated with ground disturbance and long-term loss of desert scrub and other unique desert vegetation in 16 Nevada, as well as long-term loss of individuals and habitat of federally or state-listed 17 endangered, threatened, rare, and otherwise sensitive plant and wildlife species, 18 including the federally listed desert tortoise. Habitat fragmentation or possible effects on 19 regional wildlife movements (wildlife corridors), and loss or degradation of habitat 20 caused by erosion, sedimentation, turbidity, dust, fuel spills or introduction of other 21 pollutants, can also result in direct or indirect loss of vegetation and wildlife habitat, 22 including individuals or habitat for sensitive species. Water development projects have 23 the potential to alter surface or groundwater, which can adversely affect aquatic and 24 wetland habitats or limit water availability for wildlife. 25

Indirect cumulative impacts can occur from the increased potential for invasive species 26 (including landscape plants and domestic pets) and wildland fires associated with 27 commercial, residential, and recreational development, as well as military activities. 28 Wildland fires that could be ignited by military activities pose a significant threat to 29 native vegetation, wildlife, aquatic and wetland habitats, and special status plant 30 species and their habitats both in and outside the existing or proposed NTTR boundary. 31 A Wildland Fire Management Plan provides a framework for fire management, wildland 32 fire suppression, burned area emergency rehabilitation, emergency stabilization, and 33 fuel treatment activities to support the military mission including resource protection and 34 ecosystem management objectives. 35

Increased recreational development can also impact biological resources, although to a 36 lesser extent. The potential loss of recreational areas associated with the Alternative 3C 37 expansion area could result in a shift of recreational activities to other locations in the 38 region, and potential direct and indirect impacts to biological resources resulting from 39 recreational activities could occur; however, the extent or scope of potential impacts is 40 indeterminable and would be highly speculative without a thorough understanding of the 41 42 usage of the Alamo areas (which is unknown at this time) and the potential shift of recreation activity. Any potential impacts that could occur would not be expected to 43

#### DECEMBER 2017

increase to a magnitude or for a duration of time that would cause the loss or
 degradation of biological resources, and there would be no overall significant effects to

3 biological resources.

Military actions or projects would follow the regulatory requirements (e.g., NEPA, CWA, 4 ESA) and natural resources management requirements, guidelines, and biological 5 constraints currently being implemented on the NTTR. Implementation of the same 6 7 planning prior to mission and project activities are required to avoid and minimize impacts to biological resources, including an assessment of cumulative impacts (U.S. 8 Air Force, 2010). Potential cumulative effects of federal actions on federally listed 9 endangered species are addressed project by project through the ESA Section 7 10 consultation process with the USFWS. Through this process, federal agencies and the 11 USFWS jointly assess project-specific effects and develop and implement appropriate 12 measures that reflect current conditions and status of the species. Improvement 13 projects on military lands outside the NTTR, including the F-35 beddown and TASS 14 beddown projects at Nellis AFB and CIPs on Nellis AFB and Creech AFB, may also 15 contribute to the loss or degradation of biological resources, although those effects are 16 likely to be small and localized compared with other past, present, and proposed future 17 actions in the region. 18

For any of the action alternatives, direct impacts to biological resources are likely to 19 occur as a result of continued military use of the NTTR, including loss of native desert 20 scrub vegetation, wildlife and habitat, aquatic and wetland habitats, and special status 21 species and their habitats. There is also the potential for loss associated with wildfires 22 23 and spread of invasive species, which is difficult to measure. The length of the withdrawal period is relevant. The longer the withdrawal period (e.g., for Alternative 2 24 and 3), the more impacts there will be on the land and biological resources). However, 25 based on the size of the NTTR and the surrounding area compared with the amount of 26 acreage that would be used for military training, direct impacts to biological resources 27 would be minimal. Sensitive habitat areas, including aquatic and wetland habitats, 28 would be avoided to the extent practicable, and impacts on special status plant and 29 wildlife species would be minimized and mitigated if required. 30 Indirect impacts associated with invasive species are minimized by using BMPs to prevent their 31 establishment, monitor for new establishment, and manage existing populations. The 32 level of the cumulative impacts to biological resources depends on whether the effects 33 of disturbance are significant on a regional level and the sensitivity of the resource. 34 However, for any of the action alternatives, military activities would contribute little to 35 regional cumulative adverse direct or indirect impacts on biological resources on a 36 regional level. 37

Extension of the existing NTTR withdrawal, as well as the addition of any of the proposed expansion areas, may have beneficial cumulative impacts insofar as it would maintain or increase protection of regional vegetation, wildlife, aquatic habitats and wetlands, and special status species and their habitats from the impacts associated with urbanization and nonmilitary land uses, such as development, recreation, grazing, and mining. The proposed withdrawal effort would also serve to continue, and under

## 4-24 DECEMBER 2017

1 expansion increase, natural resource management on Air Force lands, which also 2 results in increased opportunities for resource protection.

Under the No Action Alternative, all or a percentage of the lands currently restricted may be open to a variety of public and private uses, such as commercial or residential development, recreation, grazing, and mineral extraction. These uses could result in greater loss or disturbance to biological resources than occurs under current Air Force use.

#### 8 4.1.4.9 Cultural Resources

9 Damage to the nature, integrity, and spatial context of 10 cultural resources can have a cumulative impact if the 11 initial act is compounded by other similar losses or 12 impacts. The alteration or demolition of historic structures 13 or the disturbance or removal of cultural artifacts may

For the Native American perspective on information in this section, please see Appendix K, paragraph 4.1.4.9.1.

incrementally and cumulatively impact the cultural and historic setting of an area or region.

In general, recreational activities have historically occurred within proposed expansion 16 areas, and military activities have occurred in the existing withdrawal areas under 17 18 consideration. Activities on the NTTR that involve potentially ground-disturbing activities are guided by the Nellis AFB ICRMP and existing Air Force instructions. 19 Given the required coordination with the Nellis AFB Cultural Resources Office, as well 20 as any measures recommended by the SHPO as part of future Section 106 actions, 21 future mission activities are not expected to cumulatively impact cultural resources. 22 None of the alternatives would involve specifically located construction, demolition, or 23 training activities. Any proposed activities or projects involving ground disturbance could 24 be subject to further consideration under the NHPA as well as NEPA prior to 25 implementation. Ordnance delivery and other operational activities would occur on 26 existing ranges and target impact areas approved for such activities on the NTTR. As 27 described in this LEIS, flight operations, construction, and munitions use, as well as 28 29 other activities discussed, are unlikely to result in adverse effects to NRHP-eligible cultural resources. 30

An increase in overflights or sonic boom frequency could potentially adversely affect traditional use locations or sacred sites by creating sonic disturbance to the setting. However, consultation with Native American groups would continue through the Native American Program to identify areas of concern and determine the extent of effects to these resources. No adverse impacts to cultural or traditional resources associated with NTTR operations are anticipated when considered cumulatively with other actions in the same area.

There are 2,889 cultural resource locations (prehistoric, historic and ethnographic) currently identified within the boundaries of the NTTR. There are an additional 2,111 resources located within the NTTR airspace. The total number of resources identified by other past, present and future projects described below is 159. Current 1 cultural resource sites on the NTTR represents the majority of cultural resource sites 2 identified in the region.

All of the projects described in the past, present and future projects within the region 3 either had no historic properties present within the APE, or resulted in no adverse 4 effects to cultural resources or resulted in a resolution of adverse effects thereby 5 completing the Section 106 process. In the projects where historic properties were to 6 7 be impacted (e.g., Amargosa Farm Road Solar Energy Project, Crescent Dunes Solar Energy Project, Coyote Springs Investment Planned Development Project, and the Fire 8 Management for Cedar Peak on NTTR), then data recovery was required, treatment 9 plans were created, or existing agreements led to a resolution of adverse effects. 10

There are 142 archaeological sites that were identified in the APE of the Crescent 11 Dunes Solar Energy Project (Tonopah Solar Energy, 2010). Of these 13 were identified 12 13 as historic properties. The Proposed Action impacted four of these properties and required a BLM Historic Property Treatment Plan for each to resolve adverse effects. 14 The Coyote Springs Investment Planned Development Project EIS (Entrix, 2008) (the 15 "Coyote Springs Development EIS") identified four historic roads and 27 prehistoric 16 These sites were recommended for additional Section 106 consultations in 17 sites. cooperation with the BLM and SHPO through an existing MOU. The Amargosa Farm 18 Road Solar Energy Project (EPG, 2010) identified 13 archaeological sites, of which 19 1 was considered eligible for listing on the NRHP and required mitigation in the form of 20 data recovery. The Fire Management for Cedar Peak on NTTR EA (U.S. Air Force, 21 2015b) identified two archaeological sites and three isolates. One of the sites is 22 considered eligible for the NRHP and requires a protective buffer as mitigation against 23 forest management activities. The Nellis AFB Capital Improvements Program EA (U.S. 24 Air Force, 2013a) identified one archaeological site considered ineligible to the NRHP 25 and determined that no cultural resources would be impacted by this action. The "Tough 26 Mudder", L.L.C., EA (BLM, 2012d) identified one archaeological site and subsequently 27 28 modified the APE to avoid this resource. The "Vegas to Reno" Race Event EA 2009 (BLM, 2016j) is utilizing previously identified routes and does not affect any cultural 29 resources. 30

The F-35 beddown EIS reviewed sites located under the NTTR airspace and determined potential impacts that may be caused by the beddown. In total, 5,000 cultural resources and 50 traditional use properties were identified under the airspace. It was determined that the cultural sites and traditional cultural properties would be unaffected by the proposed action (U.S. Air Force, 2011).

The Desert Tortoise HCP (Nye County Planning Department, 2009), the Oasis Valley Recreation Trails Master Plan (GRO Trails and Race Consulting, 2016), the Lincoln County Master Plan (Lincoln County, 2015), the Creech AFB Capital Improvements Program EA (U.S. Air Force, 2013b) and the TASS EIS (U.S. Air Force, 2017o) did not identify any cultural features or sites considered eligible to the NRHP.

None of the regional development projects discussed have been identified as significantly contributing to cumulative impacts to cultural resources. Most of these projects are subject to Section 106 of the NHPA. If impacts to these resources are

# 4-26 DECEMBER 2017

anticipated due to proposed activities, plans for the protection or mitigation of these 1 resources must be developed by the proponent in consultation with the SHPO and other 2 consulting parties as appropriate. Future federally funded or permitted undertakings 3 would be required to follow the NHPA Section 106 process, and as a result, any 4 potential adverse effects to cultural resources would be resolved through completion of 5 that process. If proper mitigation or protective measures are undertaken in consultation 6 with the SHPO and other consulting parties for structures, resources, or sites, no 7 significant cumulative impacts to cultural resources are expected when considered in 8 conjunction with other actions. 9

#### 10 **4.1.4.10 Earth Resources**

Analysis of cumulative impacts to earth resources focused on activities with a discernible potential for the withdrawal or expansions to affect the nature of earth resources at the regional scale. Changes to soils associated with the withdrawal would not substantially alter earth resources in the area. Conceptually, the proposed actions would occur over time and are generally consistent with existing uses of the NTTR and would not be expected to substantially affect earth resources in the NTTR region.

Potential construction-related soil disturbances at multiple adjacent locations can have 17 cumulative impacts. If the actions are concurrent, windborne eroded soil and transport 18 of eroded soil through stormwater runoff can have cumulative impacts on air and water 19 20 guality. Cumulative impacts from erosion would be negligible on the NTTR and in the general study area due to several factors. In general, these activities would be spread 21 over a large geographic area and would occur over a long period of time, dissipating the 22 overall impacts. Also, although erosion does commonly result from storm events, 23 precipitation in the region is relatively low, reducing risks for water-caused erosion. In 24 addition, the Air Force and state regulations require BMPs to minimize erosion and 25 stormwater runoff. 26

An extension of the current NTTR would continue to impact earth resources as 27 described under the baseline condition. Expansion under Alternative 3 would involve 28 29 ground-disturbing activities, but details regarding those activities are only known in a conceptual framework and amount to less than 100 acres of disturbance. When this 30 number is compared to other past, present, and future projects described below, it 31 represents orders of magnitude less than other regional ground-disturbing activity. Any 32 33 subsequent development or use would require additional consideration under NEPA and in conjunction with the NDEP. 34

Proposed future dismounted troop movements could potentially damage earth 35 resources, but that is unlikely given the size and scope of such activities. The continued 36 restriction of access to the NTTR and USFWS-managed DNWR areas in the 37 Alternative 3C proposed withdrawal area, which are currently not open to mining 38 39 activities, could delay extraction of potentially recoverable resources if safety conditions and economic factors were to make such recovery feasible. A total of 21,060.6 acres of 40 ground disturbance was identified in past, present, and future regional projects. This 41 number is far lower than the probable total disturbance occurring in the area but shows 42

a good overview of effects to earth resources in the area from a variety of projects. The following projects involved some degree of soil disturbance; the Coyote Springs Development EIS, the F-35 beddown EIS, the Oasis Valley Recreation Trails Master Plan, the TASS beddown at Nellis AFB, the Fire Management Plan for Cedar Peak on NTTR EA (U.S. Air Force, 2015b), the "Tough Mudder" L.L.C., EA (BLM, 2012d). The remaining projects in this section either did not contain adequate information to provide an analysis or did not impact earth resources.

The Coyote Springs Development EIS identified 20,960 acres of disturbance from 8 planned development and a utility corridor (Entrix, 2008). The F-35 beddown EIS would 9 involve 36 acres of ground disturbance that would occur primarily in previously 10 The Oasis Valley Recreation Trails Master Plan proposes developed areas. 11 32.19 miles of new trails with a rough average width of 9 feet per trail given trail and 12 right-of-way measurements (GRO Trails and Race Consulting, 2016). This is 13 approximately 35 acres of disturbance to previously undeveloped property. The TASS 14 EIS identified 18.5 acres of disturbance owing to construction within previously 15 developed areas (U.S. Air Force, 2017o). The Fire Management Plan for Cedar Peak 16 on NTTR EA (U.S. Air Force, 2015b) identified 6 acres of disturbance within a high 17 slope, high erosion risk area. The BLM estimates that 2.3 acres of the "Tough Mudder" 18 L.L.C., EA (BLM, 2012d) course could potentially be impacted by erosion due to heavy 19 rainfall events, while 2.8 acres of the course are of the proper soil type and slope to 20 resist erosion risk. 21

The "Vegas to Reno" Race Event EA (BLM, 2016), the Crescent Dunes Solar Energy 22 Project (Tonopah Solar Energy, 2010) environmental analysis, the Lincoln County 23 Industrial Park study, the Creech AFB Capital Improvement Plan EA, the Nellis AFB 24 Capital Improvement Plan (U.S. Air Force, 2013a) and the Amargosa Farm Road Solar 25 Energy Project (EPG, 2010) did not provide specific details for determining acreage of 26 total disturbance allowing for an adequate analysis of impacts to soils. Lincoln County 27 28 Industrial Park Master Plan (Lincoln County, 2015) potentially represents thousands of acres of new development but no specific numbers are available at this point given the 29 high order view that the Master Plan provides. 30

No earth resources would be impacted by the Desert Tortoise HCP (Nye County Planning Department, 2009).

Any potential cumulative impacts to earth resources would be reduced through adequate project planning, fulfillment of NPDES requirements, and implementation of other site-specific BMPs in relation to other past, present, and future actions.

#### 36 4.1.4.11 Water Resources

Cumulative effects to water resources consist of the combined potential effects resulting from the Proposed Action and applicable past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects described in Section 4.1.2 and Section 4.1.3. These projects would be unlikely to result in direct impacts to surface waters. Potential cumulative effects to water resources would be associated with construction and other ground-disturbing activities, operation of new facilities, and increased groundwater use.

#### DECEMBER 2017

With the exception of the Goldfield Historic District project and fire management 1 activities, all other projects would involve some level of ground disturbance, including 2 construction of Air Force facilities, housing, industrial facilities, and recreational areas; 3 installation of a solar energy project; and placement of pipeline and other infrastructure 4 related to groundwater and utility projects (including Utility Corridor 18-224). Ground 5 disturbance could also potentially occur during fire management activities on the NTTR. 6 Ground disturbance can result in erosion of soil and any associated contaminants due 7 to rainfall runoff and, to a lesser extent, wind. Erosion can lead to sedimentation or 8 introduction of contaminants into surface waters. In sufficient quantity, sediments and 9 contaminants can negatively affect water quality. The total area of ground disturbance 10 associated with projects for which such information is available is nearly 26,000 acres 11 (F-35 beddown at Nellis AFB, TASS beddown at Nellis AFB, off-highway trails and other 12 recreational projects, CSN, Lincoln County Industrial Park, and the Amargosa Farm 13 Road Solar Energy Project). Of these projects, most of the ground disturbance is 14 attributed to the planned Coyote Springs LLC development (about 21,000 acres). 15 Quantitative data is not available for the remaining projects. It is anticipated that the 16 majority of ground-disturbing activities described in Section 4.1.2 and Section 4.1.3 17 would be subject to NPDES permitting requirements and conducted in accordance with 18 management practices designed to minimize the potential for erosion. A wide range of 19 such practices may be implemented, including, but not limited to silt fencing, sediment 20 traps, and placement of straw bales or sand bags. Trees would be felled by hand during 21 fire management activities at the Cedar Peak area on the NTTR in order to avoid soil 22 impacts. With implementation of permit requirements and appropriate management 23 practices, the cumulative amount of erosion resulting from the Proposed Action and 24 other past, present, and future actions is unlikely to significantly affect surface waters. 25

26 Some of the projects would result in long-term placement of structures such as houses, industrial facilities, and Air Force facilities (F-35 beddown at Nellis AFB, TASS beddown 27 at Nellis AFB, Nellis and Creech AFB CIPs, CSN, Lincoln County Industrial Park, 28 Amargosa Farm Road Solar Energy Project, and multiple groundwater and utility 29 projects). The structures and related elements such as parking areas, sidewalks, and 30 roads would increase the amount of impervious surface in the ROI, which would 31 increase the amount of stormwater runoff. In addition, increased vehicle use would likely 32 result in additional petroleum products (gasoline, oil, etc.) present on some of the 33 impervious surfaces. Increased runoff could result in erosion, downstream flooding, and 34 conveyance of pollutants into surface waters. Although quantitative data are not 35 available for the area of impervious surface or the types and quantities of pollutants 36 37 potentially conveyed to surface waters, it is expected that stormwater management features would be part of the permitting process and long-term design for each project. 38 With implementation of stormwater management practices, the cumulative effects of 39 stormwater runoff on surface waters resulting from the Proposed Action and other past, 40 41 present, and future actions is not expected to be significant.

42 Several of the identified past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions would 43 result in increased water use in the ROI. Projects that involve increased population 44 (either military or civilian) would result in additional water demand. New industrial

#### 4-28

#### DECEMBER 2017

facilities would also require additional water. Although data are not available for all 1 projects, a total of about 22,000 AFY of groundwater withdrawal would occur as a result 2 of implementing projects that have quantitative data available (SolarReserve Crescent 3 Dunes Solar Energy Facility, Coyote Springs LLC development, Amargosa Farm Road 4 Solar Energy Project, and Kane Springs Valley Groundwater Development project). In 5 addition, an increase in water use of about 400,000 gallons per day is estimated for the 6 F-35 weapons school beddown at Nellis AFB. The additional water use is anticipated in 7 association with program activities (e.g., aircraft washing) and an increase in on-base 8 personnel. Three of the projects would involve groundwater extraction and transport. Air 9 Force well water appropriations on the NTTR are underutilized, and therefore, there 10 would likely be no requirement for additional surface or groundwater appropriations 11 associated with Air Force activities. Of the 27 hydrographic basins associated with the 12 NTTR, 10 are currently either fully allocated or overallocated. Although groundwater 13 resources are likely sufficient to support other nonmilitary projects in the area, new 14 groundwater rights and appropriation requests would require review and approval by the 15 Nevada State Engineer's Office. State review would also include evaluation of potential 16

17 effects to migration of groundwater contaminated by historical nuclear device testing.

#### 18 4.1.4.12 Hazardous Materials and Solid Wastes

Maintenance operations associated with two reasonably foreseeable future actions 19 identified in Section 4.1.3 (i.e., the TASS beddown and the F-35 beddown) would likely 20 21 result in an increase in the quantity of hazardous materials used and hazardous wastes generated at Nellis AFB. These materials and wastes would continue to be managed 22 according to established procedures and disposal practices. Additionally, these 23 materials and waste would not adversely impact the existing management system or the 24 regional disposal capacity. Consequently, implementation of the Proposed Action 25 combined with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects would not 26 result in significant cumulative impacts associated with increases in the quantity of 27 hazardous materials used, the quantity of wastes generated, or off-site impacts related 28 to regional disposal capacity. 29

It would also be anticipated that the estimated increase in training from the standup of 30 31 an F-16 TASS and the F-35 beddown, when combined with Alternatives 1, 2, or 3, would result in an associated, proportional increase in the quantity of chemicals 32 released from munitions training. The Air Force currently complies with TRI reporting 33 requirements and would continue to track ordnance use associated with these future 34 actions. Based on the type of munitions that would likely be used, no new chemical 35 thresholds would be exceeded and no additional reporting would be required. 36 Additionally, the Air Force would continue to implement established range cleanup 37 procedures. Consequently, implementation of the Proposed Action combined with past, 38 present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects would not result in significant 39 cumulative impacts associated with increases in the quantity of hazardous materials 40 released during training. 41

# 4-30 DECEMBER 2017

#### 1 4.1.4.13 Health and Safety

2 An increase in flight operations associated with two reasonably foreseeable future actions identified in Section 4.1.3 (i.e., the TASS and the F-35 beddown) would result in 3 an associated increase in the cumulative potential for mishaps or bird strike, especially 4 during periods of migration. Many bird species use mountain ranges as migration 5 corridors and the Sheep Range attracts various bird species because of the elevation, 6 habitat diversity, and presence of water. As with Alternatives 1, 2, and 3, 7 implementation of procedures discussed in Section 3.13.2.2 would ensure that the 8 potential adverse impacts from mishaps and bird strikes would remain low. 9

The increase in training activities also has the potential to increase munitions-related fires. For Alternative 3C, ground disturbance has the potential to result in an expansion of invasive annual grass that could result in increased wildfire risk. Resulting wildfire smoke can also impact aviation and ground personnel safety, as well as nearby communities and sensitive populations. An increase in flight operations may also require additional airspace de-confliction where a wildfire response would include civilian firefighting aircraft.

Adherence to established safety protocols for any wildland fire management activity would continue, including the use of appropriate personal protective equipment and communications links between all parties. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Action combined with past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects would not result in significant impacts to the safety environment within the ROI.

#### 22 4.1.4.14 Transportation

Increased growth in the Las Vegas area is expected to continue to have an impact on regional traffic flow. The proposed withdrawal effort would primarily impact only existing roads within the DNWR Alamos area and would not disrupt local traffic flow. Therefore, there is minimal potential for cumulative impacts to local transportation associated with the proposed withdrawal efforts, because the proposed withdrawal extension/expansion would not have an impact on any major public roadways.

One of the alternative routes being considered for the I-11 and Intermountain West 29 Study Corridor would utilize the U.S. Route 95 corridor west of Las Vegas that borders 30 the South and North Ranges of the NTTR. The project is an effort by Arizona, Nevada, 31 and other Intermountain West states and the federal government to develop a 32 transportation corridor between the Rocky Mountains and the Cascade Range/Sierra 33 Nevada Mountains linking Mexico and Canada. One of the potential study area 34 segments is the Northern Nevada Future Connectivity Corridor. U.S. Route 95 also is 35 adjacent to the proposed withdrawal areas for Alternatives 3A and 3B. Withdrawal of 36 either of these areas could potentially limit the possible alignments of the proposed 37 corridor because of the restricted access associated with the withdrawal area. Although 38 this might result in the need for additional planning and design to avoid conflicts, it 39 should not result in significant adverse transportation impacts. 40

## 1 4.2 OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

### 2 4.2.1 Relationship Between Short-Term Uses and Long-Term Productivity

Military training activities that could include future munitions use or construction of threat emitters or roads would result in a short-term use of resources. Long-term productivity impacts are determined by comparing the project's impacts against long-term regional and local planning objectives. Impacts are associated with land use changes, population increases, and the related traffic and socioeconomic factors. The shortand long-term effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives are summarized below.

#### 9 4.2.2 Short-Term Uses

All alternatives would have minor short-term effects related to conceptual construction and military activities through the use of construction-related materials, munitions, fuels, etc. The significant economic benefits created during construction and military activities in the form of jobs, and the direct and indirect demand for goods and services, would offset the short-term use of the environment.

#### 15 4.2.3 Long-Term Productivity

Long-term adverse impacts on productivity as a result of unmitigated short-term impacts and uses would include the following:

- Increased noise levels associated with the additional aircraft operations in the
   Alamo airspace
- Reduced public access to USFWS lands
- Long-term beneficial impacts on productivity would include the following:
- Overall support of the region's continued economic development through:
- 23 o Creation of more jobs locally
- 0 Increased tax base
- 25 o Increased revenues for local businesses
- 26 o Increased revenues for local utilities
- o Continued military mission

## 28 4.2.4 Short-Term Uses Versus Long-Term Productivity

Many of the potential adverse impacts on long-term productivity are the result of shortterm factors, which are often mitigated through planning aspects when implementing a proposed action and/or alternatives; public access is one example. The Proposed Action and alternatives analyzed in this document would have immediate short-term impacts on public access with long-term implications.

## 4-32 DECEMBER 2017

Public access to a large area of the DNWR would be curtailed. The reduction in public access will result in both short- and long-term impacts for those that would like yearround access to all areas of the DNWR. In addition, the reduced public access will have short-term impacts since the public will not have access for some seasonal activities such as bird watching.

#### 6 4.2.5 Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources

NEPA requires environmental analysis to identify any irreversible and irretrievable 7 commitments of resources involved in the implementation of the Proposed Action or 8 alternatives. Irreversible and irretrievable resource commitments are related to the use 9 of nonrenewable resources and the effects that the uses of these resources have on 10 future generations. Irreversible effects primarily result from the use or destruction of a 11 specific resource (e.g., energy and minerals) that cannot be replaced within a 12 reasonable timeframe. Irretrievable resource commitments involve the loss in value of 13 an affected resource that cannot be restored as a result of the action (e.g., extinction of 14 a threatened or endangered species or the disturbance of a cultural site). 15 Implementing the Proposed Action through any of the alternatives would require a 16

16 Implementing the Proposed Action through any of the alternatives would require a 17 commitment of natural, physical, human, and fiscal resources. In all of these categories, 18 irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources would occur. Land required for 19 military operations would be irreversibly committed during the withdrawal period; in 20 some cases, land uses would change. Although it is possible for land to revert to its 21 former state where land withdrawal was not renewed, the likelihood of such an 22 occurrence for the NTTR would be low.

Public access to lands that have biological resources would be irreversibly and irretrievably lost with the proposed project, and some areas of wildlife habitat would be lost as well. This loss could create habitat fragmentation impacts, which would be a concern for certain wildlife such as the bighorn sheep. However, based on the size of the surrounding area compared with the amount of acreage that would be used for military training, the loss would be minimal; sensitive habitat areas would be avoided to the extent practicable and impacts on sensitive species would be mitigated.

30 The proposed commitment of natural, physical, human, and fiscal resources is based on

the requirements mandated by Congress. It is anticipated that businesses, employees,

32 and residents of the local area would benefit from improved economics resulting from

implementation of the Proposed Action.

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DECEMBER 2017

5-2

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### 6-2 DECEMBER 2017

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#### 1 7. LIST OF REPOSITORIES

- 2 University of Nevada, Las Vegas Library
- 3 4505 South Maryland Parkway
- 4 Box 457001
- 5 Las Vegas, NV 89154
- 6 University of Nevada, Reno Library
- 7 Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center
- 8 1664 N. Virginia Street
- 9 Mailstop 322
- 10 Reno, NV 89557
- 11 Indian Springs Library
- 12 **715 Gretta Lane**
- 13 Indian Springs, NV 89018
- 14 Reno Downtown Library
- 15 301 S. Center Street
- 16 Reno, NV 89501
- 17 Caliente Branch Library
- 18 **100 Depot Avenue**
- 19 P.O. Box 306
- 20 Caliente, NV 89008
- 21 Carson City Library
- 22 900 North Roop Street
- 23 Carson City, NV 89701
- 24 Las Vegas-Clark County Library District
- 25 833 Las Vegas Blvd. North
- 26 Las Vegas, NV 89101
- 27 Beatty Library District
- 28 400 North 4th Street
- 29 Beatty, NV 89003
- 30 Pahrump Community Library
- 31 701 East Street
- 32 Pahrump, NV 89048

DECEMBER 2017

- 1 Lincoln County Library
- 2 63 Main Street
- 3 Pioche, NV 89043
- 4 Amargosa Valley Library
- 5 829 E. Farm Road
- 6 HC 69 Box 401T
- 7 Amargosa Valley, NV 89020
- 8 Tonopah Library
- 9 167 South Central Street
- 10 Tonopah, NV 89049
- 11 State Bureau of Land Management
- 12 **1340** Financial Blvd.
- 13 Reno, NV 89502
- 14 Nye County Commissioners Office
- 15 101 Radar Road
- 16 P.O. Box 153
- 17 Tonopah, NV 89049

#### 8. INDEX

Air Quality, 1-31, 2-34, 2-44, 3-24-3-39, 3-245, 49 1 2 3-288-3-289, 3-308, 3-309, 4-13, 4-14-4-16, 50 3 4-21 51 4 attainment, 1-31, 3-24, 3-25, 3-26, 3-29, 3-30, 52 5 3-31, 4-15 53 6 climate change, 1-31, 1-32, 3-29 54 55 7 greenhouse gas (GHG), 1-31, 3-27-3-28 56 8 National Ambient Air Quality Standards 57 9 (NAAQS), 1-31, 3-24, 3-25, 3-26, 3-29 58 10 Airspace, 1-2, 1-3, 1-6, 1-9, 1-11-1-12, 1-16, 59 11 1-18, 1-21-1-22, 1-30, 1-31, 2-2-2-3, 2-14, 60 2-15, 2-19, 2-20, 2-33, 2-34, 3-1-3-8, 3-9, 12 61 3-10, 3-11, 3-18, 3-19-3-20, 3-21, 3-26, 3-30, 13 14 3-41, 3-44, 3-65, 3-67, 3-73, 3-76, 3-78, 3-79, 62 15 3-85, 3-111, 3-116, 3-129, 3-130, 3-163, 63 16 3-167, 3-168, 3-172, 3-175, 3-176, 3-177, 64 17 3-181, 3-182, 3-189, 3-197, 3-264, 3-274, 65 3-279, 3-280, 3-281, 3-284, 3-287, 3-309, 18 66 4-3, 4-12, 4-18, 4-21, 4-24, 4-25, 4-31 19 67 20 Bureau of Land Management (BLM), 1-1, 1-2, 68 21 1-29, 1-30, 2-13, 2-14, 2-15, 2-16, 2-19, 2-22, 69 22 2-23, 2-26, 2-27, 2-31, 2-32, 2-33, 2-34, 2-49, 70 23 3-39, 3-40, 3-41, 3-42, 3-43, 3-45, 3-48, 3-51, 71 3-52, 3-53, 3-57, 3-58, 3-60, 3-61, 3-63, 3-64, 24 72 3-65, 3-67, 3-70, 3-71, 3-73, 3-77, 3-78, 3-79, 25 73 3-92, 3-98, 3-99, 3-100, 3-102, 3-106, 3-107, 74 26 27 3-108, 3-109, 3-110, 3-137, 3-146, 3-147, 75 28 3-150, 3-151, 3-162, 3-173, 3-174, 3-179, 76 29 3-181, 3-185, 3-196, 3-203, 3-204, 3-209, 77 3-210, 3-217, 3-218, 3-229, 3-237, 3-238, 30 78 3-239, 3-241, 3-247, 3-263, 3-264, 3-267, 31 79 3-268, 3-276, 3-279, 3-280, 3-286, 3-291, 32 80 33 3-293, 3-294, 3-294, 3-298, 3-301, 3-303, 81 34 3-305, 3-307, 3-312, 4-2, 4-8, 4-9, 4-10, 4-16, 82 35 4-25, 4-27 83 Cultural Resources, 1-29, 1-32, 2-13, 2-34, 2-37, 36 84 37 2-39, 2-43, 2-50, 3-60, 3-180-3-196, 3-265, 85 38 3-299-3-301, 3-314, 4-2, 4-13, 4-24-4-26 86 39 archeological resources/sites, 1-32, 2-35, 87 40 3-180, 3-184-3-186, 3-189, 3-190, 3-192, 88 41 3-193, 3-194 89 42 Area of Potential Effects (APE), 3-180, 3-181, 90 43 3-184, 3-187, 3-188, 4-25 91 44 Historic Property, 3-180, 3-188, 3-191, 3-192, 92 45 3-193, 3-195, 4-25 93 94 National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), 46 95 47 1-32, 2-35, 2-43, 3-180, 3-184, 3-185, 96 48 3-187, 3-188, 3-191, 3-193, 3-194, 3-195,

3-299, 3-300, 3-300, 3-307, 3-315, 4-24, 4-25, 4-26

- sacred sites, 1-32, 3-60, 3-180, 3-181, 3-182, 3-183, 3-192, 3-193, 3-299, 3-314, 4-24
- Section 106, 1-32, 2-35, 3-184, 3-185, 3-187, 3-188, 3-192, 3-193, 3-194, 3-195, 3-299, 3-300, 3-300, 3-315, 4-24, 4-25, 4-26
- State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), 2-36, 2-37, 2-50, 3-187, 3-188, 3-192, 3-195, 4-21, 4-24, 4-25, 4-26
- traditional cultural properties, 3-180, 3-181, 3-182, 3-183, 3-192, 3-193, 3-194, 3-299, 3-314, 4-25
- tribes/tribal, 1-2, 1-32, 2-13, 2-50, 3-112, 3-121, 3-180, 3-181–3-184, 3-181, 3-187, 3-188, 3-192
- Desert National Wildlife Range (DNWR), 1-5, 1-8, 1-9, 1-10, 1-16, 1-17, 1-23, 1-26, 1-29, 1-30, 1-31, 1-33, 2-13, 2-14, 2-21, 2-26, 2-27, 2-28, 2-31, 2-33, 3-7, 3-39, 3-40, 3-41, 3-42, 3-44, 3-45, 3-48, 3-50, 3-51, 3-52, 3-53, 3-55, 3-58, 3-59, 3-61, 3-62, 3-63, 3-65, 3-70, 3-74, 3-76, 3-78, 3-82, 3-84, 3-87, 3-88, 3-89, 3-90, 3-99, 3-106, 3-107, 3-108, 3-136, 3-138, 3-142, 3-159, 3-171, 3-176, 3-178, 3-179, 3-200, 3-210, 3-217, 3-218, 3-236, 3-247, 3-271, 3-277, 3-281, 3-285, 3-286, 3-289, 3-291, 3-292, 3-298, 3-302, 3-302, 3-303, 3-307, 3-308, 3-310, 3-311, 4-16, 4-26, 4-30, 4-32
- Earth Resources, 1-32, 2-34, 2-50, 3-97–3-99, 3-196–3-218, 3-301–3-303, 3-315–3-316, 4-26–4-27
  - erosion, 2-34, 2-40, 2-43, 2-46, 2-50, 3-53, 3-168, 3-197, 3-202, 3-203, 3-209, 3-212, 3-213, 3-214, 3-215, 3-216, 3-218, 3-233, 3-234, 3-235, 3-236, 3-237, 3-238, 3-316, 4-22, 4-26, 4-27, 4-28
  - geological resources, 1-32, 3-66, 3-130, 3-196, 3-197–3-200, 3-203, 3-209, 3-212, 3-214, 3-215, 3-216, 3-217, 3-218, 3-248, 3-301–3-303, 3-315, 3-316
  - ground disturbance, 1-9, 1-16, 2-27, 2-36, 2-45, 2-46, 2-47, 2-49, 2-50, 2-51, 3-6, 3-14, 3-19, 3-21, 3-22, 3-28, 3-31, 3-36, 3-37, 3-58, 3-59, 3-64, 3-65, 3-79, 3-80, 3-81, 3-84, 3-87, 3-89, 3-106, 3-121, 3-122, 3-123, 3-127, 3-128, 3-135, 3-162,

8-2 DECEMBER 2017

$     \begin{array}{r}       1 \\       2 \\       3 \\       4 \\       5 \\       6 \\       7 \\       8 \\       9 \\       10 \\       11 \\       12 \\       13 \\       14 \\     \end{array} $	3-165, 3-169, 3-170, 3-171, 3-172, 3-174, 3-176, 3-190, 3-192, 3-193, 3-194, 3-202, 3-213, 3-214, 3-215, 3-216, 3-217, 3-223, 3-233, 3-234, 3-235, 3-236, 3-237, 3-257, 3-260, 3-261, 3-262, 3-277, 3-278, 3-285, 3-287, 3-288, 3-289, 3-290, 3-291, 3-292, 3-294, 3-295, 3-296, 3-298, 3-299, 3-300, 3-300, 3-301, 3-302, 3-303, 3-304, 3-306, 3-309, 3-313, 3-314, 3-315, 3-316, 4-17, 4-21, 4-22, 4-24, 4-26, 4-27, 4-28 metals, 2-52, 3-204, 3-210, 3-217, 3-231, 3-232, 3-234, 3-236, 3-240, 3-241, 3-244, 3-259, 3-274, 3-303, 3-304, 3-305 minerals, 3-196, 3-204–3-209, 3-210, 3-227,	51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63
15 16 17 18 19	4-32 paleontological resources, 3-196, 3-211– 3-212, 3-213, 3-214, 3-215, 3-216, 3-218, 3-301–3-303, 3-301, 3-315, 3-316 seismic/fault, 3-190, 3-197–3-198, 3-210,	64 65 66 67 68
<ul> <li>20</li> <li>21</li> <li>22</li> <li>23</li> <li>24</li> <li>25</li> <li>26</li> </ul>	3-212, 3-217 soils, 2-46, 2-50, 3-130, 3-135, 3-139, 3-141, 3-147, 3-158, 3-171, 3-196, 3-200–3-203, 3-212, 3-213, 3-214, 3-215, 3-216, 3-218, 3-221, 3-231, 3-234, 3-247, 3-248, 3-259, 3-274, 3-301–3-303, 3-301, 3-315, 3-316, 4-2, 4-26, 4-27	69 70 71 72 73 74 75
27 28 29	volcanic, 3-130, 3-197, 3-198, 3-200, 3-202, 3-207, 3-209, 3-211, 3-226, 3-227, 3-228 Environmental Justice, 3-111–3-129, 3-295–	76 77 78 79
30 31 32	3-296, 3-313, 4-20–4-21 Hazardous Materials/Waste, 1-7, 1-33, 3-212, 3-238–3-264, 3-305, 3-317, 4-29–4-30	80 81 82
33 34	areas of concern (AOCs), 3-242, 3-243, 3-257, 3-263	83 84
35 36 37 38 39 40	contamination, 1-33, 2-2, 2-32, 3-38, 3-65, 3-92, 3-110, 3-111, 3-162, 3-172, 3-202, 3-212, 3-228, 3-230, 3-232, 3-233, 3-236, 3-238, 3-241, 3-242, 3-243, 3-245, 3-246, 3-247, 3-248–3-254, 3-258, 3-259, 3-271, 3-295, 3-296, 3-304, 3-314	85 86 87 88 89 90
41 42	depleted uranium, 1-33, 3-232, 3-233, 3-244, 3-245, 3-246, 3-258	91 92
43 44	Environmental Restoration Program (ERP), 3-238, 3-239, 3-241, 3-242, 3-257, 3-263	93 94
45 46 47	Federal Facility Agreement and Consent Order (FFACO), 3-231, 3-248, 3-249, 3-264	95 96 97
48 49 50	releases/spills, 1-33, 2-35, 3-172, 3-177, 3-202, 3-212, 3-216, 3-237, 3-239, 3-240, 3-241, 3-242, 3-243, 3-244, 3-247, 3-248,	98 99 100 101

residues, 2-52, 3-202, 3-231, 3-232, 3-234, 3-236, 3-240, 3-241, 3-243, 3-244, 3-245, 3-246, 3-257, 3-258, 3-259

solid waste management unit (SWMU), 3-243, 3-263

unexploded ordnance (UXO), 1-18, 1-26, 1-33, 3-231, 3-240, 3-243, 3-244, 3-258, 3-275, 3-280

Health & Safety, 2-43

Automated Terminal Information System (ATIS), 3-273

- Land Use, 1-7, 1-13, 1-26, 1-29, 1-33, 1-34, 2-3,
  2-31, 2-32, 2-34, 2-43, 2-45–2-46, 2-51, 3-9,
  3-17, 3-21, 3-23, 3-38, 3-39–3-65, 3-92,
  3-100, 3-110, 3-121, 3-171, 3-179, 3-218,
  3-238, 3-249, 3-263, 3-280, 3-286, 3-287,
  3-289–3-291, 3-296, 3-298, 3-303, 3-305,
  3-307, 3-308, 3-310–3-311, 4-10, 4-13, 4-14,
  4-16–4-18, 4-19, 4-20, 4-21, 4-23, 4-31, 4-32
  Alamo areas 2-15, 2-16, 2-26, 3-7, 3-21
  - Alamo areas, 2-15, 2-16, 2-26, 3-7, 3-21, 3-23, 3-36, 3-44, 3-48, 3-55, 3-59, 3-63, 3-76, 3-85, 3-86, 3-87, 3-89, 3-106, 3-127, 3-136, 3-138, 3-142, 3-159, 3-160, 3-172, 3-176, 3-184, 3-186, 3-193, 3-194, 3-197, 3-200, 3-203, 3-210, 3-211, 3-212, 3-215, 3-224, 3-226, 3-229, 3-230, 3-235, 3-237, 3-261, 3-278, 3-281, 3-285, 3-300, 3-307, 3-309, 3-311, 3-315, 4-30, 4-31
  - Beatty VFW Events, 3-45, 3-61, 3-108, 3-290, 3-307, 4-7

Best in the Desert Race, 3-45, 3-61, 3-108, 3-290, 4-8

- grazing, 1-33, 2-14, 2-27, 2-31, 2-46, 2-47, 3-23, 3-38, 3-39, 3-40, 3-41, 3-42, 3-43, 3-44, 3-59, 3-60, 3-64, 3-77, 3-92, 3-97, 3-99, 3-106, 3-109, 3-110, 3-139, 3-164, 3-166, 3-175, 3-178, 3-179, 3-202, 3-281, 3-290, 3-291, 3-293, 3-294, 3-294, 3-298, 3-310, 3-312, 3-313, 4-23
- Herd Management Areas (HMAs), 2-13, 3-45, 3-48, 3-63, 3-290, 3-290, 3-307, 3-310
- hunting, 1-33, 2-13, 2-51, 3-44, 3-45, 3-48, 3-59, 3-60, 3-61, 3-62, 3-63, 3-74, 3-76, 3-84, 3-86, 3-97, 3-98, 3-99, 3-107, 3-184, 3-289–3-291

hunting units, 3-44, 3-45, 3-48, 3-50, 3-61, 3-63, 3-99, 3-290, 3-310

mining, 1-32, 1-34, 1-35, 2-31, 2-32, 2-46, 2-51, 3-23, 3-38, 3-39, 3-41, 3-42, 3-44,

DECEMBER 2017

- 1 3-51, 3-60, 3-64, 3-70, 3-77, 3-92, 3-93, 2 3-95, 3-109, 3-110, 3-164, 3-169, 3-175, 3 3-178, 3-181, 3-182, 3-203, 3-204, 3-205, 4 3-207, 3-209, 3-210, 3-217, 3-218, 3-281, 5 3-288, 3-290, 3-290, 3-291, 3-294, 3-298, 3-302, 3-303, 3-310, 3-316, 4-4, 4-23, 4-26 6 7 Nevada Wild Horse Range, 3-41, 3-45, 3-46, 3-137 8 9 North Range, 1-2, 1-4, 1-6, 1-7-1-8, 1-13, 10 1-17, 1-18, 1-26, 1-31, 2-5, 2-6, 2-14, 2-20, 2-21, 2-33, 3-7, 3-25, 3-41, 3-42, 3-45, 11 3-52, 3-58, 3-59, 3-63, 3-71, 3-73, 3-74, 12 3-79, 3-105, 3-130, 3-132, 3-133, 3-135, 13 3-136, 3-137, 3-138, 3-139, 3-142, 3-147, 14 3-151, 3-153, 3-154, 3-156, 3-158, 3-171, 15 16 3-173, 3-179, 3-196, 3-197, 3-221, 3-223, 17 3-226, 3-228, 3-231, 3-233, 3-242, 3-243, 18 3-246, 3-254, 3-265, 3-268, 3-276, 3-279, 19 3-281, 4-18, 4-30 20 Oasis Valley, 3-45, 3-53, 3-61, 3-98, 3-183, 3-198, 3-307, 4-6, 4-7, 4-16, 4-25, 4-26, 21 22 4-27 23 Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV), 1-33, 1-34, 2-46, 3-40, 3-45, 3-47, 3-48, 3-52, 3-53, 24 3-55, 3-61, 3-62, 3-98, 3-107, 3-290, 25 26 3-290, 3-307, 3-310, 3-312, 4-7, 4-16, 27 4-17, 4-20, 4-21 28 Point Bravo, 3-44, 3-241 right-of-way, 1-33, 2-26, 3-40, 3-41, 3-42, 29 3-70, 3-76, 3-78, 3-109, 3-294, 3-312, 4-9, 30 4-10, 4-27 31 32 Silver Flag Alpha, 3-44, 3-241 33 South Range, 1-2, 1-4, 1-6, 1-7, 1-8-1-11, 1-12, 1-13, 1-16, 1-17, 1-18, 1-21, 1-26, 34 35 1-31, 2-5, 2-6, 2-14, 2-17, 2-19, 2-20, 2-21, 2-33, 2-34, 2-51, 2-52, 3-7, 3-20, 3-25, 36 37 3-26, 3-41, 3-42, 3-50, 3-52, 3-55, 3-58, 3-59, 3-60, 3-63, 3-70, 3-71, 3-73, 3-74, 38 3-77, 3-79, 3-81, 3-82, 3-83, 3-84, 3-86, 39 40 3-88, 3-89, 3-90, 3-91, 3-92, 3-105, 3-106, 41 3-127, 3-130, 3-132, 3-134, 3-135, 3-136, 42 3-137, 3-138, 3-142, 3-147, 3-151, 3-153, 43 3-154, 3-156, 3-158, 3-159, 3-171, 3-172, 44 3-175, 3-179, 3-194, 3-196, 3-197, 3-209, 3-221, 3-223, 3-228, 3-231, 3-232, 3-233, 45 3-234, 3-235, 3-236, 3-246, 3-247, 3-255, 46 47 3-265, 3-268, 3-276, 3-280, 3-281, 3-283, 48 3-285, 3-289, 3-292, 3-298, 3-299, 3-301, 3-303, 3-306, 3-309, 3-310, 3-311, 3-312, 49 50 3-313, 3-315, 3-317, 4-18 100 Trails-OV, 3-45, 3-61, 3-290, 4-7, 4-16 101 51
  - 52 Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW), 1-2, 53 1-32, 2-13, 2-14, 2-37, 2-48, 3-44, 3-45, 3-48, 54 3-50, 3-59, 3-60, 3-61, 3-62, 3-63, 3-99, 55 3-132, 3-137, 3-138, 3-146, 3-290, 3-307, 56 3-310
  - 57 Nevada Division of Environmental Protection 58 (NDEP), 2-34, 2-35, 3-24, 3-214, 3-216, 59 3-220, 3-224, 3-241, 3-242, 3-243, 3-247, 60 3-248, 3-254, 3-255, 3-257, 3-258, 4-26
  - 61 Nevada National Security Site (NNSS), 1-5, 62 1-11, 2-6, 2-12, 2-14, 2-17, 3-41, 3-55, 3-228, 63 3-230, 3-231, 3-249, 3-268

64

65

66

67

68

69

70

71

72

73 74

75

76

77

78

79

80

81

82

83

84

85

86

87

88

89

90

91

92

93

94

95

96

97

98

99

- Noise, 1-33, 1-34, 2-40, 2-43, 2-44, 2-51, 2-52, 3-6, 3-8-3-24, 3-56, 3-73, 3-74, 3-75, 3-76, 3-80, 3-81, 3-83, 3-84, 3-85, 3-86, 3-91, 3-114, 3-115, 3-116, 3-117, 3-118, 3-119, 3-120, 3-121, 3-122, 3-123, 3-124, 3-125, 3-126, 3-127, 3-128, 3-129, 3-164, 3-165, 3-166, 3-169, 3-171, 3-175, 3-177, 3-178, 3-183, 3-190, 3-193, 3-287-3-288, 3-292, 3-293, 3-295, 3-296, 3-297, 3-298, 3-309, 3-312, 3-313, 4-13-4-14, 4-18, 4-20, 4-21, 4-31
  - C-weighted day-night average sound level (CDNL), 3-9, 3-10, 3-11, 3-14, 3-17, 3-20, 3-21, 3-116, 3-121, 3-122, 3-123, 3-124, 3-127, 3-128, 3-295, 3-307, 3-313
  - C-weighted decibel, 3-9, 3-10, 3-14, 3-17, 3-20, 3-124, 3-307
  - day-night average sound level (DNL), 3-8, 3-10, 3-11, 3-16, 3-17, 3-116, 3-121, 3-123, 3-127, 3-129, 3-295, 3-307, 3-313, 4-20, 4-21
  - maximum sound level (Lmax), 3-9, 3-10, 3-16, 3-22, 3-74
  - sonic boom, 1-33, 1-34, 3-9, 3-10, 3-11, 3-17, 3-18, 3-20, 3-74, 3-164, 3-190, 3-212, 3-287, 3-309, 4-24
  - sound exposure level (SEL), 3-8
  - subsonic flight, 3-9, 3-10, 3-73, 3-76, 3-116, 3-121, 3-123, 3-127, 3-164, 3-295, 3-313, 4-13, 4-21
  - supersonic flight, 3-3, 3-10, 3-11, 3-18, 3-73, 3-74, 3-76, 3-116, 3-121, 3-123, 3-124, 3-127, 3-128, 3-295, 4-13, 4-21
- Public Health & Safety, 1-33, 3-17, 3-24, 3-246, 3-263, 3-264, 3-306, 3-317, 4-30
- aircraft mishaps, 3-247, 3-248, 3-264, 3-269-3-271, 3-272, 3-275, 3-277, 3-280, 3-306, 3-317, 4-30

#### DECEMBER 2017

1 2	bird/wildlife-aircraft strike hazard (BASH), 2-48, 3-167, 3-172, 3-264, 3-272, 3-276	50 51
3	fire, 1-32, 3-73, 3-102, 3-162, 3-163, 3-172,	52
4	3-239, 3-248, 3-256, 3-264–3-268, 3-271,	53
5	3-273, 3-274, 3-275, 3-276, 3-277, 3-278,	54
6	3-279, 3-280, 3-296, 3-306, 3-314, 4-2,	55
7	4-3, 4-13, 4-14, 4-18, 4-22, 4-27, 4-30	56
8	lasers, 3-268, 3-277	57
9	radio frequency, 1-8, 3-269	58
10	safety buffers, 1-11, 1-26, 1-29, 1-30, 2-19,	59
11	2-23, 2-26, 2-38, 3-7, 3-60, 3-63, 3-76,	60
12	3-106, 3-173, 3-176, 3-236, 3-278, 3-285,	61
13	3-294, 3-297, 3-304, 3-307, 3-313, 3-314	62
14	Socioeconomics, 1-34, 2-41, 2-46, 2-52, 3-8,	63
15	3-92, 3-93, 3-96, 3-98, 3-100, 3-101, 3-102,	64
16	3-103, 3-105, 3-106, 3-107, 3-108, 3-109,	65
17	3-110, 3-293, 3-312, 4-19	66
18	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), 1-2,	67 68
19	1-8, 1-9, 1-26, 1-30, 1-31, 1-32, 2-13, 2-14,	68 69
20	2-15, 2-20, 2-21, 2-26, 2-31, 2-33, 2-34, 2-36,	
21	2-37, 2-48, 2-49, 3-7, 3-41, 3-42, 3-44, 3-48,	70
22	3-50, 3-51, 3-52, 3-53, 3-60, 3-61, 3-65, 3-66,	71
23	3-67, 3-73, 3-77, 3-78, 3-80, 3-82, 3-92, 3-99,	72
24	3-106, 3-107, 3-108, 3-132, 3-137, 3-141,	73
25	3-146, 3-147, 3-151, 3-158, 3-161, 3-169,	74
26	3-170, 3-171, 3-174, 3-179, 3-184, 3-185,	75
27	3-196, 3-217, 3-218, 3-229, 3-235, 3-238,	76
28	3-240, 3-241, 3-245, 3-247, 3-263, 3-264,	77
29	3-267, 3-268, 3-271, 3-276, 3-278, 3-279,	78
30	3-280, 3-286, 3-289, 3-298, 3-301, 3-302,	79
31	3-303, 3-307, 4-9, 4-23, 4-26, 4-31	80
32 33	Visual Resources, 1-33, 3-50–3-56, 3-63, 3-65, 3-310	81 82
34	Dark Skies Initiative, 3-51	83
35	light pollution, 1-33, 3-51, 3-52, 3-53, 3-55,	84
36	3-56, 3-58, 3-59, 3-73, 3-289, 3-290,	85
37	3-291, 3-310, 3-311, 4-17	86
38	naturally dark night sky, 1-33	87
39	viewer exposure, 3-50	88 89
40	viewer sensitivity, 3-50	- 89 - 90
41	Water Resources, 1-34, 2-34, 2-35, 2-41, 2-50,	91
42	2-52, 3-56, 3-83, 3-87, 3-90, 3-141, 3-142,	92
43	3-218, 3-220, 3-221, 3-222, 3-224, 3-227,	
44	3-229, 3-230, 3-237, 3-238, 3-303, 3-304,	93
45	3-316, 4-27	94 95
46	seeps, 1-32, 2-36, 2-46, 2-48, 2-50, 2-51,	96
47	3-135, 3-139, 3-141, 3-142, 3-146, 3-167,	97
48	3-168, 3-220, 3-221, 3-223, 3-224, 3-227,	
49	3-233, 3-234, 3-235	

- springs, 1-32, 1-34, 2-27, 2-36, 2-46, 2-48, 2-50, 2-51, 3-50, 3-56, 3-87, 3-135, 3-139, 3-141, 3-142, 3-146, 3-154, 3-167, 3-168, 3-220, 3-221, 3-223, 3-224, 3-225, 3-227, 3-228, 3-229, 3-233, 3-234, 3-235, 3-304, 3-316
- water appropriations, 3-229, 3-233, 3-303, 3-304, 4-29
- water rights, 1-34, 2-35, 3-219, 3-229, 3-230, 3-233, 3-235, 3-236, 3-238, 3-304, 3-305, 3-316, 4-29
- wilderness, 1-8, 1-9, 1-13, 1-15, 1-16, 1-29, 1-30, 1-31, 1-33, 1-34, 2-3, 2-4, 2-6, 2-8, 2-9, 2-14, 2-15, 2-20, 2-21, 2-41, 2-43, 2-51, 2-52, 3-7, 3-23, 3-26, 3-40, 3-50, 3-51, 3-52, 3-53, 3-55, 3-58, 3-60, 3-64, 3-65–3-92, 3-171, 3-172, 3-178, 3-182, 3-193, 3-215, 3-227, 3-271, 3-277, 3-289, 3-292, 3-293, 3-293, 3-297, 3-298, 3-301, 3-307, 3-311, 3-312, 4-16, 4-18, 4-19
  - primitive, 2-52, 3-48, 3-62, 3-66, 3-67, 3-70, 3-71, 3-73, 3-74, 3-77, 3-78, 3-79, 3-80, 3-81, 3-84, 3-85, 3-88, 3-89, 3-99, 3-124, 3-292, 3-311, 3-312, 4-19
  - scenic, 1-33, 3-48, 3-50, 3-51, 3-55, 3-62, 3-66, 4-18
  - solitude, 2-52, 3-66, 3-67, 3-70, 3-71, 3-73, 3-74, 3-78, 3-79, 3-80, 3-81, 3-83, 3-84, 3-85, 3-86, 3-88, 3-89, 3-91, 3-292, 3-293, 3-311, 4-19
  - unconfined recreation, 2-52, 3-66, 3-67, 3-71, 3-73, 3-74, 3-77, 3-78, 3-79, 3-80, 3-81, 3-84, 3-85, 3-88, 3-89, 3-292, 3-311, 3-312, 4-19
  - untrammeled, 3-50, 3-59, 3-64, 3-66, 3-71, 3-78, 3-79, 3-80, 3-81, 3-91, 3-289, 3-291, 3-292, 3-310, 3-311, 4-17, 4-18, 4-19
  - Wilderness Areas, 3-65, 3-66, 3-67, 3-68, 3-69, 3-70, 3-71, 3-73, 3-74, 3-76, 3-77, 3-78, 3-79, 3-81, 3-82, 3-83, 3-84, 3-85, 3-86, 3-87, 3-88, 3-89, 3-90, 3-91, 3-92, 3-292, 3-293, 3-293, 4-16, 4-18, 4-19
  - wilderness quality, 3-73, 3-77, 3-80
  - Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), 3-65, 3-67, 3-68, 3-70, 3-73, 3-76, 3-77, 3-79, 3-81, 3-82, 3-83, 3-84, 3-85, 3-86, 3-87, 3-88, 3-89, 3-90, 3-91, 3-92, 3-292, 3-293, 3-293, 4-16, 4-18, 4-19