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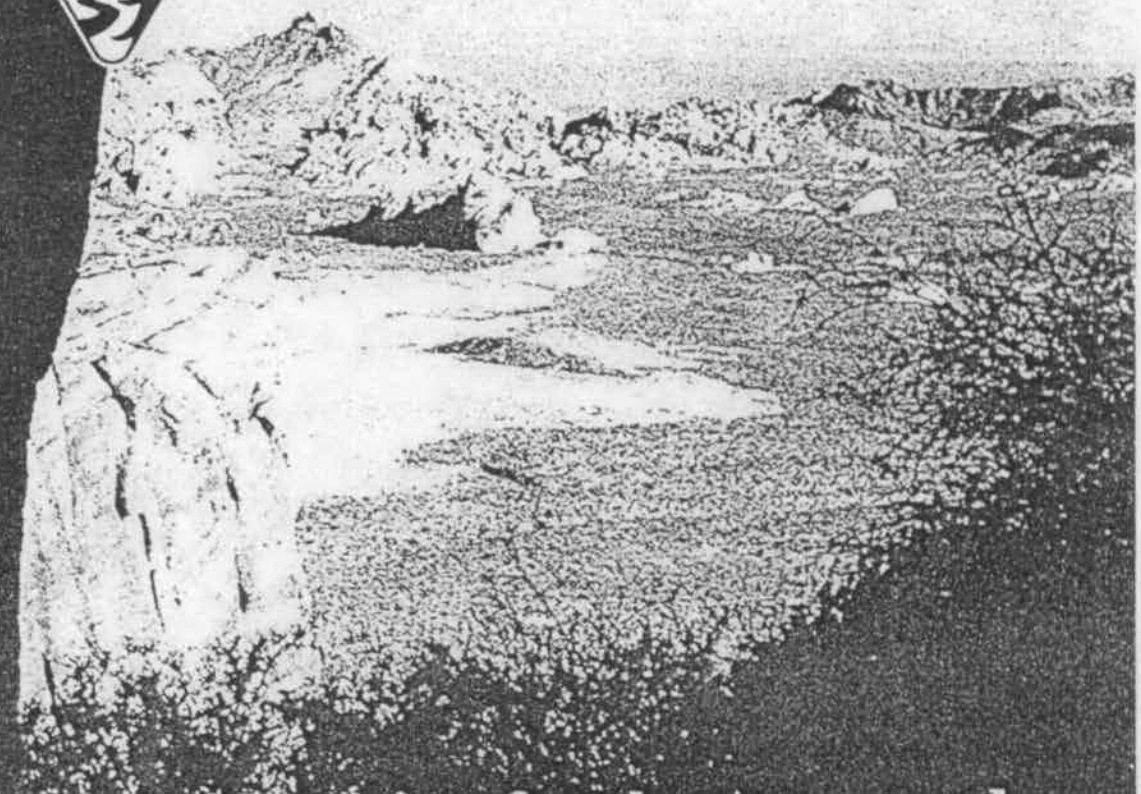
QA:N/A

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Bureau of Land Management

Las Vegas Field Office
4765 Vegas Drive
Las Vegas, NV 89108



Record of Decision for the Approved Las Vegas Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement

October, 1998

MISSION STATEMENT

The Bureau of Land Management is responsible for the stewardship of our public lands. It is committed to manage, project, and improve these lands in a to manner to serve the needs of the American people for all times. Management in based upon the principles of multiple use and sustained yield of our nation's resources within a framework of environmental responsibility and scientific technology. These resources include recreation, rangelands, timber, minerals, watershed, fish and wilderness, air and scenic, scientific and cultural.

BLM/LV/LP-99/002+1610

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
Nevada State Office
P.O. Box 12000 (1340 Financial Blvd.)
Reno, Nevada 89520-0006
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In Reply Refer To:
1610 (LVFO)
(NV-910)
(NV-050)

Dear Reader:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is pleased to present the Approved Las Vegas Resource Management Plan (RMP) Record of Decision. This RMP documents where and how BLM plans to administer the public lands under its jurisdiction within the Las Vegas Field Office.

The Approved RMP is the result of an extensive collaborative effort between State, local, and other Federal agencies, organizations, and members of the public. This document incorporates changes based on one protest and coordination with the State Clearinghouse and individual State agencies. The Approved RMP Record of Decision constitutes BLM's commitment to the public for managing public lands. Any substantial change to the Approved RMP can only be made through a plan amendment process with full public involvement and notification, in accordance with BLM regulations 43 CFR 1610.5-5.

Please be aware that the planning process does not end with the Record of Decision. One of the requirements of BLM planning is a review process to determine whether the plan is still current and the objectives are being met. The Approved RMP shall be reviewed on a minimum of five year intervals for adequacy. As a result of the review process, this plan may be updated through plan amendment, or maintenance, if simply data adjustment related.

I look forward to working with all interested agencies, organizations, and members of the public in implementing this challenging prescription for the future. If you would like more information, please send your requests to: Bureau of Land Management, 4765 West Vegas Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada 89108 or call (702)-647-5097.

Sincerely,

Robert V. Abbey
State Director, Nevada

LAS VEGAS RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN
and
RECORD OF DECISION

The approval of this Record of Decision for the Las Vegas Resource Management Plan (RMP) completes the planning and environmental analysis process for this planning effort. The Las Vegas RMP provides management guidance and identifies land use decisions to be implemented for management of 3.3 million acres of public lands in Clark and Southern Nye Counties.

The approved RMP, which is incorporated by reference and displayed in Appendix A, consists of the proposed decisions described in the Proposed Las Vegas RMP. Minor changes to address comments submitted during the protest period and the governor's consistency review period are identified in this record of decision. This plan is consistent with the plans, policies of other federal, state, and local government agencies, as well as those of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

This record of decision for the Las Vegas RMP, fulfills the requirements of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976 (43 CFR 1600). This document meets the requirements for a Record of Decision as provided in 40 CFR 1505.2.

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

U.S.D.I. Bureau of Land Management
Las Vegas Field Office
4765 West Vegas Drive
Las Vegas, Nevada 89108
Telephone: (702)-647-5000

Approved by

NEVADA STATE DIRECTOR

10-5-98
DATE

Introduction

The Las Vegas Resource Management Plan (RMP) provides a comprehensive framework for managing approximately 3.3 million acres of public lands administered by the Las Vegas Field Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). This RMP replaces the Clark County Management Framework Plan (1984) and the Esmeralda-Southern Nye, Area B, Resource Management Plan (1986); pertinent decisions from those two documents are brought forward into this RMP. This new plan will guide the management of the public land resources for the next 20 years for portions of Clark County and Southern Nye Counties southern Nevada (see Map 1-1). Significant resources and program emphases in the plan include: threatened and endangered species, land disposal actions, wilderness management, wildlife habitat, special status species, riparian areas, forestry and vegetative products, livestock grazing, wild horses and burros, air, soil, water, fire, land acquisition priorities, hazardous materials management, rights-of way, cultural resources, recreation, utility corridors, and locatable, saleable and leasable minerals.

The development of this land-use plan began early in 1990 when the public was invited to become involved through participating in several scoping meetings. Over the next two years, a Draft Plan and Environmental Impact Statement was developed. It was published and sent to the public for review in May of 1992. A supplement to the draft was developed to provide an alternative which would address implementation of the Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan, as well as analyze range reclassification, corridors and future management of Wilderness Study Areas following Congressional release or designation. This document was released to the public in May of 1994. Following BLM review of over 400 comment letters on the Draft and Supplement, the Proposed Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement was developed and sent to the public for the 30 day protest period June of 1998. Fourteen letters of protest were subsequently filed with the BLM Director. The resolution of these protests involved many phone calls and meetings with some of those who protested and the Nevada State Clearinghouse. The final resolution of these protests and State concerns were completed in September of 1998. Copies of the protest and BLM response letters addressing specific points of protest, are available for public review at the BLM Las Vegas Field Office. As a result of the protests, we are adjusting the proposed disposal boundary for Sandy Valley. The concerns of the State were noted.

Purpose and Need

This Record of Decision (ROD) specifies and establishes the Las Vegas RMP, following development of several alternatives and an Environmental Impact Statement. The RMP provides objectives and directions as a framework for management of public lands for the foreseeable future, with implementation of the goals and objectives of the Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan (USFWS 1994) the highest priority. Land use allocations such as the designation of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, go into effect when this Record of Decision is signed by the State Director. Other RMP decisions will be implemented as monies are made available, or pending completion of site-specific activity or project plans.

Description of the Planning Area

The planning area includes those lands in southern Nevada as identified on Map 1-1. The Las Vegas BLM District encompasses a total of approximately 3,332,000 acres of public lands in Clark County and a portion of southern Nye County (Map 1). In addition, the BLM is also manages one million acres of split-estate lands in the planning area. The split-estate lands are of two types, one where the subsurface or mineral estate or a portion thereof is owned by the Federal government and the surface is under private ownership, and another where the Federal government owns the surface and the subsurface minerals or a portion thereof are in private ownership.

Southern Nevada is characterized by diverse geographical features. Landforms range from rugged mountain ranges, to sloping bajadas and broad valleys. The Colorado River and several of its tributaries flow through the eastern portions of the planning area. New communities and developments, such as Laughlin, are expanding along the Colorado River, providing jobs and recreational opportunities in previously undeveloped areas. The Las Vegas Valley portion of the planning area is a major topographic feature, trending north-south through the middle of the planning area. This valley has a burgeoning metropolitan area, consisting of the cities of Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Henderson, and Boulder City. Much of the planning area, however, remains remote and rural, with the population dispersed over large areas or clustered in small communities. The public lands in the planning area have important scenic, recreational, mineral, archeological, wilderness, wildlife, and vegetative values. Public uses of these resources often have an important role in the growth and development of local communities.

Alternatives Considered but Dropped from Detailed Analysis

Winter Grazing in Desert Tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Among the alternatives proposed was one with winter grazing by livestock in desert tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, contingent that grazing not exceed restrictive utilization levels. Based on the Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan, livestock grazing in desert tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern is not compatible with recovery of the desert tortoise and should be prohibited. Therefore, this alternative was dropped from further consideration.

Alternatives Considered in the Draft and Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan

The following six alternatives met the discretionary limits established through applicable laws, regulations, and policies. The alternatives were developed to provide management options that address issues important to the public and management concerns.

No Action Alternative

This alternative represents no change to the current management direction. Management of all resources would be accomplished by following the decisions and objectives in the *Clark County Management Framework Plan* and the *Esmeralda - Southern Nye Resource Management Plan, Planning Area B.*

Alternative A

This alternative provides for a full spectrum of public land uses in the traditional sense of multiple-use and sustained-yield; consumptive and non-consumptive uses would be balanced. Lands would be made available for expansion and development of growing communities.

Alternative B

This alternative provides for maximum opportunities for land-based growth and development needs of the State of Nevada, while continuing to provide for multiple-use and sustained yield of the public lands.

Alternative C

This alternative provides for managing public lands on an ecosystem basis, with an emphasis on biodiversity, non-consumptive uses, and protection and recovery of the desert tortoise in accordance with the *Clark County Habitat Conservation Plan* (Clark County HCP).

Alternative D

This alternative continues multiple use of public lands, permits maximum flexibility in disposal of public lands, and provides for protection and recovery of the desert tortoise.

Alternative E

This alternative provides for public land uses on the basis of multiple-use and sustained-yield, while emphasizing biodiversity and protection and recovery of the desert tortoise, in conformance with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) *Tortoise Recovery Plan.*

PROPOSED ACTION:

The proposed action as outlined in the 1998 Proposed Las Vegas RMP is the environmentally preferable alternative. The proposed action is similar in most major respects to Alternative E. Alternative E was presented in the Supplement to the Draft Resource Management Plan (May 1994), in response to public and internal comments received during the first seven steps of the planning process. Also, some objectives and management direction from the alterntatives contained in the Draft Plan were incorporated, where appropriate, into Alternative E to develop the Las Vegas RMP.

The Las Vegas RMP is written to ensure compliance with provisions of the *Endangered Species Act* (ESA) and subsequent Biological Opinions, as well as the *Desert Tortoise (Mojave Population) Recovery Plan* (often referenced as *Tortoise Recovery Plan*). The Las Vegas RMP will guide future management of public lands in the Las Vegas District.

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

MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Design of the Proposed Plan was guided by the need to provide for a wide range of land uses on the one hand, and the need for environmental safeguards to protect fragile and unique resources and. The "preferred" alternative (Alternative D above) thus was *not* selected because it did not meet the required needs to ensure the recovery of the desert tortoise as outlined in the Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan. Environmental safeguards adopted in the Proposed Plan are designed to provide effective conservation of cultural resources, riparian areas, desert tortoise, special status species, and fish and wildlife habitat, while at the same time allowing broad opportunity for diverse land uses and resource development where consistent with desert tortoise recovery. Thus, all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm have been incorporated into the Proposed Plan.

This Resource Management Plan was updated to reflect changes since the Proposed RMP was released in June of 1998. Corrections and additions have been made where necessary in the following text.

Selected Resource Management Plan/Based on Protests and State Consistency Review

The Las Vegas RMP Objectives and Management Directions are hereby incorporated by reference as decisions for implementation. The following minor changes address corrections and concerns identified during the protest and the Governor's consistency review periods.

Readers and users of Las Vegas RMP should be aware that the land management objectives and directions adopted conform to the principles of multiple use and sustained yield, as well as protection of unique resources as directed in FLPMA. However, multiple use management does not imply or allow all uses on all areas. Management of some resource values affects the conditions under which other resources can or can not be utilized or developed. For example, within Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, mineral exploration and production activities will be subject to more restrictions and standard operating procedures than outside ACECs. In addition, no new mineral entries would be allowed to ensure impacts to these resources are reduced or eliminated.

Management Directions SS-3-a-n would change as follows: "Do not allow commercial collection of flora. Only allow commercial collection of **wildlife** upon completion of **either** a credible study **or investigation** that demonstrates commercial collection does not adversely impact affected species or their habitat, **as determined by NDOW**. This action will not affect hunting, trapping or casual collection as permitted by the State."

The acres available for disposal would change in Objective LD-1 as follows: "Approximately **173,593** acres of public lands within the disposal areas identified on Map 2-3 are potentially available for disposal through sale, exchange, or Recreation and Public Purpose patent to provide for the orderly expansion and development of southern Nevada." A few of the disposal areas available acreage changed as follows: Mesquite/Bunkerville 14,460 to 14,544, Nelson 1,259 to 1,265, Sandy Valley 6,268 to 4,012, Searchlight 1,944 to 2,584 and Las Vegas Valley 52,021 to 51,826. These changes reflect a parcel by parcel check to count the actual number of acres in each disposal area, except for Sandy Valley where the BLM agreed to reduce the available acres based on a valid protest. It is anticipated that all disposal area acreages will be updated yearly to keep track of the acres remaining in each disposal area. The Las Vegas Valley disposal area is being slightly modified in three areas: 1). Section 14 in T.23S., R.63E., is being removed because the land is no longer identified in the Falcon Point Exchange proposal. 2). The land identified on the disposal map in T.21S., R.59E., section 11 is dropped because it is part of Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area. 3). That part of the disposal boundary which borders the North McCullough Wilderness Study Area (WSA) is adjusted consistent with the Southern Nevada Public Lands Act, as amended by the House of Representatives. The adjusted disposal area follows the surveyed boundary of the North McCullough WSA.

The boundaries of the Rainbow Gardens ACEC and the Sunrise Mountain SRMA are being modified to exclude certain public land. This will change the approximate acreage of both areas from 37,620 to 36,412. The land is identified as follows:

T. 20 S., R. 62 E., M.D.M.
sec. 1, Lots 9 and 10, and Lots 13 to 20, inclusive;
sec. 11, Lots 1 to 8, inclusive;
sec. 12, Lots 2 to 7, inclusive, and Lots 12 and 13.

T. 20 S., R. 63 E., M.D.M.
sec. 3, SE¼.

Approx. 1,208.09

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on behalf of Nellis, has requested this land for withdrawal to Nellis Air Force Base (NAFB) for public safety purposes and to ensure compliance with the Department of Defense regulation 6055.9 regarding ammunition and explosion safety standards. The withdrawal would extend the existing safety arcs for the NAFB's Live Ordnance Loading Areas and would provide safety buffers between potentially hazardous areas and growing populated areas. The modification does not impact areas designated for bear poppy protection and management.

An errata is provided in Appendix B which identifies some of the minor corrections the public noted during the 30 day protest period. These minor changes are presented as part of the official record.

Rationale for the Decisions

The emphasis of the Las Vegas RMP is protecting unique habitats for threatened, endangered, and special status species, while providing areas for community growth, recreation, mineral exploration and development, as well as many other resource uses. The BLM is committed to provide the desert tortoise with the highest possible quality of habitat with limitations on the interference by man.

Mitigation for Air Quality in the Las Vegas Valley

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

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

Public Involvement

The Las Vegas RMP is a product of comprehensive public involvement. The process was initiated with the publication of the Notice of Intent to prepare a RMP, published in *Federal Register* (Vol. 55, No. 60, Wednesday, March 28, 1990).

On March 29, 1990, approximately 1,400 initial scoping reports were distributed to a mailing list that included interested and affected individuals, State and Federal agencies, local governments, organizations, and private industry. Over 1,000 additional scoping reports were requested and distributed throughout the scoping period. In addition, copies of the scoping report were available at all public meetings.

A Notice of Availability for The Draft Plan was published in the *Federal Register* (Vol. 57, No. 113, Thursday, June 11, 1992). A Notice of Intent to supplement The Draft Plan was published in *the Federal Regis*ter (Vol. 58, No. 126, Friday, July 2, 1993). A Notice of Availability for The Supplement was published in the *Federal Register* (Vol. 59, No. 104, Wednesday, June 1, 1994).

The Draft Plan and The Supplement were published and made available for a 90-day public comment period on June 11, 1992 and June 1, 1994 respectively. Additional copies of The Draft and Supplement documents were distributed to numerous agencies and organizations, as well as many individuals. The Plan was mailed to everyone on the mailing list, which is included for review at the end of this chapter. The complete mailing list is located at the Las Vegas BLM Field Office at 4765 Vegas Drive, Las Vegas, Nevada, 89108.

A total of eight hearings were held throughout the district, seven for The Draft Plan and one for The Supplement. A combined total of 152 speakers gave testimony for The Draft Plan and Supplement, 124 and 28 respectively.

A total of 406 comment letters were received on The Draft Plan and Supplement, 340 and 66 respectively. Written comments and questions were divided into 50 general categories to accommodate review and answering by staff specialists.

Public comments and questions received during the scoping and planning process, including the various meetings and hearings, as well as the BLM's responses. The presentation of comments and questions is arranged by resource programs in the same order as the resources are addressed in the Plan. Only those letters that addressed issues presented in the Draft Plan and Supplement were answered. All letters submitted are on file and available for review at the Las Vegas BLM Field Office.

Protest Issues and Responses

The Director of the BLM received 14 protests of the Las Vegas RMP/Final EIS. The following is a summary of the issues and responses from the Directors office. The issues of concern include the following; 1). Withdrawal of public lands from mineral entry. 2). Level of public input in identification of land disposal areas. 3). Closure of the Newberry allotment. 4). Who has standing and who has the right to protest. 5). Decision not to dispose of public lands by Carey Act, Desert Land Entry or Indian Allotments. 6). Restriction of surface access in violation of 43 USC 932, R.S. 2477. 7). BLM is in violation of the Clean Air Act.

Summary of response to issue #1). The proposed withdrawal of minerals in Desert Tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) and the Gold Butte ACEC is consistent with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. The BLM is required to give priority to the designation and protection of ACECs (P.L. 94-579 Sec. 202 (c)(3)).

The need for the proposed withdrawal from mineral entry to protect desert tortoise was identified as a result of anticipated impacts. These impacts include loss and degradation of habitat, harassment and an increased probability of incidental take.

Summary of response to issue #2). Disposal areas were identified to allow blocking up land for ease of management and community development (Proposed Las Vegas RMP/FEIS, Summary of Alternatives, Table S-1 and pages S-19 through S-20).

The BLM properly followed the applicable regulations and manual guidance for public input and continued coordination. For example, the disposal boundary adopted for the Las Vegas Valley corresponds to the disposal boundary developed by a Congressional Task Force. The collaborative process utilized by this Task Force included representatives from State, local, county, environmental groups, cities and the general public.

The BLM disagrees with the assertion that a significant change was made to the disposal area around the Las Vegas Valley, that was not adequately analyzed in one of the alternatives. The total acreage identified for disposal within the Las Vegas Valley is within the range of alternatives analyzed. Specifically, the proposed Las Vegas Valley deposal area is 100,000 acres less than the No-Action Alternative which represents existing management under the Management Framework Plan.

Summary of response to issue #3). The Newberry Mountain allotment is closed to grazing for the following reasons: 1). Lack of fencing around the entire perimeter of the Desert Tortoise Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC). Although it is true some fencing will be completed along Highway 163 to Laughlin, the entire boundary of the ACEC will not be fenced. Control of livestock will not be adequate enough to assure that cattle do not make use of the ACEC and impact desert tortoise habitat. Closure to grazing will result in long term stabilization and improvement in desert tortoise habitat and population trends (Proposed Las Vegas RMP/FEIS, page 4-19). 2). All riparian areas are unique habitat in the desert which requires maximum protection to reach proper functioning condition (Proposed Las Vegas RMP/FEIS, page 2-9, RP-1). 3). Livestock grazing has not occurred on the Newberry Mtn. Allotment for over 20 years and the Proposed Las Vegas RMP/FEIS determined livestock grazing on the Newberry Mtn. Allotment is not an appropriate use of the public lands.

Summary of response to issue #4). The regulations are clear and precise on who can protest (43 CFR 1610.5-2(a)).

The BLM has complied with applicable regulations in the development of the Proposed Las Vegas RMP/FEIS regarding public participation. Granted there was an extended period of time for this process to be completed, but there was opportunity for anyone to become involved in the process. Public participation was not limited to only residents of the Las Vegas Valley. There were numerous opportunities for public participation since 1994, including former Congressman Bilbray's Task Force, resource advisory councils meetings, open houses, 35 individual briefings and public notification of the RMP's status. All those involved had the opportunity to protest, but the majority chose not to protest. All members of the public will continue to have the opportunity to participate in the development and approval of implementation activities associated with the RMP.

Summary of response to issue #5). Agricultural entries are discretionary actions. The BLM can consider physical suitability of the land as well as water availability, climatic conditions, economic feasibility, other resources, highest and best use of the land, and land use planning decisions when making a suitability determination for agricultural entry. The lands in the

planning area were determined non-suitable for agricultural entries during the planning process.

Summary of response to issue #6). A concern about R.S. 2477 roads was noted, however, the Proposed Las Vegas RMP/FEIS does not restrict road access on any road claimed by Clark County. Surface use restricting decisions such as withdrawals and no surface occupancy, do not affect roads that are claimed by the county under R.S. 2477.

Summary of response to issue #7). On page 2-8 of the Proposed Las Vegas RMP specific reference is made to completing conformity determinations and ensuring conformance with other State, local, tribal and Federal air quality laws, regulations and standards. The BLM complied with 40 CFR 1502.14 through .16. Air Quality conditions and the impacts of the Proposed Las Vegas RMP/FEIS on air quality are addressed on pages 3-2 to 3-7; 4-2 to 4-4; and 4-53 to 4-55 of the Proposed Las Vegas RMP/FEIS. The BLM is and will continue to complete air conformity determinations as required by law.

Plan Monitoring and Implementation

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

BLM will involve the public and county government in any plan amendment or substantive modification of this RMP. Any change to land use allocations, restrictions or uses will be effected through a formal plan amendment or revision prepared in conformance with BLM planning regulations found in Section 1610.6 of Title 43 of the Code of Federal Regulations. Agencies, organizations, and individuals with an expressed interest in the Las Vegas RMP, will be informed of any proposed changes and will be provided an opportunity to participate in the amendment process.

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

Bureau of Land Management
Las Vegas District

Resource Management Plan

Map # 1-1
Prepared July 11, 1997

Appendix A

Las Vegas Resource Management Plan

Final Plan

A code with 2 to 3 capital letters is used to designate each resource program (see list below). Objectives are designated by sequential numbers following the program code, such as AR-1. Management directions are identified by the objective designation followed by a lower case letter, such as AR-1-a. The AR-1-a management direction is linked directly to, and listed below, the AR-1 objective.

Objectives and management direction for the air, soil, water, and riparian resources that are impacted by other resource programs are included in those program sections. To avoid redundancy, these objectives and management direction are not repeated within the air, soil, water, and riparian sections.

Objectives and management direction denoted with an asterisk (*) are common to all alternatives.

Codes for Each Resource

Air Resource	AR
Soil Resource	SL
Water Resource	WT
Riparian	RP
Vegetation	VG
Visual Resource	VS
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern	AC
Fish and Wildlife Habitat	FW
Special Status Species	SS
Forestry	FR
Livestock Grazing	LG
Wild Horse and Burro	WHB
Cultural Resource	CR
Lands	LD
Rights-of-Way	RW
Acquisitions	AQ
Recreation	RC
Wild and Scenic Rivers	SR
Wilderness	WS
Minerals	MN
Hazardous Materials	HZ
Fire	FE

Air Resource Management

Objective

AR-1 - Ensure that actions occurring on BLM-administered lands do not violate local, state, tribal and Federal air quality laws, regulations, and standards. *

Management Direction

AR-1-a - Ensure that the planning process addresses air quality considerations by incorporating objectives and actions into resource activity plans, such as Allotment Management Plans, Habitat Management Plans, and Watershed Management Plans. Where applicable, include "conformity" demonstration in site-specific activity plans and/or National Environmental Policy Act documentation.

AR-1-b - Permit only those activities on BLM-administered lands that are consistent with Federal, State, and local air quality standards and regulations. Require that all appropriate air quality permits are obtained before BLM approval of an action is granted.* Where applicable, demonstrate how proposed management actions comply with local, state, tribal and Federal air quality laws, regulations, and standards (Conformity; per 40 CFR 93.100 et seq).

Soil Resource Management

Objective :

SL-1 - Reduce erosion and sedimentation while maintaining or where possible enhancing soil productivity through the maintenance and improvement of watershed conditions.*

Management Direction:

SL-1-a. On watersheds that exhibit good potential for recovery, implement protective measures, including but not limited to fencing and removal of tamarisk.

SL-1-b. Improve watersheds that have a critical erosion condition and a moderate erosion condition to have a high erosion susceptibility (See Table 2-1). Give priority to those watersheds within the Colorado River drainage system*.

SL-1-c - Maintain watersheds that have a stable and slight erosion condition with a low moderate or high susceptibility; and maintain watersheds that have a moderate erosion condition with a low or moderate erosion susceptibility (See Table 2-1).

Table 2-1. Erosion condition and susceptibility management objectives.

Condition Class	Susceptibility Class	Action Maintain	Action Improve
Critical	High		X
Critical	Moderate		X
Critical	Low		X
Moderate	High		X
Moderate	Moderate	X	
Moderate	Low	X	
Slight	High	X	
Slight	Moderate	X	
Slight	Low	X	
Stable	High	X	
Stable	Moderate	X	
Stable	Low	X	

(Source: BLM, Las Vegas District Office files 1991).

Water Resource Management

Objectives

WT-1. Maintain the quality of waters presently in compliance with State and/or Federal water quality standards. Improve the quality of waters found to be in noncompliance.*

WT-2. Maintain or reduce salt yields originating from public lands to meet State-adopted and Environmental Protection Agency approved water quality standards for the Colorado River.

Management Direction

WT-1a,2a. Using Best Management Practices as identified by the State of Nevada, minimize contributions from both point and non-point sources of pollution (including salts) resulting from public land management actions.

Objective

WT-3 - Ensure availability of adequate water to meet management objectives including the recovery and/or re-establishment of Special Status Species.*

Management Direction:

WT-3-a - Determine water needs to meet management objectives. File for appropriative water rights on public and acquired lands in accordance with the State of Nevada water laws for water sources that are not federally reserved.*

WT-3-b - Determine instream flow requirements and apply for necessary water rights on the Virgin River and Meadow Valley Wash.

Riparian Management

Objective

RP-1. Provide widest variety of vegetation and habitat for wildlife, fish, and watershed protection; ensure that all riparian areas are in proper functioning condition by achieving an advanced ecological status, except where resource management objectives require an earlier successional stage. Manage vegetation consistent with VG-1.*

Management Direction

RP-1-a. Complete assessments on all riparian areas, including development of actions necessary to achieve Proper Functioning Condition on all areas that are functioning at risk.*

RP-1-b. Improve riparian areas, giving priority to areas Functioning at Risk with a downward trend. Implement measures to protect riparian areas, such as fencing and/or alternate water sources away from the riparian area.*

RP-1-c. Ensure that the minimum requirement of Proper Functioning Condition on all riparian areas is maintained or achieved.

RP-1-d. Do not allow competitive off-road vehicle events within 0.25 mile of natural water sources and associated riparian areas.*

RP-1-e. Retain riparian and mesquite woodlands in Federal ownership, unless their disposal is in the public interest.

RP-1-f. Use integrated weed management techniques to control and eradicate tamarisk, such as burning, chemical, biological or mechanical treatments, where potential for treatment is good. Rehabilitate the area with native species to help reduce the potential for tamarisk re-establishment and improve ecosystem health.

Vegetation Management

Objective

VG1 - Maintain or improve the condition of vegetation on public lands to a Desired Plant Community or to a Potential Natural Community (see Appendix N for desert tortoise habitat guidelines for desired plant community).*

Management Direction:

VG1a - Manage to achieve a Desired Plant Community or a Potential Natural Community.

Objective

VG2. Restore plant productivity on disturbed areas of the public lands.*

Management Direction

VG2a. Rehabilitate, reclaim, or revegetate areas subjected to surface-disturbing activities, where feasible. When rehabilitating disturbed areas, manage for optimum species diversity by seeding native species, except where non-native species are appropriate.*

Visual Resource Management (VRM)

Objective

VS-1. Limit future impacts on the visual and aesthetic character of the public lands.* (See Map 2-9)

Management Direction:

VS-1-a. Designate 968,890 acres of public lands as VRM Class II and manage to retain the landscape's existing character. In these areas, authorized actions may not modify existing landscapes or attract the attention of casual viewers.* (Map 2-9)

VS-1-b. Designate 1,727,870 acres of public lands as VRM Class III for partial retention of the existing character of the landscape. In these areas, authorized actions may alter the existing landscape, but not to the extent that they attract or focus attention of the casual viewer.* (Map 2-9)

VS-1-c. Designate 635,135 acres of public lands as VRM Class IV, which allows activities involving major modification of the landscape's existing character. Authorized actions may create significant landscape alterations and would be obvious to casual viewers.* (Map 2-9)

VS-1-d. Continue to refine the VRM inventory to refine the database, viewsheds, and scenic ratings.*

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Objectives

AC-1. Establish areas of critical environmental concern specifically for management of desert tortoise within the Northeastern Mojave and Eastern Mojave recovery units identified in the *Tortoise Recovery Plan* (SS-31a)(see Table 2-2). Manage a sufficient quality and quantity of desert tortoise habitat, which in combination with tortoise habitat on other Federal, State and private land, will meet recovery plan criteria. Maintain functional corridors of habitat between areas of critical environmental concern to increase the chance of long-term persistence of desert tortoise populations within the recovery unit.

AC-2. Protect areas with significant cultural, natural, or geological values by establishing areas of critical environmental concern shown in Tables 2-3 through 2-6.

Management Direction

AC-1a/2a. Designate areas shown in Tables 2-2 through 2-6 and on Map 2-7 as areas of critical environmental concern for a total of approximately 1,005,031 acres. Manage each area based on the specific resource constraints identified in Tables 2-2 through 2-6.

AC-1b/2b. Incorporate Areas of Critical Environmental Concern on lands relinquished from withdrawal to other Federal agencies into the Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Also apply the management guidance, restrictions, and directions appropriate to areas of Critical Environmental Concern to the relinquished lands.

AC-1c/2c. Manage those portions of an Area of Critical Environmental Concern within a Wilderness Study Area under the Interim Management Policy until such time Congress makes further determination on their status. For those areas released from wilderness consideration by Congress, manage under the appropriate Area of Critical Environmental Concern guidance, restrictions and directions.

Table 2-2. Desert tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).

ACEC Name		Piute/Eldorado	Coyote Springs	Mormon Mesa	Gold Butte, Part A
Acreage		329,440	75,500	151,360	186,909
Values		Critical tortoise habitat.			
Resource Constraints	Lands	Retain in federal ownership. Designate as ROW avoidance area except within corridors.			
	Minerals	Close to locatable minerals and solid leasables. Open to fluid mineral leasing subject to no surface occupancy stipulations. Allow material site ROW only within 1/2 mile of the centerline of Federal Aid Highways. Designate as a site type ROW exclusion area except within 1/2 mile of either side of Federal Aid Highways. Allow FUP only within 1/2 mile of the centerline of federal and state highways and specified county roads. Issue FUP to governmental entities only.			
	Range	Close to livestock grazing. Manage for zero wild horses and burros.			
	Roads	Require reclamation of temporary roads. Authorize new roads in response to specific proposed actions where no feasible alternative exists. Ensure access to private property.			
	Wildlife	Do not allow commercial collection of flora. Only allow commercial collection of fauna upon completion of a scientifically credible study that demonstrates commercial collection does not adversely impact affected species or their habitat. This action will not affect hunting, trapping or casual collection as permitted by the State.			
	OHV/ORV Designation and Recreation	Designate as "Limited to designated roads and trails" for all motorized and mechanized vehicles. Prohibit ORV speed events, mountain bike races, horse endurance rides, 4WD hill climbs, mini events, publicity rides, high speed testing and similar speed based events. Commercial activities may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if consistent with the recovery of the desert tortoise. Allow non-speed events subject to: 1) Recreation Use Permits shall be required for events with more than 25 vehicles; 2) Events with more than 100 vehicles must be held during the tortoise inactive season (11/1 to 2/28(29). There will be a cap of no more than 300 motorcycles or 300 four-wheeled vehicles on any event with the exception that if an alternative route is not found for the Barstow to Las Vegas, the number of entrants permitted in Nevada will be consistent with that permitted by California. 3) No off-highway vehicle events will be permitted from 4/1 to 6/1 and from 8/15 to 10/15 (dates will vary slightly annually to provide a full weekend if 4/1 falls during the weekend and to provide three full weekends prior to (or including) 11/1); 4) A maximum of 10 permitted non-speed events will be allowed annually during the tortoise active season (3/1 to 10/31) with no more than 3 events per ACEC, with the exception that an event based on historic use patterns will be allowed from Mesquite through the Mormon Mesa ACEC. This event may have 200 entrants, will count as 2 of the 3 events held annually and is limited to a one way route (north-south or south-north); 5) A maximum of 12 permitted non-speed events will be allowed annually during the tortoise inactive season with no more than 4 events per ACEC; 6) Vehicles shall not exceed the legal speed limit (posted or unposted) of the road(s) used during the event. Clark County speed limit for unposted roads is 25 MPH.			

Table 2-3. Archaeological and cultural resources ACECs (not shared with other ACECs).

ACEC Name		Stump Spring	Sloan Rock Art District	Hidden Valley	Keyhole Canyon	Bird Spring ***	Arden Historic Sites	Crescent Townsite
Acreage		641	320	3,360	361	161	1,480	437
Values		Prehistoric camp and historic trail/ camp).	Prehistoric habitation and rock art.				Historic railroad construction, and mining.	
Resource Constraints	Lands		ROW exclusion.					
		Retain in federal ownership. Designate as ROW avoidance areas. Close to mineral material ROWs.						
	Minerals	Close to locatable minerals, salables and solid leasables. Open to fluid minerals subject to no surface occupancy stipulations.						
	Range	Manage consistent with the surrounding allotment and herd management area, if applicable.						
	Roads	Require reclamation of temporary roads. Authorize new roads in response to specific authorized actions only, ensure access to private property.						
	OHV/ORV Designations, Recreation	Limited designation, consistent with OHV designations of surrounding areas, except for Hidden Valley which is closed to OHV.						
	Key: ***Within Red Rock Canyon NCA expansion; acreage not included in total ACEC calucations in plan. Already withdrawn from mineral entry under the Red Rock legislation.							

Table 2-4. Archaeological and cultural resources ACECs and a Natural ACEC (shared with Gold Butte ACEC).

ACEC Name		Gold Butte ACEC, Part B		Gold Butte ACEC, Part A		
		Gold Butte ACEC, Part B	Gold Butte Townsites	Red Rock Spring	Whitney Pocket	Devil's Throat
Acreage		119,097*	***160	**640	**160	**640
Values		Cultural resources, scenic, wildlife habitat, sensitive species.	Historic mining	Prehistoric habitation and rock art.		Natural hazard area.
Resource Constraints	Lands	Retain in federal ownership. Designate as ROW avoidance area.	Retain in federal ownership. Designate as ROW avoidance area.			
	Minerals	Close to locatable minerals, salables and solid leasables. Open to fluid minerals subject to timing and special use constraints.	Close to locatable minerals, salables and solid leasables. Open to fluid minerals subject to no surface occupancy stipulations. Close to mineral material ROWs.			
	Range	Close to grazing. Manage wild burros at AML = 98.	Manage consistent with the surrounding allotment and herd management area, if applicable.			
	Roads	Require reclamation of temporary roads. Authorize new roads in response to specific authorized actions only, ensure access to private property.				
	OHV/ORV Designations, Recreation	Limited to existing roads and trails. Do not allow speed ORV events. Other events allowed on case-by-case basis.		Limited designation; consistent with OHV designations of surrounding areas.		
	Key: *Includes 160 acres of Gold Butte Townsite; excludes Bureau of Reclamation withdrawn land **Within Gold Butte ACEC Part A, acreage not included in totals calculations in plan. **Within Gold Butte ACEC Part B; acreage not included in totals calculations in plan.					

Table 2-5. Special wildlife and riparian ACECs.

ACEC Name		Amargosa Mesquite	Gold Butte ACEC Part C* (Virgin Mountains)	Big Dune	Ash Meadows
Acreage		6,891	38,431	1,920	37,152
Values		Neotropical bird habitat.	Wildlife habitat; scenic and botanical.	Special Status species habitat.	
Resource Constraints	Lands	Retain in federal ownership. Designate as an ROW avoidance area except within corridors. Close to mineral material ROWs.		(and) Designate as ROW exclusion area.	(and) Acquire private land on a willing seller basis.
	Minerals	Close to locatable minerals, salables and solid leasables.			
	Fluid Minerals	Allow fluid mineral leasing, subject to Timing and Surface Use Constraint special stipulations		Allow fluid mineral leasing subject to no surface occupancy stipulations.	Close to geothermal prospecting and leasing, including BLM lands inside the Ash Meadows NWR
	Range	Open to livestock grazing. AML for wild horses and burros = zero.	Close to livestock grazing. N/A for wild horses and burros.	N/A	Close to livestock grazing. AML for wild horses = zero.
	Roads	Require reclamation of temporary roads. Authorize new roads in response to specific authorized actions only, ensure access to private property.			
	OHV/ORV Designations, Recreation	Designate as limited to existing roads and trails. No competitive ORV events.		Designate 10-15% as closed to OHV; designate 85-90% as open to OHV; no competitive ORV events.	Outside the Refuge boundary - Limit to existing roads and trails; within the Refuge boundary - limited, designated roads and trails. No competitive OHV events.
	Key	*Originally called Virgin Mountain ACEC, it was combined with the Gold Butte ACEC to form one contiguous ACEC.			

Table 2-6. Combination values ACECs

ACEC Name		Arrow Canyon	Rainbow Gardens	River Mountains	Virgin River
Acreage		2,084	37,620	5,617	6,411
Values		Paleontological (Miocene bird tracks); Geological (candidate for the mid-carboniferous boundary stratotype section); cultural (prehistoric rock art).	Geological; scientific; scenic; cultural (320 acres)); sensitive plants.	Bighorn sheep habitat; scenic viewshed for Henderson and Boulder City.	T&E; riparian habitat; cultural resources (5,000 acres only)..
Resource Constraints	Lands	Retain in federal ownership. Designate as ROW avoidance area except within corridors. Close to mineral material ROWs.			(and) Acquire private land w/riparian or aquatic habitat on a willing seller basis.
	Minerals	Close to locatable minerals, salables and solid leasables. Open to fluid minerals subject to no surface occupancy stipulations.			
	Range	Manage consistent with the surrounding allotment and herd management area, if applicable.	Close to livestock grazing. N/A for wild horses and burros.	N/A	Close to livestock grazing. N/A for wild horses and burros.
	Roads	Require reclamation of temporary roads. Authorize new roads in response to specific authorized actions only, ensure access to private property.			
	OHV/ORV Designations, Recreation	Limited designation consistent with OHV designations of surrounding areas.	Designate as limited to designated roads and trails. No speed based vehicle events.	Designate as limited to existing roads and trails. No speed based vehicle events.	

Fish, Wildlife and Special Status Species Management

Fish and Wildlife

Objectives

FW-1. Maintain or improve approximately 869,800 acres of current and potential bighorn sheep habitat toward full ecological potential. Through management and habitat enhancement projects, allow desert bighorn sheep populations to reach levels consistent with the carrying capacity of their habitat, and consistent with other BLM policy. Table 2-7 shows the potential population estimates of bighorn sheep. Make adjustments to the population estimates as needed, based on the results of monitoring.

Management Direction

FW-1-a. Maintain and improve bighorn sheep habitat by maintaining existing water developments, constructing additional water developments, and protecting/improving springs, seeps and riparian habitat, consistent with BLM policy for management of wilderness study areas, in the following areas:

•

Arrow Canyon/Elbow Range
- South Spring/Bird Spring Range
- Gold Butte/Virgin Mountains
- Muddy Mountains
- Spring Range
- Eldorado/Newberry Range
- Specter Range/Last Chance Range/Bare Mountains McCullough Range/Highland Range/Crescent Peak.

Limit competition between bighorn, livestock, and wild horses and burros around spring sources by providing separate water sources for each type of user. When possible, provide water at the source for wildlife. If new data indicate that improvements are needed in other areas, do not limit activities to the areas listed above.

FW-1-b. Evaluate discretionary activities proposed in bighorn sheep habitat and on a case-by-case basis. Grant authorization if the proposed actions are consistent with goals and objectives of the *Rangewide Plan for Managing Desert Bighorn Sheep Habitat on Public Lands* (U.S. Dept. of Interior, BLM 1988) and other applicable policies.

Objective

FW-2. Re-establish native fauna (including naturalized species) to historic habitat and improve population numbers in current use areas.

Management Direction

FW-2-a. Cooperate with State and Federal wildlife agencies in implementing introductions, reintroduction, and augmentation releases of native and/or naturalized species (such as desert bighorn sheep, and chukar).

FW-2-b. Design new waters for livestock and wild horses and burros to reduce potential conflicts with bighorn sheep and other wildlife, consistent with BLM policy for management of wilderness study areas.

FW-2-c. Animal damage control activities may be allowed on a temporary basis if necessary for successful re-establishment of native species or to allow for recovery of decimated populations.

Objective

FW-3. Support viable and diverse native wildlife populations by providing and maintaining sufficient quality and quantity of food, water, cover, and space to satisfy needs of wildlife species using habitats on public land.

Management Direction

FW-3-a. Manage mesquite and acacia woodlands for their value as wildlife habitat in the following areas: Amargosa Valley, Meadow Valley Wash, Moapa Valley, Pahrump Valley, Stewart Valley, Hiko Wash, Piute Wash, Crystal and Stump Springs, or any other areas identified as being of significant wildlife value.

FW-3-b. Allow harvesting of green or dead and down Mesquite by permit only and in those areas identified in FW-3-a, where consistent with sustaining plant communities in a healthy and vigorous state and also consistent with sustaining viable wildlife populations.

FW-3-c. Manage habitat to support elk that move onto BLM-managed lands from U.S. Forest Service lands in the Spring Mountains. Determine needed adjustments to population levels through monitoring in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service and Nevada Division of Wildlife.

FW-3-d. Allow construction and maintenance of additional upland game guzzlers, as needed, consistent with BLM policy, including placement in wilderness study areas.

Table 2-7. Bighorn sheep Habitat Management Areas.

Habitat Management Area	Potential population	Source of Potential Population
Arrow Canyon Range	391-431	MAD HMP
South Spring/Bird Spring Range	150-200	Draft S. Spring HMP
McCullough Mountains	734	Rangewide Plan
Highland Range	70-105	Highland HMP
Eldorado Mountains	400-450	census data
Muddy Mountains	500-550	census data
Newberry Mountains	169	Rangewide Plan
River Mountains	230-260	census data
Virgin Mountains	127-145	Draft Virgin/Gold Butte HMP
New York/Castle Peak	140	Rangewide Plan
Gold Buttes	228-252	Draft Virgin/Gold Butte HMP
Last Chance Range	129-157	Southern Nye HMP
Specter Range	116-142	Southern Nye HMP
Bare Mountains	86-105	Southern Nye HMP
Total	**3,470-3,840**	

(Source: *Rangewide Plan for Managing Bighorn Sheep on Public Lands* USDI, BLM 1988, habitat management plans and current population levels. Numbers were not provided by NDOW.)

FW-3-e. Protect artificial and natural waters that provide benefit to wildlife by providing a minimum buffer of 0.25 mile for permitted activities (such as for off-road vehicle events).

FW-3-f. Protect key nesting areas, migration routes, important prey base areas, and concentration areas for birds of prey on public lands by mitigating activities during National Environmental Policy Act compliance.

FW-3-g. Protect important resting/nesting habitat, such as riparian areas and mesquite/acacia woodlands. Do not allow projects that may adversely impact the water table supporting these plant communities.

FW-3-h. Improve disturbed non-game bird habitat, including the water table supporting these habitats, by emphasizing maintenance and enhancement of natural biodiversity.

Special Status Species

Special Status Species include all plant and animal species that are Federally listed as "threatened or endangered" under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, Candidate species under the Endangered Species Act, State listed species, or species otherwise identified by the BLM State Director.

Objective

SS-1. Manage special status species habitat at the potential natural community or desired plant community, according to the need of the species.

Management Direction

SS-1-a. Improve approximately 400 acres of aquatic and riparian habitat on the Virgin River, Muddy River, and Meadow Valley Wash from its existing poor-to-fair condition to good-or-better condition by replacing *Tamarix* with native species.

SS-1-b. Maintain or improve approximately 37,152 acres of spring, wet meadow, and desert habitats in Ash Meadows Area of Critical Environmental Concern to potential natural community or desired plant community.

Objective

SS-2. Manage habitat to further sustain the populations of Federally listed species so they would no longer need protection of the Endangered Species Act. Manage habitats for non-listed special status species to support viable populations so that future listing would not be necessary.

Management Direction

SS-2-a. Enter into conservation agreements with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the State of Nevada that, if implemented, could reduce the necessity of future listings of the species in question. Conservation agreements may include, but not be limited to, the following: Blue Diamond cholla, Las Vegas bearpoppy, white-margined penstemon, and *Phainopepla.*

SS-2-b. Manage public lands adjacent to the Ash Meadows Area of critical environmental concern and the Moapa National Wildlife Refuge to complement spring and aquatic habitat for special status species, including projects that may affect ground water levels or spring flows.

SS-2-c. Maintain approximately 1,920 acres of sand dune habitat on Big Dune in a natural condition to support all species dependent upon dune habitat, with emphasis on special status species.

Objective

SS-3. Manage desert tortoise habitat to achieve the recovery criteria defined in the *Tortoise Recovery Plan* (USFWS 1994) and ultimately to achieve delisting of the desert tortoise. When the population in a recovery unit meets the following criteria it may be considered recovered and eligible for delisting (for complete criteria see the *Tortoise Recovery Plan*).

Criterion 1: As determined by a scientifically credible monitoring plan, the population within a recovery unit must exhibit a statistically significant upward trend or remain stationary for at least 25 years (one tortoise generation).

Criterion 2: Enough habitat must be protected within a recovery unit, or the habitat and desert tortoise populations must be managed intensively enough, to ensure long-term population viability. At least one area of critical environmental concern (Desert Wildlife Management Area) must be established in each recovery unit that is, except under unusual circumstances, at least 1,000 square miles in area.

Although the *Tortoise Recovery Plan* recommends establishment of at least one desert wildlife management area of 1,000 square miles in each recovery unit, it is not possible to achieve this on public lands in Nevada. The minimally acceptable situation identified in the *Tortoise Recovery Plan* is to establish several smaller desert wildlife management areas that are connected by corridors of functional tortoise habitat. This is the situation in both the Northeastern Mojave and Eastern Mojave Recovery Units.

In the Northeastern Mojave Recovery Unit, approximately 1,780 square miles of desert tortoise habitat are proposed to be managed for recovery of the desert tortoise. This area includes lands managed by the BLM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Park Service in Nevada, Arizona and Utah. Approximately 648 square miles of these lands are managed by the Las Vegas BLM Field Office. In the Eastern Mojave Recovery Unit, the 514 square miles proposed for designation as an area of critical environmental concern in the Las Vegas District would be combined with additional tortoise habitat in Lake Mead National Recreation Area and in California to meet recovery criteria.

Criterion 3: Provisions must be made for population management at each area of environmental concern (Desert Wildlife Management Area) so that discrete population growth rates (lambdas) are maintained at or above 1.0. A lambda of 1.0 indicates a stable or increasing population.

Criterion 4: Regulatory mechanisms or land management commitments have been implemented that provide for adequate long-term protection of desert tortoises and their habitat. Delisting would be followed by a loss of protection under the Endangered Species Act; therefore, adequate protection through alternative means is essential before delisting can occur. Reasonable assurance must exist that conditions which brought about population stability will be maintained, or as necessary, improved during the foreseeable future.

Criterion 5: The population in the recovery unit is unlikely to need protection under the Endangered Species Act in the foreseeable future.

Management Direction

SS-3-a. Manage 743,209 acres of the four desert tortoise areas of critical environmental concern specifically for desert tortoise recovery (Map 2-7). Implement the management actions listed below, and on Table 2-2, in these areas of critical environmental concern:

a. Minimize impacts to tortoise habitat during fire suppression by minimizing the use of mechanized equipment and, where possible,

staying on existing roads and trails. However, give priority to keeping the wildfire to an absolute minimum.

b. Manage wild horses and burros for zero appropriate management level within desert tortoise areas of critical environmental concern.

c. Implement inventory, monitoring, and research projects dealing with management issues within desert tortoise areas of critical environmental concern.

d. Limit utility corridors to 3,000 feet or less in width.

e. Do not allow new landfills.

f. Do not authorize military maneuvers.

g. Allow development of campgrounds only if consistent with the objectives of the *Tortoise Recovery Plan*.

h. On a case-by-case basis, support fencing of highways and moderately-to-heavily traveled dirt roads with tortoise-proof fencing and installation of culverts to allow tortoises to cross under the highway and roads.

i. Require reclamation of disturbed lands resulting from activities that result in loss or degradation of tortoise habitat with habitat to be reclaimed so that pre-disturbance condition can be reached within a reasonable time frame. Reclamation may include salvage and transplant of cactus and yucca, recontouring of the area, scarification of compacted soil, soil amendments, seeding, and transplant of seedling shrubs. Subsequent seeding or transplanting efforts may be required, if monitoring indicates that the original effort was not successful.

j. Commercial activities may be permitted, on a case-by-case basis, if not in conflict with recovery of the desert tortoise.

k. Designate as "limited to designated roads and trails" for all motorized and mechanized vehicles.

l. Allow non-speed off-highway vehicle events subject to restrictions identified in RC-11-f.

m. Prohibit off-road vehicle speed events, mountain bike races, horse endurance rides, 4-wheel drive hill climbs, mini events, publicity rides, high speed testing, and similar speed-based events.

n. Do not allow commercial collection of flora. Only allow commercial collection of fauna upon completion of a scientifically credible study that demonstrates commercial collection of fauna does not adversely impact affected species or their habitat. This action will not affect hunting or trapping and casual collection as permitted by the State.

o. In accordance with the BLM/Clark County Interlocal Agreement approved July 1, 1997, BLM will regulate and manage organized recreational activities on County RS2477 roads in accordance with 43 CFR, subpart 8372.

p. Campers may pull their vehicles off the edge of the road but must stay within 15 feet of the edge of the road, except in Wilderness Study Areas where the vehicle must remain within the berm of the road.

Objective

SS-4. Encourage the obtainment and dissemination of knowledge regarding the Mojave Desert ecosystem including desert tortoise biology.

Management Direction:

SS-4-a. Manage the Desert Tortoise Conservation Center Management Area (11,014 acres) to support desert tortoise research and other research associated with the Mojave Desert Ecosystem. When feasible, expand the function of the center to include an environmental education/awareness program in close coordination with other Federal agencies and State and local governments.

SS-4-b. If and when funding is available, expand the existing facilities at the Desert Tortoise Conservation Center Management Area as necessary to accommodate future research and educational needs.

Forestry Management

Objectives

FR-1. Maintain woodland and conifer forest where possible for all-aged stands, with an understory vegetation forage value rating at moderate or better.

Management Direction

FR-1-a. Firewood cutting and gathering is limited to approved areas subject to restrictions

developed for protection of Threatened, Endangered and Sensitive species and other sensitive resources.

FR-1-b. Allow harvest of dead and/or down wood or BLM-marked green mesquite "trees" for dwarf mistletoe control only in approved areas.

Objective

FR-2. Limit collection or sale of desert vegetation and other vegetative resources for public use to approved areas including disposal areas, rights-of-way, and gravel pits.

Management Direction

FR-2-a. Assess the potential for salvage and/or harvest of desert vegetation at locations where surface-disturbing activities are authorized.

Livestock Grazing Management

Objective

LG-1. Provide for continued grazing of domestic livestock on public lands, consistent with law, regulation, established standards and guidelines and policy on areas open to livestock grazing (see Map 2-8).

Management Direction

LG-1-a. Manage the range resource consistent with the phenological and physiological requirements of key perennial species.

LG-1-b. Livestock grazing on all ephemeral allotments will be permitted if on-the-ground evaluations determine that forage is available, and use is consistent with the Standards and Guidelines and allotment specific objectives.

LG-1-c. Provide for increased plant vigor and reproductive capability of perennial forage on the open allotments through livestock grazing management.

LG-1-e. Maintain static trend or achieve upward trend of key perennial forage species through livestock grazing management.

LG-1-e. Salt and mineral supplement will be placed a minimum of one mile from water.

LG-1-f. Manage grazing allotments outside the desert tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern consistent with grazing Prescription 2 as identified in Biological Opinion File No.: 1-5-91-F-36 as amended: Livestock use may occur on open allotments in desert tortoise habitat outside Areas of Critical Environmental Concern/Desert Wildlife Management Areas from March 1 to October 14, as long as forage utilization does not exceed 40 percent on key perennial grasses, forbs, and shrubs. Between October 15 and February 28, forage utilization will not exceed 50 percent on key perennial grasses and 45 percent on key shrubs and perennial forbs.

The BLM will reinitiate formal consultation on a case-by-case basis if any change is identified to Prescription 2 in an allotment grazing system.

LG-1-g. Close all allotments to livestock grazing within the planning unit, with the following exceptions: Hidden Valley, Mount Stirling, Lower Mormon Mesa, Roach Lake, White Basin, Muddy River, Wheeler Wash, Mesa Cliff, Arrow Canyon in Battleship Wash, Flat Top Mesa, Jean Lake, and Arizona administered allotments (see Map 2-8 for locations and boundaries). That portion of the Jean Lake allotment within the desert tortoise Area of Critical Environmental Concern would be closed to grazing. Close all land disposal areas to livestock grazing (See Map 2-3).

LG-1-h. Designate allotments that currently have an existing closure as permanently closed. Designate all unallotted areas within southern Nye County as permanently closed to livestock grazing.

LG-1-i. Additional allotment closures could be approved based on voluntary relinquishment of grazing privileges, permits, or leases.

LG-1-j. The type of livestock that will be authorized on each allotment is identified in Table 2-8. Changes to the type of livestock may be made following site-specific environmental analysis.

Objective

LG-2. Establish grazing management systems including rest rotation, deferred rest rotation, or other management approaches as needed to meet specific resource management objectives.

Management Direction

LG-2-a. Include water availability for all uses as part of any grazing system, considering riparian areas, livestock, wildlife, wild horses and burros.

LG-2-b. Develop range improvements, as needed, to reach more uniform distribution of livestock consistent with management objectives.

Table 2-8. Kind of livestock

Horses & Cattle	Cattle
Flat Top Mesa	Arrow Canyon
Lower Mormon Mesa	Jean Lake
Mesa Cliff	Hidden Valley
	Mt. Stirling
	Muddy River
	Roach Lake
	Wheeler Wash
	White Basin

LG-2-c. Incorporate Standards and Guidelines into all livestock use authorizations, grazing systems, and management plans to ensure rangeland health improved or maintained (see Appendix L).

Objective

LG-3. Manage allotments open to grazing using the "selective management" approach (see Map 2-8 and LG-3-a for open allotments).

Management Direction

LG-3-a. Drop existing categories from allotments closed to livestock grazing. Other direction:

- Arrow Canyon and White Basin will remain "M."
- Hidden Valley, Jean Lake, Wheeler Wash, and Mount Stirling will remain "I."
- Mesa Cliff, Muddy River and Roach Lake will remain "C."
- Change Lower Mormon Mesa from "C" to "I."
- Change Flat Top Mesa from "C" to "M".
- The category for the three allotments administered by Arizona will not be changed.

Wild Horse and Burro Management

Objectives

WHB-1. In Herd Management Areas not constrained by desert tortoise restrictions (see Maps 2-1 and 2-7), manage for healthy, genetically viable herds of wild horses and/or burros in a natural, thriving ecological balance with other rangeland uses (see Table 2-9).

Management Direction

WHB-1-a. Establish Appropriate Management Levels within Herd Management Areas (see Table 2-9).

WHB-1-b. Adjust the Appropriate Management Level identified for each Herd Management Area when monitoring determines the animal population, forage, water, riparian, and other ecosystem management objectives are not being met.

WHB-1-c. Limit utilization of current year's production by all herbivores on key perennial forage species within Herd Management Areas to 50 percent for grasses and 45 percent for shrubs and forbs.

WHB-1-d. Develop and maintain dependable water sources, consistent with BLM policy for wilderness management, to allow more even distribution of horses and burros throughout the Herd Management Areas.

WHB-1-e. Use by wild horses and burros will not be allowed in that portion of the Gold Butte Herd Management Area that overlaps with the desert tortoise Gold Butte Area of Critical Environmental Concern (Gold Butte Part A).

WHB-1-f. No new wild horse or burro ranges will be recommended for approval by the Director.

Objective

WHB-2. Maintain the wild, free-roaming character of the wild horses and burros on the public lands.

Management Direction

WHB-2-a. To facilitate management consistent with distinct population units, realign the following Herd Management Areas (see Map 2-1):

- Red Rocks Herd Management Area (formerly part of Spring Mountains Herd Management Area).
- Wheeler Pass Herd Management Area (formerly part of Spring Mountains Herd Management Area).
- Johnnie Herd Management Area (formerly Last Chance and Mt. Stirling Herd Management Areas).

WHB-2-b. Adopt Herd Management Area boundaries to existing 1971 locations; this will increase the size of some Herd Management Areas but will not decrease any in size (see Map 2-1).

WHB-2-c. Develop/maintain memorandums of understanding for coordinated herd management with the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service where Herd Management Areas extend across administrative boundaries.

WHB-2-d. Wild horses and burros that become problem animals or traffic hazards on Nevada State

Routes 159 + 160 or in urban areas will be removed as soon as possible.

WHB-2-e. Wild horses and burros will be scheduled for removal as expeditiously as possible from fenced private lands within the planning area, after a request is made by the private landowner and reasonable efforts to restrict the animals from private property have failed.

WHB-2-f. Wild horses and burros will be removed when animals are residing on lands outside the Herd Management Area or when the Appropriate Management Level is exceeded.

WHB-2-g. Construct underpasses or other structures within highway rights-of-way to allow safe passage of wild horses and burros. Appropriate locations will be determined by BLM and the Nevada Department of Transportation in coordination with affected interests.

Table 2-9. Wild horse and burro Herd Management Areas.

HMA	Initial Herd Size	Estimated AML
Eldorado	75 burros	0 burros
Gold Butte	600 burros	98 burros
Muddy Mountains	29 horses	0 horses
	110 burros	50 burros
Red Rocks	50 horses	50 horses
	130 burros	50 burros
Johnnie	125 horses	50 horses
	300 burros	75 burros
Amargosa	0	0
Ash Meadows*	0	0

Key:

* Ash Meadows HMA was inadvertently left out of previous planning documents.

Cultural Resource Management

Objective

CR1. Identify and protect cultural and paleontological resources in conformance with applicable legislation and BLM policy.

Management Direction

The following management directions are based on a variety of attributes for those kinds of sites discussed in Table 2-10. The attributes include the potential for the extraction or preservation of scientific data, site integrity, the isolated nature of certain properties, and an assessed potential for impacts from recreational activities. Each site type possesses one or more uses with applicable prescriptions for management according to that displayed in Table 2-10.

CR-1a. Manage the following for information potential: roasting pit, camp/open lithic scatter, rock feature, and historic trash scatter site types. These kinds of sites should be subject to the following direction:

CR-1a-1. Utilize data recovery efforts through research designs to attempt to mitigate adverse effects to cultural resources and paleontological sites from proposed Federal actions.

CR-1a-2. Study known cultural and paleontological sites not expected to incur impacts from Federal actions as a result of using proactive research designs. The designs may be initiated by BLM or independent researchers subject to the concurrence of BLM and the State Historic Preservation Office.

CR-1-a3. Representative samples of each site type will be preserved for conservation purposes.

CR-1-a4. Manage cultural resources on 1,500 acres of public lands within the Virgin River Anasazi prehistoric district for the potential to yield scientific or historic information.

CR-1-b. Manage the following for conservation potential: rockshelter, rock art locale, prehistoric and historic remains, mining sites, and historic road/trail site types, which are located in areas that do not receive intensive recreational uses. These kinds of sites should be subjected to the following direction:

CR-1-b1. Manage cultural resources on 11,759 acres of public lands at Red Rock Spring and Stump Springs, the Hidden Valley district, the Sloan rock art site, the Arden Historic Sites, the Crescent and Gold Butte mining town sites, and the South Virgin Peak Ridge District for conservation of their overriding scientific or historic importance.

CR-1-b2. Release cultural resource sites designed for "management for conservation" only after development of a memorandum of agreement between BLM, the State Historic Preservation

Office, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. This document would detail efforts to conduct intensive documentation or retrieve the physical remains of the property.

CR-1-b3. Manage paleontological resources on 40 acres of public lands within the Arrow Canyon Bird Track paleontological site for conservation of its overriding scientific or historic importance.

CR-1-b4. Release paleontological sites designated for "management for conservation" uses only after the development of a research design approved by BLM to remove the specimens, create casts of the objects, and provide interpretive exhibits.

CR-1-c. Manage the following for public uses: rockshelter, rock art locale, prehistoric and historic structural remains, mining sites, and historic road/trail site types located in areas that have sustained, or are projected to receive, intensive recreational uses.

CR-1-c1. Manage cultural resources on 3,660 acres of public lands within the Arrow Canyon Rock Art District, Keyhole Canyon, Frenchman Mine, and Gypsum Cave areas for public values that include sociocultural, educational, and recreational uses.

CR-1-c2. Develop programs that use surveillance to monitor resources with public value uses. Where analysis of monitoring results indicates a need for further protection, construct or install physical barriers, as appropriate.

CR-1-d. Manage cultural resources on approximately 200,000 acres of Traditional Lifeway Areas within the Las Vegas BLM District for their sociological values by providing for their protection and preservation (see Map 2-2).

This direction would primarily be accomplished by inviting Native American Traditional cultural groups to provide information to BLM concerning sensitivity of cultural values on Federal lands in Traditional Lifeway Areas. These lands are not available for disposal.

CR-1-e. Selected cultural resources should be designated as priorities for activity planning and determining best use potential. These include historic remains in Gold Butte, Crescent, Goodsprings, and Searchlight mining districts, as well as the Hidden Valley Archeological District in the Muddy Mountains. There are also special cultural resource considerations that may affect the location, timing, or method of development or use of other resources in the planning area. These resources include plants or animals essential to maintaining cultural integrity of a Traditional Lifeway Area.

Lands Management

Objective

Land Disposal Areas:

LD-1. Approximately 175,314 acres of public lands within the disposal areas identified on Map 2-3 are potentially available for disposal through sale, exchange, or Recreation and Public Purpose patent to provide for the orderly expansion and development of southern Nevada.

Management Direction

LD-1-a. Unauthorized use of public lands outside established disposal areas may be resolved through direct sale, if proven the action was not willful or was due to an erroneous survey; or if remediation of existing hazardous substances on the property would be too costly.

LD-1-b. Public lands located outside established disposal areas would be considered for repositioning to consolidate BLM parcels into a more contiguous land pattern and to improve public services and BLM land management. Repositioning would occur on a case-by-case basis, by exchange only, provided that:

1. The lands would serve the purpose of: a) community expansion and economic development, b) local government needs, or c) to facilitate Federal land management and minimize BLM administrative costs.

2. The lands are not adjacent to Congressionally mandated disposal boundaries.

3. Lands to be disposed are located outside any Area of Critical Environmental Concern, Traditional Lifeway Area, Special Recreation Management Area, Right-of-way corridor, Wilderness Study Area, active communication site, riparian site, or cultural sites eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places.

4. The public lands are not encumbered by an existing permit or lease that would preclude the disposal action.

5. The lands do not include habitat of Threatened, Endangered, and Special Status Species, or other crucial wildlife habitat.

Table 2-10. Management direction for archaeological site types and cultural resources in LVD.

Site Type	Management Use	Prescription
Prehistoric		
Rockshelter[1]	Information	Data recovery plan
Rockshelter[2]	Conservation	Monitoring/protection
Rockshelter[3]	Public Uses	Activity plan
Roasting pit[4]	Information	Data recovery plan
Camp/lithic scatter[4]	Information	Data recovery plan
Rock feature[4]	Information	Data recovery plan
Structural remains[1]	Information	Data recovery plan
Structural remains[2]	Conservation	Monitoring/protection
Structural remains[3]	Public Uses	Activity plan
Rock art[1]	Information	Data recovery plan
Rock art[2]	Conservation	Monitoring/protection
Rock art[3]	Public Uses	Activity plan
Historic		
Structural remains[1]	Information	Data recovery plan
Structural remains[2]	Conservation	Monitoring/protection
Structural remains[3]	Public Uses	Activity plan
Trash/debris scatter[4]	Information	Data recovery plan
Road/trail[1]	Information	Recordation
Road/trail[2]	Conservation	Monitoring/protection
Road/trail[3]	Public Uses	Activity plan
Traditional Lifeway Areas	Conservation	Native American consultation Monitoring

Key:

1 Located in area proposed for severe disturbance or total destruction from Federal actions.

2 Located in relatively isolated area, not projected for intensive recreational uses or Federal actions.

3 Located in area projected for intensive recreational uses.

4 Located in any area; representative samples for conservation previously selected.

Table 2-11. Disposal areas

Disposal Areas	Acres
Amargosa Valley	27,904
Goodsprings	915
Indian Springs South	1,302
Indian Springs North	420
Jean	2,445
Las Vegas Valley	52,021
Lathrop Wells	3,772
Laughlin	4,720
Mesquite/Bunkerville	14,460
Moapa/Glendale	40,950
Nelson	1,259
Pahrump	14,768
Sandy Valley	6,268
Searchlight	1,944
Primm*	1,181
Valley West	985
Total	**175,314**

*Includes acreage on the west side of the highway adjacent to existing development.
**See Appendix G for exact acreage total

6. Other public uses of the parcel are of less value.

7. The parcel of land is for a specific purpose and is no longer required for any other Federal purpose.

8. Local communities support the exchange, and there is close coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Nevada Division of Wildlife, and Clark County.

9. Public access would be improved.

10. Any other specific values or concerns not identified above would be analyzed at the time of the proposal to determine if the disposal would be in the public's best interest.

LD-1-c. Public lands within the Las Vegas BLM District are not suitable for entry under Indian Allotment, Desert Land Entry or the Carey Act, and would not be disposed of through those authorities.

LD-1-d. Recreation and Public Purpose leases identified for sale prior to approval of this plan, which were located inside a disposal area under the current management plan and are outside the proposed disposal areas, would remain available for sale to the current lessee or assignee.

LD-1-e. Approximately 9,423 acres of BLM inholdings within Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge are available for withdrawal by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service for inclusion in the refuge.

LD-1-f. Approximately 11,014 acres of the Desert Tortoise Conservation Center Management Area are available for withdrawal by other Federal agencies when such transfer would further objective SS-4.

Objective

Land Use Authorizations

LD-2. All public lands within the planning area, unless otherwise classified, segregated or withdrawn, and with the exception of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and Wilderness Study Areas, are available at the discretion of the agency, for land use leases and permits under Section 302 of Federal Land Policy and Management Act and for airport leases under the authority of the Act of May 24, 1928, as amended.

Management Direction

LD-2-a. Land use lease or permit applications and airport lease applications will be addressed on a case-by-case basis, where consistent with other resource management objectives and local land uses. Special terms and conditions regarding use of the public lands involved will be developed as applicable.

Objective

Land Classifications/Segregations

LD-3. Terminate or modify any unused, outdated, or unnecessary classifications/segregations and withdrawals on public lands to reduce the area of segregation in the plan area.

Management Direction

LD-3-a. In consultation with the appropriate Federal agency or applicant, review existing and pending classifications/segregations and withdrawals to determine if there is a continued need for them. Consideration will be given to withdrawal of approximately 1,500 acres of public land adjacent to Nellis Air Force Base in

support of the Department of Defense's Ammunition and Explosives Safety Program.

LD-3-b. The following small tract classifications will be terminated:

T. 25 S., R. 59 E. BLM, BLM Order 2/18/63, Small Tract Cl 1

T. 22 S., R. 60 E., BLM, BLM Order 4/28/72, Small Tract Cl 106

Rights-of-Way Management

Objective

RW-1. Meet public demand and reduce impacts to sensitive resources by providing an orderly system of development for transportation, including legal access to private inholdings, communications, flood control, major utility transmission lines, and related facilities.

Management Direction

RW-1-a. Designate the following corridors:

1. A corridor 1,400 feet wide from the north side of the Sunrise Instant Study Area south through Rainbow Gardens to the Lake Mead crossover.

   This corridor is described as west of the east boundary of the IPP-McCullough powerlines. Activation and use of this corridor is contingent upon Congressional action releasing the Instant Study Area from further wilderness consideration and study.

2. See Map 2-4 for the location of the proposed corridor designations in this alternative. An approximate total of 158,806 acres is involved, including legislative designations and the proposed Sunrise Mountain designation. The corridors range in width from 1,400 feet to 3,000 feet, for a total length of approximately 538 miles.

RW-1-b. Do not extend the following corridors :

1. The corridor entering Nevada at Nipton Road and designated as Contingent Corridor W in the California Desert Conservation Area Plan, dated 1980, will not be carried forward in this alternative. The 1988 *Mojave National Scenic Area Management Plan* recommended elimination of the corridor; this was accomplished by a plan amendment to the California Desert Conservation Area Plan.

2. Corridor K-G described and identified in the *Esmeralda-Southern Nye Resource Management Plan* (1986) will not be carried forward in this alternative. This area is constrained by natural and man-made features including mountains, the Amargosa River, the Low-Level Nuclear Waste Site, and the town of Beatty. An adjacent corridor to the east of this area has the capability to handle foreseeable future powerlines.

3. The corridor designated along the eastern boundary of U.S. Highway 93 between the Aerojet Conveyance Area and the Apex Project Area will not tie into the corridor designated inside the west boundary of the Apex project area. Per an industry request, the corridor will stop approximately 5 miles short of the project area, continue east, and tie into the corridor extending southwesterly from the Moapa Indian Reservation.

RW-1-c. When feasible, and where compatible, major pipeline rights-of-way will be placed within powerline corridors.

RW-1-d. Provide right-of-way access for local flood control agencies to develop or maintain flood control developments, consistent with right-of-way avoidance and exclusion areas.

RW-1-e. Except as identified in RW-1-f and RW-1-g, all Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and all lands within 0.25 mile of significant caves, *exclusive of any designated corridors*, are designated as right-of-way avoidance areas. This management direction also applies to RW-2 below.

RW-1-f. Linear right-of-way exclusion areas are limited to the Hidden Valley District, Sloan Rock Art, and Big Dune Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

RW-1-g. Site type right-of-way exclusion areas are limited to all areas of critical environmental concern, except within 0.50 mile on either side of Federal Aid Highways. This management direction also applies to RW-2 below.

RW-1-h. All public land within the planning area, except as stated in RW-1-c through RW-1-g, are available at the discretion of the agency

for rights-of-way under the authority of the Federal Land Policy Management Act.

Objective

RW-2. Maximize the use of existing communication sites and prevent the proliferation of scattered single user sites.

Management Direction

RW-2-a. See Map 2-4 for the present location of existing established communication sites that will be carried forward in this alternative.

RW-2-b. Authorization of future communication site rights-of-way would be handled as follows:

Communication Sites with a Site Management Plan:

1. Facilities authorized under new rights-of-way will be constructed in accordance with an approved Site Management Plan.

Communication Sites without a Site Management Plan:

2. New rights-of-way will be authorized within and on existing rights-of-way and facilities.

   This direction also includes communication site facilities not ordinarily located on a mountain top, such as AM radio facilities, personal communications service facilities, and cellular telephone sites. Personal communications service facilities will most likely occur along transportation corridors such as interstate highways.

RW-2-c. Requests for new communication sites will generally be processed as follows:

1. Competitive bidding procedures will be utilized.

2. Multi-user facilities will be constructed.

3. Site users will jointly form a committee and develop a Site Management Plan.

See **MN-1-n.** for Objectives and Management Direction regarding material site rights-of-way.

Acquisitions Management

Objective

AQ-1. To acquire private lands to enhance the recovery of special status species, protect valuable resources and facilitate the management of adjacent BLM lands. Secure legal and physical on-the-ground access to otherwise inaccessible public lands.

Management Direction

Land Acquisition Needs

Land acquisition needs will generally be processed through the land exchange program; however, if the opportunity arises lands may be acquired by donations, Congressionally appropriated funds, or compensation funds.

AQ-1-a. The following land acquisition priorities are based on finding willing sellers:

1. Private lands required to meet management objectives within designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Wilderness Study Areas, recommended Wilderness Areas, Congressionally designated areas, Threatened and Endangered Species habitat, and areas containing special status species.

2. Lands located within the district, conveyed into private ownership to Aerojet Corporation through P.L. 100-275. The lands involved are located in Coyote Spring Valley and will be retained in Federal ownership as part of Coyote Springs Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

3. Private lands along the Virgin River, south of Riverside.

4. Lands not specifically identified for acquisition could be acquired on a case-by-case basis for the following reasons:
   a) protect Threatened and Endangered Species and Special Status Species.
   b) provide resource protection.
   c) facilitate implementation of the Resource Management Plan.
   d) provide a more manageable land ownership pattern.
   e) maintain or enhance public uses and values.

AQ-1-b. The BLM will not acquire contaminated property.

Recreation Management

Objective

RC-1. Ensure that a wide range of recreation opportunities are available for recreation users in concert with protecting the natural resources on public lands that attract users.

Management Direction

RC-1-a. Primary management emphasis will be on resource-based uses, not facility-based uses.

RC-1-b. Designate the following Special Recreation Management Areas as areas where BLM will concentrate the majority of its recreation management program effort (see RC-2 through RC-9).

- Muddy Mountains
- Nellis Dunes
- Sunrise Mountain
- Las Vegas Valley
- Nelson Hills
- Jean/Roach Dry Lakes
- Laughlin
- Big Dune

Lands outside the Special Recreation Management Areas will be included within the Southern Nevada Extensive Recreation Management Area (see RC-10 and Map 2-5).

RC-1-c. Limit recreation facility development and special designations to those necessary for resource protection.

RC-1-d. Retain the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum inventory classifications and opportunity settings as a long-term management goal for all actions.

Recreation Opportunity Spectrum designations (as described in detail in Chapter 3, See Map 3-17) include the following:

Designation	*Acres*
Semi-primitive Nonmotorized	276,570
Semi-primitive Motorized	651,414
Roaded Natural	1,928,640
Rural	350,626
Urban	124,645

RC-1-e. Support the Nevada Division of Wildlife in an effort to maintain and improve hunting opportunities in Clark County.

RC-1-f. Designate the desert tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern as Special Areas under 43 CFR 8372 to provide improved management and coordination between recreational uses and tortoise habitat management.

Muddy Mountains Special Recreation Management Area

Objective

RC-2. Manage 123,400 acres of the Muddy Mountain area to provide semi-primitive recreation opportunities and integrated management of wildlife habitat, cultural resources, and other recreational uses. (See Map 2-5)

Management Direction

RC-2-a. Manage the majority of the area (78,480 acres) for semi-primitive non-motorized recreation opportunities.

RC-2-b. Manage the remaining area (44,897 acres) for semi-primitive motorized recreation opportunities.

Nellis Dunes Special Recreation Management Area

Objective

RC-3. Manage 10,000 acres of the Nellis Dunes as an open area for intensive off-road vehicle and other recreation opportunities, including organized off-road vehicle events, casual off-road vehicle freeplay, picnicking, photography, and other non-off-road vehicle commercial and competitive permitted activities. (See Map 2-5)

Management Direction

RC-3-a. Permit off-road vehicle free-play and high-speed, competitive Off-Highway Vehicle events of all types within the Special Recreation Management Area.

RC-3-b. Prohibit recreational and target shooting in the Special Recreation Management Area, to coincide with Clark County's shooting ordinance.

RC-3-c. Consider cooperative ventures, such as concession leases to enhance recreation opportunities.

Sunrise Mountain Special Recreation Management Area

Objective

RC-4. Manage 37,620 acres of the Sunrise/Frenchman Mountain/Rainbow Gardens

Special Recreation Management Area for recreation opportunities in concert with sensitive plant, scenic, cultural, and geologic values of the concurrent Area of Critical Environmental Concern. (See Map 2-5).

Management Direction

RC-4-a. Prohibit speed based motorcycle/truck/buggy off-road vehicle events. Limit mountain bike events to designated roads and trails until completion of long-term planning in the Recreation Area Management Plan.

RC-4-b. Allow non-speed events (such as all terrain bicycle events, motorcycle trials, non-competitive off-road vehicle events, and commercial permitted events and activities) on designated roads and trails on a case-by-case basis until completion of long-term planning in the Recreation Area Management Plan .

RC-4-c. Encourage cooperative ventures, such as concession leases, to enhance recreation opportunities.

RC-4-d. Concentrate major powerline transmission rights-of-way within the confines of the designated utility corridor to reduce conflicts with recreation and to reduce impacts to scenic resources, such as Rainbow Gardens and Lava Butte.

RC-4-e. This area will be closed to casual recreational shooting in accordance with Clark County's No-shooting for the Las Vegas Valley.

Las Vegas Valley Special Recreation Management Area

Objective

RC-5. Coordinate with county and city governments to manage 197,300 acres in the Las Vegas Valley to facilitate the provision of open space areas, recreational trails, and parks necessary for valley residents. (See Map 2-5)

Management Direction

RC-5-a. Identify land for reserve recreational trail, open space, parks, etc. as needed, prior to land disposals. Reservation should be done through Recreation and Public Purpose applications by local governmental agencies.

RC-5-b. Identify public lands on the perimeter and within the Special Recreation Management Area that are appropriate for recreational uses in support of local government land use plans.

RC-5-c. Prohibit recreational and target shooting on public lands within the Special Recreation Management Area, in accordance with the Clark County and local government shooting ordinances. Prohibit camping on public lands in the Special Recreation Management Area, except where specifically authorized and designated.

RC-5-d. Close the Special Recreation Management Area to individual, organized, and competitive off-road use and vehicle events including off-road casual use. An exception to this closure is the Nellis Dunes off-road vehicle Area and the "Nevada 400" course route to the north. Nevada 400 course limited to one event per year.

Nelson Hills/Eldorado Special Recreation Management Area

Objective

RC-6. Manage 81,600 acres for competitive off-road vehicle events on BLM-administered lands in the Nelson Hills/Eldorado Valley Special Recreation Management Area, in accordance with the applicable Biological Opinion(s) to protect desert tortoise habitat. (See Map 2-5)

Management Direction

RC-6-a. Authorize a maximum of nine speed based events yearly, including five motorcycle/All Terrain Vehicle and four buggy events.

RC-6-b. All permitted events must take place on existing previously used courses.

RC-6-c. Permitted speed-based off-road vehicle events are allowed only between November 1 and February 28 within the parts of the Special Recreation Management Area that are critical tortoise habitat.

Jean/Roach Dry Lakes Special Recreation Management Area

Objective

RC-7. Manage 216,300 acres in the Jean/Roach Dry Lakes area (Map 2-10) for intensive recreation opportunities, including competitive off-road vehicle (in accordance with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biological Opinion) and other recreational events, as well as dispersed recreational use and commercial activities. Minimize impacts to white-margined penstemon populations in accordance with policies regarding BLM sensitive species. (See Map 2-5)

Management Direction

RC-7-a. Permit high-speed, competitive off-road vehicle events, casual off-road vehicle uses, and other recreational and commercial activities.

RC-7-b. Permitted events will be allowed only on previously disturbed areas in tortoise habitat, existing roads, trails, and dry washes.

RC-7-c. Non-vegetated parts of the dry lake beds will be managed as Open to unrestricted Off-Highway Vehicle use.

Laughlin Special Recreation Management Area

Objective

RC-8. Provide a higher level of management emphasis through increased use monitoring, ranger patrols, increased BLM presence at permitted events, and increased coordination with local government and businesses for recreational uses on 25,600 acres of public lands around Laughlin, Nevada (See Map 2-5)

Management Direction

RC-8-a. Work closely with the Nevada Division of Wildlife to protect habitat areas and riparian resources of concern.

RC-8-b. Until completion of the Recreation Area Management Plan, allow up to two off-road vehicle events, with the following terms:

- Limit to 200 participants.
- Closed from May 1 to the Saturday following opening of upland game bird season (usually the second Saturday in October).

The seasonal restrictions and the number of events and participants may be modified as a result of the Recreation Area Management Plan process.

Big Dune Special Recreation Management Area

Objective

RC9. Manage 11,600 acres of the Big Dune area for moderate, casual off-road vehicle use, camping, and other casual recreation opportunities. (See Map 2-5)

Management Direction

RC-9-a. Prohibit all Off-Highway Vehicle use within the 200-acre beetle habitat in the Big Dune Area of Critical Environmental Concern (except on the designated route through the area), to ensure continued survival of the native beetle population. Prohibit speed-based competitive off-road vehicle events within the 1,920-acre Big Dune Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

RC-9-b. Allow commercial activities and other permitted events on a case-by-case basis.

RC-9-c. Establish long-term management goals and objectives including consideration of group camping areas. Long-term recreation management within the dunes would be based on the beetles' minimum habitat requirements.

Southern Nevada Extensive Recreation Management Area

Objective

RC-10. Manage public lands not included within Special Recreation Management Areas as the Southern Nevada Extensive Recreation Management Area, emphasizing dispersed and diverse recreation opportunities. (See Map 2-5)

Management Direction

RC-10-a. Manage permitted recreation and commercial events (outside Special Recreation Management Areas) as follows:

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern - Prohibit the following activities: off-road vehicle speed events, 4-wheel drive hill climbs, mini-events, publicity rides, and high speed testing.

Limit non-speed and non-off-road vehicle events to designated roads and trails in tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern; and to existing roads and trails in Areas of Critical Environmental Concern designated for other purposes.

Allow other recreation and/or commercial events on a case-by-case basis. Seasonal restrictions may be imposed, based on tortoise activity.

Other Areas - Permit events on a case-by-case basis. Restrictions and stipulations necessary for protection of the desert tortoise may be imposed within desert tortoise habitat. Close land disposal areas to overnight camping.

RC-10-b. Allow recreation concession leases that enhance resource management objectives.

RC-10-c. As resource conditions and/or use levels warrant, inventory, designate, and manage mountain bicycle and equestrian trails throughout the Extensive Recreation Management Area to meet increasing public demand for these activities.

Off Highway/Road Vehicle Designations

Objective

RC-11. Provide opportunities for off-road vehicle use while protecting wildlife habitat, cultural resources, hydrological and soil resources, non-motorized recreation opportunities, natural/aesthetic values, and other uses of the public land (See Map 2-10).

Management Direction

RC-11-a. Designate following areas (see Map 2-10) as OPEN to all motorized and mechanized vehicles:

- Nellis Dunes Special Recreation Management Area (approx. 10,000 acres).
- Non-vegetated portions of Big Dune Special Recreation Management Area outside of designated beetle habitat (approx. 11,600 acres).
- Non-vegetated portions of dry lake beds (approx. 3,000 acres).

RC-11-b. Designate following areas (see Map 2-10) as CLOSED to all motorized and mechanized vehicles:

- Hidden Valley (3,360 acres) in the south Muddy Mountains.
- Approximately 200 acres of beetle habitat at Big Dune Special Recreation Management Area (that portion shown on Map 2-10).

The Mojave Road is closed to competitive events along or within the road alignment; however, a race course may cross the road alignment. Except for the Hidden Valley area, lands in Wilderness Study Areas are not included in this designation. This designation would apply to any areas designated by Congress as wilderness in the future. (See Map 2-10.)

RC-11-c. Designate the following areas (See Map 2-10) as LIMITED TO DESIGNATED ROADS AND TRAILS for all motorized and mechanized vehicles:

- Approximately 743,209 acres desert tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern including the Piute/Eldorado, Mormon Mesa, Coyote Springs, and Gold Butte.
- Approximately 327,000 acres adjacent to the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area and the United States Forest Service Spring Mountain National Recreation Area (between State Highway 160 and U.S. Highway 95).
- Rainbow Gardens Area of Critical Environmental Concern (37,620 acres).
- BLM inholdings totaling approximately 9,423 acres in Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge.
- All land disposal areas.

RC-11-d. Designate approximately 2,186,483 acres as shown on Map 2-10 as LIMITED TO EXISTING ROADS, TRAILS AND DRY WASHES for all motorized and mechanized vehicles. This designation includes:

- All Areas of Critical Environmental Concern designated for purposes other than tortoise habitat protection and all lands not otherwise designated in RC-11-a, b or c.
- All Wilderness Study Areas (or portions) not included in RC-11-c.

Wilderness Study Areas are further limited to "existing trails and ways". This distinction is made because Wilderness Study Areas are by definition (and inventory) "roadless." However, some Wilderness Study Areas have 4-wheel drive jeep trails known as trails or ways that remain open to limited use. Wilderness Study Area Off-Highway Vehicle designations are interim, contingent on Congress making a final decision as to their designation as wilderness.

RC-11-e. *Management of Speed-Based Recreation Events* (See Appendix J.)

Within tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern - Prohibit off-road vehicle speed events, mountain bike races, horse endurance rides, 4-wheel drive hill climbs, mini-events, publicity rides, high-speed testing, and similar speed based events.

Within other Areas of Critical Environmental Concern - Prohibit off-road vehicle speed events, 4-wheel drive hill climbs, mini-events, publicity rides and high speed testing. Mountain bike events and horse endurance rides may be allowed on a case-by-case basis and limited to existing roads and trails.

Within non-Area of Critical Environmental Concern Critical Habitat - Nine speed-based events can be allowed yearly in the Nelson Hills/Eldorado Valley on existing roads and

trails; with racing allowed between November 1 and February 28, and the number of laps limited to a maximum of five. Additional specifics may be included in the U.S.Fish and Wildlife Service Biological Opinion. If the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service changes critical habitat following the designation of tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, the Off-Highway Vehicle designations and off-road vehicle restrictions will be reviewed and modified if appropriate.

Nellis Dunes and dry lakes - Allow off-road vehicle and other speed events subject to environmental protection and public safety stipulations.

Other Areas - Permit events on a case-by-case basis. No seasonal restrictions. No new courses in critical desert tortoise habitat. No new off-road vehicle events in crucial bighorn sheep habitat.

RC-11-f. Management of Non-Speed Based Recreation Events (including non-speed portions of speed events; See Appendix J and Map 2-10).

Within desert tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern - Allow non-speed events subject to the following limitations:

1. Issue Recreation Use Permits for events with more than 25 vehicles.

2. Events involving more than 100 vehicles must be held during the tortoise inactive season from November 1 to February 28/29. To maintain consistency with California vehicle limit restrictions, there will be a cap of no more than 300 motorcycles or 300 four-wheeled vehicles (including all terrain vehicles) on all events. With the exception that if a alternative route for the Barstow-to-Vegas event is not found, resulting in the need to traverse the Piute Area of Critical Environmental Concern, the number of entrants permitted in Nevada will be consistent with that permitted by California.

3. No Off-Highway Vehicle non-speed events will be permitted between April 1 and June 1 and between August 15 and October 15 (Dates will vary slightly annually due to calendar shifts to provide a full Saturday and Sunday weekend if April 1st falls during the weekend and to provide three full weekends prior to, or including November 1st).

4. A maximum of 10 permitted non-speed events, with a limit of 100 vehicles, will be allowed annually during the tortoise active season (March 1st to October 31, except for dates allowed in #3 above). There will be no more than three events per Area of Critical Environmental Concern, with the exception that an event based on historic use patterns will be allowed from Mesquite through the Mormon Mesa Area of Critical Environmental Concern. This event, which may have 200 entrants, counts as two of the 3 events held annually and is limited to a one-way route (north-south or south-north).

5. A maximum of 12 permitted non-speed events will be allowed annually during the tortoise inactive season (November 1 to February 28/29) with no more than 4 events per Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

6. Vehicles shall not exceed the legal speed limit (posted or unposted) of the roads used during the event. Clark County speed limit for unposted roads is 25 miles per hour. These events include, but are not limited to motorcycle or buggy rallies and mountain bike rides.

7. Authorized non-speed events that cross the Lincoln/Clark County borders will only be allowed in accordance with corridors identified within the approved Caliente Management Framework Plan Amendment.

Within other Areas of Critical Environmental Concern - Non-speed uses such as non-speed off-road vehicle events (road rallies, dual sport rides, and non-speed transfer sections of speed events), mountain bike events, and horse trail rides are allowed on existing roads, trails, and dry washes (RC-11-d).

Within non-Area of Critical Environmental Concern Critical Habitat - Non-speed uses such as non-speed off-road vehicle events (road rallys, dual sport rides, and non-speed transfer sections of speed events), guided commercial scenic tours, and mountain bike tours are allowed on existing roads and trails. If the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service changes critical habitat following the designation of tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Off-Highway Vehicle designations will be reviewed and modified if appropriate.

Nellis Dunes and Dry Lake Beds - Allow off-road vehicle and other events subject to environmental protection and public safety stipulations.

Other Areas - Permit events on a case-by-case basis. No seasonal restrictions. No new courses in critical desert tortoise habitat.

Cave Management

Objective

RC-12. Protect significant cave resources including cultural, scientific, biological, geological, hydrological, educational and recreational values; and manage each cave for its primary unique resource opportunity.

Management Direction

RC-12-a. Determine the primary values of each cave and set long-term management goals and objectives.

RC-12-b. Enlist local and national caving organizations to assist in assessment and management of cave resources. Restrict access to cave location data to bonafide scientific studies and experienced cavers.

RC-12-c. Manage all cave resources as wild systems, free from commercial or show cave type developments. Special Recreation Permits for commercially guided trips by qualified cave experts may be considered if environmental studies show that cave resources will not be impacted.

RC-12-d. Establish a registration system for cave entry, where needed.

RC-12-e. Designate all significant cave resources and newly discovered cave resources as right-of-way avoidance areas.

RC-12-f. If necessary, implement closures to protect breading, hibernating, or migrating bats from unnecessary disturbances.

RC-12-g. If necessary, gate cave entrances to protect unique and fragile cave resources from damage or overuse.

Wild and Scenic Rivers Management

Objective

SR-1. Participate in a study of the Virgin River for Wild and Scenic River designation when proposal is initiated by either Arizona or Utah.

Management Direction

SR-1-a. Provide interim management protection for the river by including the area in the Virgin River Area of Critical Environmental Concern and requiring any proposed action to consider the potential affect on the river's classification as Wild and Scenic.

Wilderness Management

Objective

WS-1. Ensure that characteristics on certain lands that caused them to be inventoried and designated as Wilderness Study Areas are maintained and not diminished or lessened in any way that might constrain or limit Congress' final wilderness designation decisions.*

Management Direction

WS-1-a. Manage Wilderness Study Areas in accordance with the Interim Management Policy for Lands Under Wilderness Review.

Objective

WS-2. Provide management direction for new wilderness areas and Wilderness Study Areas not designated as wilderness by Congress and released from interim management.

Management Direction

WS-2-a. Manage released lands to generally maintain the existing aesthetic qualities through multiple use management of those areas and to provide for semi-primitive recreation opportunities. Adopt limited use Off-Highway Vehicle, Visual Resource Management and Recreation Opportunity Spectrum designations consistent with designations already in place on adjacent non-Wilderness Study Area lands.

WS-2-b. Manage those lands released by Congress to allow opportunities for mineral exploration and development in accordance with current laws and regulations and consistent with decisions for minerals management on adjacent lands.

Objective

WS-3. Release from further wilderness review lands in the Logandale area that were omitted from the original wilderness review that do not meet Wilderness Study Area criteria.

During the BLM's wilderness study, there were 20,299 acres in several parcels inadvertently omitted due to a mapping error showing the lands as State of Nevada property. Because of this error, these lands were in an uncertain status. A subsequent field inventory determined that these lands do not meet the criteria necessary for Wilderness Study Area designation. This objective completes the inventory/decision process.

Management Direction

WS-3-a. Release the Logandale Unit from further consideration as wilderness due to the existing uses of the area as a roaded natural recreation area. These uses have impacted the area's naturalness and comprised its primitive and unconfined recreational opportunities potential.

Minerals Management

See Map 2-3 (Land Disposal Areas) and Map 2-7 (Areas of Critical Environmental Concern) for the locations of the mineral management areas described below.

Objectives

MN-1. Where lands remain open to entry provide for orderly exploration and development of valuable minerals on Federally owned mineral estate whether or not the surface estate is in Federal ownership.

MN-2. Use appropriate environmental safeguards to allow for the preservation and enhancement of fragile and unique resources.

Management Direction

Solid Leasable Minerals

MN-1-a. On split estate lands, private surface that is developed for non-mineral use will not be managed for solid mineral development.

MN-1-b. Allow solid mineral leasing on 1,872,673 acres, which are on lands outside identified disposal and administrative areas, outside riparian and natural spring areas, and outside Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, subject to standard lease terms and conditions (see Appendix M). Proposed Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Disposal Areas, and Locations and Areas Closed to Authorization/Renewal of Material Site Rights-of-Way and to Mineral Materials Disposal and Locatable Minerals and Solid Leasables are listed in Tables 2-2, 2-3, 2-4, 2-5, 2-6, 2-11 and 2-12. See Maps 2-3 and 2-7.

MN-1-c. After June 1, 1999, do not renew sand and gravel solid mineral leases that lie within lands identified for disposal (Map 2-3). Except as otherwise provided, continued sand and gravel extraction would be considered under 43 Code of Federal Regulations Part 3600, subject to authorized officer approval. No sales under the 3600 regulations would be made until the leases expire.

MN-1-d. Solid mineral leasing will be allowed on lands released from Wilderness review that are not within Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, and not within areas described in MN-1-a, MN-1-b, MN-1-c, above.

Fluid Leasable Minerals

MN-1-e. Allow fluid mineral leasing subject to standard terms and conditions on 1,909,351 acres, which are outside identified disposal and administrative areas and outside Areas of Critical Environmental Concern. (See Appendix M and Maps 2-3 and 2-7.)

MN-1-f. Allow fluid mineral leasing on lands released from wilderness review, subject to the management direction in MN-1-e, MN-1-g, and MN-1-n. The total acreage released will not be known until Congress acts.

MN-1-g. Allow fluid mineral leasing, subject to No Surface Occupancy stipulations within areas having important cultural, geological, and riparian resources; special status species plant and animal habitat; Areas of Critical Environmental Concern; administrative sites; and Special Recreation Management Areas. The ACECs subject to this No Surface Occupancy provision total approximately 866,000 acres (see list of these ACECs and acreages of each below). For Areas of Critical Environmental Concern noted with **, the acreage *excludes* Bureau of Reclamation withdrawals.

ACEC	*Acres*
Piute/Eldorado Valley	329,440
Coyote Springs Valley	75,500
Mormon Mesa	151,360
Gold Butte, Part A (including Whitney Pockets, Devil's Throat, Red Rock Springs ACEC, Bureau of Reclamation lands.)**	185,469
Arden Historic Sites	1,480
Arrow Canyon	2,084
Ash Meadows (outside Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge)	27,729
Big Dune	1,920
Crescent Townsite	437
Hidden Valley	3,360
Keyhole Canyon	361
Rainbow Gardens **	37,620
River Mountains **	5,617
Sloan Rock Art District	320
Stump Spring	641
Virgin River	6,411
Desert Tortoise Conservation Center Management Area (excluding 475-acre overlap with Arden Historic Sites)	11,014
Nellis Dunes Recreation Area	10,000
Public Domain lands within Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge	9,423
Muddy River Riparian zone	205
Virgin River Riparian zone within 0.25 mile of natural springs (See Table 3-3).	8,000
Total Acres:	866,067

MN-1-h. Close the Ash Meadows Area of Critical Environmental Concern, including BLM lands inside the Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge to geothermal prospecting and leasing.

MN-1-i. Allow fluid mineral leasing (subject to Timing and Surface Use Constraint special stipulations) on the four Areas of Critical Environmental Concern listed below totaling approximately 112,000 acres. These ACECs have special wildlife habitat, riparian, cultural, and geologic values.

ACEC	*Acres*
Amargosa Mesquite	6,891
Gold Butte, part B, outside of Wilderness Study Areas	66,477
Gold Butte, part C (Virgin Mountains)	38,431
Total acres:	111,799

Locatable Minerals

MN-1-j. An estimated 2,135,146 acres would remain open to the operation of the mining laws after existing withdrawals for military uses, industrial sites, and powersites (see Map 2-7).

MN-2-a. Withdraw the following urban disposal areas, BLM- administrative areas, special plant and animal management areas, sensitive cultural resource sites, and special geologic areas from the operation of the mining laws, subject to valid existing rights. Within desert tortoise areas of critical environmental concern, conduct validity determinations of mining claims prior to approval of a mine plan on pre-existing mining claims.

Areas to be Segregated and Withdrawn:

Urban Disposal and BLM Administrative Areas	Acres
Amargosa	27,904
Goodsprings	915
Indian Springs	1,303
Jean	2,445
Lathrop Wells	3,773
Las Vegas Valley	54,487
Laughlin	4,720
Mesquite	14,460
Moapa	40,950
Nelson	1,259
Pahrump	14,768
Primm	1,181
Sandy Valley	6,268
Searchlight	1,944
Three Lakes Valley	1,989
Valley West (Blue Diamond)	995
Desert Tortoise Conservation Center Management Area (excludes the 495-acre overlap with Arden Historic Sites)	11,014

Desert Tortoise Habitat Areas, Cultural Resource, and Special Geologic Areas:	*Acres*
Piute /Eldorado Valley ACEC	329,440
Coyote Springs Valley ACEC	75,500
Mormon Mesa ACEC	151,360
Gold Butte ACEC, Part A (including,, Devil's Throat*, Red Rock Springs*, and Whitney Pockets* Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, and Bureau of Reclamation lands.)	185,469
Amargosa Mesquite ACEC	6,891
Arden Historic Sites ACEC	1,480
Arrow Canyon ACEC	2,084

Big Dune ACEC	1,920
Ash Meadows ACEC(outside Refuge)	27,729
Crescent Mining Town ACEC	437
Devils Throat ACEC*	
Gold Butte, Part B (includes Gold Butte Townsite ACEC)	118,536
Hidden Valley ACEC	3,360
Keyhole Canyon ACEC	361
Rainbow Gardens ACEC	37,620
Red Rock Springs ACEC*	
River Mountains ACEC	11,095
Sloan Rock Art District ACEC	320
Stump Springs ACEC	641
Whitney Pockets ACEC*	
Virgin Mountains ACEC	38,341
Virgin River ACEC	6,411

Special Recreation Management Areas:	*Acres*
Nellis Dunes	10,000

Riparian Zones:	*Acres*
Muddy River riparian zone	205
Virgin River Riparian zone	805
Within 0.25 mile of natural springs (See Table 3-3).	8,000
Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge (BLM-administered lands)	9,423

ACEC and Special Recreation Management Areas (see Maps 2-7 and 2-5; also see Table 3-3 for spring areas.)

Total acres: 1,227,226

Salable Minerals

MN-1-k. Allow salable mineral disposal outside the areas listed in Table 2-12, and outside Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (see Tables 2-2 through 2-6). Two exceptions are described below, one for highway maintenance use in desert tortoise management Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, and another for existing Clark County Free-Use and Government Wash Community Pit on the east edge of the Rainbow Gardens Area of Critical Environmental Concern. (*Note*: Legal descriptions are in Appendix M.)

1) Gold Butte A, Coyote Springs, Mormon Mesa and Piute/Eldorado desert tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern remain open to issuance of free-use permits only within 0.50 mile to either side of the State highways and County Roads identified on Maps 2-12 and 2-13. These authorizations would only be issued to governmental entities. Grant permits only for a limited period of time. For expansions of existing pits exceeding a cumulative total of 1,000 acres of new disturbance, the applicant would be responsible for U.S. Fish and Wildlife consultation addressing possible impacts to the Desert Tortoise.

2) Allow existing free-use and community pit authorizations in Township 20 South, Range 64 East, within the Rainbow Gardens Area of Critical Environmental Concern, to be re-authorized or renewed, but do not allow expansion of the sites.

MN-1l. Mineral material disposal determined to be detrimental to desert tortoise would not be authorized.

MN-1-m. Consultation with the affected town board or advisory council would occur prior to approval of salable minerals disposal that could impact an unincorporated town or community.

Material Site Rights-of Way

MN-1-n. Allow new material site rights-of-way designation outside Areas of Critical Environmental Concern listed in Tables 2-2 through 2-6 and shown on Map 2-7. An exception is described below for material site rights-of-way in desert tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.

Exception: Gold Butte A, Coyote Springs, Mormon Mesa, and Piute/Eldorado desert tortoise Areas of Critical Environmental Concern would remain open to the granting of material site rights-of-way only within 0.50 mile to either side of those federal aid highways identified on Maps 2-12 and 2-13. These authorizations would only be issued to governmental entities. Apply acreage limitations identified under MN-1-k.

Hazardous Materials Management

Objective

HZ-1. Prevent hazardous materials contamination of public lands.

Management Direction

HZ-1-a. Minimize releases of hazardous materials through compliance with current regulations. When hazardous materials are released into the environment, assess their impacts on each resource and determine the

appropriate response, removal, and remedial actions to take.

Objective

HZ-2. Reduce risks associated with hazardous materials on public lands.

Management Direction

HZ-2-a. Evaluate all actions (including land use authorizations and disposals, mining and milling activities, and unauthorized land uses) for hazardous materials, waste minimization and pollution prevention.

HZ-2-b. Complete site-specific inventories when lands are being disposed or acquired. It is departmental policy to minimize potential liability of the Department and its bureaus by acquiring property that is not contaminated unless directed by Congress, court mandate, or as determined by the Secretary." (602 DM 2).

HZ-2-c. Inspect mining and milling sites to determine appropriate management for hazardous materials.

Fire Management

Objective

FE-1. Provide fire suppression on approximately 3,332,000 of public acres, based on suppression areas/zones and resource management needs (Map 2-11).

Management Direction

FE-1-a. Provide fire suppression efforts commensurate with resource and adjacent property values at risk.

FE-1-b. Prevent human-caused fires through an aggressive education, investigation, and public outreach effort.

FE-1-c. Provide for maximum fire protection through a comprehensive fire detection system using a multi-agency approach.

FE-1-d. Use approved fire suppression techniques in areas of critical environmental concern where there are concerns for habitat, cultural resources, threatened and endangered species, wilderness study areas, designated natural areas, and urban/rural/wildland interface zones.

FE-1-e. For fire suppression , follow specific guidance in the Fire Management Action Plan.

Objective

FE-2. Allow prescribed fire for resource enhancement purposes on those areas identified on Map 2-11.

Management Direction

FE-2-a. Determine specific hazard reduction priorities, including any noxious or invasive species infestations, and implement according to the existing budget.

Objective

FE-3. Provide fuels reduction management for resource protection on those areas identified on Map 2-11.

Management Direction

FE-3-a. Determine specific prescribed burn priorities annually, including any noxious or invasive species infestations, and implement where possible.

Objective

FE-4. Provide fire suppression assistance to other state and federal entities where formal agreements are in place.

Management Direction

FE-4-a. Provide, maintain, and/or upgrade fire management cooperative agreements, memoranda of understanding, and reciprocal agreements to provide maximum protection to resources and or adjacent property values.

Management Areas

Fire Suppression Areas/Zones

The planning area is subject to suppression for wildland fires in three suppression zones (see Map 2-11) based on site-specific resource management needs (such as critical desert tortoise habitat, Wilderness Study Areas and Areas of Critical Environmental Concern).

Develop specific tactics and initial attack schemes in subsequent activity plans.

Zone 1: General Characteristics

This area does not contain critical desert tortoise habitat. The dominant vegetation throughout most of the zone is perennial. There is high recreation and visitor use, high fuel carryover potential, high urban/wildland interface factor, and a high interagency mutual aid assistance factor. Unique vegetative communities exist throughout the zone. Non-attainment air quality is an issue. A higher

percentage of human-caused and or related fires occur in Zone 1 than in other areas.

Zones 2A and 2B: General Characteristics
These areas contain critical desert tortoise habitat and bighorn sheep populations. There is a higher percentage of ephemeral/perennial plant communities, which can periodically produce heavy fuel loading of persistent annual species. Areas in these zones are mostly rural/wildland interface where a higher volume of fires are caused by lightening. Historic mining districts are more prevalent. These zones are generally more dry. Interagency mutual aid and assistance is necessary. Non-attainment air quality is an issue to a lesser degree, and unique vegetative communities exist throughout the zones.

Fire Use Areas - Prescribed burning for resource enhancement may occur in the Gold Butte Allotment (where important values are wildlife, watershed, wild horses and burros), South McCullough Range (for wildlife), Virgin River Floodplains (where important values are riparian, wildlife, water quality, and recreation), and the Ash Meadows/Amargosa Flat Area.

Fire Fuels Management Areas - The fuel hazard reduction for resource/property protection will occur in the Virgin Peak White Fir Stands (ladder fuel reduction), South McCullough Range Pinyon-Juniper Woodlands (shaded fuel break), and the Spring Mountain Woodlands (ladder fuel reduction).

Table 2-12. Locations and areas closed to authorization/renewal of material site rights-of-way and to mineral materials disposal, solid mineral leasing and subject to segregation and withdrawal of locatable minerals.

	Acres
Valid Existing Closures	
Amargosa Mesquite ACEC	6,891
Arden Historic Sites ACEC	**1,595
Arrow Canyon Paleontological Site ACEC	2,084
Ash Meadows ACEC	37,152
Big Dune ACEC	1,920
Crescent Mining Townsite ACEC	437
Coyote Springs ACEC	75,500
Devil's Throat ACEC	*640
Gold Butte ACEC, Part A	185,469
Gold Butte ACEC, Part B (including Gold Butte Townsites)	118,937
Gold Butte ACEC, Part C (Virgin Mts)	38,431
Hidden Valley (Muddy Mountains) Archaeological District ACEC	3,360
Keyhole Canyon Rock Art Site ACEC	361
Mormon Mesa ACEC	151,360
Piute-Eldorado ACEC	329,440
Rainbow Gardens ACEC	37,620
Red Rock Spring Archaeological Site ACEC	*640
River Mountains ACEC	5,617
Sloan Rock Art Site ACEC	320
Stump Spring Prehistoric/Historic Site ACEC	641
Virgin River Anasazi Prehistoric District ACEC	6,411
Whitney Pocket Archaeological Complex ACEC	*160
Desert Tortoise Conservation Center	11,489
Nellis Dunes Special Recreation Management Area	10,000
Virgin River riparian zone	805
Muddy River riparian zone	205
Within 1/4 mile of natural springs and associated riparian zones	8,000
Total Acres (excluding overlaps and existing Bureau of Reclamation withdrawals)	1,033,569

**Arden Historic Sites ACEC overlaps 475 acres within the Desert Tortoise Conservation Center.

* Gold Butte ACEC, Part A overlaps Devil's Throat ACEC, Red Rock Spring ACEC, and Whitney Pockets ACEC.

Appendix B

Errata - Las Vegas Resource Management Plan

1. The Indian Springs South disposal area was changed to Three Lakes Valley disposal area.

2. Page 5-2 identified 36 CFR part 60. It should read 36 CFR part 800.

3. Page 5-5 identified Map numbers as 3-17, 3-18, 3-19. The Map numbers changed to 3-12, 3-13, and 3-14.

4. Appendix G was referenced in Table 2-11. The correct appendix reference is D.

5. Page 3-57 Rights was misspelled (Rghts).

6. Map 2- 6 the same pattern was shown for 3 Wilderness Study Areas, US Fish and Wildlife #s 1-3, South McCullough and Arrow Canyon. The Las Vegas Field Office has the corrected map.

7. Table S2-36 identified a 45% decrease in acreage available for fluid mineral leasing. This number is corrected to read 17%.

8. A section on socio-economics was inadvertently omitted from Chapter 4 and is attached to this errata for reference purposes.

9. RP-1 has a minor change in wording as follows: ....condition; achieve an advanced ecological status,....

10. SL-1-b has a minor word change as follows: ....moderate erosion condition "with" instead of "to have."

11. The Herd Management Area Map was corrected by removing State Lands and lands administered by the National Park Service from the boundaries identified on Map 2-1.

12. Indian Springs was listed as Citizens Advisory Council under Nye County whereas they are a Town Advisory Board under Clark County.

13. Page 3-58 is changed to reflect the most up to date in formation, provided by Nevada Power Company: Nevada Power Company, in cooperation with Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, completed an initial analysis of the Marketplace-Allen 500 kV Transmission project. This project would consist of four 500 kV transmission circuits on two sets of lattice structure, from the Harry Allen substation near Dry Lake to a new substation called Marketplace, near the Eldorado/McCullough substation in Eldorado Valley. While the project is still being contemplated, it will not terminate on the north at the Harry Allen substation but rather five miles north at the newly constructed Crystal substation. The Marketplace substation would be interconnected to the Mead-Phoenix and Mead-Adelanto 500 kV projects and to the existing McCullough substation. The Crystal 500 kV substation would

be interconnected with the proposed Southwest Intertie Project and Utah/Nevada 500 kV (second IPP line). The White Pine Power Project (two 500 kV lines) could also participate in the project, as well as other interested companies. This interconnection would replace numerous proposed 500kV lines through the area, thus limiting the proliferation of lines through the Sunrise Mountain Area.

Socio-Economic Values

From Livestock Grazing Management

The reduction of 7,597 in the number of Animal Unit Months available for grazing from 10,037 to 2,440 represents a decline in capital asset value of $341,865; and a loss of potential net ranch income estimated at $36,238.

Because livestock grazing represents a relatively small portion of economic activity in both Clark and Nye Counties, no noticeable adverse economic effects will occur to the county economies as a result of the reduction in livestock grazing activities. There will be no noticeable reverberation throughout the economy, no noticeable multiplier effects upon purchases and sales, or income and employment. Individual operators would have sustained personal losses, however that potential has been significantly ameliorated by the Clark County Desert Conservation Plan.

Of the 13 allotments that have had active use over the past 5 years, 6 were previously purchased by the Clark County Desert Conservation Plan, leaving 7 active allotments. Five of the remaining active allotments which have been proposed for closure under this action have since also been purchased by the Desert Conservation Plan, leaving 2 active allotments and 2 operators remaining in business. One of these operators has had his grazing permit revoked for repeated unauthorized use. The result is that one operator will remain in business, with the balance having received compensation for their grazing operation, and one having lost his grazing permit through willful violations. In all cases where compensation was received, the compensation has been adequate to replace the loss of income stream, but the abandonment of the lifestyle of cattle-ranching, which for many operators is their preferred way of life, cannot be compensated for. Some of the operators will take up livestock grazing in other areas, in order to continue their lifestyle.

From Minerals Management

No actual loss of income or employment from existing operations is expected to occur as a result of this Plan. However, the various stipulations, restrictions, and constraints will have a discouraging effect on mineral exploration and development throughout much of the RMP area.

Section 7 consultation and mitigation fees will add costs to all mineral operations proposed within any of the Desert Tortoise Habitat areas. Cost increases may range from an additional 10 to 20 percent for environmental permitting and bonding. In areas where closure to mineral entry is required, any potential mineral development and production, with its attendant income and employment would be foregone throughout the period of closure.

Leasing stipulations would add additional costs upon oil and gas exploration and development due to the constraints such restrictions impose on scheduling and operating efficiency.

Mineral materials development will be necessitated by continued growth in the Las Vegas Valley. The cost of hauling mineral materials could be substantially increased, depending upon location and proximity to access and use. Transportation costs increase by about 25 percent for each doubling of the haul distance (Mine Cost Service, 1998). Transportation costs range from 45 to 70 cents per ton mile. However, increases in demand for sand and gravel, and the additional haul distances that might be required would provide upward pressure on prices, with the total increase in cost, then, to be borne by the final consumer.

From Lands Management

Restrictions imposed on land disposal actions and rights-of-way could have adverse economic impacts on private individuals and public entities that wish to propose or apply for transfer of these lands for suitable purposes. Increased costs would occur for all lands actions subject to Section 7 consultation and mitigation.

Payments in Lieu of Taxes will not be affected by any of the proposals in this RMP. Restrictions on land

transfers could, however, reduce some potential future expansion of the tax base.

From Rights-of-Way Management

The establishment of designated corridors enables more efficient planning of future energy, communication and transportation facilities. A lack of such designated corridors, or the avoidance of existing corridors, engenders higher planning costs to utility companies and results in longer processing time for rights-of-way applications.

Section 7 consultation and mitigation fees could make permitting and construction of rights-of-way more expensive than in those areas where it is not required. Companies will take such costs under consideration in their analyses. Often, such costs are not of sufficient magnitude to discourage development of the most efficient and effective route. Cost-benefit analyses will be brought to bear by the proponents of any proposed route.

From Recreation Management

No reduction in recreation visitor days, or the associated recreation-related expenditures is expected to occur. Indeed, the growing population in Clark County will have the effect of increasing visitor days and associated expenditures. Limitations and restrictions on casual OHV use would not preclude such recreation, but will encourage the displacement of such recreation to those areas where fewer limitations might apply.

While Off-road Vehicle speed competitive events will be eliminated in some areas, such events will be accommodated by displacement to other areas. Non-speed organized events will be enhanced by management proposals.

Some beneficial wildlife population adjustments may be expected as a result of improvements in habitat condition and changes in the amount of vegetation available to wildlife. Increases in wildlife populations will influence the number of hunter days, thereby affecting moderate increases in expenditures, income and employment.

While all public land recreation activities do contribute to the local economy, the associated expenditures represent less than 5 percent of any sector of the regional economy's income and employment. Any potential gains or losses would not be of sufficient magnitude to have any noticeable impact.

* U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE: 1998-783-035/60012

Job Messages

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