



## United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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[http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle\\_mountain\\_field.html](http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle_mountain_field.html)

In Reply Refer To:  
N-86261  
2800 (NVB0200)

AN 22 2010

Dear Reader:

The Bureau of Land Management, Battle Mountain District, Renewable Energy Coordination Office has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the impacts from a proposed Right-of-Way application for wind energy testing and monitoring facilities. The Proposed Action would be to grant a Right-of-Way to GreenWing Energy America Corporation to install three meteorological towers within a 15,319 acre project area on public lands near Carvers, in Nye County, Nevada (enclosed map).

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Council on Environmental Quality regulations on implementing NEPA, the EA identifies, describes, and evaluates resource impacts from the proposed project.

Copies of the EA may be obtained by notifying the Tonopah Field Office at the letterhead address above or, from the internet address below.

[http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle\\_mountain\\_field/blm\\_information/national\\_environmental.html](http://www.blm.gov/nv/st/en/fo/battle_mountain_field/blm_information/national_environmental.html)

Written comments on the EA will be accepted at the above letterhead address, until 4:30 p.m., February 22, 2010. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment, including your personal identifying information, may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this proposed Right-of-Way action, please contact Timothy Coward, Project Manager, Renewable Energy Coordination Office at the above Tonopah Field Office address or at (775) 482-7800.

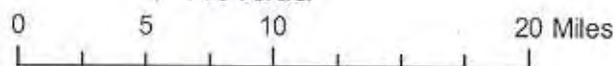
Sincerely,

Thomas J. Seley  
Field Manager

Enclosure



**Fig. 1-1 Project Area Overview**  
 Round Mountain  
 Nye County  
 Nevada



**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management**

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**Environmental Assessment DOI-BLM-NV-B020-2009-0013-EA  
DATE: January 2010**

**Round Mountain Wind Energy Testing Site and Monitoring  
Project**

**INSTALLATION OF THREE METEOROLOGICAL  
TOWERS NEAR ROUND MOUNTAIN, NYE COUNTY,  
NEVADA  
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

File Number: NVN-086261

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>ACEC</b>	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
<b>AFB</b>	Air Force Base
<b>GreenWing</b>	GreenWing Energy America Corporation
<b>ATV</b>	all-terrain vehicle
<b>BLM</b>	(United States) Bureau of Land Management
<b>B.P.</b>	before present
<b>CEQ</b>	Council on Environmental Quality
<b>CESA</b>	Cumulative Effects Study Area
<b>CFR</b>	Code of Federal Regulations
<b>DVNP</b>	Death Valley National Park
<b>EA</b>	Environmental Assessment
<b>E &amp; E</b>	Ecology and Environment, Inc.
<b>FAA</b>	Federal Aviation Administration
<b>FLPMA</b>	Federal Land Policy and Management Act
<b>FO</b>	Field Office
<b>GIS</b>	geographic information system
<b>IR</b>	instrument route
<b>MET</b>	meteorological tower
<b>MTR</b>	Military Training Route
<b>NEPA</b>	National Environmental Policy Act
<b>OHV</b>	off-highway vehicle
<b>RMP</b>	Resource Management Plan
<b>ROW</b>	right-of-way
<b>SF</b>	standard form
<b>SR</b>	state route
<b>TFO</b>	Tonopah Field Office
<b>USFWS</b>	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
<b>VR</b>	visual route
<b>VRM</b>	Visual Resource Management

# **CHAPTER 1.0**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

GreenWing Energy America Corporation (GreenWing) proposes to install three meteorological towers (MET) (Proposed Action) on public lands under the jurisdiction of the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) (Case File Number NVN-086261), administered by the Tonopah Field Office (TFO). The Proposed Action area is located in northwestern Nye County, Nevada, near the town of Carvers in Big Smoky Valley (see Figure 1-1). This Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Proposed Action has been prepared by Ecology & Environment, Inc. (E & E) to fulfill the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1970.

### **1.2 PURPOSE OF AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED ACTION**

#### **Agency Purpose and Need**

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide GreenWing access to a limited number of appropriate locations to gather sufficient wind speed, direction and other meteorological data to ascertain whether there is sufficient and sustained wind energy to develop a renewable wind energy project capable of generating marketable electrical energy for commercial purposes. The need for the Proposed Action is to respond to a Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) right-of-way (ROW) request submitted by the proponent to construct and operate three (3) Meteorological Towers (METs) on public lands administered by the BLM Tonopah FO.

#### **Background**

GreenWing submitted a Standard Form (SF) 299 application to the TFO on September 14, 2009. The application requested a wind energy site testing and monitoring ROW grant for three METs within a project area, of approximately 15,319 acres near the town of Carvers, Nevada. GreenWing proposes to collect, log, and transmit data on wind speed and wind direction at various predetermined heights above the ground. The wind data collected from the METs is needed to validate the wind resource for the potential future construction of a commercial wind energy park, including placement of wind turbine generators, which would generate renewable energy to be sold to public utilities, local municipalities, and possibly large commercial users under medium and long-term purchase agreements.

The three METs would be located at the following locations:

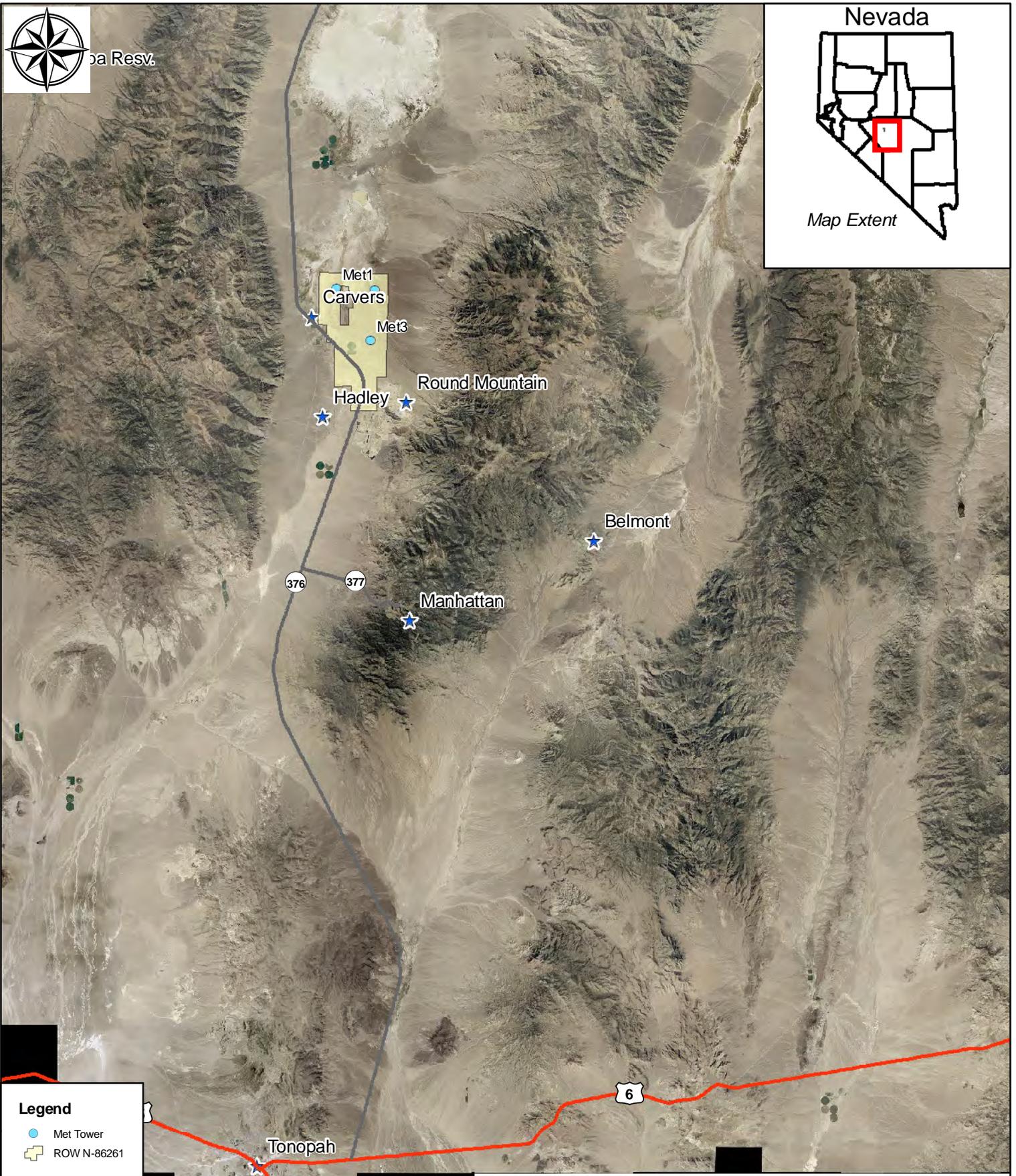
#### Mount Diablo Meridian

Township 11 North, Range 43 East,  
Sec. 15, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 13, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
Sec. 36, SW $\frac{1}{4}$ .

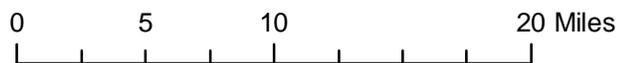
The following legal land description summarizes all public lands currently included in the proposed ROW.

Mount Diablo Meridian

<u>Township 11 North, Range 43 East</u>	<u>Township 10 North, Range 43 East</u>
Sec 13 All	Sec 1 All
Sec 14 All	Sec 2 All
Sec 15 N <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> , N <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> SE <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> , N <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> SW <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> , SW <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> SW <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> , SE <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> SE <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	Sec 3 All
Sec 16 All	Sec 10 All
Sec 17 E <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> NE <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> , SE <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> SE <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	Sec 11 All
Sec 20 SE <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> SE <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	Sec 12 All
Sec 21 All	Sec 13 W <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Sec 22 W <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> SW <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> , NE <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub> NE <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>	Sec 14 All
Sec 23 All	Sec 15 N <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Sec 24 All	Sec 23 All
Sec 25 All	Sec 24 W <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Sec 26 All	
Sec 27 E <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> E <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> , W <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> W <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	
Sec 28 All	
Sec 33 E <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	
Sec 34 All	
Sec 35 All	
Sec 36 All	



**Fig. 1-1 Project Area Overview**  
 Round Mountain  
 Nye County  
 Nevada



### **1.3 RELATIONSHIP TO PLANNING AND CONFORMANCE WITH LAND USE PLANS**

#### **1.3.1 Resource Management Plan**

The public lands administered by the BLM in the Proposed Action vicinity are managed in accordance with the following land use plan for the TFO, BLM Battle Mountain District, which are in compliance with the FLPMA of 1976, as amended:

- *Proposed Tonopah Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement* (BLM 1994)
- *Approved Tonopah Resource Management Plan Record of Decision* (BLM 1997)

The Proposed Action is in conformance with the above Resource Management Plan (RMP), even though it is not specifically provided for. In particular, the Proposed Action is clearly consistent with the BLM's stated need ~~to~~ make lands available for community expansion and private economic development and to increase the potential for economic diversity" (BLM 1997, p. 18, ~~Land~~ and Rights-of-Way Objectives" section).

#### **1.3.2 Local Land Use Planning and Policy**

The Proposed Action is consistent with known state and local zoning or planning ordinances. Section 202(c)(9) of the FLPMA governs BLM planning and requires BLM land use plans to be consistent with land use planning and management programs of other Federal departments, state agencies, local governments, and Tribes.

The Nevada Statewide Policy Plan for Public Lands developed by the counties and cities of Nevada and the State Land Use Planning Agency of the Division of State Lands, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, State of Nevada, under authority of Senate Bill 40 of the 1983 Nevada Legislature (NRS 321.7344), does not specifically provide language for wind energy projects, but states in the ~~Public Lands~~" section under the heading ~~Goals of Public Lands~~" that the State of Nevada will ~~...~~manage and utilize public lands on the basis of multiple use and sustained yield concepts, and in a manner that will conserve natural resources; protect and preserve the quality of the environmental, ecological, scientific, historical and archeological values; protect and preserve wildlife habitat and certain lands in their natural condition; and provide for long term benefits to the people of Nevada and future generations." The section continues with a statement that Nevada will ~~ensure~~ the development of the state's natural resources in a manner consistent with state and local goals regarding the environment, economic development and social concerns" (State of Nevada 1985, p. 8).

The Proposed Action is consistent with the goals of the *Nye County Policy Plan for Public Lands*, which states that Nye County will ~~...~~provide for Nevada's energy needs through coordinated resource planning and management between private enterprise and government to plan for development of energy resources" (Nye County 1985, p. NY-10). To date, the State of Nevada and Nye County have not issued land use plans that specifically address requirements for wind energy testing. The project would support Section 211 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, concerning renewable energy development on public lands.

#### **1.4 Public Scoping**

Twenty-four notification letters, accompanied by a figure depicting the proposed MET location sites, were submitted to ROW holders, mining claimants, and grazing allotment holders within the 15,319-acre Proposed Action area to inform them of the proposed MET installation. The BLM has not received any requests for a public meeting on the proposal. One comment letter was received from Nevada Bell stating there was no present conflict but the company would be interested in reviewing future project plans.

#### **1.5 ISSUES**

The BLM interdisciplinary team identified the resources and uses to be addressed in this document as outlined in Chapter 3. Avoidance of cultural resources, sensitive plant and wildlife species, and airspace impacts were identified as specific issues to be addressed in relation to the Proposed Action.

#### **1.6 AUTHORIZING ACTIONS**

The BLM's approval of the Proposed Action or possible alternatives associated with the SF-299 and EA is required prior to authorization of the ROW grant and commencement of operations. GreenWing would be responsible for obtaining any other necessary permits and approvals from stakeholders, including any relevant Federal, state, and local agencies.

The lands within the proposed ROW grant area would not be available for other wind energy rights-of-way applications. The holder of the site testing and monitoring right-of-way grant has established no right to development.

## CHAPTER 2.0 PROPOSED ACTIONS AND ALTERNATIVES

### 2.1 PROPOSED ACTION

Under the Proposed Action, GreenWing would construct three METs within the proposed ROW (Case File Number NVN-86261) to determine the potential for wind energy generation in the area. Each MET would be approximately 60 meters in height, with a series of guy wires extending from the top of the tower to the ground approximately 50 meters from the base. Construction of the METs is expected to require five to six personnel working approximately three days on each tower, for a total nine days. The METs would remain in continuous operation until sufficient data was collected to determine the suitability of a wind energy project or until the three-year ROW authorization expired.

#### 2.1.1 Location and Access

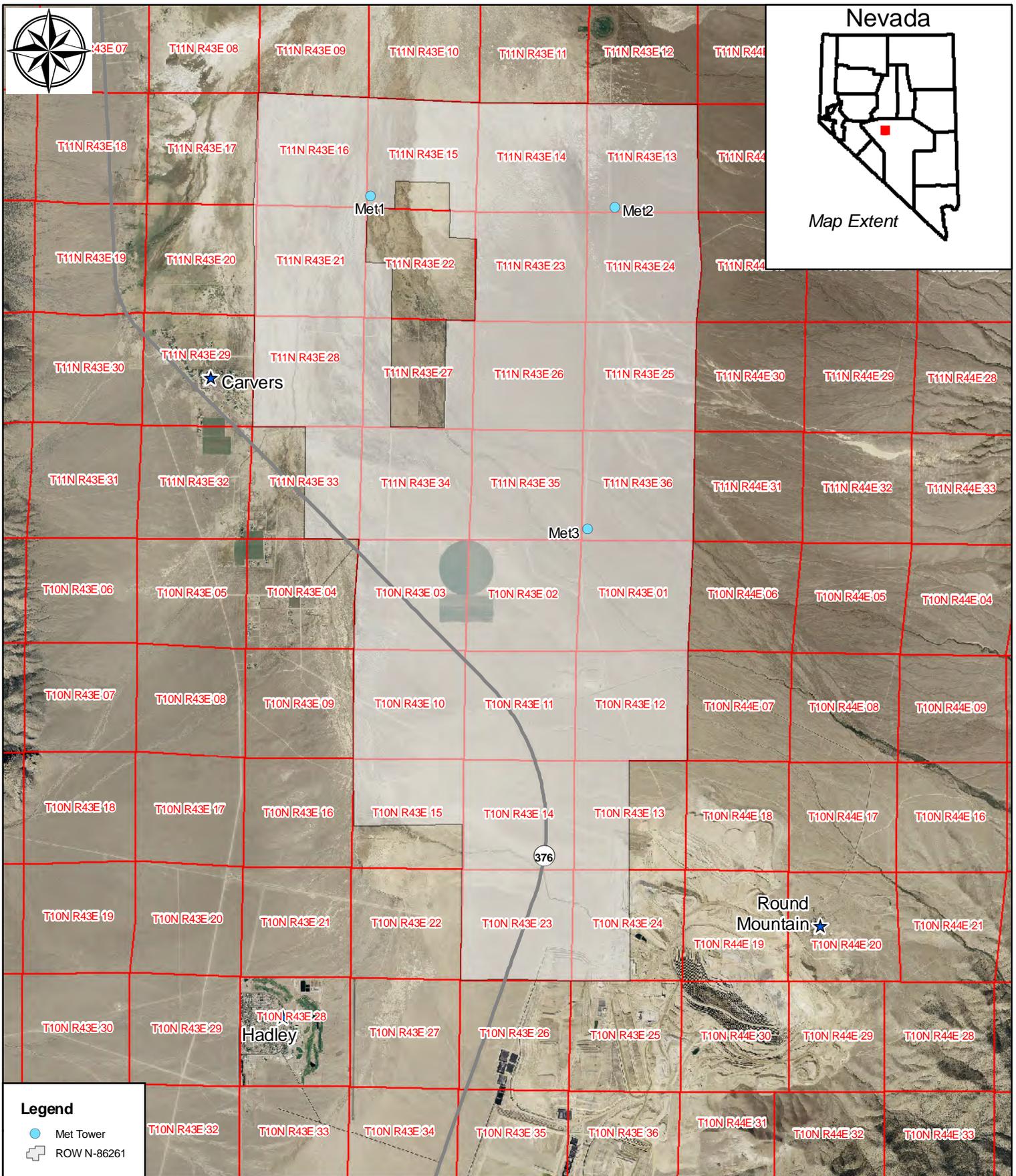
The proposed locations for the METs are identified in Table 2-1 and Figure 2-1. Table 2-1 includes UTM 11N coordinates for each MET and their respective Township Range and Section (TRS) location.

**Table 2-1 MET Locations**

MET	Coordinates		Mount Diablo Meridian TRS Aliquot
	Easting	Northing	
1	487475	4295394	011N 043E 015 SW4
2	491049	4295232	011N 043E 013 SW4
3	490646	4290526	011N 043E 036 SW4

The Proposed Action area would consist of a 61-meter (200-foot) radius area extending from the base of each MET (approximately 3 acres for each), within which all ground-disturbing activities would occur. GreenWing has conducted biological and cultural resources surveys over a larger area (5 acres) to allow for minor changes to the MET locations for engineering or other reasons. The 5-acre survey areas at each MET would encompass 15 total acres of the 15, 319 acre project area of the ROW grant.

Vehicle access to the proposed MET locations would be restricted to existing roads, which would not be improved for the purposes of construction or operation of the METs. Access to MET #1 would be gained by traveling east on Crow Field Road from Nevada State Route (SR) 8/376 and following existing dirt roads north. Access to MET #2 and MET #3 would be gained by traveling north on Dump Road from SR 8/376. A speed limit of 25-mph would be followed to minimize airborne dust, noise generation, and potential impacts on local wildlife.



**Fig. 2-1 Proposed Action Area**  
 Round Mountain  
 Nye County  
 Nevada

0 0.5 1 2 Miles

### **2.1.2 Equipment**

METs would be delivered to the Proposed Action area in multiple 10-meter sections on pickup trucks equipped with trailers. Two to three pickup trucks and potentially one or two all terrain vehicles (ATVs) would be used to transport equipment and crew. Each MET would consist of a 60-meter tower, a 3-foot-by-3-foot foundation plate, and 24 guy wires extending a maximum of 50 meters from the base of the tower. To ensure safety and reliability of the METs, construction would follow all manufacturers' guidelines.

### **2.1.3 Construction and Staging Area**

The Proposed Action area (includes construction and staging) for each MET would be contained within a 61-meter (200-foot) radius area extending from the base of the MET (see Figure 2-1) and accessed by way of existing roads and tracks. The Proposed Action area, equal to approximately 3 acres per MET location, aligns with the total lay-down area needed for MET construction. The towers would be held in place by a set of guy wires attached to four anchors arranged in a square pattern. GreenWing intends to use deadman anchors to properly secure the METs. Each anchor must be sunk to a depth of three to four feet into the soil. When installing deadman anchors, an angled hole is dug, the anchor is set in place, and the original earth is back-filled over the anchor. Each MET would be placed on a flat 3-foot-by-3-foot metal pad. The ground would be graded level with hand tools and the pad would be positioned directly on bare ground. Due to the sparse nature of the vegetative community in the Proposed Action area, GreenWing does not anticipate the need for vegetation removal during construction or maintenance.

### **2.1.4 Clean-up Operations**

Any waste or debris associated with constructing the MET would be removed and properly disposed of at an approved off-site location.

### **2.1.5 Meteorological Tower Operations**

The MET would remain in continuous operation until sufficient data was collected to determine the suitability of a wind energy project or until the three-year ROW authorization expired. During operation, a two-person crew would typically visit the MET once every three months to perform periodic maintenance, which would be completed in approximately four hours. If non-routine maintenance, such as lowering the MET to replace malfunctioning equipment, were required, a four- to six-person crew would be required for approximately two 8-hour work days. Each MET would include a data logger, cell phone link, solar cell, and battery attached to the tower near the base. The tower system is designed to automatically store data and periodically transmit the data via the cell phone link, thus minimizing the need for on-site visits.

## **2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION MEASURES**

### **2.2.1 Vegetation, Wildlife, and Soils**

The Proposed Action would require trimming existing brush or other desert vegetation (excluding identified sensitive species) to approximately 6 inches above the ground surface, if applicable. Trimming in this manner would allow the vegetation to remain viable after construction was completed. Where possible and if needed, topsoil would be conserved during excavation and reused as cover on disturbed areas to facilitate regrowth

of vegetation. The BLM would be consulted about acceptable weed control methods within the Proposed Action area.

At the request of the BLM, industry-recognized bird flight diverters would be appropriately attached to the MET guy wires in an effort to ensure avian species are not impacted by the Proposed Action. Additionally, if surface-disturbing construction activities were to take place during the April 1 to July 15 nesting season, a qualified wildlife biologist would conduct a systematic survey a maximum of 10 days prior to disturbance to identify any breeding or nesting sites of migratory birds, and then would develop appropriate mitigation such as delaying or relocating the activity to avoid such sites. MET installation is anticipated to take place in February 2010, outside the breeding or nesting window; therefore, potential disturbance would be avoided. In addition, within 12 months of MET installation, Anabat detectors would be attached to the MET itself to monitor potential bat activity in the Proposed Action area.

### **2.2.2 Wild Horses and Burros**

The Proposed Action area is not located within a designated Herd Management Area (HMA), and no impact on wild horses and burros is expected.

### **2.2.3 Air Quality**

The Proposed Action would require minimal ground disturbance during the construction phase and therefore would not create large amounts of fugitive dust. To reduce fugitive dust from pickup trucks and ATVs, drivers would be required to observe a speed limit of 25 miles per hour.

## **2.3 ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED ACTION**

### **2.3.1 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Analysis**

The Proposed Action area was selected to collect data on wind speed and direction needed to validate the wind resource at the site for the potential future construction of a commercial wind energy facility. There is no other known method to sufficiently evaluate the wind resource in enough detail for the purposes of a potential large-scale commercial project other than the installation of MET towers.

MET #1 was located in what appeared to be poorly-drained soil, with the potential of ponding (standing water) during extreme precipitation events. This MET has since been moved to avoid any potential issues, and the initial MET location will no longer be considered in analyses. `-

### **2.3.2 No-Action Alternative**

Under the No-Action Alternative, no METs would be constructed and no meteorological data would be gathered.

## CHAPTER 3.0 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This section describes elements of the existing environment that could be affected by the Proposed Action or the No-Action Alternative. The BLM is required to address specific elements of the environment that are subject to requirements specified in statute or regulation or by executive order (BLM 2008). Table 3-1 outlines the elements that must be addressed in all environmental analyses, as well as other resources deemed appropriate for evaluation by the BLM, and indicates whether the Proposed Action or No-Action Alternative affects those elements.

**Table 3-1 Supplemental Authorities and Other Resources of the Human Environment and Rationale for Detailed Analysis**

Resource	Not Present	Present/Not Affected	Present/May be Affected	Rationale
<b>Supplemental Authority</b>				
Air Quality		X		There are no areas of non-attainment for criteria pollutants in or around the Proposed Action area.
Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)	X			Resource not present in the vicinity of the Proposed Action area.
Cultural/Historical		X		See Section 3.3.7 for description.
Environmental Justice	X			The Proposed Action would not disproportionately affect minority or low-income populations.
Farmlands Prime or Unique	X			Resource not present in the vicinity of the Proposed Action area.
Noxious Weeds/Invasive Non-native Species			X	See Section 3.3.1.5 for description.
Native American Concerns		X		See Section 3.3.2 for description.
Floodplains	X			Resource not present in the vicinity of the Proposed Action area.
Riparian/Wetlands	X			Resource not present in the vicinity of the Proposed Action area.
Threatened or Endangered Species			X	See Section 3.3.1.1 for description.
Migratory Birds			X	See Section 3.3.1.2 for description.

**Table 3-1 Supplemental Authorities and Other Resources of the Human Environment and Rationale for Detailed Analysis**

Resource	Not Present	Present/Not Affected	Present/May be Affected	Rationale
Waste – Hazardous/Solid	X			No hazardous waste would be generated by the Proposed Action. Any solid waste or debris associated with constructing the MET would be removed and properly disposed of at an approved off-site location.
Water Resources/Quality	X			The Big Smoky Watershed Area, like most others in this arid desert region, lacks perennial sources of surface water and the small amount of water that is present does not meet the United States Environmental Protection Agency’s minimum standards for drinking water according to the latest BLM studies (BLM 1997).
Wild and Scenic Rivers	X			Resource not present in the vicinity of the Proposed Action area.
Fish Habitat	X			There are no surface water bodies that provide fish habitat in the vicinity of the Proposed Action area.
Wilderness	X			Designated BLM Wilderness Area is not located within the Proposed Action area. The Forest Service has two designated Wilderness Areas in the vicinity: Arc Dome Wilderness Area is located approximately 2 miles to the west and the Alta Toquima Wilderness Area is located approximately 5 miles to the east of the Proposed Action area.
Forests and Rangelands (Healthy Forest Restoration Act land only)	X			Resource not present in the vicinity of the Proposed Action area.
Human Health and Safety			X	See Section 3.3.5 for description.
<b>Other Resources</b>				
Grazing Management			X	See Section 3.3.8 for description.
Lands and Realty			X	See Section 3.3.4 for description.

**Table 3-1 Supplemental Authorities and Other Resources of the Human Environment and Rationale for Detailed Analysis**

Resource	Not Present	Present/Not Affected	Present/May be Affected	Rationale
Minerals		X		The Proposed Action would not involve excavation or other major ground-disturbing activities and therefore would not affect local mineral resources.
Paleontological Resources		X		There are no known paleontological resources in the Proposed Action area.
Recreation		X		Local recreation opportunities would not be affected by the Proposed Action.
Socioeconomic Values		X		The Proposed Action takes place in an extremely rural area and would not affect local socioeconomic values.
Soils		X		The Proposed Action would not involve excavation or other major ground-disturbing activities and therefore would not affect local soil resources.
Vegetation			X	See Section 3.3.1.3 for description.
Visual Resources			X	See Section 3.3.6 for description.
Wild Horses and Burros	X			Resource not present in the vicinity of the Proposed Action area.
Wildlife			X	See Section 3.3.1.4 for description.
Airspace			X	See Section 3.3.3 for description.

Source: BLM 2008.

### **3.2 RESOURCES NOT EVALUATED FURTHER**

The BLM interdisciplinary team reviewed the resources in Table 3-1 and determined that the following supplemental authorities of the human environment are not present in or near the Proposed Action area or are present but would not be affected by the Proposed Action or No-Action Alternative: Air Quality, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), Environmental Justice, Prime or Unique Farmlands, Floodplains, Riparian and Wetlands Zones, Solid and Hazardous Waste, Wild and Scenic Rivers, Fish Habitat, Wilderness, Forests and Rangelands, Minerals, Paleontological Resources, Recreation, Socioeconomic Values, Wild Horses and Burros, and Soils. These elements will not be analyzed further in this EA.

### **3.3 RESOURCES CARRIED FORWARD FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS**

The following resources presented in Table 3-1 have been determined to be present and potentially affected by the Proposed Action: Cultural/Historical, Noxious Weeds/Invasive Non-native Species, Native American Concerns, Threatened and Endangered Species, Migratory Birds, Wildlife, Lands and Realty, Vegetation, Visual

Resources, Human Health and Safety, Grazing Management, and Airspace. BLM specialists have evaluated the potential impacts of the Proposed Action and No-Action Alternative on these resources.

This EA includes a description of the affected physical, biological, and human environment in the Proposed Action area. This information was derived from data gathered during literature searches and field surveys for sensitive plant and animal species and cultural resources between April and October 2009 at the Proposed Action area and consultation with the BLM and other Federal, state, and local agencies. Cumulative impacts are discussed in Chapter 4.

### **3.3.1 Biological Resources**

#### **3.3.1.1 Special Status Species**

Special status species include all species that are United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) listed, proposed, or candidates for listing, all state-protected species, and all species designated as sensitive by the Nevada BLM State Office.

##### **3.3.1.1.1 Affected Environment**

Prior to initiating field surveys to determine the potential presence or absence of sensitive animal and plant species inside the proposed 5-acre MET sites, E & E contacted BLM and USFWS personnel and reviewed publicly available data to develop a list of special status species that may be present in the Proposed Action area. Background data reviewed included the following:

- Nevada Natural Heritage Program: Nye County Rare Species List
- BLM: Tonopah Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement

Three sensitive species (all plants) were identified as potentially occurring in the Proposed Action area and were specifically surveyed for. These were black milkvetch (*Astragalus funereus*), sand cholla (*Opuntia pulchella*), and Watson's oxytheca (*Oxytheca watsonii*). None of these species were documented at the three proposed MET locations; however, habitat consistent with that of *O. watsonii* was observed at the MET #3 site. No special status wildlife species were observed during surveys; however, focused avian and bat surveys were not conducted so there exists the potential that one or more special status avian and/or bat species forage over the proposed MET sites. Therefore, this does not negate the potential for special status wildlife species to occur in the vicinity of the Proposed Action area.

##### **3.3.1.1.2 Environmental Consequences**

It is unlikely that construction and maintenance activities would impact special status species as none of the species potentially occurring in this area were documented on site.

##### **3.3.1.2 Migratory Birds**

Migratory birds are protected under the USFWS Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 and include short- and long-distance migrants and resident birds. The MBTA lists 836 species, and typically (with few exceptions) excludes non-native and game species.

### 3.3.1.2.1 Affected Environment

Several migratory bird species were observed during the biological surveys of the Proposed Action sites in April and October 2009. At MET site #1, large flocks of horned larks (*Eremophila alpestris*), three golden eagles (*Aquila chrysaetos*), and two common ravens (*Corvus corax*) were observed. Horned larks and common ravens were also observed at the proposed sites for METs #2 and #3. The presence of golden eagles during April surveys indicates that this species is possibly breeding near the Proposed Action area; however, these birds may have been migrating through the area. In addition, bald eagles are found in this valley during winter/migration, but it is unlikely that they will be affected by the proposed METs (Cooper 2009).

### 3.3.1.2.2 Environmental Consequences

Potential impacts to individual migratory birds and/or their nests could result from disturbance during nesting season, which extends from approximately April 1 through July 15. Installation of the METs is expected to occur prior to the nesting season. However, if installation is delayed and falls within the nesting season, field surveys would be conducted to document migratory birds, their nests, eggs, and young prior to any planned disturbance. If any nests, eggs, or young are found, the Proposed Action should be delayed until the birds have completed their nesting and brood-rearing activities, or the Proposed Action would be redesigned so as not to negatively affect the migratory birds, their nests, eggs, or young.

Collisions with guy wires also could contribute to injuries or mortalities of individuals. In addition, the presence of METs would provide potential perches for raptors where perches do not otherwise exist, which could increase predation on smaller migratory bird species. Adhering to the mitigation measures outlined in Section 2.2.1 would minimize impacts to migratory bird populations.

### 3.3.1.3 Vegetation

#### 3.3.1.3.1 Affected Environment

Three vegetation types occur in the Proposed Action area, including salt desert shrub, black greasewood, and alkaline meadows and bottoms (BLM 1994). All three of these habitats were documented in or near the Proposed Action area. MET #1 is located in the alkaline meadows and bottoms, and METs #2 and #3 are in salt desert shrub communities. In addition, black greasewood was observed in the vicinity of the Proposed Action area along the Jefferson Creek drainage. Common species of the Big Smoky Valley include Indian ricegrass (*Achnatherum hymenoides*), alkali sacaton (*Sporobolus airoides*), basin wildrye (*Leymus cinereus*), alkali bluegrass (*Poa juncifolia*), squirreltail (*Elymus elymoides*), galleta (*Hilaria jamesii*), sand dropseed (*Sporobolus cryptandrus*), Baltic rush (*Juncus balticus*), alkali cordgrass (*Spartina gracilis*), Nevada ephedra (*Ephedra nevadensis*), inland saltgrass (*Distichlis spicata*), and bud sage (*Artemisia spinescens*; BLM 1994). Refer to Table 3-2 for plant species observed during field surveys.

**Table 3-2 Plant Species List for the Proposed Action Area**

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Achnatherum hymenoides</i>	Indian ricegrass
<i>Artemisia spinescens</i>	Budsage

**Table 3-2 Plant Species List for the Proposed Action Area**

Scientific Name	Common Name
<i>Atriplex confertifolia</i>	Shadscale
<i>Chrysothamnus viscidiflorus</i>	Green rabbitbrush
<i>Distichlis spicata</i>	Saltgrass
<i>Elymus trachycaulus</i>	Slender wheatgrass
<i>Ephedra nevadensis</i>	Mormon tea
<i>Grayia spinosa</i>	Spiny hopsage
<i>Halogeton glomeratus</i>	Halogeton
<i>Iva axillaris</i>	Poverty weed
<i>Juncus balticus</i>	Baltic rush
<i>Salsola tragus</i>	Russian thistle
<i>Sarcobatus cf. baileyi</i>	Greasewood

**3.3.1.3.2 Environmental Consequences**

Short-term impacts to local vegetative communities would be likely to occur from construction of the METs; however, these impacts would be limited to minor soil disturbance and vegetation trimming during the construction of the METs. Construction would affect a small area of vegetation, which would be trimmed as described in Section 2.2.1, allowing the vegetation to remain viable and minimizing or eliminating long-term impacts.

**3.3.1.4 Wildlife**

This section addresses all wildlife species not addressed in the Special Status Species and Migratory Birds sections (3.3.1.1 and 3.3.1.2, respectively).

**3.3.1.4.1 Affected Environment**

Table 3-3 lists wildlife species (excluding migratory birds) observed during the biological survey in the Proposed Action area. As an additional note, several species of bats are known by the BLM to exist near the Proposed Action area; however, they would not likely be affected by the erection of the METs.

**Table 3-3 Wildlife Species List for the Proposed Action Area**

Scientific Name	Common Name
<b>Reptiles</b>	
<i>Sceloporus occidentalis longipes</i>	Western fence lizard
<b>Mammals</b>	
<i>Antilocapra americana</i>	Pronghorn antelope
<i>Lepus californicus</i>	Black-tailed jackrabbit

**3.3.1.4.2 Environmental Consequences**

Provided that all documented wildlife species are avoided through monitoring their presence during construction and maintenance activities, no impacts to wildlife would occur.

### **3.3.1.5 Noxious Weeds/Non-native, Invasive Species**

#### **3.3.1.5.1 Affected Environment**

The plant species list (Table 3-2) identifies two non-native plant species occurring in the Proposed Action area, halogeton and Russian thistle. Halogeton was documented along the roadside (Dump Road) in and around METs #2 and #3. Russian thistle was documented at MET #3.

#### **3.3.1.5.2 Environmental Consequences**

Impacts on local vegetative communities would be limited to minor soil disturbance and trimming during the construction of the METs. Construction would affect a small area of vegetation, which would be trimmed as described in Section 2.2.1. Construction would not facilitate the spread of invasive plants if appropriate preventive measures were employed. Green Wing will consult with the TFO to determine the measures to be taken to prevent the spread of invasive plants in the Proposed Action area.

### **3.3.2 Native American Concerns**

#### **3.3.2.1 Affected Environment**

Various tribes and bands of the Western Shoshone have stated that Federal projects and land actions can have widespread effects to their culture and religion as they consider the landscape as sacred and as a provider. The Round Mountain MET project lies within the traditional territory of the Western Shoshone and specifically within Big Smoky Valley.

Sites and resources considered sacred and/or detrimental to the continuation of tribal traditions include, but are not limited to: prehistoric and historic village sites, sources of water (hot and cold springs), pine nut gathering locations, sites of ceremony and prayer, prehistoric and ethno-historic archaeological sites, gravesite locations, "rock art" sites, medicinal/edible plant gathering locations, areas associated with creation stories, or any other tribally designated Traditional Cultural Property.

Specifically, Darrough's Hot Spring, which is located on private land, is the closest location of a previously identified property of cultural importance (approx. 2 miles to the west of MET site #1). Former and existing Indian Allotment lands are also scattered throughout Big Smoky Valley. Other sites of importance exist near the Round Mountain Gold Mine and surrounding Forest Service land, but due to protection and confidentiality agreements, they would not be specifically mentioned in this public document.

#### **3.3.2.2 Environmental Consequences**

Considering the Proposed Action, purpose, and results of previous consultations and project specific informal tribal input, results of the archaeological resources inventory for the project, it is unlikely that this activity will adversely affect any Native American traditional/cultural use site, activity, or resource. The Proposed Action is not likely to have the ability to compromise the physical integrity of and access to any sites known to exist within or in close proximity to the project for the following reasons:

- Project activities are located within close proximity to the town of Carvers and Round Mountain and are adjacent to private property and existing residences - contemporary use sites are not known to exist within this active environment;
- Limited new surface disturbance, associated with MET construction, is proposed;

- Project activities are not widespread and are limited to a relatively small area;
- The proposed MET closest to any known site of tribal concern is located approximately 2 miles away (Darrrough's Hot Spring);
- Temporary METs gathering wind energy data are not known to impact spring sources;
- Existing access throughout the area would also be maintained.

Though the possibility of disturbing Native American gravesites within most project areas is extremely low, inadvertent discovery procedures would be noted. Under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), section (3)(d)(1), it states that the discovering individual must notify the land manager in writing of such a discovery. If the discovery occurs in connection with an authorized use, the activity, which caused the discovery, is to cease and the materials are to be protected until the land manager can respond to the situation.

Also, during project implementation, if any surface and/or subsurface cultural properties, items, or artifacts (stone tools, projectile points, etc...) are encountered, it must be stressed to those involved in the project activities that such items are not to be collected and the land manager must be contacted immediately. Cultural and Archaeological resources are protected under the Archaeological Resources Protection Act (16 U.S.C 470ii) and the Federal Land Management Policy Act (43 U.S.C. 1701).

Although tribal resources and sites of traditional/cultural importance may not be impacted by this specific project (construction of 3 temporary METs), any future proposal to develop (as a result of the data gathered from the METs) will be sent to tribal representatives for their review, comment, and participation. A determination of impact for this specific project is not indicative of those that might occur if or when a development plan is submitted.

Consultation and traditional/cultural site, activity, and associated resource identification opportunities continue to be available to tribal participants for multiple projects throughout Big Smoky Valley.

### **3.3.3 Airspace**

#### **3.3.3.1 Affected Environment**

Several small-capacity airports occur within 50 miles of the Proposed Action area. The privately-owned Hadley Airport (Round Mountain Gold Corporation) is approximately 4 nautical miles southwest of the most southerly proposed MET location; and is the closest airport to the Proposed Action area. Three small-capacity public airports also are within 50 nautical miles of the Proposed Action area: Kingston Airport (approximately 27 miles to the north), Gabbs Airport (approximately 43 miles to the northwest), and Tonopah Airport (approximately 47 miles to the south). Reno/Tahoe International Airport in Reno is the nearest major commercial airport and is more than 150 nautical miles northwest of the Proposed Action area.

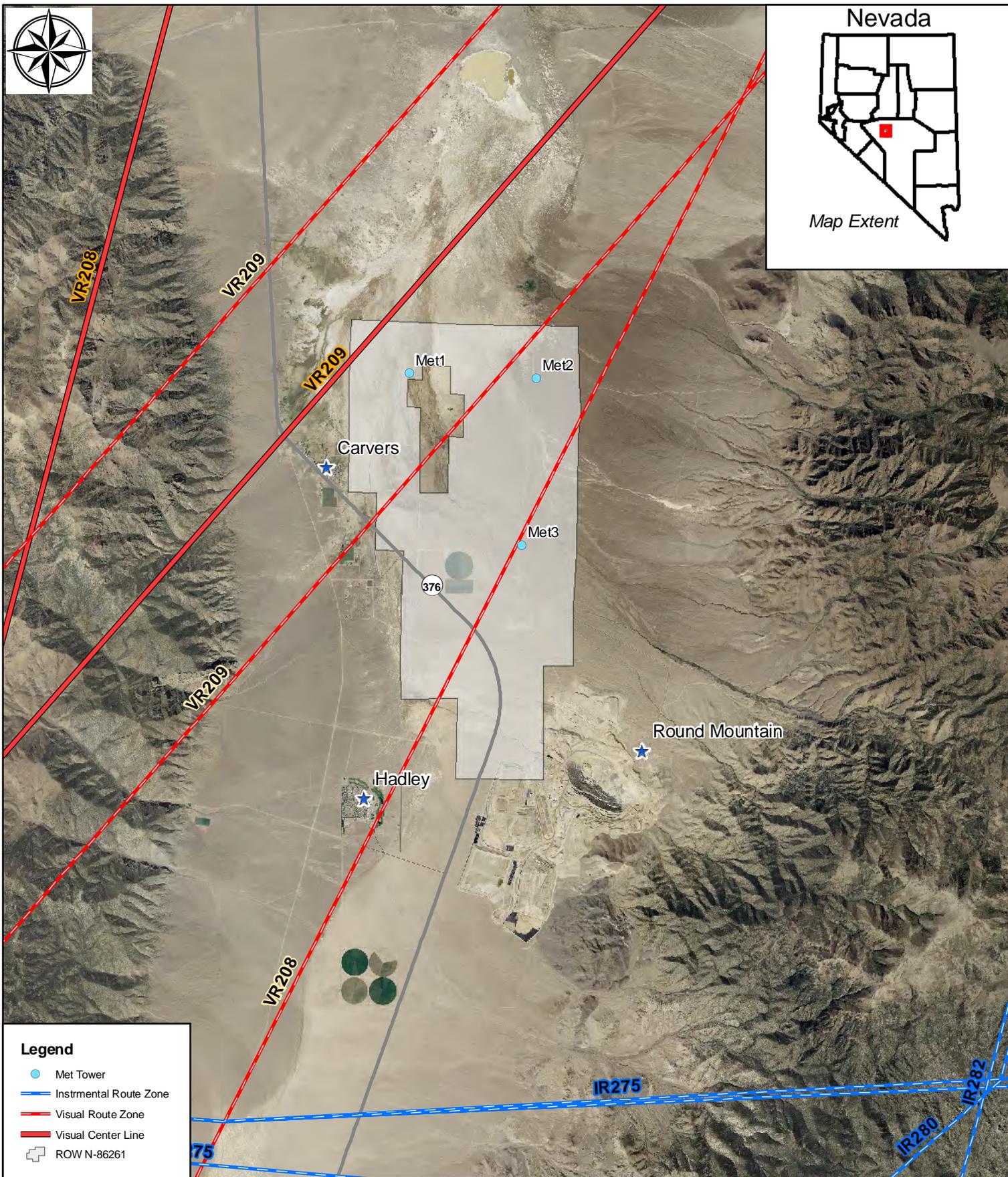
Military aviation activities along Military Training Routes (MTRs) occur in the vicinity of the Proposed Action area. One MTR is near the Proposed Action area. Visual Route (VR) 209, administered by Naval Air Station (NAS) Lemoore, California, occurs less

than 1 mile northwest of the Proposed Action area (Federal Aviation Administration [FAA] 2009; see Figure 3-1).

### **3.3.3.2 Environmental Consequences**

Representatives from Nellis Air Force Base (AFB) were consulted about possible impacts of the Proposed Action on military aviation activities and long- and short-range radar systems. Representatives considered the Proposed Action to be of no impact to these activities and systems; however, noted that the METs would be adjacent to an impact area for military activities. Nellis AFB also noted that if the associated proposed Round Mountain Wind Project is constructed and extends into the impact area, there would be radio frequency concerns.

The FAA has performed studies [2009-WTW-11230-OE, 2009-WTW-11232-OE, and 2009-WTW-11231-OE] on airspace impacts resulting from the Proposed Action and issued a Determination of No Hazard to Air Navigation for the MET location (FAA 2010a, b, and c). Additionally, the Proposed Action area is in a “green” zone for possible long range radar impacts which signifies that no impacts to Air Defense or Homeland Security radars are anticipated (FAA 2009). With all of the aforementioned details of the local airspace environment taken into account, the Proposed Action would not cause impacts to local airspace.



**Fig. 3-1 Military Training Routes**  
 Round Mountain  
 Nye County  
 Nevada

### 3.3.4 Lands and Realty

#### 3.3.4.1 Affected Environment

The Proposed Action is regulated under land use policies set forth by the BLM and Nye County in their respective planning documents. Section 202(c)(9) of the FLPMA governs BLM planning and requires that the BLM land use plans be consistent with state and local land use plans to the extent possible. In the case of the Proposed Action, the BLM Tonopah RMP and the Nye County Comprehensive Plan mention utility corridors and oil, gas, and geothermal energy development, but do not specifically mention wind or other alternative forms of energy (BLM 1997).

The Proposed Action would take place entirely on BLM land within the proposed ROW (Casefile No. NVN-086261). In addition, there are 13 other ROWs in the vicinity of the Proposed Action area. These ROWs would be located within the boundaries of the proposed Round Mountain Wind Project, which is associated with the Proposed Action (Table 3-4).

**Table 3-4 ROWs in the Vicinity of the Proposed Action Area**

ROW Holder	ROW Case Number	Use Type
Sierra Pacific Power Co.	NVN-009042	Power Transmission
Nevada Bell	NVN-033405	Telephone/Telegraph
Nye County	NVN-034726	Sanitary Landfills
Sierra Pacific Power Co.	NVN-038955	Power Transmission
Richard and Margaret Carver	NVN-039891	Other – Non-Energy
Carrol and Rea C. Stonier	NVN-041911	Access Road
Nevada Bell	NVN-046314	Telephone/Telegraph
Nevada Bell	NVN-046445	Telephone/Telegraph
Sierra Pacific Power Co.	NVN-048110	Power Transmission
Nye County Roads Dept.	NVN-053177	Roads
Sierra Pacific Power Co.	NVN-054288	Power Transmission
Round Mountain Gold Corp.	NVN-054310	Water Facilities
Nevada Bell	NVN-055261	Telephone/Telegraph
Nevada Bell	NVN-055410	Telephone/Telegraph
Ralph James Steward	NVN-060867	Other – Non-Energy
Sierra Pacific Power Co.	NVN-060961	Power Transmission
Nevada Bell	NVN-062143	Telephone/Telegraph
Nevada Bell	NVN-063200	Fiber Optic Facilities
Robert Beck and Karen Trust	NVN-075837	Access Road

Source: BLM 2009

#### 3.3.4.2 Environmental Consequences

The Proposed Action would not infringe upon or affect any ROWs in the area, and local stakeholders have been notified of the Proposed Action. Much of the land in the vicinity of the Proposed Action remains virtually unused due to a lack of vegetation for livestock grazing, and has a low potential for mineral exploration and extraction. Due to this current low level of land use, the Proposed Action would have no impacts on local land uses.

### **3.3.5 Human Health and Safety**

#### **3.3.5.1 Affected Environment**

The METs are to be located on public land in the Big Smoky Valley, east of the town of Carvers, Nevada. One tower is adjacent to an existing road. The other two towers would be serviced by dirt access roads. The base of the towers and the guy wires would be accessible to the public.

#### **3.3.5.2 Environmental Consequences**

The METs would be fenced at the base of the tower as well as the guy wires during the construction and operation phases. The fencing would consist of four 8-foot long by 6-foot high panels of cyclone type or Hog Wire Panel fencing, placed on the surface of the soil and held in place with drive anchor footings or T-Posts.

Fluorescent guy guard covers would be placed on every guy wire that would be attached to the tower, at the point of the wire connecting to fencing, to help prevent injuries to the public and wildlife. These fluorescent guy guard covers would be placed on every guy wire, at least 10-feet from the ground up. Painting the tower white from the top going down, approximately 30 feet to make the tower more visible to flying aircraft and the placement of four high visibility balls (orange) as near to the top of the tower as possible, to ensure visibility of tower to flying aircraft, would be required. GreenWing would be required to comply with all applicable Federal Aviation Administration requirements for lighting, painting, or marking of the METS that would be authorized by issuance of the grant.

### **3.3.6 Visual Resources**

#### **3.3.6.1 Affected Environment**

Viewers near the Proposed Action area include residents of the towns of Carvers and Hadley, motorists on State Route (SR) 376 and other local roads, visitors to the Toiyabe National Forest, and pilots using the Hadley Airport. Designated State or National Scenic Byways do not occur within or near the Proposed Action area. The towns of Carvers and Hadley are approximately 2 and 5 miles, respectively, to the southeast of the closest proposed MET. The view of the Proposed Action area is between 1.5 and 4 miles from SR 376, depending on position on the highway and the nearest visible proposed MET location. The Proposed Action area is situated between two sections of the Toiyabe National Forest, the borders of which are approximately 3 miles west and 4 miles east of the Proposed Action area. The National Forest provides scenic and recreational opportunities to the public.

The BLM assigns Visual Resource Management (VRM) classifications for all public land that it manages in an effort to preserve scenic vistas and the overall visual quality of the landscape. VRM classifications range from Class 1, highest scenic value with the most protection for scenic values of the landscape, to Class 4, lowest scenic value with the least emphasis on preserving overall scenery. In the *Approved Tonopah Resource Management Plan and Record of Decision* (BLM 1997), the BLM classifies the valley encompassing the Proposed Action area as Class 4.

### **3.3.6.2 Environmental Consequences**

The Proposed Action area is considered of lower scenic value than other designated scenic areas in the region, since the BLM has classified the Proposed Action area as VRM Class 4. Because the METs are slender, non-reflective structures, they would not visually dominate or become highly noticeable to the casual observer. Therefore, the Proposed Action is not likely to cause a visual impact to local viewsheds or VRM classifications in the Proposed Action area.

### **3.3.7 Cultural/Historical Resources**

#### **3.3.7.1 Affected Environment**

HRA, Inc., (HRA) conducted archaeological surveys of the Proposed Action area in October, 2009. HRA's archaeological survey of the three Round Mountain MET parcels resulted in the identification of one archaeological site. That site was determined to be not eligible to the National Register of Historic Places.

#### **3.3.7.2 Environmental Consequences**

The Proposed Action will not impact any significant archaeological resources in or near the Proposed Action area.

### **3.3.8 Grazing Management**

#### **3.3.8.1 Affected Environment**

The Proposed Action area is situated in the Smoky Grazing Allotment (BLM 1997). This allotment is actively grazed by two permittees.

#### **3.3.8.2 Environmental Consequences**

The Proposed Action would have minimal impacts on grazing management, as vegetation would be trimmed in relatively small areas (see Section 2.2.1). In addition, GreenWing will install metal galvanized fencing around the base of the METs and along the base of the guy wires to deter interference from livestock and wildlife.

### **3.3.9 No-Action Alternative**

Under the No-Action Alternative, no MET would be constructed within the Proposed Action area to gather meteorological data. Gathering the data could lead to future wind energy development. Existing BLM management activities and land uses would continue.

## **CHAPTER 4.0 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

For the purposes of this EA, cumulative impacts are analyzed as the sum of all past and present actions, the Proposed Action, and reasonably foreseeable future actions resulting primarily from public uses within the defined cumulative assessment area. A cumulative impact is defined as ~~the~~ impact which results from the incremental impact of the action, decision, or project when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time” (40 CFR 1508.7).

As required by NEPA and its implementing regulations, this chapter addresses the cumulative effects on the environmental resources in the cumulative effects study area (CESA) that could result from the implementation of the Proposed Action in combination with the past actions, present actions, and reasonably foreseeable future actions. The CESA for the specific resources is described below. The length of time considered for cumulative effects analysis varies according to the duration of impacts from the Proposed Action on each resource. For the purposes of this analysis and under Federal regulations, ~~impacts~~” and ~~effects~~” are assumed to have the same meaning and are used interchangeably.

The environmental consequences of the Proposed Action for each resource analyzed in this EA were evaluated in Chapter 3. The following sections discuss the resources identified to be potentially impacted by the Proposed Action within their identified CESA.

### **4.2 CUMULATIVE EFFECTS STUDY AREA**

The CESA for the affected resources is the proposed BLM wind energy ROW (Case Number NVN-086261, [Figure 1-1]) which encompasses the Proposed Action area and currently comprises the possible area for wind energy development by GreenWing. Due to its relatively small footprint and minimal alteration to the surrounding environment, the Proposed Action would not contribute to cumulative impacts beyond the CESA boundary.

### **4.3 PAST AND PRESENT ACTIONS**

Past and present actions within the CESA consist primarily of mining activities, transportation and access, and livestock grazing.

Several mining operations and mining claims exist in the vicinity of the CESA, the most prominent being the Round Mountain Gold Corporation. This operation has produced large amounts of gold.

Past and present actions within the CESA are supported by a surface transportation network that includes SR-8/376, county roads, dirt roads, and ~~two-tracks~~” on public

lands. Few are regularly maintained and off-highway vehicle (OHV) use may occur outside of this network.

Livestock grazing occurs within the Smoky Grazing Allotment, which includes the CESA. The Toiyabe National Forest, to the east and west of the CESA, provides local recreational destinations and attracts visitors regularly.

#### **4.4 REASONABLY FORESEEABLE FUTURE ACTIONS**

Assuming that wind and climate data resulting from the Proposed Action indicate feasibility, GreenWing would permit, construct, and operate the Round Mountain Wind Project. This development would consist of multiple wind turbines at undetermined locations within the CESA and would involve additional site-specific analysis of impacts, including cumulative impacts. Under this scenario, other activities, such as mining activities, mineral exploration, livestock grazing, and recreation, would have less possibility of occurring within the CESA. Conversely, if the resulting data from the Proposed Action were unfavorable to wind energy development, the land would remain largely undeveloped, as no specific plans for the land within the CESA are presently known.

If approved, a ROW grant for the project area would be issued for an initial term of three years from the date of issuance. This term could be renewed (43 CFR 2807.22) for a term not to exceed three years if a separate right-of-way application and Plan of Development is submitted for a wind energy development project prior to the end of the initial term of the site testing and monitoring grant. A separate application for wind energy development would require a separate analysis, review, and decision.

#### **4.5 CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

##### **4.5.1 Cultural and Historic Resources**

The Proposed Action would not adversely affect any cultural resources. Cumulative impacts to cultural resources could result from the reasonably foreseeable future action of the proposed Round Mountain Wind Project or any other future wind power development within the CESA, but actual impacts could not be addressed until specific plans (e.g., area to be cleared and graded) were created, a new Area of Potential Effect was established, and separate environmental analyses were performed.

##### **4.5.2 Wildlife (Including Migratory Birds and Special Status Species)**

The proposed MET construction is not expected to cause impacts to local wildlife communities as long as requirements, such as avoiding sensitive species, are met. Current potential land uses, such as OHV use and livestock grazing, would be much more likely to cause impacts to wildlife than the proposed MET construction. Cumulative impacts to wildlife could result from the reasonably foreseeable future action of the proposed Round Mountain Wind Project, or any other future wind power development within the CESA, but actual impacts could not be addressed until specific plans (e.g., area to be cleared and graded) are created and separate environmental analyses are performed.

##### **4.5.3 Vegetation (Including Noxious Weeds/Non-native Invasive Plants)**

The proposed MET construction is not expected to cause long-term impacts to local vegetative communities as long as requirements, such as avoiding sensitive species, are met. Current potential land uses, such as OHV use and livestock grazing, would be much

more likely to cause impacts to vegetation than the Proposed Action. Although ground and vegetation disturbance by the Proposed Action would affect a relatively small area, the project could facilitate the spread of non-native invasive plants currently present. These impacts could be minimized or avoided by taking appropriate preventive measures, such as examining the undercarriage of construction vehicles and removing trapped vegetation prior to departing the site. Cumulative impacts to vegetation could result from the reasonably foreseeable future action of the proposed Round Mountain Wind Project, or any other future wind power development within the CESA, but actual impacts could not be addressed until specific plans (e.g., area to be cleared and graded) were created and separate environmental analyses were performed.

#### **4.5.4 Airspace**

The Proposed Action is not expected to cause impacts to local airspace. However, potential impacts to airspace resulting from the proposed Round Mountain Wind Project, or any other future wind power development within the CESA, are a distinct possibility. Placement of wind turbines, which occupy a much larger portion of airspace than do METs, could be micro-sited to avoid military and civilian aeronautical routes, thus mitigating possible impacts. The FAA would make a final determination of impacts to airspace if and when development plans (e.g., exact coordinates for each wind turbine) for a wind power development were submitted to them.

#### **4.5.5 Visual Resources**

The Proposed Action is expected to have negligible impacts on local visual resources. The Proposed Action meets the VRM objectives of a Class 4 designation, primarily because METs are slender, non-reflective structures. Impacts to visual resources resulting from the reasonably foreseeable future action of the proposed Round Mountain Wind Project, or any other future wind power development within the CESA, could occur. Although it is assumed that wind turbines would cause noticeable alteration to viewsheds in and around the CESA, actual impacts could not be addressed until specific plans (e.g., wind turbine placement in reference to roadways, recreation areas, and historic landmarks) were created and separate environmental analyses were performed.

#### **4.6 NO-ACTION ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No-Action Alternative, the BLM would not approve the Proposed Action and the potential cumulative impacts analyzed above would not occur. Present activities would continue in the CESA and current BLM management practices would be used for past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions.

## **CHAPTER 5.0 MITIGATION AND MONITORING**

### **5.1 MITIGATION AND MONITORING**

#### **5.1.1 Mitigation**

GreenWing would implement the environmental protection measures outlined in Section 2.2. These measures are designed to avoid or reduce the impacts associated with the Proposed Action and have been used as a guideline for impact analysis in this EA. No further mitigation measures are proposed.

#### **5.1.2 Environmental Monitoring**

GreenWing was initially prepared to provide monitoring for sensitive plant and animal species and cultural resources as part of the construction phase of the Proposed Action. Because there was limited evidence of sensitive plant and animal species, GreenWing is not proposing any monitoring measures.

## CHAPTER 6.0 LIST OF PREPARERS AND SOURCES

### 6.1 LIST OF PREPARERS

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