

Legislative Committee on Public Lands  
Bureau of Land Management (BLM) – Southern Nevada District Update  
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The BLM's Southern Nevada District includes 3.5 million acres of public land in 3 field offices: Las Vegas, Pahrump, and Red Rock/Sloan. It also includes the Nellis Test and Training Range, a 2.9 million-acre withdrawal to the U.S. Air Force. The following is a briefing on current status of projects in the Southern Nevada District.

A. Nellis Test and Training Range (NTTR)

The Department of Defense is the lead agency for a legislative land withdrawal renewal of NTTR (the withdrawal also includes Creech Air Force Base, Nellis Air Force Base, the Nellis Small Arms Range, and Fallon Naval Airbase). The current legislative withdrawal expires in 2021. Cooperating Agencies in this effort include the BLM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Department of Wildlife. The schedule for completing the withdrawal package is October 2018 to be ready for congressional approval. Tribal consultation will be initiated in mid-spring and public scoping meetings will be held late spring, early summer.

B. Las Vegas/Pahrump Field Offices Resource Management Plan Revision

The BLM's Southern Nevada District is in the process of developing the Proposed Resource Management Plan (RMP)/Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which is the next stage of the RMP Revision process. BLM released the draft RMP in November 2014 for a 150-day comment period. The district received over 24,000 comments, mostly as form letters; however BLM received 1,750 comments from cooperating agencies.

The BLM has been holding meetings with the various cooperating agencies while developing the Proposed RMP/Final EIS to discuss their issues and concerns. In the next several months, responses to substantive public and cooperating agency comments will be summarized.

The BLM's Southern Nevada District anticipates publishing the Proposed RMP Final EIS, along with a 30-day protest period, in late summer 2016. In addition to the 30-day protest period, the BLM will also provide a 60-day Governor's consistency review to ensure consistency with state and local plans, policies, and programs.

Protests and responses from the Governor's consistency review on the Proposed RMP/ Final EIS will be resolved before issuing a Record of Decision. The Southern Nevada District anticipates the Record of Decision in spring of 2017.

C. Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act

The Act allows the proceeds from the sale of U.S. public land in the Las Vegas Valley to fund a range of conservation, restoration, capital improvement, and public improvement projects throughout the State. The revenue derived from the land sales is divided among the State of Nevada Education Fund (5%); the Southern Nevada Water Authority (10%), and the remainder is made available to fund projects. Since 1998, the program has generated \$3.5 billion for over 1,200 projects. Round 15 was approved by Secretary Jewell on January 6, 2016; 43 projects were funded to encourage environmental sustainability, community collaboration, and wildlife connectivity.

- Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Wildfire Prevention - \$5.7 million

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- PTNA - \$4.8 million
- Capital Improvements - \$5.2 million
- CI - \$5.7 million
- Environmentally Sensitive Land Acquisition - \$12 million
- Eastern NV Landscape Restoration Project - \$4 million
- MSHCP - \$1.3 million

Land Sales – in November, 2015, BLM sold 261 acres for \$32.7 million. On April 26, 2016 BLM will hold an auction for 609 acres. BLM posts the fair market value appraisal of each parcel 30 days prior to the auction.

D. Fire and Aviation

SNDO experienced a below average fire season in 2015, with 101 fires and 75 acres burned. This allowed the division to support fire suppression efforts in sage grouse habitat in northern Nevada. The Vegas Valley Hand crew assisted training the military battalion that was activated for fire suppression in the Pacific Northwest. Hazardous fuel reduction actions were implemented on 4,500 acres, including a prescribed fire in the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area.

E. Las Vegas Field Office

- In the Dry Lake Solar Energy Zone, BLM issued rights-of-way to 3 different companies to build solar facilities, which would collectively produce up to 480 Megawatts of renewable energy for the Nevada utility market. One grant holder was able to secure a 174 MW power purchase agreement (PPA), and plans on breaking ground in May 2016.
- Major transmission projects moving forward in Southern Nevada include TransWest Express, LS Power (recently selected as the Cal ISO sponsor for the Harry Allen to Eldorado 500 kV transmission project), and Eastern Nevada Transmission Project.
- Apex Industrial Area development – Southern Nevada was excited to hear about Faraday Futures and Hyperloop developing facilities in the Apex Industrial Area. BLM manages several utility and transportation corridors through the Apex area, and the Las Vegas Office has been closely working with the Governor’s Office of Economic Development, City of North Las Vegas, and others to expedite processing of rights-of-way to support these important projects.

F. Pahrump Field Office

The Wild Horse and Burro program is managed out the Pahrump Office. The Southern Nevada District manages 2.1 million acres of Herd Management Areas. Nuisance burros along busy highways are gathered and made available for adoption. An emergency horse gather was conducted in the Cold Creek area near the Spring Mountains, gathering around 200 animals. Census and monitoring are ongoing in all Herd Management Areas, where BLM has established Appropriate Management Levels.

G. Red Rock/Sloan National Conservation Area Field Office

- 2 million people each year visit Red Rock Canyon
- Proposed road improvement projects on the Scenic Loop include construction of low water crossings bridges, parking lots and paving improvements, and improvements to the boardwalk at Red Spring.

- The historic Walking Box Ranch, acquired in 2005, is being restored and stabilized by the National Park Service's Historic Preservation Training Center. The Red Rock/Sloan Office expects the work to be completed this year. Once the work is completed, the Walking Box Ranch will be used as a museum and interpretive center for the public.
- Sloan Canyon NCA – BLM is working with the City of Henderson to improve access to Petroglyph Canyon and improve visitor signage to enhance biking, hiking, and equestrian opportunities.