HQO.20060227.0001

QA: N/A

Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED WITHDRAWAL OF PUBLIC LANDS WITHIN AND SURROUNDING THE CALIENTE RAIL CORRIDOR, NEVADA

DOE/EA 1545

December 2005

U.S. Department of Energy
Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management
Las Vegas, Nevada

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Ely, Nevada

COVER SHEET

Lead Agency: U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)

Cooperating Agency: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Title: *Environmental Assessment* (EA) *for the Proposed Withdrawal of Public Lands Within and Surrounding the Caliente Rail Corridor, Nevada* (DOE/EA 1545)

For further information contact:

Lee Bishop
EA Document Manager
U.S. Department of Energy
1551 Hillshire Drive
Las Vegas, NV 89134
Telephone: (800) 794-5408

For general information on the U.S. Department of Energy National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 process, write or call:

Carol M. Borgstrom, Director
Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance (EH-42)
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585
Telephone: (202) 586-4600, or leave a message at (800) 472-2756

Abstract:

The proposed action addressed in this EA is the withdrawal of approximately 308,600 acres of public land administered by the BLM from surface entry and new mining claims, subject to valid existing rights, within and surrounding the Caliente rail corridor, as described in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement for a Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada* (DOE 2002). The proposed land withdrawal is sought to enhance the safe, efficient, and uninterrupted evaluation of land for potential rail alignments within the Caliente rail corridor. This EA evaluates the potential impacts of the proposed land withdrawal and the land evaluation activities. The BLM is a cooperating agency on this EA.

Public Comments:

In preparing this EA, the DOE considered comments received during a 30-day public comment period by letter, e-mail, fax, and oral and written comments received during three public meetings on the draft EA.

CHANGE HISTORY

Revision Number	Interim Change No.	Effective Date	Description of Change
0	0	12/06/2005	Initial issue

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

CONTENTS

Page

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS v

1. INTRODUCTION 0
   1.1 History and Background 0
   1.2 Purpose and Need for Agency Action 1
   1.3 Description of the Proposed Action 1
   1.4 Relationship to Existing Statutes and Regulations 2
   1.5 Relationship to Land Use and Resource Management Plans 3

2. ALTERNATIVES 3
   2.1 Alternative 1—Land Withdrawal for 20 Years 3
   2.2 Alternative 2—Land Withdrawal for 10 Years (Preferred Alternative) 3
   2.3 Alternative 3—No-Action 4
   2.4 Alternatives Eliminated from Further Consideration 4
      2.4.1 Land Withdrawal for Less Than 10 Years 4
      2.4.2 Legislative Withdrawal 4

3. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT 4
   3.1 Geology and Mineral Resources 4
      3.1.1 Known Mineral Deposits and Mineral Production 5
      3.1.2 Existing Mining Claims 8
      3.1.3 Energy Resources 9
   3.2 Water Resources 9
   3.3 Air Quality 10
   3.4 Biological Resources 10
      3.4.1 Vegetation 10
      3.4.2 Endangered, Threatened, State-Sensitive, and BLM-Sensitive Plant Species 11
      3.4.3 Wildlife 11
      3.4.4 Endangered, Threatened, State-Sensitive, and BLM-Sensitive Wildlife Species 11
   3.5 Wilderness 12
   3.6 Cultural Resources 12
   3.7 Floodplains and Wetlands 13
   3.8 Socioeconomic Conditions 14
      3.8.1 Population 14
      3.8.2 Employment and Income 15
   3.9 Land Use and Ownership 18

4. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES 20
   4.1 Mineral Resources 20
      4.1.1 Alternative 1 20
      4.1.2 Alternative 2 (Preferred Alternative) 21
      4.1.3 Alternative 3 (No-Action Alternative) 21

CONTENTS (Continued)

Page

4.2 Water Resources and Air Quality 22
4.3 Biological Resources 22
4.4 Wilderness 22
4.5 Cultural Resources 22
4.6 Floodplains and Wetlands 22
4.7 Socioeconomic 23
4.7.1 Alternative 1 23
4.7.2 Alternative 2 (Preferred Alternative) 24
4.7.3 Alternative 3 (No-Action Alternative) 24
4.8 Land Use and Ownership 24
4.8.1 Alternative 1 24
4.8.2 Alternative 2 (Preferred Alternative) 24
4.8.3 Alternative 3 (No-Action Alternative) 25
4.9 Cumulative Impacts 25

5. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION 25
5.1 Public Participation 25
5.2 Public Comments 26
5.3 Agencies Consulted 27

6. REFERENCES 28
6.1 Documents Cited 28
6.2 Codes, Standards, Regulations, and Procedures 30

APPENDIX A – Glossary of Terms A-1

APPENDIX B – Public Comment and Response Document B-1

APPENDIX C – Federal Register Notice C-1

FIGURES

Page

1. Proposed Land Withdrawal Area 1
2. Mining Districts Located Within and Near the Proposed Land Withdrawal Area 6
3. Mining Claims within the Proposed Land Withdrawal Area 8
4. Plans and Notices Filed with BLM and the Price of Gold 9
5. Land Ownership of the Proposed Land Withdrawal Area 19

TABLES

Page

1. Known Mineral Occurrences Near the Proposed Withdrawal Area 6
2. County and Community Populations 1990 – 2004 15
3. At-Place Employment by Industry Group from 2002 and 2004 15
4. Labor Force Trends 2002 – 2004 17
5. Percent Change in Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment: 2002 – 2004 17
6. Total Personal Income (in thousands $) 17
7. Per Capita Personal Income 18
8. List of Comment Categories and Number of Comments Received 26

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DOE	U.S. Department of Energy
EA	Environmental Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
FEIS	Final Environmental Impact Statement
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act
FR	*Federal Register*
HMA	Herd Management Area
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWPA	Nuclear Waste Policy Act
PLO	Public Land Order
PM	Particulate Matter
RMP	Resource Management Plan
ROW	Right-of-Way
U.S.C.	United States Code

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

On December 19, 2003, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) applied to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), requesting that the Secretary of the Interior withdraw public lands in Lincoln, Nye, and Esmeralda Counties, Nevada, from surface entry[1] and the location of new mining claims, subject to valid existing rights. The proposed withdrawal would be made to support DOE activities associated with evaluation of the land for the potential development of a 300-mile branch rail line[2] to transport spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste from commercial and DOE sites nationwide to the Yucca Mountain repository as part of the DOE's obligations under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 (NWPA), as amended.

On December 29, 2003, the BLM published a *Notice of Proposed Withdrawal* in the *Federal Register* (68 FR 74965) (Appendix C), which segregated the lands from surface entry and the location of new mining claims, subject to valid existing rights, authorized by the General Mining Law of 1872, for a period of 2 years, ending December 29, 2005. The BLM held public meetings on the application in June 2004. The 2-year land segregation provides the DOE time to assemble a case file, of which this environmental assessment (EA) will be a part, and for the BLM to conduct studies, all of which are needed to support a recommendation to the Secretary of the Interior regarding issuance of a Public Land Order (PLO) for the requested withdrawal pursuant to 43 CFR Part 2300.

After a Record of Decision has been made on an appropriate rail alignment, the DOE may apply for a Right-of-Way (ROW) for the construction, operation, and maintenance of a branch rail line. If the BLM grants the DOE a ROW for the rail line before the expiration of the PLO, then surface entry and mining claim prohibitions would be removed from lands not part of the ROW. If the ROW for a branch rail line is not granted to DOE before the expiration of the PLO, then the restrictions would be lifted on the withdrawal expiration date.

This EA incorporates, by reference, information from the *Final Environmental Impact Statement for a Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada* (FEIS) (DOE 2002) (hereinafter referred to as the Yucca Mountain FEIS). The Yucca Mountain FEIS analyzed the Caliente Corridor, which served as the basis for the land area requested by the DOE in the 2003 land withdrawal application, in Volume 1—Section 3.2.2.1, the Environmental Baseline for Potential Nevada Rail Corridors; Volume II—J.1.2.2, Transportation Routes; and Volume II—J.3.1.2, Highway and Rail Routes in Nevada for Transporting Rail Casks. This EA also relies, as noted, on updated information for determining impacts.

---

[1]Surface entry means appropriation of any non-federal interest or claim (other than mining claims), land sales, BLM land exchanges, state selections, Desert Land Entries, Indian Allotments, Carey Act selections or any other like public land disposal action. These actions, generated by BLM, may lead to title of the land leaving the United States. Surface entry does not include ROWs, granted pursuant to Title V of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, and other easements, leases, licenses, and/or use permits.

[2]The DOE filed an *Application for Administrative Land Withdrawal for Potential Rail Corridor* (NVN 77880) with the Bureau of Land Management, pursuant to Section 204 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) (43 U.S.C. 1714).

1.2 PURPOSE AND NEED FOR AGENCY ACTION

The purpose for agency action is to preclude surface entry and the location of new mining claims, subject to valid existing rights, within and surrounding the Caliente rail corridor as described in the Yucca Mountain FEIS (DOE 2002). This protective measure is needed to enhance the safe, efficient, and uninterrupted evaluation of land areas for potential rail alignments within the Caliente rail corridor. The evaluation will assist the DOE in determining, through the Rail Alignment environmental impact statement (EIS) process, whether to construct a branch rail line, and to provide support to the BLM in deciding whether or not to reserve a ROW for the rail line under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). The BLM participated as a cooperating agency in preparing this EA because it is the responsible land manager and BLM staff could contribute resource specific expertise.

1.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action is to withdraw for a limited period of time approximately 308,600 acres of public land in Lincoln, Nye, and Esmeralda Counties, Nevada, administered by the Secretary of the Interior through BLM from surface entry and the location of new mining claims, subject to valid existing rights (Figure 1).

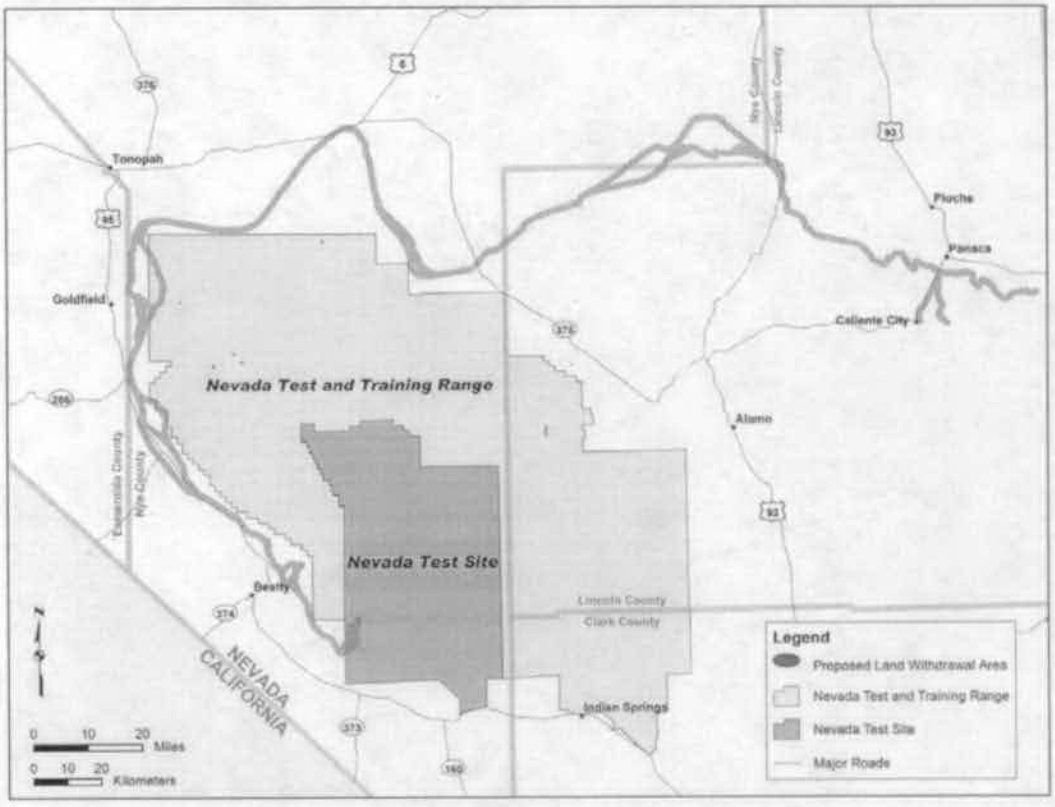

Figure 1. Proposed Land Withdrawal Area

The proposed withdrawal area extends approximately ½ mile from both sides of the centerline of the Caliente rail corridor, as described in the Yucca Mountain FEIS (DOE 2002) and

68 FR 74965. The proposed withdrawal begins near Caliente in Lincoln County, Nevada, extends westward through Nye County north of the Nevada Test and Training Range, enters into Esmeralda County near the town of Goldfield, and continues south-eastward to the Yucca Mountain repository. The proposed land withdrawal would prohibit new surface entries and the location of new mining claims to restrict activities that could interfere with the DOE's evaluation of the area. Under the proposed withdrawal, the BLM would retain management responsibilities for its lands and manage these lands consistently and in accordance with applicable BLM land use plans, laws, regulations, and applicable Department of the Interior policy. This EA addresses the impacts from the proposed withdrawal of public lands and from DOE evaluation activities. All DOE evaluation activities would be limited to "casual use" as sanctioned by BLM regulation. These activities could include photo documenting the corridor; conducting archaeological, historical, noise and vibration, and biological surveys; and placing survey markers for topographic mapping. Casual use describes land uses that do not require authorization by the Department of the Interior and are short term non-commercial activities which do not cause appreciable damage or disturbance to the public lands, their resources or improvements, and which is not prohibited by closure of the lands to such activities (43 CFR 2920.0-5(k)). Drilling and ditching operations are not considered casual use activities.

1.4 RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING STATUTES AND REGULATIONS

The DOE prepared this EA to satisfy BLM requirements for processing land withdrawal applications (43 CFR Part 2300), and it is consistent with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended; Council of Environmental Quality NEPA regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and DOE NEPA regulations (10 CFR Part 1021). The statutes and regulations relevant to this EA are described below.

The General Mining Law of 1872 (30 U.S.C. 21 et seq.), as amended, is the principal law governing development of nonfuel and nonfertilizer minerals within the federal public domain. This law allows the location, use, and patenting of mining claims on public domain lands, unless the land is closed to mineral entry.

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended, requires that impacts from any federal proposed action be analyzed and considered when making decisions. The Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA and the DOE's implementing regulations address EA preparation.

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, Section 204 (43 U.S.C. 1714), authorizes the Secretary of the Interior, acting in his or her discretion, to withdraw public lands from settlement, sale, location, or entry under the general land laws, including the mining laws, subject to valid existing rights. The BLM's implementing regulations are set forth in 43 CFR Part 2300. Additionally, under FLPMA, land withdrawals aggregating 5,000 acres or more require the Secretary of the Interior to notify both houses of Congress. If Congress disapproves of such a withdrawal within 90 days, it is terminated.

The National Historic Preservation Act, (16 U.S.C. 470) as amended, and its regulations at 36 CFR Part 800, direct federal agencies to consider the effects of proposed actions on properties eligible for or included in the National Register of Historic Places.

The Nuclear Waste Policy Act, (42 U.S.C. 10101 et seq.) as amended, enacted by Congress in 1982, acknowledged the federal government's responsibility to provide permanent disposal of the nation's spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste. In 1987, Congress significantly amended the NWPA, identifying Yucca Mountain as the only site to be studied for a geologic repository.

1.5 RELATIONSHIP TO LAND USE AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANS

Four approved BLM land use plans are relevant to the proposed action: the *Proposed Las Vegas Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement* (1998), the *Tonopah Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision* (1997), the *Schell Management Framework Plan* (1983) and the *Caliente Management Framework Plan* (1981). The proposed action conforms with the existing approved land use plans and no amendments to these plans would be required. In addition, on July 29, 2005, the BLM began a 120-day public comment period for the *Resource Management Plan for the Ely District and Associated Environmental Impact Statement* (Ely RMP/EIS). When complete, the Ely RMP/EIS will replace the Schell and Caliente Management Framework Plans, and the *Egan Resource Management Plan* approved in 1987. The proposed action also is in conformance with the Draft Ely RMP/EIS.

2. ALTERNATIVES

2.1 ALTERNATIVE 1—LAND WITHDRAWAL FOR 20 YEARS

Alternative 1 proposes to withdraw the public lands, as described in the BLM's 2003 Notice of Proposed Withdrawal in the *Federal Register* (68 FR 74965), for a period of 20 years. The proposed land withdrawal would preclude surface entry and the location of new mining claims, subject to valid existing rights. During this period, the DOE would conduct evaluation activities limited to "casual use." If the DOE is granted a ROW for the rail line before the expiration of the PLO, surface entry and mining use prohibitions would be removed from lands not part of the ROW.

2.2 ALTERNATIVE 2—LAND WITHDRAWAL FOR 10 YEARS (PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE)

Alternative 2 proposes to withdraw the public lands described in Alternative 1, for a period of 10 years. This alternative would preclude surface entry and the location of new mining claims, subject to valid existing rights, and allow the DOE to conduct casual use evaluation activities. The DOE has identified Alternative 2, land withdrawal for 10 years, as its Preferred Alternative. Although a 20-year withdrawal was the initial period of withdrawal sought by the DOE in the withdrawal application submitted to the BLM in 2003, the DOE has determined, since the application's submittal, that a 10-year land withdrawal is an adequate period for conducting necessary activities. If the DOE is granted a ROW for the rail line before the expiration of the PLO, surface entry and mining use prohibitions would be removed from lands not part of the ROW.

2.3 ALTERNATIVE 3—NO-ACTION

Under Alternative 3, the No-Action Alternative, the identified lands would not be withdrawn. Once the 2-year segregation expires on December 29, 2005, the prohibition of surface entry and the location of new mining claims would be removed. As in Alternatives 1 and 2, the DOE would conduct evaluation activities limited to "casual use." Under Alternative 3, public lands would continue to be managed pursuant to applicable BLM RMPs, laws, regulations, and policy.

2.4 ALTERNATIVES ELIMINATED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION

2.4.1 Land Withdrawal for Less Than 10 Years

As part of the NEPA process, DOE considered alternative timeframes that would protect the corridor for study activities until a ROW is obtained. DOE concluded that the reasonableness of the alternative timeframes depended on the projected time it could take, under reasonable circumstances, for the DOE to receive a ROW. The projected time was determined to be 10 years given funding uncertainties and other potential delays that the project could encounter in the future. Although there are scenarios where it would be possible for DOE to obtain a ROW in 5 years, or even 3 years, it was determined that it was not reasonable to base the withdrawal on such short timeframes. DOE plans to obtain a ROW prior to the expiration of the PLO. If DOE is granted a ROW for the rail line before the expiration of the PLO, surface entry and mining use prohibitions would be removed from lands not part of the ROW.

2.4.2 Legislative Withdrawal

The DOE considered supporting legislation for congressional withdrawal of the identified lands. However, because the time frame for congressional action would not meet Program needs this alternative was removed from consideration.

3. AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This section provides a baseline of the current human environment against which potential consequences of the proposed action and alternatives are identified and evaluated.

3.1 GEOLOGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES

The proposed land withdrawal area is within the Great Basin section of the Basin and Range physiographic province. Typical of this geographic area, the terrain consists of northerly- and northwesterly-trending mountain ranges, surrounded by sediment-filled basins, each approximately 10 to 15 miles wide (Tschanz and Pampeyan 1970; Workman et al. 2002). The present-day geologic structure of the proposed withdrawal area is the cumulative product of multiple episodes of deformation caused by compression and extension of the Earth's crust. In general, the bedrock geology of the proposed withdrawal area can be divided into a western area characterized by mainly volcanic rocks, and calderas (large depressions caused by volcanic events) and an easterly area composed largely of Paleozoic sedimentary rocks (e.g., rocks such as limestone, formed during the Paleozoic era).

3.1.1 Known Mineral Deposits and Mineral Production

The principal metallic minerals produced within or near the proposed land withdrawal area include gold, silver, lead, molybdenum, tungsten, and mercury. Non-metallic mineral commodities produced near the proposed withdrawal area include barite, fluorspar, zeolites, diatomite, and pozzolan. Copper, zinc, antimony, arsenic, gemstones (chiefly turquoise), brines, talcose minerals, and dimension stone have been produced in minor quantities. Also, some commodities occur for which there is no reported production, such as uranium, vanadium, selenium, manganese, nickel, glass (perlite and pumice), and silica (Tingley 1998).

There are 27 recognized mining districts and 4 mining areas in the vicinity of the proposed land withdrawal area. Eleven of these mining districts are crossed by a portion of the proposed land withdrawal area. Mining districts and locatable mineral occurrences within or in the vicinity of the proposed land withdrawal area are presented in Figure 2 and summarized in Table 1.

Since the 1960s, mining has been conducted in parts of, and near, the proposed withdrawal area. Exploration has generally focused on areas of known mineralization such as the Silverbow, Goldfield, and Clifford Mining Districts; although recent exploration efforts have occurred in relatively unexplored terrain, such as in the southern part of the Reveille Valley and the South Monitor Hills.

The intensity of exploration for and development of mineral commodities is based mainly on the price and demand for these commodities. Through time, mining districts, as well as areas immediately surrounding these districts, have been the sites of resurgences in mineral exploration and mining, especially as technological advancements have enabled low-grade ores to be mined economically.

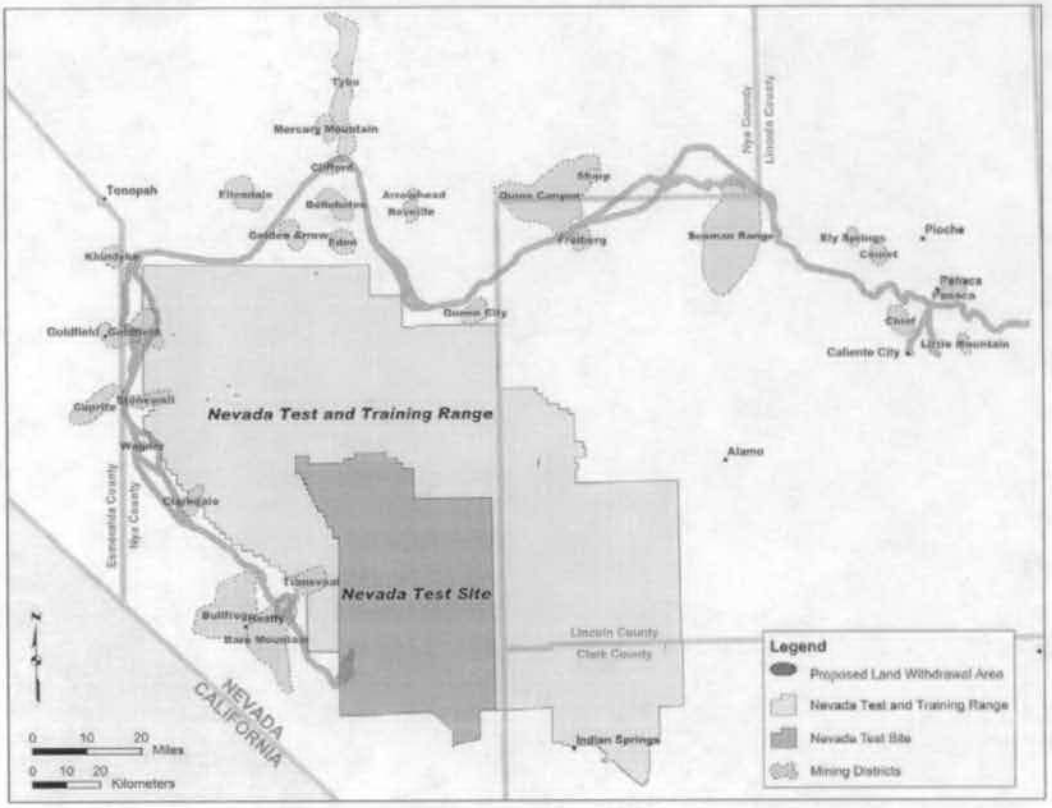

Figure 2. Mining Districts Located Within and Near the Proposed Land Withdrawal Area

Table 1. Known Mineral Occurrences Near the Proposed Withdrawal Area

Mining District/Area	Mineral Occurrence [a]	Approximate Distance from Proposed Withdrawal Area (kilometers) [b]
Caliente Area	Silica, Perlite, Zeolite	1
Little Mountain Mining District	Copper	3
Panaca Mining Area	Thallium, Uranium	2
Pozzolan Placer Mining Area	Pozzolan	3
Chief Mining District	Gold, Silver, Lead, Copper	Abuts
Comet Mining District	Silver, Lead, Zinc, Gold, Copper, Tungsten	5
Ely Springs Mining District	Silver, Zinc, Lead, Gold	6
Seaman Range Mining District	Gold, Mercury, Uranium, Copper, Zinc	Portion Transected
Sharp Mining District	Silver, Lead	6
Quinn Canyon Mining District	Fluorspar, Beryllium, Tungsten	Portion Transected
Freiberg Mining District	Silver, Lead, Zinc Copper, Tungsten	Portion Transected
Queen City Mining District	Silver, Mercury, Lead, Manganese	Abuts
Reveille Valley Area	None	Portion Transected
Eden Mining District	Gold, Silver	3

Mining District/Area	Mineral Occurrence [a]	Approximate Distance from Proposed Withdrawal Area (kilometers) [b]
Reveille Mining District and Arrowhead Mining District	Gold, Silver, Lead, Zinc, Copper, Selenium, Tungsten	8
Mercury Mountain Mining District	Mercury	3
Tybo Mining District	Silver, Lead, Zinc, Gold, Selenium, Copper, Barite	Portion Transected
Clifford Mining District	Gold, Silver, Arsenic	Portion Transected
Bellehelen Mining District	Silver, Lead, Gold, Copper, Thallium, Vanadium	2
Golden Arrow/Silver Bow Mining Districts	Gold, Silver	Abuts
Ellendale Mining District	Gold, Silver, Copper, Barite, Thallium	4 and 9
Klondyke Mining District	Silver, Lead, Gold, Copper, Turquoise, Iron	2
Goldfield Mining District	Gold, Silver, Copper, Lead, Arsenic; gemstones	Portion Transected
Cuprite Mining District	Copper, Silver, Lead, Gold, Mercury, Silica, Sulfur, Potash	Abuts
Stonewall Mining District	Gold, Silver	Portion Transected
Wagner Mining District	Copper, Gold	Portion Transected
Clarkdale Mining District	Gold, Silver	Portion Transected
Transvaal Mining District	Gold, Mercury	2
Bullfrog Mining District	Gold, Silver, Copper, Lead, Silica, Bentenite	Abuts
Bare Mountain Mining District	Gold, Mercury, Tungsten, Silver, Uranium, Silica, Fluorspar, Cinnabar, Kaolin, Perlite,	Portion Transected

Source: Tingley 1998

NOTES: Distances of mining districts to the withdrawal area are approximations, as the boundaries of the mining districts themselves are vaguely defined.

[a] Production not implied.

[b] To convert kilometers to miles, multiply by 0.621.

Recent mineral exploration and/or production has been reported at the following mining districts that transect or abut the proposed withdrawal area: Bare Mountain, Wagner, Cuprite, Goldfield, Golden Arrow/Silver Bow, Clifford, Tybo, and the Reveille Valley Area (NBMG 2003). The proposed withdrawal area represents less than 2 percent of the federal land available for mineral exploration and development within each of the three countries (Lincoln, Nye, and Esmeralda).

The Bare Mountain and Goldfield mining districts have recently reported gold production. Specifically, Daisy and Sterling Mines located in the Bare Mountain district and the Goldfield Project in the Goldfield mining district have seen recent gold production (NBMG 2003). Although located within a mining district transected by the proposed land withdrawal area, the mines in the Bare Mountain district are several miles away from the boundary of the proposed withdrawal area itself.

Revenues in 2004 from mineral production within the State of Nevada totaled $3,281,800,000. Revenues from the counties within which the withdrawal falls are as follows: Esmeralda - $11,400,000, Lincoln – $431,000, and Nye - $338,300,000. The total revenue for the three counties of $350,131,000, or less than 11% of the State of Nevada's total (Nevada Department of Taxation 2005).

3.1.2 Existing Mining Claims

All mining claims within the square-mile sections crossed by the boundary of the proposed land withdrawal area were tabulated from the BLM's Legacy Repost (LR) 2000 system. A report run in May 2005 identified 906 unpatented lode claims, 8 unpatented placer mining claims, and 1 millsite claim within and near the withdrawal area. Some of the 915 claims lay outside of the actual proposed withdrawal boundary reflected by the legal description, but were included to ensure that comprehensive data would be used for impact evaluation. There are approximately 915 claims within and near the proposed withdrawal area, which is less than 1 percent of the total mining claims held in the State of Nevada in 2003. According to the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology, approximately 100,000 mining claims were held in 2003 (NBMG 2003).

Figure 3 shows the number mining claims present within or near the boundaries of the withdrawal area from 1976 through 2003.

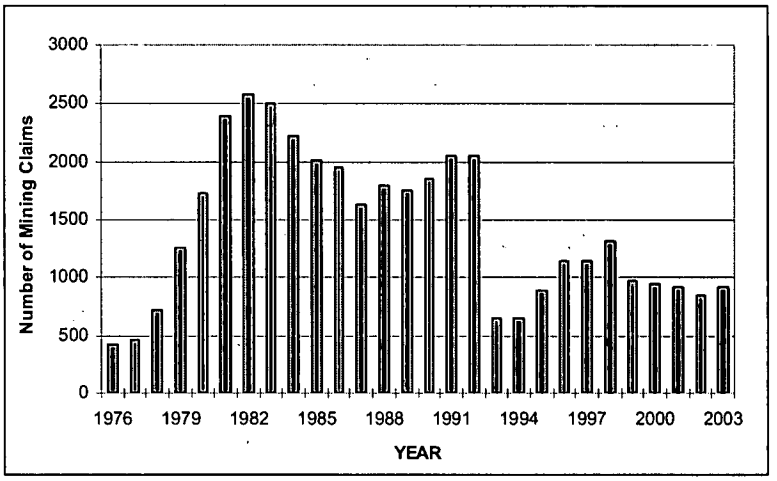

Figure 3. Mining Claims Within the Proposed Land Withdrawal Area

Currently a company or individual must file a surface management Notice of Intent to operate with the BLM before beginning exploration activities, if surface disturbance will be less than 5 acres (after reclamation). If exploration activities will disturb more than 5 acres, a Plan of Operation must be approved by the BLM before opening or expanding a mine. In 2005, 6 Notices of Intent were filed and 2 Plans of Operations were authorized with the BLM within the proposed withdrawal area. Figure 4 presents the number of Notices and Plans filed with the BLM since 1981. The Notices and Plans are superimposed with the price of gold to demonstrate the relationship between mining activities and fluctuations in mineral prices. Gold prices are used because it is the most economically valuable commodity known to be within the proposed withdrawal area.

Although the location of new mining claims has been prohibited by the withdrawal segregation since December 2003, Notices and Plans have been filed on existing claims during this time.

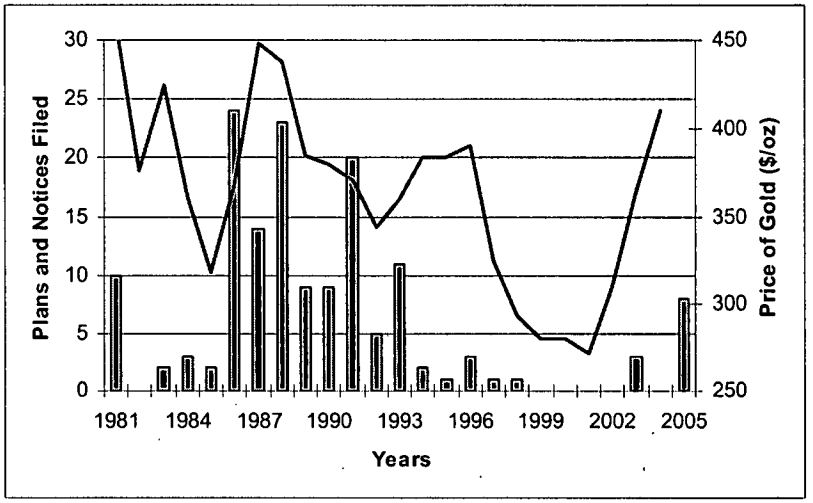

Figure 4. Plans and Notices Filed with the BLM and the Price of Gold

3.1.3 Energy Resources

No producing oil and gas wells lie within the proposed withdrawal area. The nearest producing areas are the 10 small oil fields in Railroad Valley, in northeastern Nye County. Production in Railroad Valley began in 1954, with the most recent discovery in 1998 (NBMG 2003). Total production from these fields through 2003 was almost 43 million barrels, which amounts to about 88 percent of the total production in Nevada (NBMG 2003). Only a very small amount of by-product natural gas has been produced from Nevada's oil wells through 2003 (EIA 2005). There are four oil and gas lease areas near the proposed withdrawal: the Golden Gate Range; Garden Valley of northern Lincoln County and eastern Nye County; Stone Cabin Valley of central Nye County; and in the Oasis Valley. There are 16 square mile sections within and near the proposed withdrawal area under lease.

Geothermal resources are present as hot springs and thermal waters in the vicinity of the proposed withdrawal area near Caliente Warm Springs, Bennett Spring, Pedro Spring, Sarcobatas Flat, Scotty's Junction, Panaca, and Beatty (Shevenell and Garside 2003). As of June 6, 2005, no geothermal leases have been reported within the boundaries of the withdrawal area, according to the BLM LR 2000 Database. Other than oil, gas, and geothermal resources, the withdrawal area has no historic production of leasable minerals.

3.2 WATER RESOURCES

The proposed land withdrawal area crosses a number of hydrographic areas, and is characterized by low precipitation and high annual evaporation rates typical of desert climates. There are few major rivers or water bodies in the state, and none in the proposed withdrawal area. With the exception of the eastern withdrawal area, which is part of the Colorado River drainage system, surface drainage within the withdrawal area is to low areas in enclosed basins rather than to the

sea (NDWR 1999). The drainage in the western portion of the withdrawal area, in the Amargosa River system, terminates within the enclosed Death Valley Basin in California.

There are a number of surface water resources within and near the proposed land withdrawal area, including riparian/stream areas from the Eccles Siding to Meadow Valley Wash; springs and a riparian/river area from Meadow Valley to Sand Spring Valley; springs from Sand Spring Valley to Mud Lake; and springs and a riparian/stream area from Mud Lake to Yucca Mountain (DOE 2002).

3.3 AIR QUALITY

The proposed withdrawal area is located in rural parts of Nevada that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has categorized as either unclassifiable or in attainment for criteria pollutants (i.e., nitrogen dioxide, ozone, lead, carbon monoxide, particulate matter [PM10 and PM 2.5], and sulfur dioxide) (DOE 2002). Nevada has no state air-quality monitoring stations located within or in close proximity to the proposed land withdrawal area (NBAQP 2003). Air quality data for all criteria pollutants, except particulate matter, have been collected and recorded from four air-monitoring stations at Yucca Mountain, from 1991 to 1995. Particulate matter data have been collected and recorded from four air-monitoring stations at Yucca Mountain from 1989 to 1997; from three stations from 1998 to 2001; and from two stations from 2002 to 2005. Although these data have been collected from locations more than 100 miles from the easternmost part of the proposed land withdrawal area, they likely represent the current air quality within the entire land withdrawal area, because no large emission sources or metropolitan areas exist in this region that could otherwise affect air quality. The data collected at the Yucca Mountain site have shown the air quality to meet federal and state regulatory requirements.

3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Information on biological resources was obtained using various methods. Project biologists conducted literature searches and conferred with land management agencies and authorities, including the BLM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, Nevada Natural Heritage Program, Nevada Department of Wildlife, and Nevada Division of Forestry, to identify existing information on the occurrence and distribution of plant communities; horse, burro, other wildlife, sensitive animal and plant species; sensitive communities; and weeds. Information applicable to the proposed land withdrawal area is incorporated herein.

3.4.1 Vegetation

Plant communities within and near the proposed land withdrawal were assessed by reviewing two digital land cover data sets with plant community distribution data: the 1996 Gap Analysis Program for Nevada (USU 1996) and the 2004 Southwest Regional Gap Analysis Program (NatureServe 2004). Both data sets are accessible through geographic information systems that provide computer-based mapping and analysis utilities. A combination of these two land cover classification maps was used in conjunction with field surveys to characterize the land cover within the proposed land withdrawal area. The proposed withdrawal area has a wide range of vegetation characteristic of the Great Basin-Mojave Desert and mountain communities. There are 22 different terrestrial ecological systems, including four managed systems (i.e., agricultural,

barren lands, developed areas, and noxious or invasive species dominated areas) (NatureServe 2004). The following systems encompass most of the proposed withdrawal area: intermountain basin mixed salt desert scrub; intermountain basin big sagebrush shrubland; Sonora-Mojave creosotebush-white bursage desert scrub; Mojave mid-elevation mixed desert scrub; intermountain basin semi-desert shrub steppe; Great Basin xeric mixed sagebrush shrubland; Sonora-Mojave mixed salt desert scrub; and Great Basin pinyon-juniper woodland.

3.4.2 Endangered, Threatened, State-Sensitive, and BLM-Sensitive Plant Species

No federally threatened or endangered plant species have been identified or are known to occur in the proposed land withdrawal area (Williams 2005). However, surveys conducted by Project biologists in the winter and spring of 2005 confirmed that the following nine BLM-sensitive plant species have been found within the proposed withdrawal area: the Eastwood milkweed (*Asclepias eastwoodiana*), Needle Mountains milkvetch (*Astragalus eurylobus*), Black woollypod (*Astragalus funereus*), Tonopah milkvetch (*Astragalus pseudiodanthus*), White River catseye (*Cryptantha welshii*), Tiehm blazingstar (*Mentzelia tiehmii*), Nevada dune beardtongue (*Penstemon arenarius*), Nye County Fishhook (*Sclerocactus nyensis*), and Schlesser pincushion (*Sclerocactus schlesseri*).

3.4.3 Wildlife

Wildlife within and near the proposed withdrawal area include game species such as bighorn sheep, mule deer, Gambel's quail, waterfowl, and pronghorn antelope. The proposed withdrawal area includes a number of designated wild horse and burro herd management areas (HMA) (BLM 1979; BLM 1997). Section 3.9, Land Use and Ownership includes additional information on HMAs located within the proposed land withdrawal area. Other wildlife include grey and kit fox, coyote, bobcat, badger, mountain lions, cottontail rabbit, black-tail jackrabbit, ring-tailed cat, numerous small rodent and ground squirrel species, migrating songbirds, shorebirds, raptors, and various reptiles and amphibians.

3.4.4 Endangered, Threatened, State-Sensitive, and BLM-Sensitive Wildlife Species

Biological surveys and correspondence with land management agencies and authorities have noted one threatened animal species, one endangered animal species, one candidate endangered species, and numerous BLM-sensitive animal species that may occur in or near the vicinity of the proposed withdrawal area.

The Mojave Desert tortoise (Mojave population of Gopherus agassizii) is the only species identified near of the proposed withdrawal area as threatened under the Endangered Species Act and by the State of Nevada. The Mojave Desert tortoise has been found along the southern end of the proposed land withdrawal area from approximately Beatty Wash to Yucca Mountain (DOE 2002). This area is not critical habitat for desert tortoises (50 CFR 17.95), and the number of tortoises in this area is low relative to other areas within the range of this species in Nevada. Detailed information on the Mojave Desert tortoise can be found in the Yucca Mountain FEIS (DOE 2002).

The Southwestern Willow Flycatcher, which is classified as endangered under the Endangered Species Act and by the State of Nevada, has been observed in dense stands of riparian vegetation

in Meadow Valley Wash in Lincoln County, and in Oasis Valley in southwest Nye County. There is potential habitat for the flycatcher along the Meadow Valley Wash area, which parallels the proposed withdrawal area, but no existing habitat has been confirmed inside the boundaries of the proposed withdrawal area (Brocoum 2000).

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, at least one nesting pair of yellow-billed cuckoos, a federal candidate species, was observed along the Meadow Valley Wash area, which parallels the proposed withdrawal area. Observation of the nesting pair within the boundaries of the proposed withdrawal area has not been confirmed.

Various BLM-sensitive wildlife species have been observed within the proposed withdrawal area, including the Southwestern (Arizona) toad (*Bufo microscaphus*); two fish species (i.e., Meadow Valley Wash speckled dace [*Rhinichthys osculus ssp.*] and Meadow Valley Wash desert sucker [*Catostomus clarki ssp.*]); and three bat species (i.e., the western small-footed myotis [*Myotis ciliolabrum*], fringed myotis [*Myotis thysanodes*], and western pipistrelle [*Pipistrellus Hesperus*]). The fringed myotis has been designated as protected by the State of Nevada (NAC 503.030).

3.5 WILDERNESS

Two designated wilderness areas and two wilderness study areas are located near the proposed land withdrawal area, but none fall within its boundaries. The wilderness areas include the Weepah Springs Wilderness Area and the Worthington Mountains Wilderness Area. The wilderness study areas include the South Reveille Wilderness Study Area and the Kawich Wilderness Study Area.

3.6 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural resources within and near the proposed withdrawal area were identified from surveys conducted for the Yucca Mountain FEIS (DOE 2002), a Class I literature search, site records review, and interviews with knowledgeable persons and organizations about historic and prehistoric resources of concern. Also, the maps and site records data documented in the Yucca Mountain FEIS and its supporting *Environmental Baseline File for Archaeological Resources* (CRWMS M&O 1999) provided an initial inventory of cultural resources.

The site records review identified 102 previously recorded prehistoric and historic-period archaeological sites and 75 isolated artifacts within the boundaries of the proposed withdrawal area. These sites and artifacts document the habitation of the region by Native American people for the past 12,000 to 13,000 years. The sites include rock-shelter camps, open-air camps, lithic scatters, rock-art sites, rock features, and special camps or extractive localities for gathering and processing specific resources (such e.g., as animals, plants, or tool stone). Of these sites, 15 were considered eligible or likely eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), 117 were determined to be not eligible (including all of the isolated artifacts), and the remaining sites have not yet been evaluated.

The site records review also identified 21 previously recorded historic-period archaeological sites and 11 isolated historic artifacts within the proposed land withdrawal area, documenting Euroamerican occupation of the region. Site types recorded in the proposed land withdrawal

area include ranch sites, trash dumps or scatters, a cemetery, railroad sites, campsites, mines or prospects, habitation sites, the town of Goldfield, a historic road, and isolated historic artifacts. Of these, the town of Goldfield and the Caliente Railroad Station are listed on the NRHP, 7 other historic sites have been determined eligible for inclusion on the NRHP, 19 have been determined ineligible for listing, and 4 are presently unevaluated.

Several contemporary Native American tribes and organizations have traditional ties to the lands traversed by the proposed withdrawal. Western Shoshone tribal subgroups have traditional ties to several major settlement areas including the Ogwe'pi district in Oasis Valley, near Beatty; the Piadoya district in the Kawich Range, Stone Cabin Valley, and Reveille Valley; the Lida-Goldfield area; and other historic settlement areas in Railroad Valley, Ralston Valley, and Hot Creek Valley. The Timbisha (Panamint) Shoshone have traditional ties to the Amargosa Valley and Sarcobatas Flat. Southern Paiute groups also have ties to the Amargosa Valley and vicinity of Yucca Mountain, and to the eastern part of the land withdrawal, in Pahranagat Valley/Pahroc Range and the Panaca/Meadow Valley Wash areas. Neighboring groups, such as the Owens Valley Paiute, may have visited parts of the proposed land withdrawal area frequently.

In consultation with the DOE and other federal agencies, these tribes and organizations have provided considerable information on their concerns about traditional and cultural values, including ancestral homelands and sites of religious and cultural significance (AIWS 2005). Among the areas along the BLM land withdrawal area considered to hold religious and cultural significance are the following:

- Black Cone, Crater Flat – A place of religious significance
- Oasis Valley, near Beatty – Major winter village settlement area, center of the Ogwe'pi district
- Beatty Wash petroglyphs – Rock art panels
- Willow Spring, east of Goldfield – Western Shoshone winter village of Matsum
- Rabbit Spring, Goldfield area – Major rockshelter camp
- Hawes Canyon, Stone Cabin Valley – Western Shoshone winter village of Hugwapagwa
- Warm Springs vicinity – Western Shoshone winter village
- Reveille Valley – Western Shoshone winter camp near Reveille Mill and Willow Witch Well petroglyphs
- Black Rock Spring, North Pahroc Range – Campsite
- Caliente area including Meadow Valley Wash and Clover Creek – Southern Paiute use of hot springs, rock shelters, rock-art sites, plants, and trails.

3.7 FLOODPLAINS AND WETLANDS

The proposed land withdrawal area crosses six floodplain areas in Lincoln and Nye Counties. Most of the proposed withdrawal area is characteristic of arid climates, and flood hazards can occur. Alluvial fan flash flooding is more common than typical riverbank overflow flooding because there are no perennial streams or rivers outside of the Caliente/Meadow Valley Wash area.

The proposed withdrawal area encompasses many small and a few large washes, springs and seeps, and wetlands. Although wetlands in Nevada cover a very small percentage of the total

land area, they correspond to comparatively high species diversity and provide vital habitat for wildlife.

3.8 SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The socioeconomic data collected for this section is incorporated by reference from the Yucca Mountain FEIS (DOE 2002) (updated as appropriate) and various federal, state, and community sources such as the 2000 U.S. Census, the State of Nevada Demographer's Office, State of Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs, and Nevada Small Business Development Center.

3.8.1 Population

The proposed land withdrawal area falls within three Nevada counties (i.e., Lincoln, Nye, and Esmeralda), but does not encompass any incorporated towns or cities. According to the State of Nevada Demographer's Office 2004 population estimates, Lincoln County has an approximate population of 3,822. Lincoln County is considered 100 percent rural and has a density of 0.4 people per square mile (U.S. Census Bureau 2005). The city of Caliente, the only incorporated city in Lincoln County, has a population of 1,014 (NSDO 2004).

Nye County, with a 2004 estimated population of 38,181, is the most populous county potentially affected by the proposed land withdrawal. Nye County has a population density of 1.8 people per square mile (U.S. Census Bureau 2005), with a majority of the population (55 percent) considered rural, according to population estimates from the State of Nevada Demographer's Office. The largest community in Nye County is unincorporated Pahrump, which is located outside the proposed land withdrawal area. Pahrump has an estimated population of 30,465, accounting for 80 percent of the county's population. Nye County is also includes the communities of Tonopah, Beatty, and Amargosa Valley, all of which are located near the proposed land withdrawal area. Tonopah is the most populated of these communities, with a population of 2,341 (NSDO 2004).

With an estimated 2004 population of 1,176, Esmeralda County is the least populated of the proposed land withdrawal area counties (NSDO 2004). Esmeralda is also the least densely populated, with a density of 0.3 people per square mile and is considered 100 percent rural. The community of Goldfield is located near the proposed land withdrawal area, and its 453 residents account for more than one-third of the county's population (NSDO 2004).

Southern Nevada has been and continues to be among the fastest-growing areas in the country (DOE 2002). The populations of Lincoln and Nye Counties increased from 1990 to 2000—Nye County by 81 and Lincoln County by 9 percent. However, the population of Esmeralda County decreased by 21 percent between 1990 and 2000. Table 2 presents a summary of population data.

Table 2. County and Community Populations 1990 – 2004

County, City/Community	1990[a] Population	2000 Population	2004 Population	1990-2000 Change (%)	2000-2004 Change (%)
Lincoln	3,810	4,165	3,822	9	-8
Caliente	1,120	1,123	1,014	1	-10
Nye	18,190	32,978	38,181	81	16
Tonopah	3,671	2,833	2,341	-23	-17
Amargosa	724	1,167	1,211	61	4
Beatty	1,662	1,152	981	-31	-15
Pahrump	7,430	24,235	30,465	226	26
Esmeralda	1,350	1,061	1,176	-21	11
Goldfield	672	424	453	-37	7

Source: NSDO 2004. [a] 1990 estimates were taken from U.S. Census.

Most of the proposed land withdrawal area counties are expected to grow through 2035. As indicated by data presented in the Yucca Mountain FEIS (DOE 2002), projections show that by 2035, the population of Nye County is expected to increase by more than 77 percent from 2000 levels. Lincoln County's population is also projected to increase by 33 percent during the same period. In contrast, the State of Nevada Demographer's Office projects that Esmeralda County's population will decrease by 193 residents from 2003 to 2024 (NSDO 2004).

3.8.2 Employment and Income

Among the three Nevada counties that contain portions of the proposed land withdrawal area, Esmeralda County has the fewest jobs, followed by Lincoln and Nye Counties. Table 3 shows at-place employment, or the number of jobs, by major industry for each of the three counties in 2002 and 2004.

Table 3. At-Place Employment by Industry Group from 2002 and 2004

Industry Group	2002			2004		
	Esmeralda County	Lincoln County	Nye County	Esmeralda County	Lincoln County	Nye County
Natural Resources and Mining	70	40	870	*	20	980
Construction	20	10	630	*	10	880
Manufacturing	0	10	180	0	*	220
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	10	190	1,230	20	230	1,580
Information	0	30	120	*	20	100
Financial Activities	0	50	240	0	50	280
Professional and Business Services	20	390	2,450	*	*	2,460
Educational and Health Services	0	10	440	0	20	480
Leisure and Hospitality	10	70	1,880	*	80	1,950
Other Services	0	30	200	*	10	200

Industry Group	2002			2004		
	Esmeralda County	Lincoln County	Nye County	Esmeralda County	Lincoln County	Nye County
Government	130	630	2,070	130	630	1,920
Total	250	1,450	10,300	240	1,300	11,050

Source: Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation

NOTES: * Figures are not published because they do not meet confidentiality requirements for disclosure. Detail may not add due to rounding.

The number of jobs declined between 2002 and 2004 in Esmeralda and Lincoln Counties but increased in Nye County. In Esmeralda County, jobs have declined steadily to the point where certain employment sectors in 2004 had too few jobs to report without compromising employer confidentiality. In Lincoln County, jobs have decreased steadily following a period of growth during the 1980s (DOE 2002). The relative importance of the natural resources and mining industry was small in 2002 and decreased even more during the 2002—2004 period. In 2002, natural resources and mining accounted for 3 percent of the total jobs in Lincoln County; whereas in 2004, they accounted for 2 percent.

Nye County had the greatest number of jobs among the three counties within the proposed land withdrawal area and was the only county to show job growth during the period. In 2002, Nye County had 86 percent of the jobs among the three counties, and this share increased to 88 percent in 2004. Professional and business services, leisure and hospitality, and government industries account for most jobs in Nye County. In 2004, these industries accounted for 22 percent, 18 percent, and 17 percent of the county's total jobs, respectively; and collectively, they accounted for 57 percent of the total jobs. The natural resources and mining industry, by contrast, accounted for 9 percent of the jobs in Nye County in 2004. Construction, trade, transportation, utilities, and manufacturing were the fastest growing industries in Nye County during the period with job increases of 40 percent, 28 percent, and 22 percent, respectively, in the 2-year period.

The labor market experienced trends similar to those of at-place employment in Esmeralda, Lincoln, and Nye Counties between 2002 and 2004. Overall, the labor market decreased in Esmeralda and Lincoln Counties, but increased in Nye County. In Esmeralda County, however, the number of unemployed residents decreased at a slower rate than the overall labor force, which resulted in a decrease in the unemployment rate during the period. A similar trend occurred in Nye County. In 2002, the unemployment rate was more than 7 percent in those two jurisdictions, above the state and national unemployment rates of 5.6 percent and 5.8 percent, respectively. In 2004, unemployment decreased in Esmeralda and Nye Counties, becoming more consistent with statewide and national levels. By contrast, Lincoln County experienced the greatest decline in its overall labor force, but the decrease in unemployment was slower. Therefore, while the labor force was shrinking in Lincoln County, more persons became unemployed, resulting in an unemployment rate increase from 5 percent in 2002 to 5.5 percent in 2004. Tables 4 and 5 provide these labor market data.

Table 4. Labor Force Trends 2002 – 2004

Geographic Area	2002				2004			
	Labor Force	Employ-ment	Unemploy-ment	Unemploy-mate Rate (%)	Labor Force	Employ-ment	Unemploy-ment	Unemploy-mate Rate (%)
Esmeralda County	473	440	34	7.1	440	416	24	5.6
Lincoln County	1,759	1,672	88	5.0	1,543	1,459	85	5.5
Nye County	14,751	13,677	1,074	7.3	15,438	14,546	892	5.8
Nevada	1,124,600	1,061,900	62,000	5.6	1,177,500	1,126,300	51,000	4.3
United States				5.8				5.5

Source: Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation

Table 5. Percent Change in Labor Force, Employment and Unemployment: 2002 – 2004

Geographic Area	2002-2004 Percent Change		
	Labor Force (%)	Employment (%)	Unemployment (%)
Esmeralda County	-7.0	-5.5	-29.4
Lincoln County	-12.3	-12.7	-3.4
Nye County	4.7	6.4	-16.9
Nevada	4.7	6.1	-17.8

Source: Calculated based on data contained in Table 4

Table 6 provides total personal income data for the three counties and comparative data for Nevada. Table 7 provides per capita personal income data for the three counties and comparative figures for Nevada and the United States.

Table 6. Total Personal Income (in thousands $)

Area name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2000-2003 % Change
Esmeralda Co.	$23,703	$24,612	$24,976	$25,079	5.8
Lincoln Co.	$77,548	$78,228	$84,251	$88,303	13.9
Nye Co.	$796,770	$824,353	$853,327	$922,748	15.8
Nevada	$61,427,864	$64,367,499	$66,903,994	$71,549,422	16.5

Source: BEA 2005

Note: Total Personal Income equals the total value of income received by, or on behalf of, all residents in a particular area.

Table 7. Per Capita Personal Income

Area name	2000	2001	2002	2003	2000-2003 % Change
Esmeralda Co.	$24,411	$25,799	$27,875	$29,435	20.6
Lincoln Co.	$18,561	$18,737	$19,889	$20,641	11.2
Nye Co.	$24,201	$24,409	$24,653	$25,752	6.4
Nevada	$30,437	$30,721	$30,855	$31,910	4.8
United States	$29,845	$30,575	$30,804	$31,472	5.5

Source: BEA 2005

Total personal income increased in Lincoln and Nye counties commensurate with total personal income statewide. In Esmeralda County, however, total personal income increased substantially less (Table 6). When normalized with population, however, Esmeralda County far outpaced the other areas in per capita income growth during the period—more than 20 percent between 2000 and 2003 (Table 7). Per capita income in all three counties within the proposed land withdrawal increased more than did average per capita income in either the State of Nevada or the United States overall. This change reflects real increases in total personal income and less population growth in these areas.

3.9 LAND USE AND OWNERSHIP

The proposed withdrawal of land applies only to public lands administered by the BLM. Private, U.S. Air Force, and Native American lands are not considered under this action. Nonetheless, lands located within the boundary of the proposed land withdrawal area comprise of 91.3 percent public land managed by the Ely, Battle Mountain, and Las Vegas BLM Nevada Field Offices; 3.7 percent of land administered by the U.S. Department of Defense, within the Nevada Test and Training Range; 1.8 percent of land administered by the DOE within the Nevada Test Site; 2.7 percent of privately owned land interspersed within the boundaries of the proposed withdrawal area; and 0.5 percent of Native American lands (Figure 5). The BLM manages its lands pursuant to applicable land use plans, laws, regulations, and policy. Activities that occur in the proposed land withdrawal area include, but are not limited to, mining, grazing, and recreation. The BLM also grants ROWs, easements, licenses, leases, and special use permits.

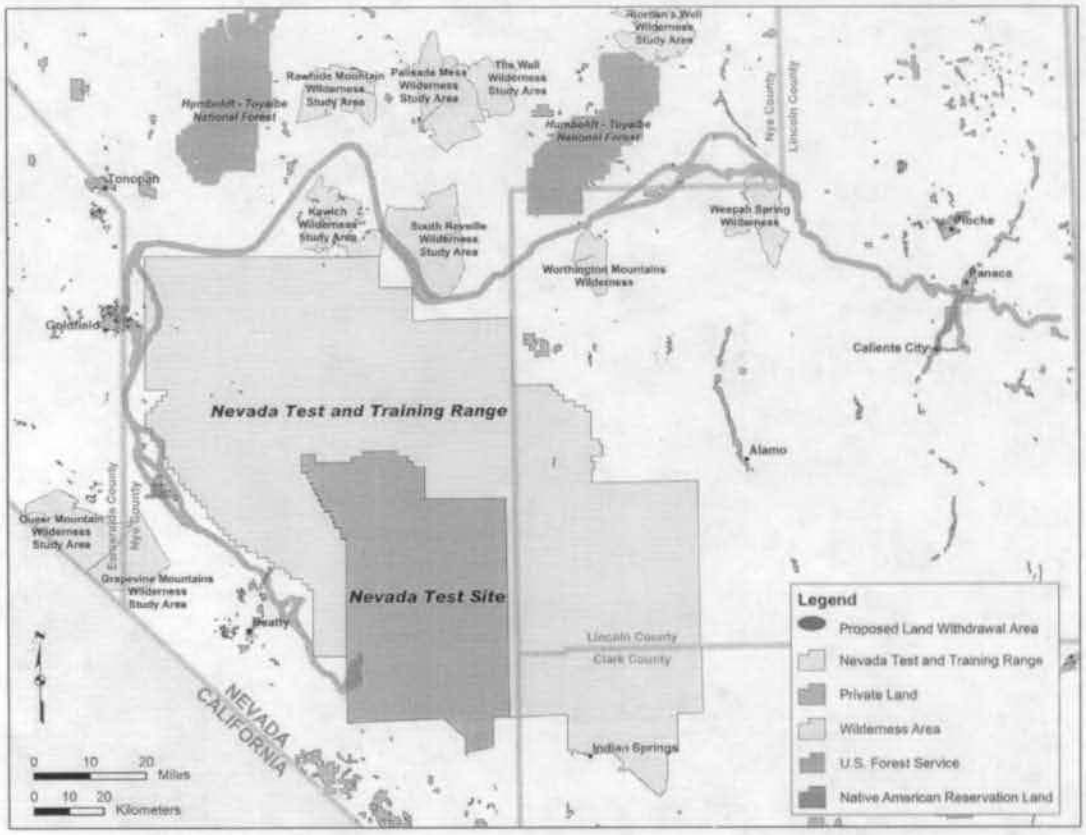

Figure 5. Land Ownership of the Proposed Land Withdrawal Area

The eastern portion of the proposed withdrawal area (defined for the purposes of this EA as the area from Caliente City to Golden Gate Range), located in Lincoln and Nye Counties, is primarily used for grazing, wild horse herd management, and ranching. This portion of the proposed land withdrawal area includes 25 BLM grazing allotments, with 20 permittees and seven BLM wild horse HMAs. This part of the proposed withdrawal area is near ROWs for nine telecommunication lines, seven pipelines, and three electrical transmission lines, and crosses four pipeline ROWs.

The eastern portion of the land withdrawal area is near three mining areas and six mining districts. Of these mining areas and districts, the proposed land withdrawal area includes a portion of the Seaman Range Mining District and abuts the Chief Mining District; these areas are identified in Table 1. The proposed land withdrawal area includes a small in-holding of private land where a local, world-renowned artist has developed a massive modern art sculpture entitled *City*.

The central portion of the proposed land withdrawal area (Quinn Canyon area to the Goldfield area), located in Nye and Esmeralda Counties, is primarily used for grazing, wild horse herd management, and mining activities. This area includes six BLM grazing allotments with six permittees and four BLM wild horse HMAs. The central portion is in the vicinity of 14 mining districts and one mining area; these areas are identified in Table 1. The proposed withdrawal area includes a portion of the Quinn Canyon, Frieberg, Tybo, Clifford, and Goldfield Mining

districts, and a portion of the Reveille Valley Mining area. The area abuts the Queen City and Golden Arrow Mining districts. In addition, land uses near the proposed land withdrawal area, but not within its boundaries, include recreation in the Reveille Range and South Reveille Wilderness Study Area; a number of private ranches, small towns, and abandoned and current mining operations are also within the vicinity of the proposed withdrawal area. The central portion of the proposed land withdrawal area is adjacent to the northern boundary of the Nevada Test and Training Range through Ralston Valley. The proposed land withdrawal area is in the vicinity of ROWs for nine pipelines and six electrical transmission lines and crosses two utility corridors.

The western portion of the proposed land withdrawal area (defined as the area from Stonewall Mountain to Yucca Mountain), located in Nye and Esmeralda Counties, is primarily used for mining, grazing, and wild horse herd management. This section of the proposed land withdrawal area includes two BLM grazing allotments with one lease, and two BLM wild horse HMAs. The western portion of the proposed land withdrawal area is in the vicinity of seven mining districts, previously identified in Table 1. Of these areas, the proposed land withdrawal area includes a portion of the Stonewall, Wagner, Clarkdale, and Bare Mountain Mining Districts, and abuts a portion of the Cuprite and Bullfrog Mining Districts.

Much of the western proposed land withdrawal area would cross BLM-designated utility corridors. The western proposed land withdrawal area is near ROWs for five electrical transmission lines and one telecommunications line, and crosses the transmission line ROWs at four locations.

Because the proposed land withdrawal area is based upon the Caliente Corridor as described in the Yucca Mountain FEIS (DOE 2002), the proposed land withdrawal area, depicted in Figure 5, transects a portion of Timbisha Shoshone tribal trust lands near Scotty's Junction tribal area. These tribal lands, however, are not subject to withdrawal under the proposed action. Currently, this land area is uninhabited, although the tribe plans to use this tract for single-family residences and small-scale economic development (DOI 2000).

4. ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

This section describes the potential environmental consequences of the proposed action and alternatives. The proposed withdrawal of lands from surface entry and the location of new mining claims, subject to valid existing rights, is administrative in nature and would not directly or indirectly impact natural and cultural resources. In addition, any DOE activities on the withdrawn land would be limited to casual use activities, which would not cause appreciable damage or disturbance to natural or cultural resources. Potential impacts of a 10- or 20-year withdrawal are discussed below.

4.1 MINERAL RESOURCES

4.1.1 Alternative 1

Under Alternative 1 (proposed land withdrawal for 20 years), the development of mineral deposits on the existing 915 mining claims within the boundaries of the proposed land withdrawal would be allowed under existing BLM mining regulations. Access to existing

mining claims (patented and unpatented) would not be restricted. Discretionary oil and gas leasing and saleable mineral activities authorized under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 would not be affected by this action. Patented mining claims would not be affected because they are considered private property and are not subject to withdrawal. Therefore, no impacts would occur to claim holders with existing mining claims or to existing and future mineral lease holders.

This alternative would prevent the staking of new mining claims within the proposed withdrawal area for a 20-year period. Although it is recognized that mineral exploration and development is strongly tied to the price of mineral commodities, foreseeable impacts to mining from the proposed withdrawal are considered negligible for the following reasons:

- The mineral commodities identified within the proposed withdrawal area are no more unique or valuable than the mineral commodities found outside the boundaries of the proposed withdrawal area.
- The number of mining claims within the corridor is approximately one percent of the total number of claims within the State of Nevada.
- Exploration and development of mineral deposits on existing claims would continue and would be unaffected by the withdrawal.
- Given the historically low number of notices and plans filed on existing mining claims within the withdrawal area, the impact of the withdrawal on mining would be negligible and temporary, possibly preventing the filing of only several notices and plans per year.
- The total revenues received per year from mining in the three affected counties is $350,131,000, or less than 11% of the State of Nevada's total. During the withdrawal period the continued production of these revenues would not be affected. Also, during the withdrawal period, new production sources can be developed from any mining claims in existence prior to December 2003, the date of the DOE's application for the PLO and the effective date of the land segregation.

4.1.2 Alternative 2 (Preferred Alternative)

The impacts from Alternative 2 would be the same as those described under Alternative 1, except that the time period of potential impact would be reduced from 20 years to 10 years.

4.1.3 Alternative 3 (No-Action Alternative)

Under Alternative 3, the temporary land segregation would end December 29, 2005, and the prohibition on surface entry and the location of new mining claims would be terminated. The location of new mining claims and the associated development of mineral commodities would no longer be limited. Under the No-Action alternative, mining activities could potentially create a number of adverse impacts to environmental resources.

4.2 WATER RESOURCES AND AIR QUALITY

Water resources would not be affected because the withdrawal of lands for 10 or 20 years would not use water resources, nor would casual use activities appreciably disturb or damage the land and impact surface and groundwater resources. Air quality would not be affected because these activities would not substantially increase emissions sources.

Under the No-Action alternative, the public lands would not be withdrawn and public lands would continue to be managed pursuant to BLM RMPs.

4.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Biological resources would not be affected by the withdrawal of public lands for 10 or 20 years, nor would DOE casual use activities appreciably disturb or damage the land and impact biological resources.

Under the No-Action, the public lands would not be withdrawn and public lands would continue to be managed pursuant to BLM RMPs.

4.4 WILDERNESS

Wilderness would not be affected because no wilderness areas or wilderness study areas would be withdrawn under the proposed 10 or 20-year withdrawal. Wilderness areas would not be impacted by casual use activities because no such activities would take place within the boundaries of wilderness areas or wilderness study areas.

Under the No-Action alternative, wilderness areas or wilderness study areas would not be affected because the status quo of these areas would remain the same.

4.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural resources would not be affected by the withdrawal of public lands for 10 or 20 years, nor would DOE casual use activities appreciably disturb or damage the land and impact cultural resources.

Under the No-Action alternative, the public lands would not be withdrawn and public lands would continue to be managed pursuant to BLM RMPs.

4.6 FLOODPLAINS AND WETLANDS

Floodplain and wetland resources would not be affected by the withdrawal of public lands for 10 or 20 years, nor would DOE casual use activities appreciably disturb or damage the land and impact these resources.

Under the No-Action alternative, the public lands would not be withdrawn and public lands would continue to be managed pursuant to BLM RMPs.

4.7 SOCIOECONOMIC

4.7.1 Alternative 1

Under Alternative 1 (proposed land withdrawal for 20 years), the economic activities associated with the development and production of mineral commodities on the existing 915 mining claims within the boundaries of the proposed land withdrawal would not be impacted. In 2004, the three affected counties (Esmeralda, Lincoln, and Nye) receive $350,131,000 in total revenues from mining, which is less than 11% of the State of Nevada's total. During the withdrawal period the production of these revenues would continue because the proposed withdrawal recognizes valid existing rights. Also, during the withdrawal period, new production sources could be developed from any mining claims in existence prior to December 2003, the date of the DOE's application for the PLO and the effective date of the land segregation. In addition, economic activities associated with discretionary oil and gas leasing and saleable mineral activities authorized under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 would not be affected by this action. Therefore, no economic impacts would occur to claim holders with existing mining claims or to existing and future mineral lease holders.

The DOE recognizes the importance of the mining industry in rural Nevada and recognizes that restricting the location of new mining claims for a 20-year period could have potential impacts to local economies and employment in the surrounding communities. Although new mining claims cannot be filed during the withdrawal period, it is the preclusion of development of these non-realized claims that could have potential economic consequences.

The economic consequence from precluding a claimant to stake a new mining and the potential of that claim to lead to the development of mineral commodities through the filing of a notice or plan with the BLM is expected to be minimal. Over the past 20 years, there have been many fluctuations in the price of gold. However, very few plans and notices have been filed in relation to the total number of claims present within the proposed withdrawal area. For example, from 2000 to 2005 (assuming that most of the claims present in 2003 still exist) there have been approximately 1000 mining claims present within the proposed withdrawal area; however, there have only been 10 notices or plans filed with the BLM during this period. Additionally, there have been only 5 years when more than 10 notices or plans were filed with the BLM. The number of notices and plans represent a very low level of actual mining activity. Further, the filing of notices and plans does not necessarily mean that an economic deposit has been found and that mining will soon commence; only some filings result in an actual mining operation.

Since the withdrawal does not affect a claimant's ability to file plans and notices for existing claims, it is reasonable to expect that some notices and plans would likely be filed during the withdrawal period on claims filed prior to December 2003, the date of the DOE's application. Likewise, it is be reasonable to assume that of the mining claims that would have been filed were it not for the withdrawal, may have resulted in a small number of filed notices and plans, and of those, fewer still would be developed. Given the historically low number of notices and plans filed, it is reasonable to expect that even with an increase in the price of minerals, the impact of the withdrawal on mining would be negligible and temporary, perhaps preventing the filing of only several notices and plans per year.

No disproportionately high and adverse affects on minority populations, low-income populations, and Indian tribes are expected.

4.7.2 Alternative 2 (Preferred Alternative)

The potential socioeconomic impacts associated with Alternative 2 would be the same as those associated with Alternative 1, except that the time period for potential impact would be reduced by one-half, for a total of 10 years. Any potential economic impacts under the 10-year withdrawal period would be of lesser extent and degree than the 20-year withdrawal. No disproportionately high and adverse affects on minority populations, low-income populations, and Indian tribes are expected.

4.7.3 Alternative 3 (No-Action Alternative)

Under Alternative 3, surface entry and the location of new mining claims could occur after December 29, 2005. Development of potential available mineral commodities, although not know with any certainty, would no longer be limited. This alternative could result in short-term increase in employment as the area would be open to future mineral exploration and production. New claims could increase local sales from annual assessment work; however, based on the information provided above, it is anticipated that the No-Action alternative would also have negligible socioeconomic impacts.

4.8 LAND USE AND OWNERSHIP

4.8.1 Alternative 1

Alternative 1 would have a negligible impact on land use and ownership within the proposed land withdrawal area. Current land uses (e.g., grazing, herd management, and existing mining activities) would continue without interference from the land withdrawal process or the casual use activities conducted by the DOE. Although the proposed action would prevent location of new mining claims and public land sales for the duration of the proposed land withdrawal, it does not restrict the BLM from granting new ROWs, and other easements, leases, licenses, and/or special use permits. Consequently, the land withdrawal would not impact current ROWs or pending ROW applications, including those for utility corridors, water pipelines, and wind generation development.

Recent legislation such as the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act and other development plans by both counties and tribes in the area are evidence of growing interest in developing rural Nevada. At this time, no known conflicts exist between the proposed land withdrawal and other public land sales or development plans.

4.8.2 Alternative 2 (Preferred Alternative)

The potential land use and ownership impacts associated with Alternative 2 would be the same as those associate with Alternative 1, except that the time period for potential impact would be reduced by one-half, for a total of 10 years. Any potential impacts to land use would be of a lesser degree and extent than the 20-year withdrawal.

4.8.3 Alternative 3 (No-Action Alternative)

Under the No-Action Alternative, surface entry and the location of new mining claims could occur after December 29, 2005. Under the no-action alternative, land ownership and use changes could occur. These changes would be reasonably expected from mining activities; however, as previously stated, the potential for future mining activity in the withdrawal area is estimated to be low. This alternative would likely have no impacts on land use and ownership within the proposed land withdrawal area.

4.9 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The proposal to withdraw lands from surface entry and the location of new mining claims, under any alternative, and to conduct activities defined as casual use would not cause appreciable damage or disturbance to the land and thus, would not result in cumulative impacts with other past, present, and proposed activities or plans. Cumulative impacts to the economy would be negligible because the amount of land withdrawn is small in comparison to the surrounding area available for mineral development.

5. CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

5.1 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Upon the DOE's submission of the proposed land withdrawal application, the BLM announced receipt of the application in a *Notice of Proposed Withdrawal* (68 FR 74965) and initiated a public comment period. Comments that BLM received regarding the segregation and proposed land withdrawal were considered during the preparation of the EA.

In a letter dated July 7, 2005, the DOE notified the Governor of Nevada of its intent to prepare an EA for the proposed withdrawal of public lands. On August 29, 2005, the DOE announced the availability of the *Draft EA for the Proposed Withdrawal of Public Lands Within and Surrounding the Caliente Rail Corridor, Nevada* (Draft EA), initiated a public comment period, and announced public meetings in the *Federal Register* (70 FR 51029). On the same day, a copy of the Draft EA was provided to the Governor of Nevada and to Affected Units of Local Government. Postcards announcing the public comment period and public meetings were mailed to 3,200 interested parties identified on DOE and BLM mailing lists.

The comment period extended from August 29, 2005, through September 28, 2005. As part of the public comment period, the DOE held three public meetings on September 12, 13, and 15, in Amargosa Valley, Goldfield, and Caliente, Nevada, respectively. The meetings were open to the public.

In addition to the three public meetings, on September 14, 2005 in Las Vegas, Nevada, the DOE met with tribal representatives from 17 Native American organizations through the Yucca Mountain Native American Interaction Program on the EA.

5.2 PUBLIC COMMENTS

The DOE received a total of 441 comments during the 30-day public comment period for the Draft EA. Comments were received from a variety of commentors, including the State of Nevada; Lincoln, Nye, and Esmeralda counties; tribal representatives; mining and grazing associations; community members; and other interested parties. The DOE reviewed and responded to all comments received (see Appendix B), and in response to the comments, made enhancements and corrections to the EA, as appropriate.

The majority of the comments received were related to mineral and energy resources, the NEPA process, and socioeconomic issues. In addition, the DOE received many comments that were not directly related to the scope of the Draft EA but, rather, pertained to the development of a potential rail line to a geologic repository at Yucca Mountain. These comments, which address issues such as rail alignments, routes, construction, operation, and maintenance, will be forwarded to the appropriate DOE manager and considered during the preparation of the Rail Alignment EIS. Table 8 lists the comment categories and the number of comments received in each category. DOE's specific responses to the issues raised in the public comments are provided in Appendix B.

Table 8. List of Commentor Categories and Number of Comments Received

Categories	Comments Received
1. Air Quality	7
2. Alternatives	21
3. Biological Resources	6
4. Cultural Resources	20
5. Editorial	7
6. Floodplains and Wetlands	4
7. Grazing	5
8. Impacts (General)	6
9. Impacts (Cumulative)	5
10. Land Use and Ownership	35
11. Mineral and Energy Resources	44
12. Native American Tribal Concerns	10
13. NEPA Process	49
14. Proposed Action	37
15. Recreation	3
16. Socioeconomic/Environmental Justice	47
17. Support for Proposed Action	12
18. Water Resources	12
19. Wilderness Areas	3
20. Related to Rail Alignment EIS	80
21. Out of Scope	28
Total	441

5.3 AGENCIES CONSULTED

The following agencies were consulted during the preparation of this EA:

- BLM, Nevada State Office
- BLM, Ely Field Office
- U.S. Department of Interior, Office of the Solicitor

6. REFERENCES

6.1 DOCUMENTS CITED

AIWS (American Indian Writers Subgroup) 2005. American Indian Perspectives on the Proposed Rail Alignment Environmental Impact Statement for the U.S. Department of Energy's Yucca Mountain Project. Las Vegas, Nevada: Consolidated Group of Tribes and Organizations.

BEA (Bureau of Economic Analysis) 2005. "CA1-3 – Personal Income Summary Estimates—Nye County, NV, Lincoln County, NV, and Esmeralda County, NV (Thousands of Dollars)." Bureau of Economic Analysis, Local Area Annual Estimates. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Economic Analysis. Accessed November 9, 2005.
URL: http://www.bea.gov/bea/regional/reis/drill.cfm?table

BLM (Bureau of Land Management) 1979. Final Environmental Statement, Proposed Domestic Livestock Grazing Management Program for the Caliente Area. INT FES 79-44. Las Vegas, Nevada: Bureau of Land Management. ACC: MOL.20010730.0394.

BLM (Bureau of Land Management) 1985. Rights-Of-Way Management, BLM Manual H-2801-1. Washington DC: U.S. Bureau of Land Management. TIC: 222475

BLM (Bureau of Land Management) 1997. Tonopah Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision. Tonopah, Nevada: U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management. ACC: MOL.20050418.0038.

Brocoum, S. 2000. "Biological Assessment of the Effects of Construction, Operation and Monitoring, and Closure of a Geologic Repository at Yucca Mountain, Nevada," Letter from S. Brocoum (DOE/YMSCO) to R.D. Williams (DOI), April 24, 2000, with enclosures. ACC: MOL.20000605.0309.

CRWMS M&O 1999. *Environmental Baseline File: Archaeological Resources.* B00000000-01717-5705-00122 REV 00. Las Vegas, Nevada: CRWMS M&O. ACC: MOL.19990302.0187.

DOE (U.S. Department of Energy) 2002. *Final Environmental Impact Statement for a Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada.* DOE/EIS-0250. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management. ACC: MOL.20020524.0314; MOL.20020524.0315; MOL.20020524.0316; MOL.20020524.0317; MOL.20020524.0318; MOL.20020524.0319; MOL.20020524.0320.

DOI (U.S. Department of the Interior) 2000. *Final Legislative Environmental Impact Statement, Timbisha Shoshone Homeland.* Three volumes. San Francisco, California: U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service. ACC: MOL.20020222.0024.

Driesner, D. and Coyner, A. 2004. *Major Mines of Nevada 2003, Mineral Industries in Nevada's Economy.* Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology Special Publication P-15. Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada, Reno, Mackay School of Mines.

Driesner, D. and Coyner, A. 2005. *Major Mines of Nevada 2004, Mineral Industries in Nevada's Economy.* Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology Special Publication P-16. Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada, Reno, Mackay School of Mines.

Energy Information Administration, 2005. Nevada Natural Gas Production. URL: http://tonto.eia.doe.gov/dnav/ng/hist/na1160_snv_2a.htm.

Kleinhampl, F.J. and Ziony, J.I. 1985. *Geology of Northern Nye County, Nevada.* Bulletin 99A. Reno, Nevada: Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology, University of Nevada Reno. ACC: MOL.20050725.0382.

NatureServe 2004. *Landcover Descriptions for The Southwest Regional Gap Analysis Project.* [Arlington, Virginia]: NatureServe. TIC: 257833.

NBAQP (Nevada Bureau of Air Quality Planning) 2003. "State of Nevada, Bureau of Air Quality Planning Trend Report, 2003." Carson City, Nevada: State of Nevada, Division of Environmental Protection. Accessed: October 27, 2005. URL: http://www.ndep.nv.gov/TrndRpt/INDEX.html

NBMG (Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology) 2003. *The Nevada Mineral Industry 2003.* Special Publication MI-2003. Reno, Nevada: Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology.

NDWR (Nevada Division of Water Resources) [n.d.]. Nevada State Water Plan. Carson City, Nevada: Nevada Division of Water Planning, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. ACC: MOL.20050714.0439.

Nevada Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation 2005. "2002 Nevada Labor Force Summary Data." Carson City, Nevada: Nevada Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation, Research & Analysis Bureau. Accessed: November 9, 2005. URL: http://www.nevadaworkforce.com/cgi/databrowsing/?PAGEID=4&SUBID=162

Nevada Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation 2005. "2004 Nevada Labor Force Summary Data." Carson City, Nevada: Nevada Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation, Research & Analysis Bureau. Accessed: November 9, 2005. URL: http://www.nevadaworkforce.com/cgi/databrowsing/?PAGEID=4&SUBID=162

Nevada Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation 2005. "2002 Nevada Small County Industrial Employment Summary" Carson City, Nevada: Nevada Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation, Research & Analysis Bureau. Accessed: November 9, 2005. URL: http://www.nevadaworkforce.com/cgi/databrowsing/?PAGEID=4&SUBID=162

Nevada Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation 2005. "2004 Nevada Small County Industrial Employment Summary" Carson City, Nevada: Nevada Department of Employment, Training & Rehabilitation, Research & Analysis Bureau. Accessed: November 9, 2005. URL: http://www.nevadaworkforce.com/cgi/databrowsing/?PAGEID=4&SUBID=162

Nevada Department of Taxation 2005. "2004-05 Net Proceeds of Minerals, Based on 2004 Calendar Year Report." Carson City, Nevada: Division of Assessment Standards.

NSDO (Nevada State Demographer's Office) 2004. "Nevada County Population Estimates July 1, 1986 to July 1, 2004 Includes Cities and Towns." Reno, Nevada: Nevada State Demographer's Office. ACC: MOL.20050420.0233.

Shevenell, L., and L.J. Garside, 2003. *Nevada Geothermal Resources*. Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology interactive online map, Scale 1:750,000, 2003, Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology. URL: http://www.nbmg.unr.edu/geothermal/gtmap.pdf.

Tingley, J.V. 1998. *Mining Districts of Nevada.* 2nd Edition. Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology Report 47. Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada, Reno, Mackay School of Mines. TIC: 235037.

Tschanz, C.M. and Pampeyan, E.H. 1970. Geology and Mineral Deposits of Lincoln County, Nevada. Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology Bulletin 73. Reno, Nevada: University of Nevada, Reno, Mackay School of Mines. TIC: 232876.

U.S. Bureau of Census 2005. "Nevada QuickFacts, Lincoln County, Nevada." Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Census. Accessed April 7, 2005. ACC: MOL.20050505.0095.
URL: http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/32/32017.html

U.S. Bureau of Census 2005. "Nevada QuickFacts, Nye County, Nevada." Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Census. Accessed April 7, 2005. ACC: MOL.20050505.0097.
URL: http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/32/32023.html

USU (Utah State University) 1996. NVLNDCVU contains polygon features of Nevada Land Use/Land cover. Nevada GAP Analysis Project. NVLNDCVU. Submittal date: 01/21/1999. ACC: MO9901COV97208.000

Williams, R. D, 2005. "Species List for U.S. Department of Energy Rail Line from Near Caliente, Lincoln County, Nevada to Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada." Letter from R.D. Williams (FWS) to R. Sweeney (DOE), March 18, 2005.

Workman, J.B., et al., 2002. *Geologic map of the Death Valley Ground-Water Model Area, Nevada and California.* Miscellaneous Field Studies Map MF-2381-A. U.S. Geological Survey. TIC: 252906

6.2 CODES, STANDARDS, REGULATIONS, AND PROCEDURES

10 CFR Part 1021. 1992. U.S. Department of Energy. "National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures." Readily available.

36 CFR Part 800. 2005. Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. "Protection of Historic Properties." Readily available.

40 CFR Parts 1500-1508. 1984. Council on Environmental Quality. "Regulations for Implementation the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969." Readily available.

43 CFR Part 2300. 1981. U.S. Department of the Interior. "Land Withdrawals." Readily available.

50 CFR 17.95. 1997. U.S. Fish and Wildlife. "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants – Critical Habitat." Readily available.

68 FR 74965. December 29, 2003. *Federal Register*. "Notice of Proposed Withdrawal and Opportunity for Public Meetings, Nevada"

70 FR 51029. August 29, 2005. *Federal Register*. "Notice of Availability of the Environmental Assessment Supporting the Department of Energy's Application to the Department of the Interior for a Public Land Order To Withdraw Public Lands Within and Around the Caliente Rail Corridor, Nevada, From Surface Entry and New Mining Claims"

Carey Act. 43 U.S.C. 641. Readily available.

Endangered Species Act of 1973. 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq. Readily available.

Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. 43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq. Readily available.

General Mining Law of 1872. 30 U.S.C. 22 et. seq. Readily available.

Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act. Pub.L.108-424. Readily available.

Mineral Leasing Act of 1920. 30 U.S.C. 181 et seq. Readily available.

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. 42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq. Readily available.

National Historic Preservation Act. 16 U.S.C. 470 et seq. Readily available.

Nevada Administrative Code 503.030. Hunting, Fishing and Trapping; Miscellaneous Protective Measures, Protected, Threatened, and Sensitive Species. Readily available.

Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982. 42 U.S.C. 10101 et seq. Readily available.

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Affected Units of Local Government–The local unit of government with jurisdiction over the site of a repository or a monitored retrievable storage facility. This term may, at the discretion of the Secretary of Energy, include units of local government that are contiguous with such unit. For the proposed Yucca Mountain repository, the affected units of local government are Nye County, which has jurisdiction over the repository site and counties contiguous to Nye County (that is, Clark, Lincoln, White Pine, Eureka, Lander, Churchill, Mineral, and Esmeralda Counties in Nevada and Inyo County in California).

Casual Use–Any short-term noncommercial activity that does not cause appreciable disturbance or damage to the public lands, their resources or improvements, and is not prohibited by closure of the lands to such activities (BLM Manual, 2801.48A2d). Casual use does not include any drilling or ditching operations.

Leasable Minerals–Minerals whose extraction from federal land requires a lease and the payment of royalties. Leasable minerals include coal, oil, gas, oil shale, tar sands, potash, phosphate, sodium, and geothermal steam.

Locatable Minerals–Metallic and certain nonmetallic minerals that occur in such quantity and quality that they can be produced at a profit when mined. Common valuable metallic minerals are gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, molybdenum, and uranium. Locatable nonmetallic minerals or rocks include quartz, limestone, dolomite, and talc.

Lode Claim–A mining claim located for "veins or lodes of quartz or other rock in place" (30 U.S.C. 23). Lode claims may extend for 1,500 feet along the strike of the vein or lode and to a maximum of 300 feet on either side of the vein or lode.

Mining Claim–A parcel of public land that a miner holds for mining purposes having acquired the right of possession by complying with the Mining Law of 1872, as amended and local laws and rules. There are four categories of mining claims: lode, placer, millsite, and tunnel site.

Mining Claim Location–The staking and recordation of a lode or placer claim, mill sites, or tunnel site on public land. A location is one that is properly located, recorded, and maintained under Section 314 of FLPMA, and the mining laws of the state where the claim or site is located.

Mining District–An area usually designated by name with described or understood boundaries where minerals are found and mined under rules prescribed by the miners, consistent with the General Mining Law of 1872.

Paleozoic Era–A geologic era extending from the end of the Precambrian era to the beginning of the Mesozoic era, dating from about 600 to 230 million years ago.

Patented Claim–One in which the federal government has passed its title to the claimant, making it private land. A patented claim gives the claimant title to the locatable minerals and the title to the surface based upon discovery of a valuable mineral deposit.

Placer Claim–All forms of deposits except veins of quartz or other rock in place, typically found in stream or river gravel deposits.

Unclassifiable Area– Designated by the U.S. EPA, any area that cannot be classified on the basis of available information as meeting or not meeting the national primary or secondary ambient air quality standard for that pollutant. Unclassifiable areas are treated as attainment areas under the Clean Air Act.

Unpatented Claim–A parcel of federal land that, pursuant to the General Mining Law of 1872 and applicable regulations, has been identified by a member of the public as potentially containing a valuable mineral deposit. The staking of an unpatented mining claim provides the claimant with the right to occupy the land within the boundaries of the claim while searching for valuable minerals.

Surface Entry–Surface entry means appropriation of any non-federal interest or claim (other than mining claims), land sales, BLM land exchanges, state selections, Desert Land Entries, Indian Allotments, Carey Act selections or any other like public land disposal action. These actions, generated by BLM, may lead to title of the land leaving the United States. Surface entry does not include ROWs, granted pursuant to Title V of FLPMA, and other easements, leases, licenses, and/or use permits.

APPENDIX B

PUBLIC COMMENT AND RESPONSE DOCUMENT

APPENDIX C

NOTICE OF PROPOSED WITHDRAWAL (68 FR 74965)

preliminary issues concerning the 2004–05 migratory bird hunting regulations for discussion and review by the Flyway Councils at their March meetings.

In accordance with Departmental policy regarding meetings of the Service Regulations Committee attended by any person outside the Department, these meetings are open to public observation. Members of the public may submit written comments on the matters discussed to the Director.

Dated: December 2, 2003.

Paul R. Schmidt,

Assistant Director, Migratory Birds and State Programs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. 03–31852 Filed 12–24–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–55–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[CO–03–840–1610–241A]

Canyons of the Ancients National Monument Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (FACA), the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Canyons of the Ancients National Monument (Monument) Advisory Committee (Committee), will meet as directed below.

DATES: Meetings will be held January 27th, February 17th, March 9th, March 30th, and April 13th, 2004 at the Anasazi Heritage Center in Dolores, Colorado at 9 a.m. The public comment period for each meeting will begin at approximately 2:30 p.m. and the meetings will adjourn at approximately 3:30 p.m.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: LouAnn Jacobson, Monument Manager or Stephen Kandell, Monument Planner, Anasazi Heritage Center, 27501 Hwy 184, Dolores, Colorado 81323; Telephone (970) 882–5600.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The eleven member committee provides counsel and advice to the Secretary of the Interior, through the BLM, concerning development and implementation of a management plan developed in accordance with FLMPA, for public lands within the Monument. At these meetings, topics we plan to discuss include planning issues and management concerns, planning alternatives, partnerships, science and other issues as appropriate.

All meetings will be open to the public and will include a time set aside for public comment. Interested persons may make oral statements at the meetings or submit written statements at any meeting. Per-person time limits for oral statements may be set to allow all interested persons an opportunity to speak.

Summary minutes of all Committee meetings will be maintained at the Anasazi Heritage Center in Dolores, Colorado. They are available for public inspection and reproduction during regular business hours within thirty (30) days of the meeting. In addition, minutes and other information concerning the Committee can be obtained from the Monument planning Web site at: *http://www.blm.gov/rmp/canm* which will be updated following each Committee meeting.

Dated: December 18, 2003.

Stephen J. Kandell,

Acting Manager, Canyons of the Ancients National Monument.

[FR Doc. 03–31842 Filed 12–24–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–AG–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[NV–930–1430–ET; NVN–77880; 4–08807]

Notice of Proposed Withdrawal and Opportunity for Public Meeting; Nevada

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Bureau of Land Management has received a request from the Department of Energy to withdraw 308,600 acres of public land from surface entry and mining for a period of 20 years to evaluate the land for the potential construction, operation, and maintenance of a branch rail line for the transportation of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste in the event the Nuclear Regulatory Commission authorizes a geologic repository at Yucca Mountain as provided for under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, as amended. This notice segregates the land from surface entry and mining for up to 2 years while various studies and analyses are made to support a final decision on the withdrawal application.

DATES: Comments and requests for a meeting should be received on or before March 29, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Comments and meeting requests should be sent to the Nevada State Director, BLM, 1340 Financial Blvd., PO Box 12000, Reno, Nevada 89520–0006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dennis J. Samuelson, BLM Nevada State Office, 775–861–6532.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Department of Energy has filed an application (NVN 77880) to withdraw the following described public land from settlement, sale, location, or entry under the general land laws, including the mining laws and the mineral leasing laws, subject to valid existing rights:

Mount Diablo Meridian

A corridor one mile in width that contains a portion of, or are wholly encompassed within, the following sections:

10S 46E 01	1N 55E 24	2N 58E 03	3N 48E 35	4N 49.2E 35
10S 46E 02	1N 55E 25	2N 58E 04	3N 48E 36	4N 49.2E 36
10S 46E 12	1N 55E 26	2N 58E 05	3N 49E 02	4N 49E 24
10S 46E 13	1N 55E 27	2N 58E 07	3N 49E 03	4N 49E 25
10S 47E 06	1N 55E 28	2N 58E 08	3N 49E 04	4N 49E 26
10S 47E 07	1N 55E 29	2N 58E 09	3N 49E 05	4N 49E 33
10S 47E 08	1N 55E 30	2N 58E 13	3N 49E 07	4N 49E 34
10S 47E 09	1N 55E 31	2N 58E 17	3N 49E 08	4N 49E 35
10S 47E 15	1N 55E 32	2N 58E 18	3N 49E 09	4N 49E 36
10S 47E 16	1N 55E 33	2N 58E 19	3N 49E 10	4N 50E 30
10S 47E 17	1N 56E 01	2N 58E 20	3N 49E 17	4N 50E 31
10S 47E 18	1N 56E 02	2N 58E 21	3N 49E 18	4N 50E 32

10S 47E 21	1N 56E 09	2N 58E 22	3N 49E 19	4N 60E 20
10S 47E 22	1N 56E 10	2N 58E 23	3N 50E 02	4N 60E 21
10S 47E 23	1N 56E 11	2N 58E 24	3N 50E 03	4N 60E 22
10S 47E 26	1N 56E 12	2N 58E 25	3N 50E 04	4N 60E 23
10S 47E 27	1N 56E 13	2N 58E 26	3N 50E 10	4N 60E 24
10S 47E 28	1N 56E 14	2N 58E 27	3N 50E 11	4N 60E 25
10S 47E 34	1N 56E 15	2N 58E 28	3N 50E 14	4N 60E 26
10S 47E 35	1N 56E 16	2N 58E 29	3N 50E 15	4N 60E 27
11S 47E 01	1N 56E 17	2N 58E 30	3N 50E 22	4N 60E 28
11S 47E 02	1N 56E 18	2N 58E 31	3N 50E 23	4N 60E 29
11S 47E 03	1N 56E 19	2N 58E 32	3N 50E 24	4N 60E 31
11S 47E 11	1N 56E 20	2N 59E 02	3N 50E 25	4N 60E 32
11S 47E 12	1N 56E 21	2N 59E 03	3N 50E 26	4N 60E 33
11S 47E 13	1N 57E 03	2N 59E 04	3N 50E 35	4N 61E 19
11S 47E 14	1N 57E 04	2N 59E 08	3N 50E 36	4N 61E 20
11S 47E 24	1N 57E 05	2N 59E 09	3N 58E 24	4N 61E 28
11S 47E 25	1N 57E 06	2N 59E 10	3N 58E 25	4N 61E 29
11S 48E 07	1N 62E 01	2N 59E 16	3N 58E 26	4N 61E 30
11S 48E 08	1N 62E 12	2N 59E 17	3N 58E 33	4N 61E 32
11S 48E 09	1N 63E 06	2N 59E 18	3N 58E 34	4N 61E 33
11S 48E 10	1N 63E 07	2N 59E 19	3N 58E 35	4N 61E 34
11S 48E 11	1N 63E 08	2N 59E 20	3N 58E 36	4S 43E 01
11S 48E 14	1N 63E 17	2N 60E 01	3N 59E 12	4S 43E 02
11S 48E 15	1N 63E 18	2N 61E 06	3N 59E 13	4S 43E 03
11S 48E 16	1N 63E 19	2N 62E 01	3N 59E 14	4S 43E 10
11S 48E 17	1N 63E 20	2N 62E 02	3N 59E 19	4S 43E 11
11S 48E 18	1N 63E 21	2N 62E 03	3N 59E 20	4S 43E 12
11S 48E 19	1N 63E 26	2N 62E 04	3N 59E 21	4S 43E 14
11S 48E 20	1N 63E 27	2N 62E 05	3N 59E 22	4S 43E 15
11S 48E 21	1N 63E 28	2N 62E 10	3N 59E 23	4S 43E 22
11S 48E 22	1N 63E 29	2N 62E 11	3N 59E 24	4S 43E 23
11S 48E 27	1N 63E 30	2N 62E 12	3N 59E 25	4S 43E 26
11S 48E 28	1N 63E 32	2N 62E 13	3N 59E 26	4S 43E 27
11S 48E 29	1N 63E 33	2N 62E 14	3N 59E 27	4S 43E 28
11S 48E 30	1N 63E 34	2N 62E 15	3N 59E 28	4S 43E 33
11S 48E 31	1N 63E 35	2N 62E 24	3N 59E 29	4S 43E 34
11S 48E 32	1S 43E 01	2N 62E 25	3N 59E 30	4S 67E 01
11S 48E 33	1S 43E 02	2N 62E 36	3N 59E 33	4S 67E 02
11S 48E 34	1S 43E 03	2N 63E 07	3N 59E 34	4S 67E 04
12S 48E 02	1S 43E 04	2N 63E 18	3N 59E 35	4S 67E 05
12S 48E 03	1S 43E 09	2N 63E 19	3N 59E 36	4S 67E 06
12S 48E 04	1S 43E 10	2N 63E 30	3N 60E 05	4S 67E 07
12S 48E 05	1S 43E 11	2N 63E 31	3N 60E 06	4S 67E 08
12S 48E 06	1S 43E 12	2S 43E 03	3N 60E 07	4S 67E 09
12S 48E 09	1S 43E 13	2S 43E 04	3N 60E 08	4S 67E 12
12S 48E 10	1S 43E 14	2S 43E 09	3N 60E 18	4S 68E 06
12S 48E 11	1S 43E 15	2S 43E 10	3N 60E 19	4S 68E 07
12S 48E 13	1S 43E 16	2S 43E 15	3N 60E 20	4S 68E 08
12S 48E 14	1S 43E 21	2S 43E 16	3N 60E 21	4S 68E 17
12S 48E 15	1S 43E 22	2S 43E 20	3N 60E 22	4S 68E 18
12S 48E 23	1S 43E 23	2S 43E 21	3N 60E 25	5S 43E 03
12S 48E 24	1S 43E 24	2S 43E 22	3N 60E 26	5S 43E 04
12S 48E 25	1S 43E 25	2S 43E 27	3N 60E 27	5S 43E 05
12S 48E 26	1S 43E 27	2S 43E 28	3N 60E 28	5S 43E 08
12S 48E 35	1S 43E 28	2S 43E 29	3N 60E 29	5S 43E 09
12S 48E 36	1S 43E 33	2S 43E 32	3N 60E 30	5S 43E 15
12S 49E 31	1S 43E 34	2S 43E 33	3N 60E 31	5S 43E 16
13S 48E 09	1S 44E 18	2S 43E 34	3N 60E 34	5S 43E 17
13S 48E 10	1S 44E 19	2S 43E 35	3N 60E 35	5S 43E 21
13S 48E 14	1S 44E 29	2S 43E 36	3N 60E 36	5S 43E 22
13S 48E 15	1S 44E 30	2S 44E 04	3N 61E 02	5S 43E 27
13S 48E 16	1S 44E 31	2S 44E 05	3N 61E 03	5S 43E 28
13S 48E 22	1S 44E 32	2S 44E 06	3N 61E 04	5S 43E 33
13S 48E 23	1S 51.2E 06	2S 44E 08	3N 61E 09	5S 43E 34
13S 48E 24	1S 51.2E 07	2S 44E 09	3N 61E 10	5S 43E 35
13S 48E 25	1S 51.2E 08	2S 44E 16	3N 61E 11	6S 43E 01
13S 48E 26	1S 51.2E 17	2S 44E 17	3N 61E 12	6S 43E 02
13S 48E 36	1S 51.2E 18	2S 44E 20	3N 61E 13	6S 43E 03
13S 49E 13	1S 51.2E 19	2S 44E 21	3N 61E 14	6S 43E 10
13S 49E 14	1S 51.2E 20	2S 44E 22	3N 61E 22	6S 43E 11
13S 49E 19	1S 51.2E 28	2S 44E 27	3N 61E 23	6S 43E 12
13S 49E 22	1S 51.2E 29	2S 44E 28	3N 61E 24	6S 43E 13
13S 49E 23	1S 51.2E 30	2S 44E 32	3N 61E 25	6S 43E 14
13S 49E 24	1S 51.2E 31	2S 44E 33	3N 61E 26	6S 43E 15
13S 49E 25	1S 51.2E 32	2S 44E 34	3N 61E 27	6S 43E 23
13S 49E 26	1S 51.2E 33	2S 51.2E 04	3N 61E 28	6S 43E 24

13S 49E 27	1S 51E 01	2S 51.2E 05	3N 61E 29	6S 43E 25
13S 49E 29	1S 51E 02	2S 51.2E 06	3N 61E 30	6S 43E 26
13S 49E 30	1S 51E 03	2S 51.2E 07	3N 61E 31	6S 43E 27
13S 49E 31	1S 51E 10	2S 51.2E 08	3N 61E 32	6S 43E 34
13S 49E 32	1S 51E 11	2S 51.2E 09	3N 61E 33	6S 43E 35
13S 49E 33	1S 51E 12	2S 51.2E 16	3N 61E 34	6S 43E 36
13S 49E 34	1S 51E 13	2S 51.2E 17	3N 61E 35	6S 44E 06
13S 49E 35	1S 51E 14	2S 51.2E 18	3N 61E 36	6S 44E 07
13S 49E 36	1S 51E 24	2S 51.2E 20	3N 62E 18	6S 44E 08
13S 50E 30	1S 51E 25	2S 51.2E 21	3N 62E 19	6S 44E 15
13S 50E 31	1S 51E 36	2S 51E 01	3N 62E 20	6S 44E 16
14S 49E 01	1S 52E 31	2S 51E 12	3N 62E 28	6S 44E 17
14S 49E 02	1S 53E 25	2S 52E 06	3N 62E 29	6S 44E 18
14S 49E 03	1S 53E 35	2S 52E 07	3N 62E 30	6S 44E 20
14S 49E 04	1S 53E 36	2S 52E 08	3N 62E 31	6S 44E 21
14S 49E 05	1S 54E 01	2S 52E 11	3N 62E 32	6S 44E 22
14S 49E 08	1S 54E 10	2S 52E 12	3N 62E 33	6S 44E 27
14S 49E 09	1S 54E 11	2S 52E 13	3N 62E 34	6S 44E 28
14S 49E 10	1S 54E 12	2S 52E 14	3N 62E 35	6S 44E 31
14S 49E 11	1S 54E 13	2S 52E 15	3S 43E 01	6S 44E 33
14S 49E 12	1S 54E 14	2S 52E 16	3S 43E 02	6S 44E 34
14S 49E 15	1S 54E 15	2S 52E 17	3S 43E 03	7S 43E 01
14S 49E 16	1S 54E 16	2S 52E 18	3S 43E 04	7S 43E 02
14S 50E 06	1S 54E 20	2S 52E 19	3S 43E 10	7S 43E 03
1N 43E 23	1S 54E 21	2S 52E 20	3S 43E 11	7S 43E 11
1N 43E 24	1S 54E 22	2S 52E 21	3S 43E 12	7S 43E 12
1N 43E 25	1S 54E 23	2S 52E 22	3S 43E 13	7S 43E 13
1N 43E 26	1S 54E 28	2S 52E 23	3S 43E 14	7S 43E 14
1N 43E 27	1S 54E 29	2S 53E 01	3S 43E 15	7S 43E 24
1N 43E 34	1S 54E 30	2S 53E 02	3S 43E 22	7S 43E 25
1N 43E 35	1S 54E 31	2S 53E 03	3S 43E 23	7S 44E 03
1N 43E 36	1S 55E 05	2S 53E 07	3S 43E 24	7S 44E 04
1N 44E 19	1S 55E 06	2S 53E 08	3S 43E 25	7S 44E 05
1N 44E 20	1S 55E 07	2S 53E 09	3S 43E 26	7S 44E 06
1N 44E 21	1S 63E 01	2S 53E 10	3S 43E 27	7S 44E 07
1N 44E 22	1S 63E 02	2S 53E 11	3S 43E 34	7S 44E 08
1N 44E 23	1S 63E 11	2S 53E 15	3S 43E 35	7S 44E 09
1N 44E 24	1S 63E 12	2S 53E 16	3S 43E 36	7S 44E 10
1N 44E 25	1S 63E 13	2S 53E 17	3S 44E 04	7S 44E 14
1N 44E 26	1S 64E 07	2S 53E 18	3S 44E 05	7S 44E 15
1N 44E 27	1S 64E 15	2S 65E 01	3S 44E 07	7S 44E 16
1N 44E 28	1S 64E 16	2S 65E 02	3S 44E 08	7S 44E 17
1N 44E 29	1S 64E 17	2S 65E 03	3S 44E 09	7S 44E 18
1N 44E 30	1S 64E 18	2S 65E 11	3S 44E 17	7S 44E 19
1N 45E 19	1S 64E 19	2S 65E 12	3S 44E 18	7S 44E 21
1N 45E 20	1S 64E 20	2S 65E 13	3S 44E 19	7S 44E 22
1N 45E 25	1S 64E 21	2S 65E 14	3S 44E 20	7S 44E 23
1N 45E 26	1S 64E 22	2S 66E 01	3S 44E 30	7S 44E 25
1N 45E 27	1S 64E 23	2S 66E 02	3S 44E 31	7S 44E 26
1N 45E 28	1S 64E 24	2S 66E 03	3S 67E 01	7S 44E 27
1N 45E 29	1S 64E 25	2S 66E 04	3S 67E 02	7S 44E 29
1N 45E 30	1S 64E 26	2S 66E 05	3S 67E 03	7S 44E 30
1N 45E 32	1S 64E 27	2S 66E 07	3S 67E 10	7S 44E 31
1N 45E 33	1S 65E 19	2S 66E 08	3S 67E 11	7S 44E 32
1N 45E 34	1S 65E 20	2S 66E 09	3S 67E 12	7S 44E 33
1N 45E 35	1S 65E 27	2S 66E 10	3S 67E 13	7S 44E 35
1N 45E 36	1S 65E 28	2S 66E 11	3S 67E 14	7S 44E 36
1N 46E 25	1S 65E 29	2S 66E 12	3S 67E 15	8S 44E 01
1N 46E 26	1S 65E 30	2S 66E 13	3S 67E 16	8S 44E 02
1N 46E 27	1S 65E 32	2S 66E 14	3S 67E 21	8S 44E 03
1N 46E 28	1S 65E 33	2S 66E 16	3S 67E 22	8S 44E 04
1N 46E 29	1S 65E 34	2S 66E 17	3S 67E 23	8S 44E 05
1N 46E 30	1S 65E 35	2S 66E 18	3S 67E 24	8S 44E 09
1N 46E 31	2N 47E 25	2S 66E 20	3S 67E 25	8S 44E 10
1N 46E 32	2N 47E 35	2S 66E 24	3S 67E 27	8S 44E 11
1N 46E 33	2N 47E 36	2S 67E 07	3S 67E 28	8S 44E 12
1N 46E 34	2N 48E 02	2S 67E 08	3S 67E 29	8S 44E 13
1N 46E 35	2N 48E 03	2S 67E 09	3S 67E 32	8S 44E 14
1N 46E 36	2N 48E 04	2S 67E 14	3S 67E 33	8S 44E 15
1N 47E 01	2N 48E 08	2S 67E 15	3S 67E 35	8S 44E 16
1N 47E 02	2N 48E 09	2S 67E 16	3S 67E 36	8S 44E 22
1N 47E 03	2N 48E 10	2S 67E 17	3S 68E 01	8S 44E 23
1N 47E 10	2N 48E 16	2S 67E 18	3S 68E 12	8S 44E 24
1N 47E 11	2N 48E 17	2S 67E 19	3S 68E 19	8S 44E 25
1N 47E 12	2N 48E 18	2S 67E 20	3S 68E 30	8S 44E 26
1N 47E 14	2N 48E 19	2S 67E 21	3S 68E 31	8S 44E 36

1N 47E 15	2N 48E 20	2S 67E 22	3S 69E 03	8S 45E 06
1N 47E 16	2N 48E 21	2S 67E 23	3S 69E 04	8S 45E 07
1N 47E 20	2N 48E 29	2S 67E 24	3S 69E 05	8S 45E 18
1N 47E 21	2N 48E 30	2S 67E 25	3S 69E 06	8S 45E 19
1N 47E 22	2N 48E 31	2S 67E 26	3S 69E 07	8S 45E 20
1N 47E 28	2N 50E 01	2S 67E 29	3S 69E 08	8S 45E 28
1N 47E 29	2N 50E 02	2S 67E 30	3S 69E 09	8S 45E 29
1N 47E 30	2N 50E 11	2S 67E 35	3S 69E 10	8S 45E 30
1N 47E 31	2N 50E 12	2S 67E 36	3S 69E 11	8S 45E 31
1N 47E 32	2N 50E 13	2S 68E 19	3S 69E 13	8S 45E 32
1N 50E 01	2N 50E 14	2S 68E 23	3S 69E 14	8S 45E 33
1N 50E 12	2N 50E 24	2S 68E 25	3S 69E 15	9S 45E 02
1N 51E 05	2N 50E 25	2S 68E 26	3S 69E 22	9S 45E 03
1N 51E 06	2N 50E 36	2S 68E 27	3S 69E 23	9S 45E 04
1N 51E 07	2N 51E 18	2S 68E 28	3S 69E 24	9S 45E 05
1N 51E 08	2N 51E 19	2S 68E 29	3S 69E 25	9S 45E 06
1N 51E 16	2N 51E 30	2S 68E 30	3S 70E 08	9S 45E 09
1N 51E 17	2N 51E 31	2S 68E 31	3S 70E 09	9S 45E 10
1N 51E 18	2N 56E 36	2S 68E 32	3S 70E 10	9S 45E 11
1N 51E 19	2N 57E 13	2S 68E 33	3S 70E 11	9S 45E 12
1N 51E 20	2N 57E 14	2S 68E 34	3S 70E 12	9S 45E 13
1N 51E 21	2N 57E 22	2S 68E 35	3S 70E 13	9S 45E 14
1N 51E 22	2N 57E 23	2S 68E 36	3S 70E 14	9S 45E 24
1N 51E 26	2N 57E 24	2S 69E 30	3S 70E 15	9S 46E 07
1N 51E 27	2N 57E 25	2S 69E 31	3S 70E 16	9S 46E 17
1N 51E 28	2N 57E 26	2S 69E 32	3S 70E 17	9S 46E 18
1N 51E 29	2N 57E 27	2S 69E 33	3S 70E 18	9S 46E 19
1N 51E 33	2N 57E 28	3.2N 50E 33	3S 70E 19	9S 46E 20
1N 51E 34	2N 57E 29	3.2N 50E 34	3S 70E 20	9S 46E 21
1N 51E 35	2N 57E 31	3N 48E 13	3S 70E 22	9S 46E 22
1N 51E 36	2N 57E 32	3N 48E 23	3S 70E 23	9S 46E 26
1N 55E 13	2N 57E 33	3N 48E 24	3S 70E 24	9S 46E 27
1N 55E 14	2N 57E 34	3N 48E 25	4N 49.2E 25	9S 46E 28
1N 55E 21	2N 57E 35	3N 48E 26	4N 49.2E 26	9S 46E 29
1N 55E 22	2N 57E 36	3N 48E 27	4N 49.2E 27	9S 46E 33
1N 55E 23	2N 58E 02	3N 48E 34	4N 49.2E 34	9S 46E 34
				9S 46E 35
				9S 46E 36

The area described contains 308,600 acres in Clark, Esmeralda, Lincoln, and Nye Counties.

This withdrawal approximates the land encompassed by the Caliente rail corridor as described in the Department of Energy's Final Environmental Impact Statement for a Geologic Repository for the Disposal of Spent Nuclear Fuel and High-Level Radioactive Waste at Yucca Mountain, Nye County, Nevada, February 2002. The purpose of the withdrawal is to evaluate the land for the potential construction and operation of a branch rail line for the transportation of spent nuclear fuel and high-level radioactive waste in the event the Nuclear Regulatory Commission authorizes a geologic repository at Yucca Mountain as provided for under the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, as amended.

For a period of 90 days from the date of publication of this notice, all persons who wish to submit comments, suggestions, or objections in connection with the proposed withdrawal may present their views in writing to the Nevada State Director of the Bureau of Land Management.

Notice is hereby given that there will be at least one public meeting in connection with the proposed withdrawal to be announced at a later date. A notice of the time, place, and date will be published in the **Federal Register** and a local newspaper at least 30 days before the scheduled date of a meeting.

Comments, including names and street addresses of commenters, will be available for public review at the Nevada State Office, 1340 Financial Boulevard, Reno, Nevada, during regular business hours 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to hold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

The application will be processed in accordance with the regulations set forth in 43 CFR Part 2300.

For a period of 2 years from December 29, 2003, in accordance with 43 CFR 2310.2(a), the lands described in this notice will be segregated from surface entry and mining, unless the application is denied or canceled, or the withdrawal is approved prior to that date. Other uses which may be permitted during this segregative period are rights-of-way, leases, and permits as long as they do not conflict with the proposed withdrawal.

Dated: December 10, 2003.

Margaret L. Jensen,

Deputy State Director, Natural Resources, Lands, and Planning.

[FR Doc. 03–31901 Filed 12–24–03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4310–HC–P

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Minerals Management Service

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection, Comment Request

AGENCY: Minerals Management Service (MMS), Interior.

ACTION: Notice of an extension of a currently approved information collection (OMB Control Number 1010–0110).