



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
60TH CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON (AMC)

10 JUN 2011

MEMORANDUM FOR ATTACHED DISTRIBUTION LIST

FROM: 60 CES/CEA
411 Airman Drive
Travis AFB CA 94535-2001

SUBJECT: Environmental Assessment for Travis AFB C-17 Use of Instrument
Routes 264, 275, 280, 281 and 282

The U.S. Air Force is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed use of five Central Nevada military training routes (MTRs) by C-17 aircrews from Travis Air Force Base (AFB), California as depicted in the attached Figures 1 and 2. The MTRs will serve as Instrument Routes (IRs) and are designated IR 264, IR 275, IR 280, IR 281 and IR 282. The need arises from the requirement for C-17 aircrews at Travis AFB to maintain proficiency in low-level navigation skills. Frequent, unrestricted use of dedicated low-level MTRs and, more importantly IRs with varied terrain, is essential. These MTRs previously originated and were scheduled out of Mountain Home AFB in Idaho and were flown predominantly by bomber aircraft such as B-1s and B-52s. They became inactive and, in 2006, Travis AFB assumed the originating and scheduling responsibilities through an Air Force-wide review and reallocation process. An Environmental Assessment is being prepared to assess the potential impacts of C-17s flying these MTRs. A June 2003 Environmental Assessment for the West Coast Basing of C-17 Aircraft evaluated 16 MTRs for use by the Travis based C-17 aircrews, however, the MTRs evaluated were not dedicated to Travis, are heavily used and must be scheduled through other installations.

The five MTRs listed above are divided into segments allowing for multiple entrance and exit points. This allows aircrews to enter a training route without committing to fly the entire route. When flying IRs, aircraft fly down to 300 feet above ground level. When flying the IR under Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) aircraft maintain 2,000 feet above the highest obstacle (whether natural or man made) within that segment and airspeeds are in excess of 250 knots, or approximately 288 miles per hour mph.

It is unlikely that Travis AFB C-17 aircrews would fly any MTR in its entirety on a single training sortie. The likely scenario is that aircrews would plan to enter and exit a route at published alternate entry and exit points and fly segments of the routes during planned sorties. Each route has numerous entry and exit points that increase the options available to the crews for use during a training sortie. Under this concept, aircrews could fly a portion of more than one route on a single sortie. Given the amount of options available with the five routes, flights using the same segments would be infrequent. For evaluation purposes, it is estimated that:

- Travis AFB C-17 aircrews would normally fly low routes two (2) times each weekday (Monday through Friday).

- Use of the five MTRs would be ten (10) sorties per week or 520 sorties per year.
- 75 percent (approximately 390 sorties per year) of the total sorties would be flown during the daytime (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.),.
- 25% (approximately 130 sorties per year) of the total sorties would be flown during the nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.).
- The number of annual sorties for each of the five routes would be 104 (78 daytime and 26 nighttime) assuming equal distribution of sorties.

Aircraft would file a flight plan and get to and from the routes via normal air traffic control routing. No modification of the currently published route structures would be necessary (i.e., there would be no change to the MTR widths, upper and lower altitude limits, or alternate entry and exit points).

In accordance with Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs, we request your participation and solicit comments on the Proposed Action (your agency will be provided with a copy of the Draft EA at a later date). Comments may include any issues related to this EA. Please provide any comments no later than 30 days from the date of this letter directly to Mr. Chris Krettecoc, 60 CES/CEAO, 411 Airman Drive, Travis AFB, CA 94535-2001.

Additionally, we solicit your assistance to identify any resources within your agency's purview that may be impacted. We also request point-of-contact information, relevant documentation available that would assist in preparing the EA, or identification of any other major projects you are aware of that may contribute to cumulative effects and would facilitate cumulative impact analysis for this EA. The environmental analysis will focus on potential impacts to: airspace operations (to include aircraft safety and bird/wildlife aircraft strike hazard); noise; land use; air quality; biological resources; cultural resources; and, environmental justice and the protection of children.

If members of your staff have any questions on this EA, please contact Mr. Chris Krettecoc at (707) 424-7517.

Sincerely,



DAVID H. MUSSELWHITE, GS-13, DAF
Chief, Asset Management

3 Attachments

1. Figure 1
2. Figure 2
3. Distribution List

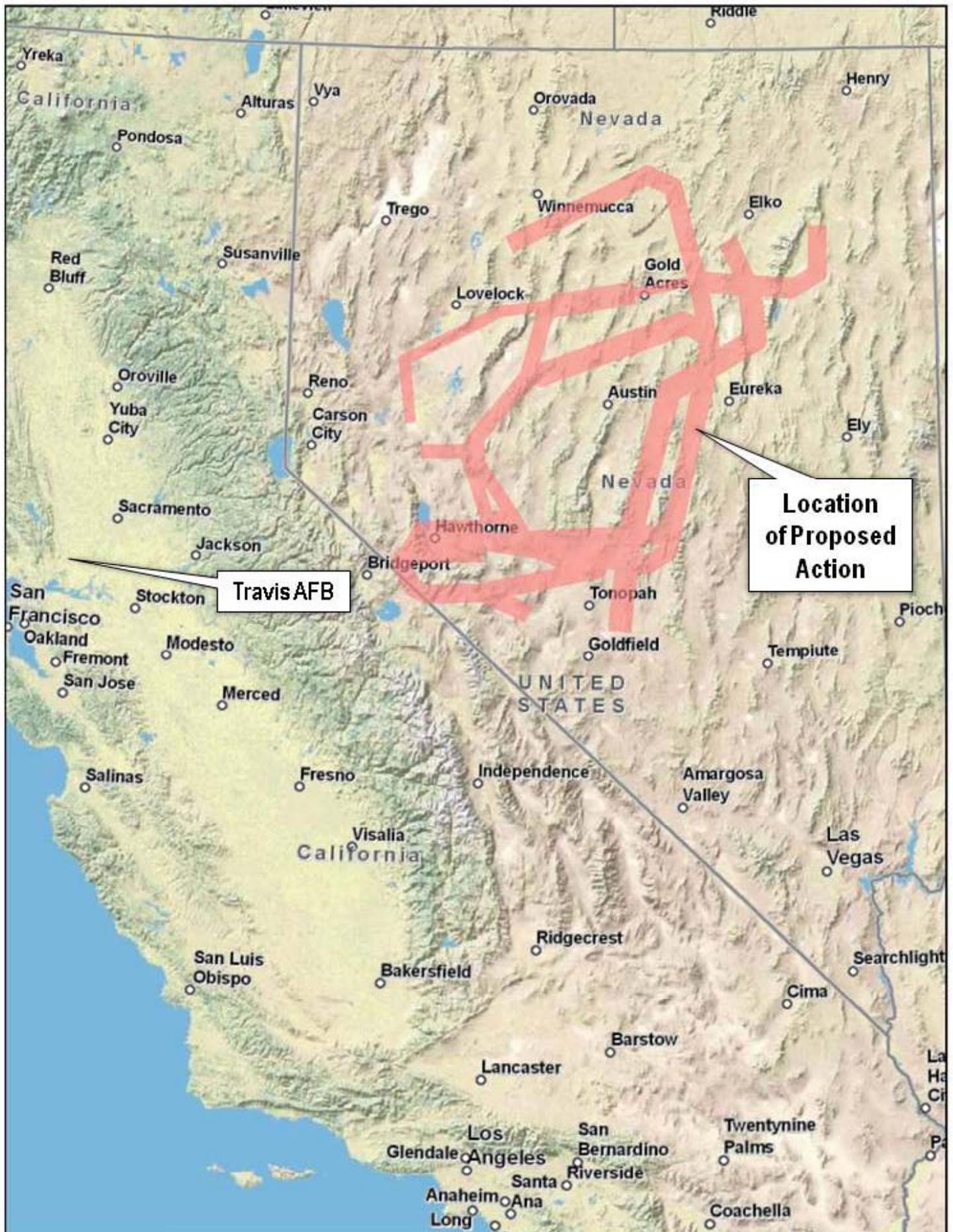


Figure 1. Project Location Map

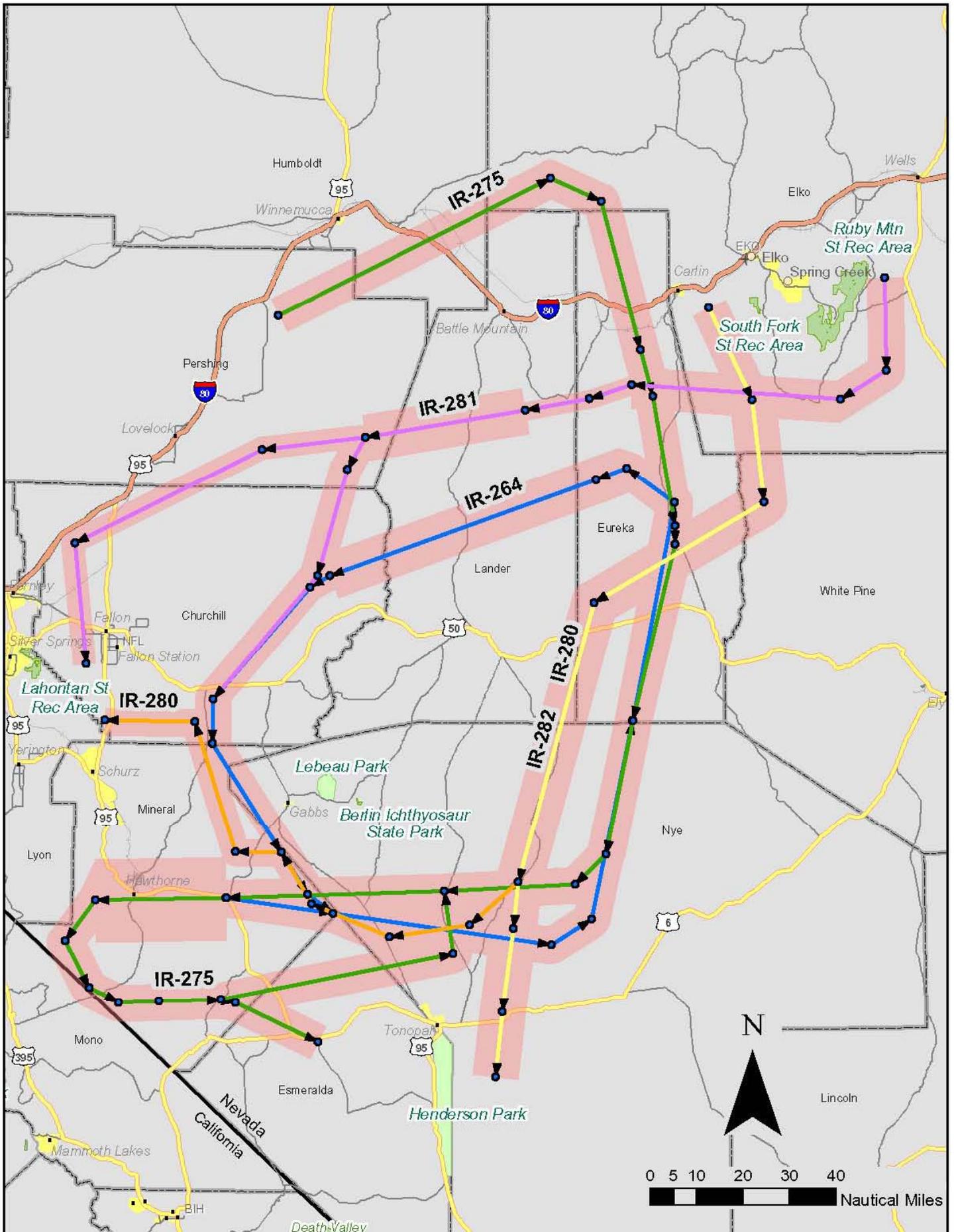


Figure 2. Location of Instrument Routes 264, 275, 280, 281, and 282

Distribution List

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