



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
99TH CIVIL ENGINEER SQUADRON (ACC)
NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE NEVADA**

19 August 2016

Lieutenant Colonel Michael A. Freeman
Commander
4430 Grissom Ave., Ste. 101
Nellis AFB NV 89191-6520

Skip Canfield
Nevada State Clearinghouse
Nevada Division of State Lands
901 S. Stewart St, Ste 5003
Carson City, NV 89701-5246

Dear Mr. Canfield

The United States Air Force (USAF) is issuing this notice to notify state and local agencies of its intent to prepare a Legislative Environmental Impact Statement (LEIS) for the Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR) military land withdrawal at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada. The LEIS is being prepared in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969; 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Parts 1500–1508, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA; and the Air Force Environmental Impact Analysis Process (EIAP) [32 CFR Part 989].

This notice also serves to invite early public and agency participation in determining the scope of environmental issues and alternatives to be analyzed in the LEIS and to identify and eliminate from detailed study the issues which are not significant. To effectively define the full range of issues and concerns to be evaluated in the LEIS, the Air Force is soliciting scoping comments from interested local, state and federal agencies, interested American Indian tribes, and interested members of the public. This notice also serves to provide early notice of compliance with Executive Order (EO) 11990, “Protection of Wetlands,” and EO 11988, “Floodplain Management.” State and federal regulatory agencies with special expertise in wetlands and floodplains have been contacted to request comment.

The current NTTR land withdrawal expires in November 2021. In accordance with the Military Lands Withdrawal Act of 1999, the Air Force has notified Congress of a continuing military need for the NTTR withdrawal. Military land withdrawal applications have been

Enable Success Through Innovative Base Support

prepared and submitted to Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The segregation of lands proposed for military withdrawal are addressed in a separate BLM Federal Register notice.

The Air Force LEIS supports Congressional decision-making for the proposed military land withdrawal and will be programmatic in nature, adding value by setting out a broad view of environmental impacts and alternatives for Congress to consider. Following Congressional action on the NTTR land withdrawal proposals, site specific proposals based on particular DoD or Air Force defined needs for the range would be evaluated with the appropriate level of tiered or supplemental NEPA.

In particular, the LEIS will analyze alternatives for military land withdrawal of the NTTR to improve the range capacity and capability to support military test and training requirements now and into the future. The LEIS will assess the potential environmental consequences of the proposal to extend the existing NTTR military land withdrawal beyond the current withdrawal expiration date. As part of the withdrawal extension, the Air Force proposes to continue military operations on the NTTR's existing 2,949,603 acres of land. In addition to extending the existing land withdrawal, the Air Force is also proposing to withdraw up to an additional 301,507 acres to improve the range's capacity to support military testing and training.

The alternatives being evaluated in the LEIS include: 1) extending the existing land withdrawal and management of the NTTR (Status Quo); 2) extending the existing land withdrawal and providing the Air Force with increased access for military activities in the South Range of the NTTR; 3) Alternative 1 or 2 and expanding the existing withdrawal by including up to 301,507 additional acres, via three sub-alternatives; 4) establishing the time period of the withdrawal as either 20 years, 50 years, or as an indefinite military withdrawal; and 5) the No Action alternative, which includes returning NTTR lands to the public domain, through the Department of the Interior.

The alternatives structure allows for combining elements of alternatives in an additive fashion. For example, Alternative 2 could be selected along with sub-alternatives of Alternatives 3 (an option for expansion) and 4 (option for duration) as part of the Air Force's recommendation to Congress for the future military withdrawal. Within the framework of these alternatives, the LEIS will support Congressional action by identifying and evaluating potential impacts to land use, airspace, safety, noise, hazardous materials and solid waste, earth resources, water resources, air quality, transportation, wilderness and wilderness study areas, cultural resources, biological resources, socioeconomics, and environmental justice.

The Air Force will be holding public open house scoping meetings in areas potentially impacted by the proposal. The purpose of the meetings and the scoping period is to further solicit input regarding the scope of issues to be addressed and identify environmental issues to be

analyzed in depth. The Air Force's notice of intent (NOI) to prepare a LEIS and hold scoping meetings will be published in the Federal Register the week of August 26, 2016, and local notices announcing scheduled dates, locations, and addresses for each meeting will be published fifteen (15) days prior to each meeting.

During scoping meetings, the Air Force will provide additional information about the NTTR Land Withdrawal. Public and agency comments presented at the meetings, as well as written comments received by the Air Force during the scoping period and throughout the environmental process, will be considered in the preparation of the Draft LEIS. Scoping comments may be submitted to the Air Force at the planned public scoping meetings and/or in writing. Comments will be accepted at any time during the Environmental Impact Analysis Process (EIAP). However, to ensure the Air Force has sufficient time to consider public input in the preparation of the Draft LEIS, scoping comments must be submitted no later than December 10, 2016.

DATES: The Air Force plans to hold five public scoping meetings from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., on the dates and at the locations listed below.

- Wednesday, October 12, 2016: Beatty Community Center, 100 A Avenue South, Beatty, NV 89003
- Thursday, October 13, 2016: Tonopah Convention Center, 301 Brouger Avenue, Tonopah, NV 89049
- Tuesday, October 18, 2016: Caliente Elementary School, 289 Lincoln Street, Caliente, NV 89008
- Wednesday, October 19, 2016: Pahrangat Valley High School, 151 S. Main Street, Alamo, NV 89001
- Thursday, October 20, 2016: Aliante Hotel, 7300 Aliante Parkway, North Las Vegas, NV 89084

The agenda for each scoping meeting is as follows:

- 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. – Open House and comment submission
- 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. – Air Force Presentation
- 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. – Open House and comment submission resumes

During the meetings, the Air Force will provide information on the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed action and solicit public comments on alternative development. If state or local agencies have specific questions or comments about the proposal, please direct any written comments or requests for information to 99th Air Base Wing Public Affairs, 99ABW.PAOutreach@us.af.mil.

Enable Success Through Innovative Base Support

Information on the NTTR Military Land Withdrawal and LEIS process can be accessed at the project website at www.nttrleis.com. The project website can be used to submit scoping comments to the Air Force or comments and inquiries may also be submitted by mail to the 99th Air Base Wing Public Affairs, 4430 Grissom Ave., Ste. 107, Nellis AFB, NV 89191 or by e-mail at 99ABW.PAOutreach@us.af.mil.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael A. Freeman".

Michael A. Freeman
Lieutenant Colonel, USAF
Commander

Enclosures

Figure 2. Current Primary Jurisdiction Designation of the DNWR

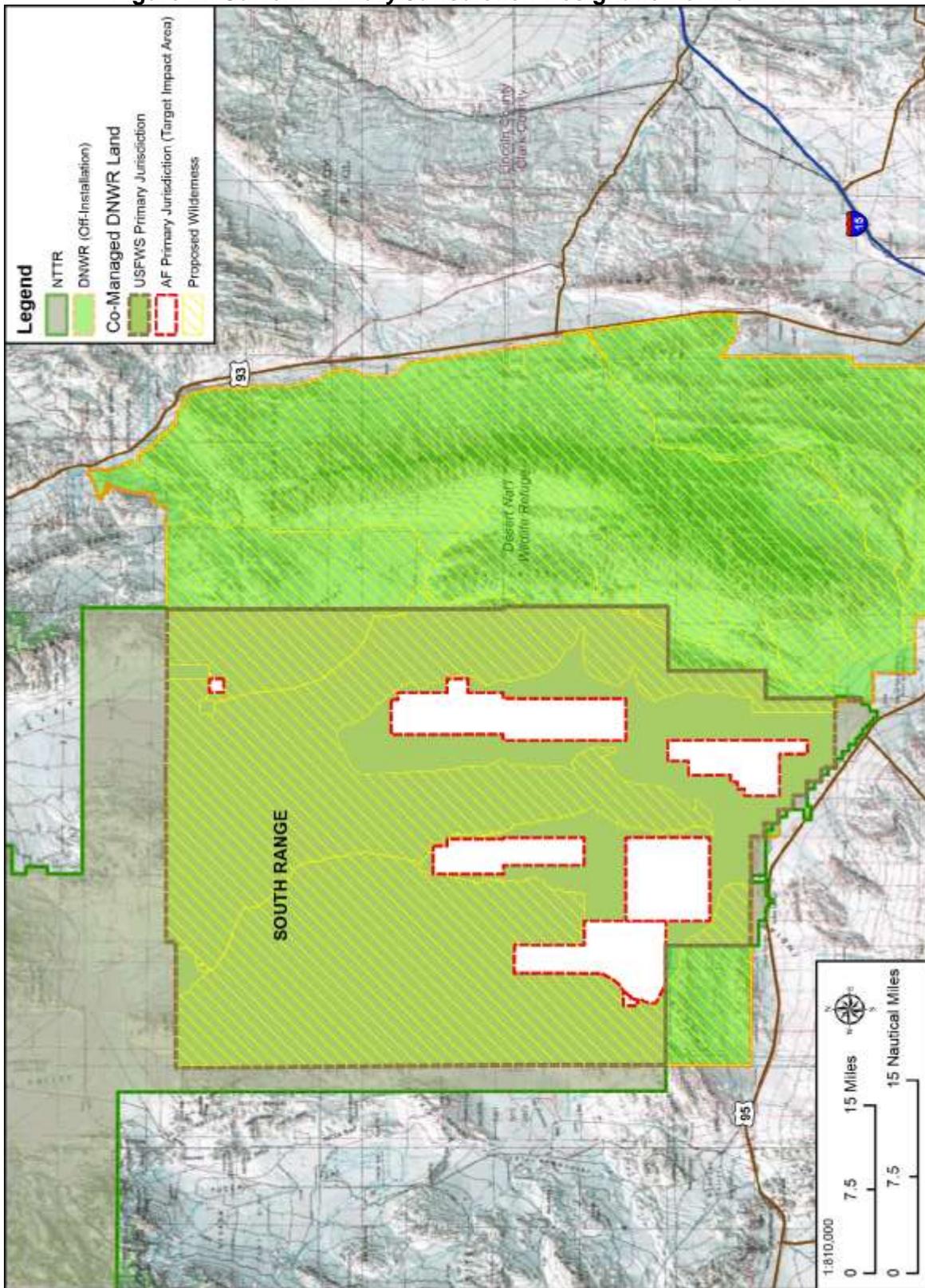


Figure 3. Alternative 3A, 3B, and 3C Locations and Acreages

