



Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

VOLUME 5
APPENDIX F (PART TWO)

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Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Final Environmental Impact Statement



Volume 5 Appendix F (Part Two)

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Code EV21.SG
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San Diego, CA 92132

F.6.3 Website Comments

Please see the Navy's responses to comments provided by Non-Government Organizations and Businesses on the project website during the public commenting period on the Draft EIS in the following tables and sub-sections.

F.6.3.1 Alfery, S. (Pershing Gold Corporation)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Stephen	Alfers	See attached letter submission dated February 11, 2019 from Stephen D. Alfery, President and CEO, Pershing Gold Corporation	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.
Stephen	Alfers	See attached letter dated February 11, 2019 from Stephen D. Alfery, President and CEO of Pershing Gold Corporation	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.



February 11, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
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also electronically submitted to:

<https://frtcmodernization.com/Public-Involvement/Submit-Your-Comment>

RE: Comments on the November 2018 Fallon Range Training Complex Draft Environmental Impact Statement

I. Introduction

Pershing Gold Corporation (Pershing Gold) controls over 25,000 acres of land in Pershing County north of the Bravo-20 proposed expansion area within the Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC). Our land holdings include the Relief Canyon gold and silver mine and numerous highly prospective mineral deposits that we are actively exploring.

Although Pershing Gold supports the Nation's military and the critically important role the military plays in keeping our country safe, we have grave concerns about the size of the proposed expansion and the Navy's proposal to withdraw over 600,000 acres of land from mineral entry, to prohibit other multiple uses, and to reserve these lands solely for military use. We believe the Navy's proposed FRTC expansion will result in seriously adverse impacts to the counties where the proposed expansion areas are located, including Pershing County where we operate. We also believe that the Navy's position that mineral activities are categorically incompatible with the training activities is pre-decisional and incorrect.

As explained below, the DEIS needs to be substantially revised to include a detailed analysis of one or more alternatives to mitigate the "vast irreparable impact" to mineral resources described in the DEIS. We believe the DEIS Action Alternatives do not satisfy NEPA requirements to evaluate alternatives to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts to the quality of the human environment; to comply with national policies, including policies that establish the need to increase production of domestic minerals; and to reconcile the alternatives with state and local plans.

II. The Proposed Mineral Withdrawals are not Consistent with the National Materials and Minerals Policy Research and Development Act of 1980 and Executive Order 13817

The list of laws and regulations pertaining to minerals in Section 3.3.1.4 Regulatory Framework is incomplete because it does not include the National Materials and Minerals Policy, Research and

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Development Act of 1980 (30 USC § 1601 *et seq.*, “MMPRDA”). Congress enacted MMPRDA four years after passing the Federal Land Policy and Management act of 1976 (“FLPMA”) to reiterate and reinforce the mineral policies established in FLPMA and the Mining and Mineral Policy Act. (30 USC § 21a).

MMPRDA defines “materials” as: “substances, including minerals, of current or potential use that will be needed to supply the industrial, military, and essential civilian needs of the United States...” In MMPRDA Congress establishes that domestic sources of minerals are critically important to national security:

The availability of materials is essential for national security, economic well-being, and industrial production ... § 1601

[I]t is the continuing policy of the United States to promote an adequate and stable supply of materials necessary to maintain national security, economic well-being and industrial production, with appropriate attention to a long-term balance between resource production, energy use, a healthy environment, natural resources conservation, and social needs. §1602

The President shall: ...coordinate the responsible departments and agencies to...identify materials needs and assist in the pursuit of measures that would assure the availability of materials critical to commerce, the economy, and national security;...promote and encourage private enterprise in the development of economically sound and stable domestic materials industries; and...encourage Federal agencies to facilitate availability and development of domestic resources to meet critical materials needs. § 1602

In response to the reporting directive in MMPRDA § 1604, President Ronald Reagan issued the National Materials and Minerals Program Plan and Report to Congress in April 1982 in which he emphasized “the need to keep the public’s land open to appropriate mineral exploration and development” and expressed concerns about the amount of federal land (then estimated to be 40 to 68 percent) that was closed to mineral exploration and development.

Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 (henceforth called “the Action Alternatives”) do not comply with the MMPRDA or the Mining and Mineral Policy Act, which is referenced in MMPRDA, and ignore President Reagan’s prescient concerns about the amount of land unavailable for mineral exploration and development. Moreover, the DEIS fails to evaluate compliance with these laws or disclose that the proposed mineral withdrawals are not consistent with these laws.

President Trump’s December 2017 Critical Minerals Executive Order (“EO”) No. 13817 (which is mentioned in Section 3.3 of the DEIS), focuses on the need to increase the supply of domestic minerals. Unfortunately, the Action Alternatives in the DEIS conflict with the Administration’s clear policy directives to reduce the nation’s reliance on foreign minerals by increasing the exploration for and development of domestic minerals resources. The DEIS fails to disclose that the impacts of the proposed mineral withdrawals are inconsistent with EO 13817.

EO 13817 specifically recognizes the important role that domestic mineral supplies play in maintaining a strong economy, creating jobs, and improving our national security. In fact, this EO explicitly states that the military is one of the largest users of critical minerals:

“...An increase in private-sector domestic exploration, production, recycling, and reprocessing of critical minerals, and support for efforts to identify more commonly available technological alternatives to these minerals, will reduce our dependence on imports, preserve our leadership in technological innovation, support job creation, improve our national security and balance of trade, and enhance the technological superiority and readiness of our Armed Forces, which are among the Nation’s most significant consumers of critical minerals.” (EO 13817 Findings at 1)

Section 3 of EO 13817 establishes that:

It shall be the policy of the Federal Government to reduce the Nation’s vulnerability to disruptions in the supply of critical minerals, which constitutes a strategic vulnerability for the security and prosperity of the United States. The United States will further this policy for the benefit of the American people and in a safe and environmentally responsible manner, by:

- (a) identifying new sources of critical minerals;
- (b) increasing activity at all levels of the supply chain, including exploration, mining, concentration, separation, alloying, recycling, and reprocessing critical minerals;
- (c) ensuring that our miners and producers have electronic access to the most advanced topographic, geologic, and geophysical data within U.S. territory to the extent permitted by law and subject to appropriate limitations for purposes of privacy and security, including appropriate limitations to protect critical infrastructure data such as those related to national security areas; and
- (d) streamlining leasing and permitting processes to expedite exploration, production, processing, reprocessing, recycling, and domestic refining of critical minerals.

Clearly the proposed mineral withdrawals in the Action Alternatives conflict with the policies and directives in EO 13817. The FRTC expansion proposal needs to be substantially revised to comply with the mineral development directives in the MMPDA and EO 13817 in order to minimize and mitigate conflicts between keeping federal lands open for mineral purposes versus the proposed withdrawal of 618,727 acres on top of the 202,864 acres that are currently withdrawn from mineral entry (an aggregate withdrawal of 821,591 acres). If the Navy is unable to lessen these conflicts,

the DEIS and Final EIS must fully disclose the conflicts and lack of compliance with MMPRDA and EO 13817.

III. The DEIS Does not Satisfy NEPA Requirements

A. Failure to Evaluate National Policies

The Council on Environmental Quality's ("CEQ's") regulations (40 CFR §§ 1500 *et seq*) implementing the National Environmental Policy Act ("NEPA") require a complete analysis of national policy considerations pertinent to the proposed mineral withdrawals under the action alternatives:

An agency shall identify and discuss all such factors including any essential considerations of national policy which were balanced by the agency in making its decision and state how those considerations entered into its decision. 40 CFR § 1505.2(b)

The availability of minerals and the need to reduce our reliance on foreign sources of minerals are established and urgent national policy issues that cannot be ignored and must be discussed in the DEIS. The failure of the DEIS to analyze these issues and disclose how the proposed mineral withdrawals could increase the country's reliance on foreign sources of minerals violates NEPA. The DEIS must include a detailed analysis of the impacts and tradeoffs associated with withdrawing up to 618,727 acres of lands that are currently open to operation of the Mining Law and renewing the withdrawal of the presently withdrawn 202,864 acres within the existing FRTC boundary.

The DEIS' current analysis of the impacts of the proposed withdrawal is deficient because it focuses mainly on economic and socioeconomic impacts and does not evaluate how this withdrawal would affect the availability of domestic sources of the minerals needed for the Nation's economy, security, and to support the manufacturing, energy, health care, and technology sectors as required pursuant to MMPRDA and EO 13817.

The analysis of how the proposed withdrawal would affect the availability of domestic minerals is critically important to the public and to Congress – the ultimate decisionmaker. The Navy must provide Congress with this analysis so that Congress has all of the necessary facts to determine whether the FRTC proposal to withdraw lands with known mineral potential is in the Nation's best interests.

B. The Determination that Mining and the Proposed Expansion are Incompatible is Pre-decisional and Violates NEPA

Prior to conducting this NEPA analysis, the Navy predetermined that future mining of locatable minerals would be incompatible within the proposed FRTC expansion areas and that training and mining are mutually exclusive activities. Based on this premise, the Navy has prematurely concluded that the proposed mineral withdrawals in the Action Alternatives are necessary to achieve the Navy's Purpose and Need. (DEIS at 2-62). The conclusion that mining must be

prohibited within the FRTC is pre-decisional, and therefore violates NEPA, and reflects an incomplete understanding of the scope of mineral exploration and development projects.

The Navy explains this decision as follows:

The Navy would be able to accommodate geothermal development in the DVTA because the laws governing this type of development would afford the Navy an opportunity to work with a developer (and with BLM) to ensure that any geothermal development would be conducted in a manner that would not adversely affect military training. However, the Navy is unable to accommodate exploitation of locatable minerals (e.g., gold) because the laws governing these mining activities would not afford the Navy an ability to impose requirements on how any such exploitation activities would be conducted. Accordingly, Alternative 3 would accommodate development of geothermal and salable mineral resources within the withdrawn area comprising the DVTA. (DEIS at 2-66)

The statement that the Navy would have no influence over how future mineral activities could proceed is incorrect due to the Navy's ability to participate in future NEPA analyses for proposed locatable mineral exploration and development projects on BLM-administered lands within the proposed FRTC expansion areas. Indeed, the Navy could play a significant role in these NEPA processes as a Cooperating Agency during which it would have considerable influence.

Prior to authorizing locatable mineral activities that disturb five or more acres, BLM must prepare a NEPA document to analyze the impacts that would result from the proposed mineral project. As part of this NEPA evaluation, BLM would have to conduct scoping to identify concerns about the project and to determine the range of alternatives that would need to be evaluated to address identified concerns. The 40 CFR § 1501.7(a)(1) scoping requirements mandate that federal agencies seek input from other federal agencies. Pursuant to this requirement, BLM would have to contact the Navy to request comments about a proposed mineral project. In response to issues raised by the Navy during project scoping, BLM's NEPA document would have to examine one or more alternatives specifically designed to respond to the Navy's comments and to evaluate ways to minimize and mitigate potential impacts to the Navy's training operations within the FRTC expansion areas.

The Navy's Preferred Alternative, Alternative 3, describes Required Design Features ("RDFs") to mitigate the impacts associated with geothermal projects including: the use of underground transmission lines where above ground lines would be problematic; compatible lighting with downward facing shades; lighting with frequencies that doesn't "wash out" night-vision devices; and coordinating with the Navy on the frequency spectrum (DEIS at 2-33). These mitigation measures and others should be considered for locatable mineral projects.

The above-cited paragraph on Page 2-66 of the DEIS regarding the laws governing mining is perhaps an acknowledgment of claimants' rights pursuant to the U.S. Mining Law to use and occupy public lands for mineral exploration and development purposes. These Mining Law rights are indeed different than the leasing system that pertains to geothermal projects. However, it is premature and inappropriate for the Navy to conclude that it must categorically prohibit all future

locatable mineral activities in the proposed expansion areas by withdrawing these areas from mineral entry. Mineral projects that incorporate the appropriate mitigation measures like the RDFs for geothermal projects may be compatible within the FRTC proposed expansion areas. This determination should be made on a project-by-project basis in conjunction with the NEPA analysis for each proposed project.

The Navy's premature conclusion that locatable mineral projects are categorically incompatible within the proposed FRTC expansion areas fails to consider that mineral project footprints are typically quite limited. For example, BLM's November 2018 Nevada and Northeastern California Greater Sage-Grouse Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendment and Final EIS¹ clearly demonstrates the limited impact that locatable minerals mining has at a landscape scale.

The 2016 SFA Withdrawal DEIS presents overwhelming documentation of the miniscule impact that mineral activities within the SFAs (Sagebrush Focal Areas) would create over the next 20 years... As documented in the 2016 SFA Withdrawal DEIS, the footprint of mining and mineral exploration activities in the SFAs ... was projected to amount to a mere 2,620 acres across the six SFA states. BLM quantifies these impacts as affecting only about 0.026 percent of the 10 million-acre SFAs. (2016 SFA Withdrawal DEIS at 4-75). The 2016 SFA Withdrawal DEIS also includes important information about the scope of mining impacts under a No Action Alternative (i.e., without the SFA withdrawals)...the total amount of mining related disturbance in sagebrush habitat under the No Action Alternative would be 9,554 acres, or approximately one-tenth of 1 percent of the total withdrawal area... (Greater Sage-Grouse Final EIS at G-67).

The FRTC DEIS must be revised to include a minerals alternative that examines the managed coexistence of mineral activities within the proposed FRTC expansion areas. The alternatives analysis requirements in 40 CFR § 1502.14 require the Navy to evaluate alternatives that minimize mineral withdrawals and impacts to the nation's ability to develop domestic minerals – many of which are necessary for national security. Section 2.5.6.2 presents a cursory explanation of why allowing locatable mineral projects in the proposed expansion areas was an alternative eliminated from further consideration. This discussion is inadequate in light of the limited footprints associated with mineral projects and the geothermal project RDF accommodations in Alternative 3 that could be applicable to mineral projects.

Although the Navy's policy to prohibit mining in active Weapons Danger Zones ("WDZ") may be appropriate in specific and limited circumstances, it should not be applied indiscriminately to over 600,000 acres of lands with known mineral potential without a much more detailed analysis of the impacts of such a large withdrawal and ways in which to mitigate these impacts. Notwithstanding the Navy's policy that categorically excludes locatable mineral projects from WDZ's, the DEIS needs to be revised to include an alternative that takes a hard look at allowing locatable minerals projects with RDFs within the expansion areas. This analysis should consider site-specific analyses of proposed mineral projects designed with appropriate RDFs to mitigate impacts to the Navy's

¹https://eplanning.blm.gov/epl-front-office/projects/lup/103343/163459/199451/2018_NVCA_GRSR_Proposed_RMPA-Final_EIS_508.pdf

training activities, while at the same time minimizing the size of the proposed withdrawals and impacts to mineral resources.

The proposed withdrawal of over 600,000 acres from mineral entry in the Action Alternatives is draconian, unnecessary, and unlawful pursuant to the MMPDA and conflicts with EO 13817. Moreover, it is counter to the Navy's own best interests as is vividly illustrated in the attached USGS document² that shows a shocking reliance on foreign sources for the many minerals that are necessary to manufacture U.S. Navy Seal gear. Implementation of any of the Action Alternatives would exacerbate the Navy's dependency on foreign minerals needed to make Navy Seal equipment and many other items important to national security.

C. NEPA Requires Avoidance, Minimization and Mitigation of Impacts

Table 3.3-2 of the DEIS clearly shows that the proposed withdrawal under all of the Action Alternatives would put numerous known mineral deposits with a high resource potential and high to moderate levels of certainty (Rankings H/D and H/C, respectively) off limits to future exploration and development. The proposed withdrawal areas include high resource potential mineral deposits of three critical minerals: barite, fluorspar, and tungsten (DEIS at 3.3-47). Section 6.3 of the DEIS characterizes the proposed withdrawal with the stunning admission that the withdrawals would have a "vast irreversible impact" on mineral resources and glosses over this impact saying that the lands could be "redistributed as public lands in the future, and almost all of the impacts that this EIS has detailed would no longer exist." (DEIS at 6-8). This "kick-the-can-down-the road" analysis does not satisfy the NEPA requirements cited below to evaluate alternatives to the Proposed Action that would avoid, minimize, and mitigate this "vast irreversible impact".

40 CFR § 1500.2(e): Use the NEPA process to identify and assess the reasonable alternatives to proposed actions that will avoid or minimize adverse effects of these actions upon the quality of the human environment.

40 CFR § 1500.2 (f): Use all practicable means, consistent with the requirements of the Act and other essential considerations of national policy, to restore and enhance the quality of the human environment and avoid or minimize any possible adverse effects of their actions upon the quality of the human environment.

40 CFR §1508.20 Mitigation: "Mitigation" includes:

- (a) Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action.
- (b) Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation.
- (c) Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment.

² <https://pubs.er.usgs.gov/publication/gip183>

(d) Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action.

(e) Compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

The tweak to the Proposed Action in Alternative 3 to minimize impacts to does not satisfy the NEPA alternatives analysis and impact avoidance, minimization, and mitigation requirements because it would still result in a significant impact to mineral resources because it includes an enormous proposed withdrawal of land from mineral entry. The DEIS must be revised to include a detailed analysis of alternatives that would avoid, minimize, and mitigate the impacts to mineral resources and the conflicts discussed above with national policies (e.g., MMPRDA and Executive Order 13817 on critical minerals).

Additionally, the Navy must comply with the 40 CFR § 1508.20(e) compensation requirement. Former Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval's December 19, 2018 letter to Captain David Halloran references a Navy proposal that would release 75,000 acres of Wilderness Study Areas ("WSAs") to partially compensate for the significant adverse impacts to mineral and geothermal resources and socioeconomics. Unfortunately, the DEIS did not respond to Governor Sandoval's suggestion.

Releasing WSAs, especially those that BLM has determined are unsuitable for wilderness designation, would provide meaningful compensation for the "vast irretrievable impact" to mineral resources. Pershing Gold believes that the DEIS should be revised to evaluate an acre-for-acre release of WSAs as compensatory mitigation for the "vast irretrievable impact" that would result from the proposal to withdraw 618,727 new acres and to renew the existing withdrawal of 202,864 acres of land. The Navy's Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS should include a request to Congress to authorize the release of 821,591 acres of WSA in the counties impacted by the FRTC proposed withdrawals. If 821,591 acres exceeds the acres of WSAs in the affected counties, other WSAs in Nevada should be released as well to compensate the State for the impacts resulting from the proposed withdrawal.

Additional compensatory mitigation measures should include financial compensation to claim owners within the proposed withdrawal areas regardless of the discovery status of their claims and whether the claim owner has a valid existing right define by a discovery of a mineral deposit that could withstand a validity examination. All claim owners have paid claims maintenance fees and many claim owners have invested substantial resources in exploring and developing their claims. These claim owners have investment-backed expectations that the lands on which their claims are located would remain open to operation of the Mining Law. Consequently they should be fairly compensated for the investments they have made in their claims. No claims within the proposed withdrawal area should be subject to a validity examination to determine whether the claim qualifies for compensatory mitigation.

D. NEPA Requires Disclosing and Minimizing Conflicts with the State and Affected Counties

NEPA documents must reveal potential conflicts that a Proposed Action would create with state and local plans, directing that NEPA documents shall include discussions of:

“Possible conflicts between the proposed action and the objectives of federal, regional, state, and local (and in the case of a reservation, Indian tribe) land use plans, policies and controls for the area concerned. (See §1506.2(d).)” 40 CFR § 1502.16(c)

NEPA also requires federal agencies to describe inconsistencies with state and local plans and to attempt to reconcile a proposed action with state and local plans:

“... environmental impact statements ... shall discuss any inconsistency of a proposed action with any approved state or local plan and laws (whether or not federally sanctioned). Where an inconsistency exists, the statement should describe the extent to which the agency would reconcile its proposed action with the plan or law.” 40 CFR §1506.2(d)

The DEIS discloses that all of the Action Alternatives would create significant socioeconomic and land use impacts. These impacts will be problematic for the affected counties. The DEIS needs to be revised to evaluate alternatives to reconcile and reduce adverse impacts to state and local plans.

IV. 2015 EIS

In December 2015, the Navy finalized an EIS to increase the level of training activity at the Fallon Naval Air Station³. The Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action in the December 2015 EIS states:

The purpose of the Proposed Action is to provide sustainable and modern airspace, range, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources to fully support training activities occurring on the FRTC in accordance with the assigned roles and missions for the Naval Aviation Warfare Development Center (NAWDC) formerly known as the Naval Strike and Air Warfare Center.

The Proposed Action is needed to achieve and maintain military readiness by using the FRTC to support and conduct military readiness activities. In this regard, FRTC furthers the Navy’s execution of its roles and responsibilities under 10 U.S.C. §5062. To comply with its Title 10 (10 U.S.C. §5062) mandates, the Navy needs to:

- maintain current levels of military readiness by enhancing training at the FRTC;
- accommodate possible future increases in training activities at the FRTC;

³ The December 2015 EIS was reviewed at:
<https://frtcmmodernization.com/Documents/2015-Military-Readiness-Activities-at-Fallon-Range-Training-Complex-Nevada-Final-EIS>

- accommodate training activities associated with force structure changes; and
- maintain the long-term viability of the FRTC as a military training and testing range.⁴

Although Page 1-29, Section 1.7.7 of the November 2018 FRTC DEIS briefly discusses the 2015 EIS, there is no discussion of what changed between the December 2015 and November 2018 to warrant the Navy's Proposed Action to expand the FRTC by over 600,000 acres and to withdraw these acres from mineral entry. The Navy needs to explain and justify what changed in the space of less than three years to warrant the huge proposed expansion and mineral withdrawal when the Purpose and Need for the 2015 EIS was to "maintain the long-term viability of the FRTC as a military training and testing range."

V. Other Issues

A. Mineral Activities Outside the Proposed Expansion Areas Must Not be Impacted

The environmental consequences to minerals discussed in Section 3.3.4 of the DEIS states for each of the training areas that "Navy training activities would not impact mining activities outside of the proposed withdrawal boundary." (DEIS at 3.3-57, 3.3-58, 3.3-59, 3.3-60, 3.3-61). Pershing Gold wants to emphasize the importance of this commitment. It is imperative that the withdrawal zones be confined to the FRTC expansion areas described in the DEIS and that there will be no buffer zones outside of the withdrawal area in which mineral activities would be restricted or potentially prohibited. The Navy should assure the affected counties, the State of Nevada, and the Nevada mining industry that the Navy will not propose any buffer zones around the proposed expansion areas or request future expansion of the withdrawal areas.

B. The Past, Present and Reasonably Foreseeable Actions Need to be Updated to Evaluate Impacts to Nevada's Renewable Portfolio Standard

The discussion of Past, Present, and Reasonably Foreseeable Future Action is incomplete because it omits the Nevada State Legislature's and Nevada Governor Sisolak's stated intentions to significantly increase the State's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS). The proposed expansion areas include one of Nevada's most important known geothermal resource areas that has a high potential for the discovery and development of buried geothermal resources capable of producing electrical power⁵. The DEIS must be revised to evaluate how restricting geothermal development under the Action Alternatives will impact the State's ability to fulfill its increased RPS objectives using geothermal resource development as an important renewable energy source.

VI. Conclusion

Pershing Gold appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments on the DEIS. As described above, we believe that expansion of the FRTC and ongoing mineral exploration and development are not mutually exclusive. We believe the DEIS needs to be substantially revised to include alternatives to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the adverse impacts to minerals.

⁴ December 2015 EIS at 1-3.

⁵ <http://www.nbmng.unr.edu/docs/Geothermal/nv-resources.pdf>

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about our comments.

Sincerely yours,



Stephen D. Alfors
Executive Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer
Pershing Gold Corporation

Attachment: Globally Sourced Mineral Commodities Used in U.S. Navy Seal Gear

cc: Pershing County Board of Commissioners
The Honorable Governor Steven Sisolak
The Honorable Mark Amodei
The Honorable Catherine Cortez-Masto
The Honorable Jacky Rosen

F.6.3.1.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

Regarding comments stating that the Navy is incorrect and pre-decision in the determination that mineral activities are categorically incompatible with training activities, in accordance with Navy policy, mining is not compatible within a surface danger zone of an operational range. The Navy would continue to follow existing operating procedures that prohibit the collection of materials from any mining area and prohibit entry to mine shafts and mines. Navy training activities would not impact mining activities outside of the proposed withdrawal boundaries. Therefore, there is the potential for a loss of access to salable and locatable minerals and mines in the land requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition. Closing the property may also affect mineral management by limiting the availability of mineral transport within certain areas. For example, new public roads, railroads, or other rights of way that would transport minerals could not be located within the proposed closed areas of the Bravo ranges, which would limit the availability to access and transport locatable and salable minerals. Closing the property would also limit the available means to transport mineral resources like oil/gas pipelines or geothermal energy transmission lines.

Regarding the comment that the Navy's EIS does not comply with NEPA, Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis.

Regarding the comment that the withdrawals are not consistent with Executive Order 13817, the Proposed Action is not in conflict with EO 13817, as the EO is more a statement of national strategy/policy with respect to critical minerals and notes that nothing in it creates any right or benefit enforceable at law. Thus, there is no formal cause of action a citizen or state could pursue based on conflict with the EO. It is in the interest of national security to undertake the Navy's Proposed Action.

Regarding the comment that the withdrawals are not consistent with the National Materials and Minerals Policy Research and Development Act of 1980, the National Materials and Minerals Policy, Research and Development Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-479) is much the same as EO 13817 in terms of being a statement of policy, rather than an enforcement of particular regulation. Also, similarly to the EO, 30 U.S.C. 1601 does not establish any formal requirement to refrain from taking certain actions that might tend to reduce the availability of or access to such materials. This law and the EO have been added to the list of regulations considered in the analysis for this EIS.

Regarding failure to satisfy NEPA requirements, due to the failure to evaluate national policies, the Navy underwent a complete and compliant NEPA analysis. The Study Area for the Proposed Action was defined in Chapter 2. Any cumulative impacts to the counties within the Study Area were discussed in Chapter 4 (Cumulative Impacts). An analysis on the impacts of the withdrawal and acquisition on the Nation's reliance on foreign minerals would be too speculative to report.

As stated earlier in this response, in regard to the determination that mining and the Proposed Action are incompatible, is in accordance with Navy policy, mining is not compatible within a surface danger zone of an operational range; this is not pre-decisional as it is Navy policy due to public health and safety

impacts (see Section 3.14 [Public Health and Safety]). The Navy would continue to follow existing operating procedures that prohibit the collection of materials from any mining area and prohibit entry to mine shafts and mines. Navy training activities would not impact mining activities outside of the proposed withdrawal boundaries. Therefore, there is the potential for a loss of access to salable and locatable minerals and mines in the land requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition. Closing the property may also affect mineral management by limiting the availability of mineral transport within certain areas. For example, new public roads, railroads, or other rights of way that would transport minerals could not be located within the proposed closed areas of the Bravo ranges, which would limit the availability to access and transport locatable and salable minerals. Closing the property would also limit the available means to transport mineral resources like oil/gas pipelines or geothermal energy transmission lines.

The Final EIS further describes the process by which interested parties could pursue compatible geothermal development in a portion of the Dixie Valley Training Area. The proposed required design features are necessary in order for the Navy to meet necessary training requirements. Development of the required design features affords an opportunity for geothermal development that would otherwise be lost. The Navy is committed to working with the developer on a case-by-case basis and acknowledges that complying with required design features could add cost to a potential geothermal development. This is addressed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value.

With regard to existing patented mining claims, the Federal Government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.

Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.

The Navy cannot accommodate locatable mining activities in the DVTA due to restrictions in authorities set forth in the Mining Law of 1872. The Draft EIS included an analysis of an alternative that examines

the managed coexistence of mineral activities within the proposed FRTC expansion area. This alternative can be found in Section 2.5.6.2 (Mining on Live-Fire [Bravo] Ranges).

Regarding avoidance, minimization, and mitigation of impacts,

requested management practices, monitoring, or mitigation measures have been assessed by the Navy between the Draft and Final EIS. These suggestions have been added in part or in their entirety to Chapter 5, Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation. Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation) has been updated with resource specific and a general table of suggestions and Navy responses in the Final EIS. Regarding the suggestion to release WSAs, the Navy is not proposing to release more WSA land than is necessary to fulfill training needs in the DVTA.

Where able, the Navy has added text to the document on the implemented suggestions from the public scoping comments, public comment period, and from the Cooperating Agencies and Tribal Participants.

As such, alternatives for the EIS incorporated actions specifically to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities.

Those alternatives and associated actions were carried forward for analysis and if necessary, based on the level of impacts, additional management practices, mitigation, or other impact avoidance/minimization measures were included to further avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts.

Regarding payment to claimants, while a mineral withdrawal affects new mining claims, it does not affect existing, valid claims on public lands. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this examination. Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. For there to be a valid existing right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value. However, holders of existing claims on public land are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, the value of the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.

With regard to patented claims, the Government passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.

Regarding impacts to the State and affected Counties, the Navy has worked with both the Governor and all affected counties throughout the NEPA process. The counties are included in the EIS as cooperating agencies and were able to meet with the Navy as well as provide comments on the Draft EIS and the Draft Final EIS for refinement of the document.

Regarding the other issues, such as mineral activities outside of the proposed expansion areas, these would not be impacted. Access to active mines would be available outside of the area proposed for the expansion.

The cumulative impacts discussion in Chapter 4 (Cumulative Impacts) does not center on the impacts of the proposed action to the state or other projects but rather, the cumulative impacts of other actions and projects in combination with the Proposed Action on resources analyzed in the EIS. Therefore, the Navy has not added an evaluation of how restricting geothermal development under the Proposed Action would impact the State's ability to fulfill its increased Renewable Portfolio Standard objectives.

Regarding the comment that the Navy should substantially revise the alternatives to avoid, minimize and mitigate impacts, the Navy has reduced the size of the overall area requested and proposed for withdrawal in the Final EIS under Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative), to the extent that it could do so consistent with meeting mission requirements. Further, the Navy will seek to acquire the minimum amount of non-federal lands needed to meet its mission requirements.

The Navy has added a figure to the Final EIS that illustrates the area requested and proposed in the Draft EIS and the changes to the Final EIS request and proposal area under Alternative 3.

The Navy has added that the land use plans referenced in the document, would need to be revised after any ultimate Congressional decision was made. The Office of Economic Adjustment could be a resource for the Counties and other impacted parties to use in resolving losses that may occur as a result of any ultimate Congressional decision.

With the implementation of the proposed modernization, the FRTC would be fully capable of supporting the aviation and ground training and readiness requirements for the training missions assigned to the FRTC, into the foreseeable future. In this regard, the Proposed Action fulfills the Navy's execution of its congressionally mandated roles and responsibilities under 10 U.S.C. section 5062 and 10 U.S.C. section 167.

Your comment has been included in the official project record. The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis.

F.6.3.2 Bennett, D. (Nevada Mining Association)

First	Last	Comment	Response
DANA	BENNETT	<p>The Nevada Mining Association submits the attached Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization, Draft Environmental Impact Statement dated February 12, 2109.</p> <p>By: Dana R. Bennett, PhD, President Nevada Mining Association</p>	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.</p>

F.6.3.3 Brewer, C. (Wild Sheep Foundation)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Clay	Brewer	<p>To Whom it May Concern:</p> <p>On behalf of the Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF), please accept the attached comment letter concerning the United States Navy's Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). While WSF supports the important role that Fallon Naval Air Station has played for over 75 years, as well as the overall mission of the United States (U.S.) Navy, we cannot support any of the 3 alternatives presented in the DEIS. WSF believes that the proposed expansions as well as the proposed alternatives must be reconsidered. WSF stands ready to engage in development of such alternatives and solutions.</p> <p>Clay Brewer Wild Sheep Foundation Conservation Director, Bighorn Program Lead</p> <p>Attachment - WSF Comment Letter</p> <p>[ATTACHED COMMENTS]</p> <p>Wild Sheep Foundatoin February 12, 2019 Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest Code EV21AK</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and has updated the analysis where appropriate.</p> <p>Regarding mitigation, the Navy has added tables discussing management practices, monitoring, and mitigation measures to the Final EIS in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation) to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts if applicable.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to access restrictions and closures as well as direct and indirect adverse impacts to wildlife and resources, the Navy has been working with the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) as a cooperating agency on this EIS since 2016. Rather than a "Managed Access Program," the NDOW and the Navy have developed a process to minimize impacts to bighorn sheep hunting in the area. The Navy would provide access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency that would set any quotas and distribute any permits, as well as maintenance of wildlife habitat. The Navy is working with NDOW on a MOA for bighorn sheep hunting on the B-17 range, a draft of which is included in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans). To the maximum extent possible, the Final EIS has been updated with details of this management plan. Details can be found in Chapter 2 and in Section 3.12 (Recreation), and a draft version of the proposed hunting program Memorandum of Agreement can be found in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans) of the Final EIS. The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>1220 Pacific Highway Building 1, 5th Floor San Diego, CA 92132</p> <p>Re: Fallon Range Training Complex – Modernization Draft EIS</p> <p>To Whom It May Concern:</p> <p>On behalf of the Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF), please accept this comment letter concerning the United States Navy’s Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The mission of the 8,000+ member strong Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF) is to enhance wild sheep populations, promote scientific wildlife management and educate the public and youth on sustainable use and the conservation benefits of hunting while promoting the interests of the hunter. We respectfully request that you take into consideration the impacts of proposed modernization strategies on desert bighorn sheep and other wildlife, their habitat, and impacts to public access by hunters and other outdoor groups. We believe solutions exist, and strongly urge you to work cooperatively with our partner, Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW), to develop realistic solutions and alternatives that will help achieve your mission while benefiting other stakeholders to the greatest extent possible.</p> <p>Upon review of the DEIS, we have significant concerns with the proposed alternatives and cannot support any of the 3 alternatives presented. Our concerns are related to: 1) access restrictions and/or closures; 2) direct and indirect adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat resources; 3) impacts of Navy-ignited wildfires and subsequent degradation or loss of wildlife habitat; and 4) lack of mitigation. Based on recent inquiries and discussions with NDOW and our WSF affiliate organizations in the state of Nevada, we offer the following general comments and recommendations for each of these</p>	<p>Navy mission.</p> <p>The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC. Therefore, the financial impact to communities from the loss of hunting in the area would be somewhat offset by this program, however, overall, lost hunting opportunities could result in a reduction in funding sources for NDOW (as discussed in Section 3.13 [Socioeconomics]).</p> <p>Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheep hunting, and events that are pre-coordinated with the Navy.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to wildlife and potential funding opportunities, the Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.</p> <p>Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species. Greater sage grouse lek location data indicates that they are east of the land areas proposed for withdrawal or acquisition. Sage grouse in these areas would be exposed to noise from aircraft overflights. Available science indicates that short-term noise intrusion does not play a significant role in lek success.</p> <p>The Navy would work closely with BLM and NDOW to manage sage grouse and other species on land under the Navy’s control. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.</p> <p>Regarding mitigation development, as a result of public comments and</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>primary concerns.</p> <p>Access restrictions and/or closures: Restricting or closing access hinders efforts of NDOW and NGO conservation volunteers in managing the wildlife and habitat for which the agency is responsible. NDOW and many conservation partners have invested substantial time and money on habitat improvements (particularly water developments) and bighorn sheep re-introductions within the proposed withdrawal. In reviewing the 3 alternatives, we believe that loss of access for bighorn sheep management, hunting and other recreation is inevitable.</p> <p>Recommendation: Work cooperatively with NDOW to finalize the “Managed Access Program” for inclusion into the Final EIS/Record of Decision to include: access commitments for wildlife/habitat management activities, hunting opportunities for bighorn sheep and other wildlife, and designated camping areas. Finally, NDOW has emphasized the need for an annual review of the Managed Access Program that provides an opportunity to implement adaptive management strategies and improve access opportunities where possible.</p> <p>Adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat resources: The impacts of increased noise and munitions, construction of fences and other infrastructure which impact habitat quality and availability, and OHV use within proposed expanded military airspace and target areas are significant. Of particular concern are lowlevel flights that have the potential for impacting bighorn sheep lambing areas and other wildlife such as sagegrouse during lekking/brood-rearing season, and waterfowl breeding and staging habitat.</p> <p>Recommendation: Commitment by the Navy to dedicate funding to wildlife and habitat avoidance, minimization, and monitoring activities in the Final EIS/ROD.</p>	<p>further analysis through the NEPA process, the Navy has further defined and developed processes for mitigation, minimization, and avoidance and has documented those changes in the Final EIS. Under NEPA, there is no required ratio relative to impacts and associated mitigation. Actions that support avoidance or minimization of impacts can be developed and implemented as part of each alternative. This was the approach taken for the action alternatives.</p> <p>As such, alternatives for the EIS incorporated actions specifically to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities. Those alternatives and associated actions were carried forward for analysis and if necessary, based on the level of impacts, additional management practices, mitigation, or other impact avoidance/minimization measures were included to further avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts.</p> <p>The Navy would work closely with BLM and NDOW to manage sage grouse and other species on land under the Navy’s control. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.</p> <p>Regarding wildfires, the Navy has and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan and, where possible, proposed plan elements and goals are included in the Final EIS. For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management). A draft outline of the Wildland Management Plan has been added to Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans).</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>Impacts of wildfires (Navy-ignited) and degradation or loss of wildlife habitat: Impacts to wildlife and habitat resources resulting from wildfires caused by live munitions and flares and subsequent conversion to annual grass dominated vegetation communities (cheatgrass) is of primary concern. Past rehabilitation efforts for fires started by Navy activities have been funded by NDOW, BLM, and local conservation groups. A finalized Fire Management Plan was not included within the DEIS and thus, is of significant concern.</p> <p>Recommendation: A completed "Fire Management Plan" should be included in the Final EIS/ROD which commits adequate funding and identifies procedures for implementing fire prevention, suppression, and rehabilitation strategies.</p> <p>Lack of mitigation: Mitigation measures within the DEIS relative to potential impacts to wildlife, recreation, wildfire, and access for management activities are lacking.</p> <p>Recommendation: A fully-funded and comprehensive wildlife resource mitigation plan should be incorporated into the Final EIS/ROD. A strategy for forming and enabling a Wildlife Working Group with the objective of enhancing wildlife populations, habitat resources, and hunting opportunities within and outside of the proposed withdrawal should be included.</p> <p>While WSF supports the important role that Fallon Naval Air Station has played for over 75 years, as well as the overall mission of the United States (U.S.) Navy, we cannot support any of the 3 alternatives presented in the DEIS. Desert bighorn sheep, pronghorn, mule deer, upland game birds and other game and non-game have been successfully restored through the cooperative efforts of sportsman, NDOW, the U.S. Navy and conservation organizations such as WSF. Considerable time and funding were used to achieve this success. Today, wildlife thrive within the proposed range expansion areas, and</p>	

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>they are among the more popular public hunting areas in the state. For these reasons, WSF believes that the proposed expansions as well as the proposed alternatives must be reconsidered. The WSF stands ready to engage in development of such alternatives and solutions.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please contact us at WSF HQ if you have questions or need additional clarification or assistance from WSF. We look forward to hearing from you on this vitally important matter.</p> <p>Sincerely, Gray Thornton President & CEO</p> <p>Kevin Hurley VP of Conservation & Operations</p> <p>Clay Brewer Conservation Director</p> <p>cc: Brett Jefferson, Chairman, WSF Jack Atcheson, Jr., WSF Conservation Committee Chair</p>	

F.6.3.4 Busselman, D. (Nevada Farm Bureau)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Doug	Busselman	Nevada Farm Bureau comments are attached as the pdf file.	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.



Nevada Farm Bureau Federation

2165 Green Vista Dr., Suite 205, Sparks, NV 89431
1-800- 992-1106 | www.nvfb.org

February 13, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV 21.SB
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

Re: Nevada Farm Bureau Comments For Draft Environmental Impact Statement Concerning
The Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization

Thank you for your consideration of our organization's comments regarding the Navy's
November 2018 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

In the EIS, several observations are made to the view that taking away people's property is not
an obligation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) being considered... "Based on
the analysis in the Draft EIS, not mitigation measures are proposed for livestock grazing.
Though not a NEPA mitigation measure, the Navy acknowledges that it has the authority under
the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, to make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses
suffered as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or
national defense."

Our comments focus on the appropriation actions to be taken for reimbursement for the loss of
private property and the impact of lost livestock grazing Animal Unit Months (AUMs).

Based on the EIS, we call attention to recognition that the plans associated with this
modernization could affect as many as 17 Bureau of Land Management (BLM) grazing
allotments with the potential loss of 7,920 to 10,992 AUMs.

Many of those impacted by the anticipated closure and withdrawal of federal lands are Farm
Bureau members with livestock grazing permits. Our public policy regarding this matter
states...

"Defense – Impacts of Military Reservations:

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Expansion of training areas, which close or limit multiple use of federal lands need
to be clearly justified with considerations given to public input and transparent
reasoning given to alternative options. Plans must also take in account and provide the
ability for continuation of necessary emergency services and wildlife management
activities."

Nevada Farm Bureau's Policy Continued...

"We propose that farmers and ranchers be properly compensated by the military branches or the federal government for any adverse economic impacts, short and long term, of new and existing military activities, reservations or restricted areas.

In cases where grazing allotment closure is required, compensation to grazing allotment owners should be required and should take into account the value of the feed provided for that allotment (within the seasonal context of how that allotment fits into the ranch's operations); the value of the water rights on the allotment (with the full value of the loss or change in status of the water right); the value of any and all range improvements and the consequences of the economic conditions for the ranching operation by the loss of the component provided by the grazing allotment. Compensated water rights should be retired.

This speaks to the long-term economic viability and sustainability of the entire agricultural operation."

From our review of the Draft EIS we maintain that the Navy inappropriately determined that they would use the "Production function to valuation" method in evaluating possible reimbursement for the loss of AUMs. The Draft EIS considered this as the most appropriate method of the four considered and placed the value for lost AUMs at \$ 56.83 per AUM.

In light of our organization's policy, developed by Farm Bureau members who understand the economic consequences for having federal lands closed from multiple use and unable to maintain livestock grazing, we believe that the best alternative for determining the value of an AUM is based on the contribution of the federal grazing permit to the market value of the ranch property as a whole.

As described by the Draft EIS – "This approach used a method published by Rimbey et al. (2007) and Torell et al. (2012) that estimated permit values ranging from approximately \$100 to \$350 per AUM based on situations where ranch operations were highly dependent on federal land grazing."

The allotments impacted by the proposed action of Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization closely align with the conditions of being highly dependent on federal land grazing. The nature and seasonal context of how these allotments fit into the ranches' operations warrant consideration of using the method we are advocating, rather than the system selected by the Navy's Draft EIS.

The system that should be used for calculations of the AUM value, published by Rimbey et al. (2007) and Torell in 2012 provide for the value with a formula that relates to each impacted ranch on an individual basis. Instead of working off a range of potential numbers, the most appropriate system would be to use the formula and work with an appraiser on an individual basis to determine the value for the consequences associated with closure or reduction of the allotment. This process would also assist in correctly identifying additional assets/private property (such as water rights) that warrant compensation.

Beyond the system, using the method published by Rimbey et al. (2007) and Torell et al. (2012), we would urge that recognition be given to the use of experienced and knowledgeable ranch appraisers to be brought in to evaluate the values for each impacted ranch and appropriate compensation be applied in light of the values determined.

We are also aware of past examples and experiences, primarily the Air Force and their expansion in Idaho that had similar impacts where significant values for reimbursement on an Animal Unit Month (AUM) basis was appropriately made.

Nevada Farm Bureau will be working to make certain that the impacted ranchers are appropriately compensated for the impacts the final outcome for this project will cause.

Sincerely,



Bevan Lister, President
Nevada Farm Bureau

F.6.3.4.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

The Navy has developed and proposed specific mitigation for each alternative that can be implemented and would avoid or minimize impacts. As such, alternatives include actions specifically designed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities. Those alternatives and associated actions were carried forward for analysis and if necessary, based on the level of impacts, additional management practices, mitigation, or other impact avoidance/minimization measures were included to further avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts.

Regarding mitigation measures for impacts to livestock grazing, the Navy will work with permittees on a case-by-case basis to mitigate losses resultant from the cancelation of a permit. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. Parts 315-316o) provides the Navy authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. Specifically, Section 315q states:

Whenever use for war or national defense purposes of the public domain or other property owned by or under the control of the United States prevents its use for grazing, persons holding grazing permits or licenses and persons whose grazing permits or licenses have been or will be cancelled because of such use shall be paid out of the funds appropriated or allocated for such project such amounts as the head of the department or agency so using the lands shall determine to be fair and reasonable for the losses suffered by such persons as a result of the use of such lands for war or national defense purposes. Such payments shall be deemed payment in full for such losses. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to create any liability not now existing against the United States.

To paraphrase the authority, 43 U.S.C. Section 315q directs the Navy to make payments out of project funds for losses arising from permittees being denied use of their federal grazing privileges during the current permit period as a result of the grazing lands in question being used for national defense purposes.

Additionally, the Navy would be required under the USDI-BLM Grazing Regulations (43 CFR Part 4100) Subpart 4120.3-6 – Removal and Compensation for Loss of Range Improvements, to compensate for a loss of range improvements. The CFR regulation states:

(c) Whenever a grazing permit or lease is cancelled in order to devote the public lands covered by the permit or lease to another public purpose, including disposal, the permittee or lessee shall receive from the United States reasonable compensation for the adjusted value of their interest in authorized permanent improvements placed or constructed by the permittee or lessee on the public lands covered by the cancelled permit or lease. The adjusted value is to be determined by the authorized officer. Compensation shall not exceed the fair market value of the terminated portion of the permittee's or lessee's interest therein. Where a range improvement is authorized by a range improvement permit, the livestock operator may elect to salvage materials and perform rehabilitation measures rather than be compensated for the adjusted value.

(d) Permittees or lessees shall be allowed 180 days from the date of cancellation of a range improvement permit or cooperative range improvement agreement to salvage material owned by them and perform rehabilitation measures necessitated by the removal.

The Navy shall use these authorities to determine payment amounts to individuals who may suffer losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of the proposed FRTC modernization action.

The Final EIS further describes the process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected by the proposed action. This process evaluates the cost of providing replacement forage and/or the losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corals, fencing and other real property).

As discussed in the Draft EIS in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics), under Alternative 3, minimum and maximum AUMs lost and lost value of AUMs would be higher as compared to Alternative 1 and 2.

Factors were used to estimate a change in AUMs for each BLM allotment and Bureau of Reclamation pasture. Factors, such as the restriction on travel of cow based on slopes of 30 percent or greater and are more than 4 miles from water, were chosen because they are consistent with BLM parameters and are critical factors in determining how livestock will utilize forage in an allotment. It is acknowledged that this is influenced by the type and class of cattle, and that cattle could graze on slopes greater than 30 percent slope or would travel over 4 miles to water, but are less likely to do so under satisfactory grazing conditions.

As far as economic impacts, the Navy estimates that Alternative 3 would result in a loss of between 6,953 and 11,002 AUMs for all livestock (approximately 11 to 18 percent from affected allotments). This would result in a loss of up to approximately 6.58 percent of AUMs within the BLM Carson City District, 0.20 percent of AUMs within the BLM Winnemucca District, and 0.53 percent of all AUMs in Nevada. Forage and rangeland improvement projects could be permanently lost as a result of the action, which could further affect AUM estimates. The total permanent economic impacts (both direct and secondary) associated with lost federal land grazing for example in Churchill County range from a minimum loss of

\$490,126,448,640 (\$375,249,333,763 in direct impacts and \$114,877,102,177 in secondary impacts) to a maximum loss of \$682,758,639,446 (\$522,730,479,418 in direct impacts and \$146,768,160,028 in secondary impacts) under Alternative 3 (Table 3.13-26) (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at <http://frtcmodernization.com>]). Table 3.13-23 represents employment impacts under Alternative 3 for affected counties; for instance, employment impacts for Churchill County would range from a loss of 6.2 (5.28 in direct impacts and 0.92 in secondary impacts) employees to a maximum loss of 8.61 (7.35 in direct impacts and 1.26 in secondary impacts) employees.

Table 3.13-24 represents labor income losses. Lost grazing in Churchill County for example would consist of a minimum loss in labor income of \$137,771 (\$108,031 in direct impacts and \$29,740 in secondary impacts) to a maximum loss of \$183,854 (\$144,338 in direct impacts and \$39,516 in secondary impacts) under Alternative 3.

Total economic impacts would be higher under Alternative 3 in comparison to Alternatives 1 and 2. By adding the overall economic impact from the decrease in AUMs (ranging from \$490,126,448,640 to \$682,758,639,446 [Table 3.13-26]) and the associated direct and secondary labor income loss (ranging from \$137,771 to \$183,854 [Table 3.13-24]) and comparing these figures to the total economic activity for the beef cattle ranching and farming sector in Churchill County (\$35 million), there would only be a reduction in economic output ranging from 0.016 percent to 0.024 percent. The reduction is significantly less when compared to the total economic activity for all sectors for Churchill County, which is 1.7 billion dollars (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at <http://frtcmodernization.com>], Table B-1). Economic losses associated with reduced AUMs would be similar in scale for Lander, Mineral, Pershing, and Plumas counties based on the percentage of lost revenue compared to sector and total economic activity. While there would be significant impacts to individual ranching operations, there would be no significant impacts to overall economic activity within the affected counties due to lost AUMs. Therefore, no significant impacts to overall economic activity would occur due to lost AUMs under Alternative 3.

The Navy acknowledges that the loss of water rights could be a factor in determining payments for losses associated with the cancellation of grazing permits. Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex) addresses the valuation of losses due to the cancellation of such permits. This valuation process would also apply to Alternatives 2 and 3.

Pursuant to the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended (43 U.S.C. section 315q), the Navy would make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes.

For any acquisition of privately-owned property, private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land acquired by the United States due to the proposed expansion. Just compensation would be determined by calculating the fair market value of parcels in accordance with federal appraisal rules codified in the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions.

The Navy, as part of the proposed action, would acquire water rights within the proposed withdrawal areas if the water right can be maintained for beneficial use. If a condition of the water right can be modified (e.g., the point of use moved outside of the withdrawal areas), then the water right would not be acquired by the Navy. If wells are associated with the water right, then the Navy will evaluate on a

case-by-case basis the disposition of the well (e.g., continued beneficial use or capping of the well). The Navy acknowledges that there may be impacts that have yet to be defined and will continue to develop and incorporate mitigation measures as necessary. For a detailed analysis of water rights on existing FRTC lands and lands requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition, please see the supporting study, NAS Fallon Water Rights Research and Inventory, on the FRTC Modernization website at <https://frtcmodernization.com>.

The following specific grazing mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Policies and procedures in the NAS Fallon INRMP would continue to be implemented to avoid conflicts with livestock grazing. This includes routine monitoring of fence lines surrounding potentially hazardous areas to ensure that the fence is secure and cannot be crossed by people or animals; the monitoring area would be increased to include new perimeter fences on lands proposed for withdrawal. Navy proposes the establishment of two (2) Conservation Law Enforcement Offer positions at NAS Fallon. The Standard Operating Procedures for handling cattle on the FRTC training ranges would be revised and implemented. Livestock friendly erosion controls would be used when performing construction activities on or adjacent to grazing land that is actively being used.

The Navy acknowledges that it has the authority under 43 United States Code section 315q of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended, to make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered by the permit holders as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes. This authority has been incorporated into the Proposed Action.

The Final EIS discusses the process that the Navy is proposing to use to determine payment amounts to each specific grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits.

The Navy cannot create new grazing land and other mitigation procedures are limited. Procedures and processes for this valuation is in the Final EIS. The following specific grazing mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Policies and procedures in the NAS Fallon INRMP would continue to be implemented to avoid conflicts with livestock grazing. This includes routine monitoring of fence lines surrounding potentially hazardous areas to ensure that the fence is secure and cannot be crossed by people or animals; the monitoring area would be expanded to include fences that are on withdrawn lands. Two Conservation Law Enforcement Offices would be proposed for hire to accommodate monitoring the added fence line. The Standard Operating Procedures for handling cattle on the FRTC training ranges would be revised and implemented. Livestock friendly erosion controls would be used when performing construction activities on or adjacent to grazing land that is actively being used. Though not a NEPA mitigation measure, the Navy acknowledges that it has the authority under 43 United States Code section 315q of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended, to make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered by the permit holders as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes.

F.6.3.5 Calkins, L. (Nevada Four Wheel Drive Association)

First	Last	Comment	Response
LAWRENCE	CALKINS	Attached, please find the Nevada Four Wheel Drive Association's comment and selection of alternative.	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.



www.n4wda.org

Nevada Four Wheel Drive Association
65 Jasper Lane
Dayton, NV 89403
775-246-3212

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest, Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

November 7, 2019

Dear Sirs,

The Nevada Four Wheel Drive Association (N4WDA) is a statewide non-profit organization consisting of volunteers dedicated to the sport of four wheel drive off highway vehicle recreation and the principle of multiple use management of US Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and other public lands. We monitor the activities of these public agencies within Nevada and other areas where our membership recreates to determine whether proposed land use issues are in their best interests.

N4WDA welcomes the opportunity to provide further comment regarding the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS.

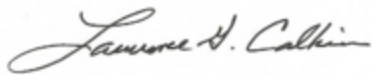
Although we would prefer to support a No Action alternative, our membership, which has many veterans of US military service, realizes that the expansion is necessary to keep the Navy's training up to date as future weapons and strategies are developed to keep our nation strong and that the expansion of the existing ranges is necessary.

We are dismayed at the loss of access to lands that our members recreate upon including the current BLM OHV Recreation area in the Dead Camel Mountains that will be eliminated with the expansion of the B-16 Range as well as the loss of access to countless miles of trails and historic mining sites near Middlegate Station due to the expansion of the B-17 Range. We hope that the Navy will consider sharing the B-16 range by allowing access to this area when training is not being conducted as discussed in our meeting at NAS Fallon with the NAS Modernization Team on December 13, 2016.

In our earlier response letter, we also proposed that the US Navy consider working with the BLM, OHV groups and other individuals to create a National OHV Recreation Area of approximately the same acreage, located elsewhere, as that being withdrawn by this Draft EIS to protect our recreational access.

The Nevada Four Wheel Drive Association, therefore, *reluctantly* lends its support for Alternative 3, which is the least restrictive of the alternatives to the public's access to these highly utilized recreational lands.

Sincerely,



Lawrence Calkins, President, N4WDA

F.6.3.5.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. While OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20, OHV use would be allowed to continue within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after WSA designation removal by Congress. The Navy is not proposing to share the B-16 range with the public. The Navy proposing under Alternative 1 and 2 to have exclusive use of the entire range or as part of Alternative 3 the Navy would relinquish the land south of Simpson road to the BLM for public use.

Topography and OHV trails similar to those that occur in the B-17 range area also occur in the Dixie Valley area or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationalists. These other public areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy has no authority to codify public lands beyond the scope of the withdrawal and therefore cannot create a National OHV Recreation Area.

F.6.3.6 Callicrate, T. (Mountain Gold Claims LLC/Lane Griffin)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Thomas	Callicrate	<p>Dear Ms. Goodwin,</p> <p>Please find attached our commits regarding the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization.</p> <p>Please e-mail back conformation that the Navy received our comment letter.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration of these commits.</p> <p>Respectfully, Thomas Callicrate Manager, Mountain Gold Claims, LLC 775-843-8835 tom@mtngold.us</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.</p>

MOUNTAIN GOLD CLAIMS, LLC /LANE GRIFFIN

*760 Brenda Way, Washoe Valley, Nevada 89704
Office/Cell: 775-843-8835; E-mail: tom@mtngold.us*

February 14, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway, Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132-5190
ATN: Ms. Sara Goodwin, EIS Project Manager

RE: Commits: Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization, Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

Also submitted to: <http://www.FRTCModerization.com>

Dear Ms. Goodwin:

Mountain Gold Claims LLC and Lane Griffin ("MGC/LG") respectfully submit the following comments related to the Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) Modernization, Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

MGC/LG acknowledge the importance and contribution of the FRTC's to the preparation of our military men and women and recognize the important role of the training provided at FRTC to our national security. We also want to have the FRTC acknowledge that the lands the FRTC wants to restrict for mineral exploration and development and other multiple uses does not fit the best uses for all parties. Therefore, MGC/LG are providing the following comments:

1. The Navy should consider using lands within the current Nellis Air Force Range Test Site ("NAFRTS") where there may be sufficient areas for the proposed modernization of the Fallon Ranges.
2. In compromise for the entire proposed restrictions proposed by the FRTC, the Navy might consider the areas to be closed for specific bombing exercises may be conducted within the "NAFRTS". The remaining lands needed for various military exercises could be accommodated within the proposed areas, pending review and adjustments for minerals, geothermal, wildlife and other multiple land uses.
3. Nevada is the major domestic supplier of various minerals that include several critical minerals used by the US military. We believe it is not sound policy nor in the national interest to restrict or eliminate any additional lands from current exploration or future mining.
4. A mineral assessment needed to be completed. A mineral resource assessment should have been completed for the DEIS by the US Geological

- Survey (USGS) to ensure, to the greatest extent possible, that all resources within the project areas were identified.
5. This impact analysis fails to consider the likely loss of a large mining operation (100-300 jobs) and the associated ripple effect of the loss of tax monies to state and local governments, secondary job losses, and other impacts.
 6. MGC/LG encourages the Navy to revisit the significant impacts to exploration and mining, and should the withdrawal be approved, mitigate those impacts. Mitigation might include the release of non-suitable Wilderness Study Areas based on the 1991 BLM Record of Decision within the counties being impacted (Mineral, Churchill, Mineral, Nye and Lyon counties). Such release would help with access for mineral exploration and development, as well as other multiple use groups to lands equal to past and current acreage withdrawals the US Military has acquired and is currently requesting.
 7. If lands are to be closed or restricted for mineral exploration and development, land owners and mineral claimants controlling minerals need to be compensated for past and current expenses, as well as the loss of potential future mineral resource valuations.

Regarding our mineral interests, my partner and I have been mining claim owners of the Eagleville property situated in the Eagleville Mining District since 1995. Historically the claims have produced over 5000 ounces of gold and 30,000 tons of high-grade barite (paint and medical uses).

- We have leased the property to 5 different mining companies.
- These companies have directed their exploration efforts toward drilling 19 holes (1657 feet of diamond core and 6200 feet of reverse circulation drilling) of approx. **\$400,000** expenditures.
- They have also conducted numerous geochemical and geophysical surveys with expenditures in excess of **\$100,000**.
- A proven resource exists of 10,000 tons of dump rock averaging 0.07 ounces per ton of gold, or 700 ounces of gold at \$1300/ounce for a value of over **\$900,000**. There is a stockpile of 500 tons of high-grade barite worth \$100/ton for a value of **\$50,000**
- There is an excellent infrastructure of roads and underground workings on the property. This provides an excellent basis for efficient exploration and mining. **\$100,000**
- Claim rental payments vary year to year but average \$5000/year for 24 years for a total of **\$150,000** in money spent maintaining the claims in good standing.

In summary, there has been approximately \$750,000 spent in land improvements and development on the property, and there exists a proven resource of gold and barite of \$950,000. Eagleville is located in a mining friendly jurisdiction with a

history of many successful operations. The exploration potential for increasing the reserves is excellent.

As a general statement, MGC/LG is opposed to any land use or access restrictions that may impact exploration and mining. MGC/LG is therefore supportive of the No Action Alternative.

MGC/LG is willing to provide any additional background information that might be needed as the process continues. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Mountain Gold Claims LLC
Thomas Callicrate, Manager

Lane Griffin

F.6.3.6.1 Response

Regarding comment 1 and 2, Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the Final EIS discusses various alternatives the Navy considered, including those suggested by the public. The Final EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for not carrying specific alternatives forward for further analysis.

While it would hypothetically be possible to develop training systems at Nellis Air Force Base, the United States (U.S.) Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training currently uses nearly all of the complex's available training capacity (time and space). Shared use of Nellis Air Force Base, as currently configured or as proposed, would not be able to support the intensity of both Navy and Air Force training, and therefore was not carried forward for further analysis.

Regarding comment 3, the Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate valid mining claims. Valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value.

For existing patented mining claims, the federal government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.

Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam demonstrating a valuable mineral deposit a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.

Regarding comment 4, in the Final EIS, when a mineral resource potential is classified as either moderate or high, a lost exploration opportunity would represent a significant impact on that mineral resource. The resource potential classification considers occurrence, geologic relationship, and historic production for each mineral resource.

As discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), the proposed for withdrawal would no longer be open to new mining claims and the lands would be barred from future mineral exploration and development. Implementation of any of the action alternatives would result in potential significant impacts on exploration and development of locatable, leasable, and salable mineral resources.

Regarding comment 5, the consideration of losses of large mining operations were addressed in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics) and the supporting study by Dr. Tom Harris of the University of Nevada Reno, which can be found on the frtcmmodernization.com website.

Regarding comment 6, s discussed in detail in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics), potential losses associated with currently unknown mining and geothermal opportunities as defined under Alternative 1 would be less under Alternative 3 because geothermal opportunities would be allowed in DVTA. However, significant impacts could still occur under Alternative 3 due to such potential lost mining and geothermal opportunities in the expanded B-16, B-17, and B-20. Therefore, while reasonably foreseeable economic impacts associated with lost mining and geothermal opportunities cannot be accurately determined at this time, there is the potential that significant economic impacts could occur due to the potential loss of mining and geothermal opportunities all Alternatives.

The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

Please note that de-designating any areas outside of the Study Area proposed for wilderness as Wilderness is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process.

Regarding comment 7, he Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate valid mining claims, as discussed under the response to comment 3.

The Navy will work with the Mountain Gold Claims LLC on a case-by-case basis as discussed in the Final EIS.

F.6.3.7 Capital Trail Vehicle Association (CTVA) Action Committee

First	Last	Comment	Response
CTVA	Action Committee	Please find our comments on the draft EIS attached for your review and use. Thank you for considering our concerns. CTVA Action Committee	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

CAPITAL TRAIL VEHICLE ASSOCIATION (CTVA)

**P.O. Box 5295
Helena, MT 59604-5295**

January 1, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Attention: Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

Re: Comments for the Fallon Range Modernization Draft EIS

Dear EIS Team,

We have assembled the following information and issues from our members and other motorized recreationists for the project record. We appreciate the opportunity to provide our comments for the Fallon Range Modernization Draft EIS. We enjoy riding our OHVs on primitive trails and roads on all multiple-use land managed by the Bureau of Land Management. BLM managed land provides a significant source of these OHV recreational opportunities. We are passionate about OHV recreation for the following reasons:

Enjoyment and Rewards of OHV Recreation

- Opportunity for a recreational experience for all types of people.
- Opportunity to strengthen family relationships.
- Opportunity to experience and respect the natural environment.
- Opportunity to participate in a healthy and enjoyable sport.
- Opportunity to experience a variety of opportunities and challenges.
- Camaraderie and exchange of experiences.
- We like to build and maintain trails for use by everyone.
- For the adventure of it.

Acknowledged Responsibilities of Motorized Visitors

- Responsibility to respect and preserve the natural environment. We are practical environmentalists who believe in a reasonable balance between the protection of the natural environment and the human environment.
- Responsibility to respect all visitors.
- Responsibility to use vehicles in a proper manner and in designated places.
- Responsibility to work with land, resource, and recreation managers. We are committed to resolving issues through problem solving and not closures.

We are a locally supported association whose purpose is to preserve trails for all recreationists through responsible environmental protection and education.

Page 1 of 6

- Responsibility to educate the public on the responsible use of motorized vehicles on public lands.

Our position is that the existing system of OHV routes does not adequately meet the needs list above. The benefits to the public would greatly benefit from an enhanced system of OHV routes.

We feel that we are representative of the needs of the majority of visitors who recreate on public lands but may not be organized with a collective voice to comment on their needs during the public input process. These independent multiple-use recreationists include visitors who use motorized routes for family outings and camping trips, weekend drives, mountain biking, sightseeing, exploring, picnicking, hiking, ranching, rock climbing, skiing, camping, hunting, RVs, shooting targets, timber harvesting, fishing, viewing wildlife, snowmobiling, accessing patented mining claims, and collecting firewood, natural foods, rocks, etc. Mountain bikers have been observed to prefer OHV trails because we clear and maintain them and they have a desirable surface for biking.

Multiple-use visitors also include physically challenged visitors including the elderly and veterans who must use wheeled vehicles to visit public lands. All of these multiple-use visitors use roads and motorized trails for their recreational purposes and the decision must take into account motorized designations serve many recreation activities, not just recreational trail riding. We have observed that 97% of the visitors to our public lands are there to enjoy motorized access and motorized recreation.

Our position is that the existing system of OHV routes does not adequately meet the needs listed above. The benefits to the public would greatly benefit from an enhanced system of OHV routes. The agency has a responsibility to adequately identify the needs of the public including those not comfortable with the agency's NEPA process and reasonably provide for those needs. The public would greatly benefit from an enhanced system of OHV routes instead of more and more closures of motorized access and motorized recreation. A Pro-Recreation alternative best meets the needs of the complete cross-section of the public.

Motorized access and recreation is the means to provide the majority of the public access to and enjoyment of our public lands. We are not a special use group. We are representative of the majority of the public yet we are singled out and denied our right to enjoy public lands on an equal basis. We are looking forward to your careful consideration of our issues and concerns. The project analysis and decision must include the development of a reasonable Pro-Recreation alternative that adequately addresses the needs of the public for motorized access and recreation. We are looking forward to the development of a reasonable Pro-Recreation alternative for the Fallon Range Modernization Draft EIS.

Immediately following this letter you will find a list of significant issues that must be given adequate attention in the draft plan. The current plan and none of the current alternatives adequately address these significant issues. We ask that the draft plan be improved to adequately and reasonably address these issues by develop a true Pro-Recreation Alternative and selecting that alternative for implementation.

Following the list of significant issues are comments and information supporting each of the significant issues. Again, we ask that you adequately consider these comments and information and improve the draft plan by adequately and reasonably addressing the needs of the public for motorized access and

We are a locally supported association whose purpose is to preserve trails for all recreationists through responsible environmental protection and education.

Page 2 of 6

motorized recreation by developing a real Pro-Recreation alternative and selecting that alternative for implementation.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,

/s/ CTVA Action Committee on behalf of our 240 members and their families and friends
Capital Trail Vehicle Association (CTVA)¹
P.O. Box 5295
Helena, MT 59604-5295

Contacts:

Doug Abelin, President	at (406) 461-4818	dabelin@live.com
Jody Loomis, VP	at (406) 459-8114	jloomis@mt.net
Ken Salo	at (406) 443-5559	ctva_action@q.com

Attachments:

- Outline of Significant Issues
- Detailed Comments in Support of Significant Issues

¹ CTVA is also a member of Montana Trail Vehicle Riders Association (mtvra.com), Blue Ribbon Coalition (sharetrails.org), and New Mexico Off highway Vehicle Alliance (nmohva.org). Individual memberships in the American Motorcycle Association (ama-cycle.org), Citizens for Balanced Use (citizensforbalanceduse.com), Families for Outdoor Recreation (ffor.org), Montana 4X4 Association, Inc. (m4x4a.org), Montana Multiple Use Association (montanamua.org), Snowmobile Alliance of Western States (snowmobile-alliance.org), and United Four Wheel Drive Association (ufwda.org)

F.6.3.7.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

Regarding comments on Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV) routes, OHV use would continue to be allowed within the DVTa. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTa. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and potentially within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after any removal of Wilderness Study Area designation by Congress. Due to safety reasons, OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20.

Topography and OHV trails similar to those in B-17 also occur in the DVTa or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).

Regarding loss of recreation, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTa and surrounding areas.

Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. Regarding the “lack of reasonable alternatives,” the Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) as the action alternatives, including training elsewhere. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).

The Navy does not have control over lands outside of the withdrawal or acquisition areas, and therefore could not accommodate the mitigations requested in the alternatives suggested by items 1 through 3.

Regarding item 4 of the specific comments, the Navy analyzed OHV use in Section 3.12 (Recreation), and Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety) considers impacts to human health.

Regarding item 5, Chapter 4 (Cumulative Impacts) lists past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions that have had or are expected to have impacts either within, or within distances of up to 30 miles from, the FRTC. This includes the counties of Churchill, Elko, Eureka, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, Pershing, and Washoe. In determining which projects to include in the cumulative impacts analysis for a given resource area, the Navy made a preliminary determination regarding each past, present, or reasonably foreseeable action. Specifically, using criteria included in Section 4.2 (Approach to Analysis), the Navy determined whether a relationship exists such that the affected resource areas of the Proposed Action (included in this EIS) might interact with the affected resource area of a past, present, or reasonably foreseeable action. If no such potential relationship existed, the project was not carried forward into the cumulative impacts analysis. In accordance with CEQ guidance (Council on Environmental Quality 2005), those actions considered but excluded from further cumulative effects analysis are not catalogued in the Final EIS, because the intent is to focus the analysis on the meaningful actions relevant to inform any ultimate decision making.

Regarding item 6, the Navy's purpose and need would not be compatible with the multiple use designations, which is why the Navy has analyzed the Proposed Action and Alternatives in the Final EIS.

Regarding item 7, the Navy defers to the Department of the Interior and/or decisions of courts of appropriate jurisdiction with respect to making RS2477 determinations. In the absence of such determination, the EIS does not take a position with respect to any claimed RS2477 roads. In working with the BLM, no adjudicated RS2477 roads have been identified in the areas requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition. The Navy recognizes that there is loss of access to the areas withdrawn or acquired and potentially to non-traditional roads; however, where access to an area would no longer be available, there would be no reason to relocate the road to that area. With respect to areas that would still be open to public access generally even if a certain road would no longer be available, other means of access these areas would remain available, and therefore roads would not need to be relocated in this situation either.

F.6.3.8 Casey, M. (Clan Alpine Ranch)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Michael	Casey	My entire comment is included in the attached letter. This same letter has been sent to Navy via FedEx delivery. Thank you	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

Michael A Casey
PO Box 5184
Fallon, NV 89407

February 12, 2019

FRTC EIS Project Manager
Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

RE: Comment on Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS

Thank you for the opportunity to provide scoping comments on the Navy's Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). As owners of the Bell Flat Allotment, Cow Canyon Allotment and various private property parcels near Fallon, we ask that you incorporate the following comments into the proposed action and analyses:

Comments about what we read in the DEIS

Having read as much of the Draft EIS Document and attachments as possible in the time available, we can only conclude that your proposed withdrawal of lands (for the purpose of expanding Navy training areas) will cause us many problems. Your actions will cause problems and cost us a lot of money. At the very least, the proposed actions will frustrate and deprive us of our investment backed expectations for which we expect to be fully compensated. Please consider that this letter serves as notice that if your proposed expansion of the NASFallon training areas is approved by Congress, and we suffer any loss whatsoever, the Navy and the Government of the United States will be required to make us whole.

This Draft EIS Document includes a number of erroneous, misleading, and even false statements and you must correct the statements before your NEPA evaluation will meet the requirements of federal statutes and the CEQ. At this time, your NEPA document fails to be based on facts that are derived from systematic and objective collection of data, followed by decision-making that fully analyzes both technical and economic considerations.

Following is a small example of false or misleading statements. Our primary concern is the effect on our ranch as a business and our source of livelihood. We have depended on reference material but have not cited those sources in the following. This is not intended to be a complete list but it will illustrate the nature of the deficiencies in your EIS document:

Comment on Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization DEIS
Michael A Casey February 12, 2019 Page 3

federal government disappeared and can only be reestablished through lawful cession by the State. This document fails to discuss that legal necessity.

Fifth, relating to jurisdiction, draft EIS proposes that Navy employees will be assigned as security guards but fails to acknowledge the limits on federal law enforcement authority due to lack of cession of jurisdiction. At this time the Sheriff of each county has full jurisdiction within NASFallon properties. That is consistent with the fact that the U.S. Constitution does not make a grant of law enforcement authority to the federal government. For those reasons the Federal Land Policy and Management Act includes authority for federal agencies to pay local law enforcement agencies for their services. NASFallon employees who dress to impersonate law enforcement officers are taking actions under the color of office.

Finally, the EIS fails to discuss the fact that private rights, within the proposed withdrawal areas, will subject the proposed withdrawal to laws governing valid existing rights. The existing rights continue to remain on those lands and must be available to those who own those rights.

Further comments that discuss the topics found in the above statements

We do not object to the Navy's need for training or for increasing your training facilities and welcome any opportunity to work with your authorized representatives to negotiate solutions for any problems your proposals may cause in our business operations.

From what we have learned about your proposals to date, we prefer one of the following outcomes:

1. Take our entire ranch and pay just compensation. That can include Navy purchase of the ranch but allowing our family to continue to use the rangelands for grazing livestock.
2. Leave us alone to operate our ranch as we have for generations. That can include working cooperatively with the Navy and leaving the cattle grazing schedule much like it is today.

Navy will benefit from grazing too. Continuing to graze this very large area with cattle will help reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires. Our allotments were also traditionally sheep grazing allotments and returning to herded sheep grazing on open range means we can also help prevent wildfires and the herded sheep can be moved fairly quickly away from areas that have been selected for training exercises.

We average two fires per year that are started by Navy activity. Grazing is the most effective way to remove the fuels that allow those fires to burn over large areas.

Since we always try to work cooperatively with agencies and others, below we have indicated our preference for a peaceful negotiation that will result in a sale from willing seller to the U.S. We are sure that everyone would prefer to avoid the expensive and contentious process of condemnation through eminent domain and litigation.

Comment on Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization DEIS
Michael A Casey February 12, 2019 Page 4

As we understand your proposed action, you plan to purchase our patented lands and you propose to withdraw land from our adjudicated grazing allotments which are an integral and essential part of our ranching operation. Ownership of our cattle is only possible when we own and graze these allotments and our private irrigated pastures at the appropriate times of each year. Loss of any portion of the grazing areas effectively eliminates our ability to operate as a ranch.

As indicated below, at the very least the proposed actions will frustrate and deprive us of our investment backed expectations for which we expect to be fully compensated. These actions also jeopardize those who may hold liens on our property.

None of us at the ranch are attorneys or trained in law but we will attempt to use terminology as it is found in statutes and court decisions so everyone will understand what is being discussed. For example investment backed expectations is a phrase recognized by the Supreme Court in "*Penn Central Transportation Co. v City of New York* 438 U.S.104 (1978)" and has been used frequently since that decision. Use of the phrase (Investment backed expectations) by our courts has expanded to include "Taking" that occurs within non-patented lands. The presence of existing rights mentioned below is recognized in the savings clause of such laws as Taylor Grazing Act, NEPA, Rangelands Improvement Act, Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and many more federal and state statutes.

Our allotments contain property we own in the form of existing rights including water rights, easements, and forage preference that comprise a large portion of the valuation of our business. We are confident that the DOD Navy and the USDI BLM will be careful to protect our valid existing rights in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and other statutes. See for example Section VII of Public Law 94-579 Section 701 (h) which directs federal agencies as follows: "(h) All actions by the Secretary concerned under this Act shall be subject to valid existing rights."

Please discuss your recognition of these topics along with your plans to mitigate any actions that affect private rights in detail in the NEPA document you are preparing.

About Our Ranch

We are the owners of patented lands in Dixie Valley, Edwards Creek Valley, Clan Alpine mountain range, and Lahontan Valley. We own patented land acreage and we own existing rights throughout two adjudicated grazing allotments which are regulated by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Our grazing allotment areas include Cow Canyon Allotment and Bell Flat Allotment.

At this time forage in our allotments is utilized by cattle we own and by cattle owned by a third party under a lease arrangement. As is the nature of a ranch lease, the Lessee also depends on use of the valid existing rights owned by Michael Casey. Cattle owned by the Lessee also serve as collateral for loans held by the Lessee as a necessary source of funds for operating costs.

Comment on Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization DEIS
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In addition to the patented lands we hold title in equity to various water rights, rights of way, forage preference, and other existing rights as they exist in the fee lands where they occur including those lands controlled by BLM (Allotments). Water rights and easements (rights-of-way) are a matter of property under state law. Under the Nevada water law, based on the doctrine of prior appropriation and beneficial use, our ranch established grazing rights for a distance of at least three miles from each water source; our water rights holdings are both vested prior to passage of statutory law and appropriated under Nevada statute. Also, as recognized by federal law, our ranch established easements and rights of way for travel throughout our grazing area by our livestock and ourselves as well as for conveyance of water. Range improvements within our grazing allotments are also our property since the construction was completed with money contributed by ranchers into the Range Improvement Fund; a trust fund controlled by Dept of Interior.

Establishment of property held in equity means that claims have attached to the BLM controlled lands and effectively severed our entire allotment areas from the category of public land or federal territory or enclave. Property established by our predecessors in interest has preempted substantial portions of federal regulations regarding public lands. Please keep in mind that property is defined under the laws of the various states and in our case that includes water rights, easements, rights-of-way, forage preference, etc., administered under the substantive and procedural laws of the State of Nevada. The U.S. Supreme Court has supported this idea repeatedly, for example: "What we hold is that following the act of 1877, if not before, all non-navigable waters then a part of the public domain became *public juris*, subject to the plenary control of the designated states ... with the right in each to determine for itself to what extent the rule of appropriation or the common-law rule in respect of riparian rights should obtain; California Oregon Power co. v. Beaver Portland Cement Co., 295 U.S.142, 163 (1935)".

With the creation of the BLM our grazing areas were further severed from the whole through the process of adjudication which recognized a private property known as "forage preference" which is the modern version of grazing right. Adjudication effectively removed the ownership of the surface estate from the federal hands and at this time jurisdiction needed for police powers has not been restored which would seem to limit the solutions to Navy expansion to either negotiation or litigation..

Our ranch is comprised of patented lands, adjudicated BLM controlled allotments, private property such as water rights, rights of way, easements, and forage preference all of which are components of a grazing unit or farm unit under the homestead entry laws.

PLEASE NOTE: Details about the nature, value, and scope of our property rights will be provided to the authorized officer as we negotiate mitigation of the Navy action and/or sale of our ranch.

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Allotted Grazing and Appurtenant Water Rights and Rights-of-Way Are Private Property

We have relied on reference material for the following discussion that includes: the Eureka County Nevada Master Plan Natural Resources and Land Use Element and the Ph.D. dissertation by Angus McIntosh (2002) "*Property Rights on Western Ranches; Federal Rangeland Policy and a Model for Valuation*".

Financing institutions, whose support is critical to continued livestock grazing and agricultural operations, consider the existence of the permitted grazing of forage preference, and the reasonable expectation of land use which emanates therefrom, as an indispensable factor in determining to extend and continue financial support. Permitted grazing (number of livestock and period of time) is capitalized into the value of a ranch. A decision to purchase a ranch is based on the ability of that ranch to produce and sell livestock. A ranch purchase decision means the buyer essentially pays for livestock production stemming from the private and federally managed lands, as well as additional property in the form of water rights, rights of way, and improvements on both private and federally managed land areas.

The economic value of our ranch is highly dependent upon our permitted grazing on the allotments. We own no large blocks of private land which could be grazed if the forage from BLM allotments was not available. Losing just a portion affects the numbers of livestock and the production of beef for sale throughout the year. For example Bell Flat Allotment provides nearly 30% of our annual forage. If, as indicated by your proposal, we are prohibited from grazing Bell Flat then our entire herd of cattle will have to be reduced by at least a third and possibly by half. That means the remaining cattle would produce all of the products we can sell in each year and we will be forced to fire employees and possibly some of our family members will not be able to remain in the ranch business. It would be a terrible hardship.

Our forage preference, easements, and appurtenant water rights are considered part of the realty (i.e., real, private property). In fact, we hold deeds, liens, and operating loans that consider our grazing preference, permitted use, and water rights on the allotment as private property collateral with real value. The Internal Revenue Service also considers the permit as a taxable property interest.

The grazing on our allotment was recognized by Congress as having the character of a property right interest or investment backed expectation when it enacted that portion of the Taylor Grazing Act which is found in 43 U.S.C § 315 (b) guaranteeing renewal of permits if denial of the permit would "impair the value of the grazing unit of the permittee, when such unit is pledged as security for any bona fide loan." Under the Taylor Grazing Act, a grazing permit is considered private property and is mandatorily attached to private "base property" – land or water

Allotments for grazing in Nevada, including ours, were originally identified and adjudicated on the basis of water right ownership. Our "right to graze" is a property interest appurtenant to livestock watering rights. All property, including water rights, is founded in the power of the State of Nevada, even property existing within lands

Comment on Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization DEIS
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controlled by federal agencies. The nature of Nevada water rights reflects the split estate concept developed on western lands which was included under Mexican law and continued when our area became Territory of the United States. The interest created in and owned by our predecessors on the allotment is a portion of the "surface estate" of the split estate. McIntosh (2002) further describes this right in terms of the travel by livestock to the place where a livestock watering right is used has established livestock grazing rights-of-way for access to each water source that is based on the normal travel of livestock that are grazing as they approach or leave the water location. The split estate is demonstrated by the stock-watering rights we possess on the allotment.

Our property ownership includes a "bundle-of-rights." McIntosh (2002) quotes a legal dictionary in defining the bundle-of-rights as: "...the collection of rights that constitute fee ownership in an object or realty (or interests in real estate). The bundle-of-rights includes, but is not limited to, the right to: sell, lease, use, give away, exclude others from, and to retain. The bundle-of-rights is the list of options that an owner can exercise over his property." The term "fee" refers to the quality and character of ownership in a property. McIntosh illustrates the bundle of rights as a bundle of "sticks" with each representing a distinctive action available only to a property owner.

"Sticks" within our bundle of rights apply fully to all property rights on our allotment including those rights-of-way established prior to 1976 to allow access to the various infrastructure and water rights on the allotment. This includes Revised Statute (RS) 2477 rights-of-way for travel or access by people and livestock as well as RS 2339 and RS 2340 easements for water storage and rights-of-way for water conveyance (ditches, dams, pipelines, etc.).

There are many other sources not referenced above defining the private property-nature of our grazing allotment, stockwater rights, and rights-of-way on the allotment.

Please adequately analyze, consider and integrate the proposed action's impacts to our ranch's adjudicated forage base, water rights, and rights-of-way.

Mitigation -- Take Every Effort to Avoid and Minimize Impacts

We understand that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), under which the EIS is being developed, outlines a general policy of "Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate." We ask that the Navy work with us to identify and implement all economically and technically feasible options to avoid and minimize impacts to our ranching operation at a ratio of 1:1 (i.e., completely balance negative impacts).

Through close coordination and scheduling, allow us to graze the areas under the allotment;

1. Minimize ground operations when livestock are present to avoid hazing, livestock stress, road degradation, unwanted spreading or moving of livestock, etc.;

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2. Provide alternate livestock forage (may include seeding and removal of invasive trees such as Pinyon Pine and Utah Juniper) on other federally administered land which the ranch is authorized to graze livestock;
3. Provide alternative livestock watering source(s) on federally administered land which the ranch is authorized to graze at locations where forage was previously unused or underused due to lack of a viable water source;
4. Provide an alternative livestock watering source in any area where forage was previously unused or underused due to lack of a viable water source;
5. Implement a planned Rangeland Improvement Project on federally administered land on which the ranch is authorized to graze livestock that would improve livestock production, forage availability, or rangeland condition (e.g., fencing, weed control, brush management, Pinyon-Juniper control); , vegetation management); and/or

If any of the proposed actions include development of livestock or irrigation water and the appropriation for a water right, the water right must be held in our ranch's name.

Please incorporate adequate avoidance and minimization options in the proposed action and analyze such in the EIS.

Monetary Compensation If Avoidance and Minimization Cannot Fully Mitigate Impacts

Please Note: We wish to keep our ranch intact or sell it in its entirety.

If after closely working with us it is determined that none of the avoidance and minimization measures referred to above can be implemented or the impact is not totally offset by the avoidance and minimization measures, the Navy must mitigate the forage loss, loss of access, and loss of our water rights through direct monetary compensation.

In fact, Congress has mandated compensation for grazing "losses" due to military withdrawals in 43 US Code, Title 43, Chapter 8A, Section 315(q)

"Whenever use for war or national defense purposes of the public domain or other property owned by or under the control of the United States prevents its use for grazing, persons holding grazing permits or licenses and persons whose grazing permits or licenses have been or will be canceled because of such use shall be paid out of the funds appropriated or allocated for such project such amounts as the head of the department or agency so using the lands shall determine to be fair and reasonable for the losses suffered by such persons as a result of the use of such lands for war or national defense purposes. Such payments shall be deemed payment in full for such losses. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to create any liability not now existing against the United States. (July 9, 1942, ch. 500, 56 Stat. 654; May 28, 1948, ch. 353, § 1, 62 Stat. 277)."

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Michael A Casey **February 12, 2019** **Page 9**

Values of "grazing permits", livestock forage, and water rights within federally controlled lands have been determined in several locations in Nevada and included in federal NEPA documents. There are many examples of precedence in Nevada (and elsewhere) where entities, including the military, have done the right thing and compensated loss of grazing forage, loss of investment backed expectations, and loss of the use of property such as water rights and rights-of-way. As explained above, details about the nature, value, and scope of our property rights will be provided to your representative who has proper delegation of authority to negotiate mitigation of the Navy action and/or sale of our ranch.

Please include detailed and factual analysis of this subject in your EIS. We expect no less from NASFallon as you move towards the "Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization".

Sincerely



Michael A. Casey
For Clan Alpine Ranch

F.6.3.8.1 Response

Thank you for your comment and participation in the NEPA process. Regarding comments on future losses from loss of grazing abilities, the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives.

The following information has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.

Payment for Losses

The Navy would first consider costs associated with obtaining replacement forage and otherwise restoring/maintaining a permittee's existing operational capacity. Working with BLM and the permittee, the Navy would determine the costs necessary to replace the area/capacity removed from a grazing permit. These costs could include, but would not be limited to, preparing new allotment applications; complying with BLM environmental requirements and water rights studies; procuring private market replacement forage; shipping or transporting forage, cattle and/or ranch personnel and their horses and equipment; one-time relocation expenses associated with any full or partial transferring of operations to any new location(s); any reasonably anticipated lost profits arising as a result of operational downtime while restoring and/or relocating operations; and any other costs identified, which would be properly payable under 43 U.S.C. section 315q.

Should a permit holder decide not to seek replacement forage in conjunction with restoring operational capacity, or when restoring such capacity is not practicable, the Navy would make a good faith estimate of the financial impact the loss of that individual's permit would be expected to have on his or her ranching operation. The Navy would ask each permit holder to provide recent business operating expenses associated with the permit, their total operating expenses, an estimate of that portion of income believed to be directly related to utilization of the permit, and total income and taxes. This information would be used to determine a payment amount to compensate for losses resulting from permit cancellation, including reasonably anticipated lost profits for what would otherwise have been the duration of the permit. If a permit holder does not wish to share their financial information, or if the information shared is incomplete, the Navy would make an estimate of the value of the losses based on existing information from other sources.

It is possible that a payment amount would be based both on replacement forage along with other operational restoration-related costs, and on the financial impact the loss of a permit would be expected to have on a ranching operation (i.e., part of the payment would be based on obtaining replacement forage to the extent practicable and the rest based on payment for losses to the extent obtaining replacement forage is not practicable). In those instances, the costs to restore operational capacity would first be determined, and the remaining payment amount would then be determined in accordance with the paragraph above discussing permits holders who may elect not to seek replacement forage capacity.

Payment for Allotment Improvements

Improvements such as corrals, fencing, wells, and other appurtenances that cannot be relocated are considered real property, similar to a building. the Navy would appraise the value of all real property owned by a permit holder and would offer fair market value for the purchase of any such real property. Equipment, such as relocatable water tanks, is not considered real property, and the permit holder would be afforded an opportunity to remove their equipment prior to cancellation of a permit.

Timing of Permit Cancellation

The Navy anticipates issuing its Record of Decision with respect to FRTC modernization in January 2020. However, any Congressional withdrawal of the area currently supporting grazing permits would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Similarly, any Congressional appropriation for

implementing the FRTC Modernization action, which would include funds for making payments to grazing permit holders, would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Accordingly, the earliest the Navy would request that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) cancel any permit would be October 1, 2020.

If the Congressional withdrawal is enacted, and if Congress appropriates funds to implement the FRTC Modernization effort, the Navy would ask BLM to contact each affected permit holder. BLM would coordinate with the Navy on any action to initiate cancellation of a permit. Under 43 CFR Part 4100 Subpart 4110.4-2 (Decrease in Land Acreages), BLM would be required to provide two years advance notice of any permit cancellation. Once a given notification is made, the Navy, with assistance from BLM, would begin discussions with affected permit holders to determine payment amounts in accordance with the processes described herein.

Regarding the assertion that the Navy has made erroneous remarks in the livestock grazing section regarding restrictions on the analysis, the Navy has added the reasoning for this analysis into Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing). The reasoning is that these factors were chosen because they are consistent with BLM parameters and are critical factors in determining how livestock will utilize forage in an allotment (Holechek et al., 2011). It is acknowledged that these factors are influenced by the type and class of cattle, and that cattle can graze on slopes greater than 30 percent slope or will travel over 4 miles to water, but are less likely to do so under satisfactory grazing conditions.

Regarding the analysis, land acreages have been revised as a result of reducing the acres requested for withdrawal between the Draft and Final EIS under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative. AUMs per allotment have also been verified during a re-run of the grazing restrictive analysis with BLM coordination following a revision of water locations that were not included in the original restrictive analysis. Regarding vested water rights, the Navy acknowledges that the loss of water rights could be a factor in determining payments for losses associated with the cancellation of grazing permits. Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex) addresses the valuation of losses due to the cancellation of such permits. This valuation process would also apply to Alternatives 2 and 3.

Regarding the third point of costs of condemnation for grazing (process described earlier in this response), water rights, private lands, and mining claims, the Navy has added valuation processes to the Final EIS for these items described below.

The Navy recognizes the potential impact of the loss of water rights on the community. The Navy would purchase private water rights as real property. Additionally, acquisition of water rights would be factored into the processes for valuing grazing and mining-related just compensation or other authorized payments as appropriate. As discussed in Section 3.9 (Water Resources), the Navy does not have the authority to assist water rights holders with other water rights actions (i.e. change applications).

For any acquisition of privately-owned property, private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land acquired by the United States due to the proposed expansion. Just compensation would be determined by calculating the fair market value of parcels in accordance with federal appraisal rules codified in the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions.

The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value.

For existing patented mining claims, the federal government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.

Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam demonstrating a valuable mineral deposit a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.

Regarding the fourth issue, the Navy would offer fair market value for private property and go through a lawful process of acquisition on a case-by-case basis pending any ultimate Congressional decision.

Regarding the fifth point about security guards, to clarify, the Navy is proposing the establishment of two Conservation Law Enforcement Offer positions at NAS Fallon. Part of the duties of these officers would include monitoring of the added fence line. These positions would not be in place unlawfully.

Regarding the final point, the Navy has further described the process by which it proposes to handle existing rights on lands proposed for withdrawal or requested for acquisition in the Final EIS.

Regarding comments to allow grazing on the FRTC ranges, the Navy worked with grazing permittees throughout the Draft EIS process, and though discussions came to the conclusion that grazing would not be compatible with the needs of grazers, nor with training needs on the FRTC ranges. The DVTA would continue to be open for grazing.

Regarding fires, the Navy has and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan and, where possible, proposed plan elements and goals are included in the Final EIS. For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).

The Navy anticipates issuing its Record of Decision with respect to FRTC modernization in January 2020. However, any Congressional withdrawal of the area currently supporting grazing permits would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Similarly, any Congressional appropriation for

implementing the FRTC Modernization action, which would include funds for making payments to grazing permit holders, would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Accordingly, the earliest the Navy would request that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) cancel any permit would be October 1, 2020.

If the Congressional withdrawal is enacted, and if Congress appropriates funds to implement the FRTC Modernization effort, the Navy would ask BLM to contact each affected permit holder. BLM would coordinate with the Navy on any action to initiate cancellation of a permit. Under 43 CFR Part 4100 Subpart 4110.4-2 (Decrease in Land Acreages), BLM would be required to provide two years advance notice of any permit cancellation. Once a given notification is made, the Navy, with assistance from BLM, would begin discussions with affected permit holders to determine payment amounts in accordance with the processes described herein.

F.6.3.9 Ceflu, C. (Nevada Bighorns Unlimited)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Chris	Ceflu	Please see attached NBU Comment Letter	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

**Non-Profit Tax Exempt
ID 88-0180276**



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February 14, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command
Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

RE: Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Environmental Impact Statement

Dear U.S. Navy:

The Nevada Bighorns Unlimited – Reno (NBU) is a sportsmen and women's group concerned with the conservation of bighorn sheep as well as other issues impacting various wildlife species throughout Nevada and the West. Our membership represents the largest single chapter of sportsmen and women in the state of Nevada with over 3,400 members. We ask that you strongly consider these public comments during revisions to the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

We acknowledge that from public scoping feedback the United States Navy (Navy) made modifications to the B-17 area to lessen impacts to wildlife and sportsmen; however, upon detailed review of the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3) included within the DEIS, major wildlife and sportsmen access concerns remain. Our concerns lie within B-17, B-20, the Dixie Valley Training Area, and the proposed modification of airspace. Although the B-16 and B-19 areas will also have negative impacts to wildlife, we have only minor concerns with these areas in comparison to the others.

B-17 AREA

Our concerns with this area relate to big game, small game, and other avian species and their habitat. We also have concerns with the lack of a definitive commitment to allow the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and sportsmen access to withdraw areas in perpetuity.

Big Game – The bighorn sheep herds that occur within this area are managed as part of NDOW Management Unit 181, which has a population of approximately 380 animals. It is important to note that bighorn sheep are a special status species listed on the Bureau of Land Management's Sensitive Species list statewide, as well as a Species of Conservation Priority under the Nevada

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Wildlife Action Plan (WAPT, 2012). A number of big game water developments occur within the area proposed for withdrawal. In addition to mule deer and pronghorn antelope tags, a total of 18 desert bighorn sheep tags may be adversely impacted by the withdrawal proposed in this area. These tags provide once in lifetime recreational opportunities to Nevada's sportsmen and women as well as non-residents, and a substantial economic benefit to Churchill County and Nevada. Over the past 30 years, sportsmen, conservationists, and various government agencies have worked tirelessly to develop this into a thriving herd that is now one of the most sought after herds to hunt by sportsmen and women.

Also note, that the Bell Mountain and Bell Flat areas provide important habitat for over 250 pronghorn antelope and that these areas are also of concern for NBU.

Small Game and Other Avian Species – The proposed withdrawal area associated with B-17 overlaps numerous areas of occupied chukar habitat, which also provides significant recreational opportunities to Nevada's sportsmen and women. Additionally, a number of small game water developments occur within the proposed withdrawal area. In addition to avian game species, golden eagles and other raptor species should be considered, as they are federally protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (1940) and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (1918). Reviews of existing data show that a number of golden eagle nest sites occur within the proposed withdrawal area and these sites have significant potential for negative impacts as a result of the proposed withdrawal.

We request that the Navy include a definitive commitment to allow the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and sportsmen access to withdraw areas in perpetuity. We also request that the Navy develop an access management plan (AMP) and allow adequate opportunity for public and cooperating agency involvement in its development. We also request the AMP be included with the FEIS or as a condition of approval for the project. The AMP should also include a significant funding mechanism to ensure that any damage resulting to wildlife habitat and/or water developments from Naval operations are adequately addressed in a timely manner. This funding mechanism should not only provide compensation for damage to habitat and water development structures resulting from Naval operations but should also include conservation funding to improve wildlife habitat within the Naval Complex. NBU would request that the funding mechanism be administered by a working group of interested stakeholders, including but not limited to, wildlife interests, conservation interest, and grazing interests.

DIXIE VALLEY TRAINING AREA

Our concerns with this area relate to big game, small game, and other avian species and their habitat. Please note that although this area has been identified as "open to the public", we have concerns that this may not remain open in perpetuity. The definition of "open to the public" has not been provided and the duration has not been identified. As such, we have reviewed the impacts based on a worst-case scenario. However, it should be noted that even if these areas remain open, there will still be negative impacts to the resources outlined below. We also have concerns with the lack of a definitive commitment to allow the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) access to withdrawal areas in perpetuity, despite the fact that NDOW has the statutory responsibility for managing Nevada's wildlife across all land ownership classifications. Moreover, alternative

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mechanisms exist to ensure that these areas remain open to public access and achieve the Navy's goals, i.e. National Conservation Areas and/or WSA/Wilderness designations.

Big Game - This area overlaps NDOW Management Units 182 and 183, which have bighorn populations of approximately 340 and 320 animals, respectively. Additionally, a number of big game water developments occur within the area that would be impacted by the proposed withdrawal. It is also important to note that these areas provide significant recreational opportunities, including, but not limited to, big game hunting. In addition to mule deer and pronghorn tags within this area, a total of approximately 32 desert bighorn sheep tags may be negatively impacted by the proposed withdrawal in this area. Significant concerns exist specific to impacts to bighorn sheep lambing as well as impacts to hunters.

Small Game and Other Avian Species - The proposed withdrawal area associated with the Dixie Valley Training Area overlaps numerous areas of occupied chukar habitat, which also provides significant recreational opportunities to Nevada's sportsmen and women. Additionally, a number of small game water developments occur within the proposed withdrawal area. In addition to avian game species, golden eagles and other raptor species should be considered as they are federally protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (1940) and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (1918). Review shows that golden eagle nest sites occur within the proposed withdrawal area and these sites have significant potential for negative impacts. Concerns also exist relating to impacts to chukar and the sportsmen and women that hunt in addition to potential impacts to nesting golden eagles.

We request that the Navy include a definitive commitment to allow the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and sportsmen access to withdrawal areas in perpetuity. We also request that the Navy develop an access management plan (AMP) and allow adequate opportunity for public and cooperating agencies involvement in its development. We also request the AMP be included with the FEIS or as a condition of approval for the project. Furthermore, we request that the FEIS support land designations that ensure public access in perpetuity, i.e. National Conservation Areas and/or WSA/Wilderness designations, or a combination thereof.

B-20 AREA

The primary concern with this withdrawal area is its proximity to the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (SNWR), and proximity to and withdrawal of Fallon National Wildlife Refuge lands. Specifically, impacts to those migratory bird species and the sportsmen that utilize them are of issue.

The wetland complex associated with the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is Nevada's largest. The Stillwater Marsh area has been a historic stopover point for migratory waterfowl during their spring and fall migration as well as an important nesting site for many waterfowl, marsh, and shorebirds. Peak numbers of 250,000 ducks, 10,000 geese, and 13,000 tundra swans occur during good water years (USFWS, 1985). This wetland complex has been documented and cited in numerous pieces of literature, including but not limited to Garone (1961), Reisner and Bates (1990), and USFWS (1985), as a critically important production area and migratory stopover along the Pacific Flyway. Significant concerns exist associated with interrupting the migration corridor

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leading to and from this wetland complex, negative impacts upon the birds using this area as a stopover as well as negative impacts upon those birds using this area for nesting purposes.

This SNWR also serves as an important area for recreationists such as bird watchers and waterfowl hunters. Great concern exists specific to potential negative impacts upon these individuals utilizing this area.

Noise impacts to the sportsmen community (Stillwater Farms Inc./Canvasback Gun Club) have been demonstrated within the Noise Study but not addressed within this DEIS. Degradation of the waterfowl complex and land values has not been addressed within the DEIS.

Review shows that golden eagle nest sites occur within the proposed withdrawal area and these sites have significant potential of negative impacts.

We request that the Navy explore modifications to lessen noise impacts so they don't increase at the SNWR and Stillwater Farms Inc./Canvasback Gun Club. We also request that the Navy shift the B-20 area one to two miles north so that the bombing area is not immediately adjacent to the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. This will not only aid in lessening potential impacts from ordinance but also will allow sportsmen access to waterfowl that often use this flooded area (just north of the current refuge boundary) during wetter years. NBU believes this would be a very minor change to the Navy's current withdrawal request and still fulfill the purpose and need, while avoiding impacts to wildlife and water resources, as well as the public who utilize these resources. Furthermore, we request that the current bird aircraft/animal strike hazard (BASH) of maintaining a minimum 3,000 feet over refuges be adopted as an enforceable Navy regulation over both SWNWR and Stillwater Farms Inc./Canvasback Gun Club.

MODIFICATIONS TO AIRSPACE

We have concerns regarding the proposed expansion of special use air space and the reconfiguration of existing airspace throughout northern Nevada and especially the flight deck at which training operations will take place. Specifically, the potential for adverse impacts to species such as greater sage-grouse and bighorn sheep exist associated with the noise from training activities close to the ground. Impacts to bighorn sheep breeding and lambing, as well as greater sage-grouse breeding and nesting could be detrimental.

Bighorn sheep habitat/lambing areas:

The following bighorn sheep populations appear to correspond directly or adjacent to Points of Interest within the Noise Study and DEIS.

Points within herds:

- Points 14 & 15 – Fairview/Slate Herd: Increase of 0.4 dBA and 0.2 dBA respectively
- Point 21 – Virginia Mountains herd (not applicable to noise increase per the Noise Study)
- Point 16 – Clan Alpines: Increase of 1.5 dBA
- Point 23 – Middle Toiyabes: Increase of 1.0 dBA

Points adjacent to herds:

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- Point 5 – Clan Alpine herd: Increased of 1.7 dBA
- Point 12a – Desotoyas herd: Increase of 1.5 dBA

The bighorn sheep Points of Interest show no significant increase but upon review of the Alternative 3 section of the Noise Study (specifically the data associated with Figure 3.7-40), there are several herds that will have noise increases of at least 10 dBA and others that will increase by 3 and/or 6 dBA. These significant impacts are not acknowledged anywhere in the DEIS. Accordingly, the analysis of bighorn sheep impacts is misleading as the points of interest are not representative of overall impacts (i.e., the DEIS only discusses data for those herds that will have the lowest impacts).

Noise Study shows portions of the following in the 10 dBA increase zone:

- Toiyabe herd,
- Middle Toiyabe herd,
- South Toiyabe herd,
- Mt. Jefferson herd, and
- Gabbs Valley Range herd.

Noise Study shows portions of the following herds in 3 and/or 6 dBA increase zone:

- Gabbs Valley Range herd,
- Monte Cristo herd, and
- Stillwaters herd.

We are unable to determine bighorn sheep impacts clearly from the data presented within this DEIS and no avoidance, minimization, or mitigation has been presented to offset impacts.

Greater Sage-grouse:

Best available science is not included within the analysis. For example: Numerous publications exist that were not cited in the DEIS that have more thorough metrics for analyzing impacts to greater sage-grouse leks. These can be found within the NDOW document titled *Acoustic Impacts and Greater Sage-grouse: A Review of Current Science, Sound Measurement Protocols, and Management Recommendations* (NDOW, 2018).

Noise didn't include sage-grouse lek baseline noise data collection. Current standard for lek noise impacts is 10dBA above baseline (NDOW, 2018), which was not used in this analysis. Furthermore, the modeled baseline values for lek Points of Interest are extremely high. Other studies (including those discussed by NDOW [2018]) show baseline lek values that are upwards of 30 dBA quieter than those modeled within the DEIS.

The Noise Study for the DEIS includes the following Points of Interest that appear to be on or adjacent to leks, though they are not actually called lek points within the DEIS:

- Point 23 Kingston (Kingston lek) – 1 dBA
- Point 12a (Buffalo Hills Lek) – 1.5 dBA
- Point 12b (Silver Creek 4 lek) – 1 dBA
- Close proximity to leks: Point 3 (6 dBA), Point 7 (1.7 dBA)

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Our review of the Noise Study data shows that over 50 leks fall within the zone of a 10 dBA increase, which is not mentioned within the DEIS and is considered a significant impact, subject to mitigation; as per best available science, similar Department of Interior impacts analysis, and NDOW protocols. The analysis of greater sage-grouse impacts appears misleading as the Points of Interest are not representative of overall impacts and the methods used to evaluate impacts are incorrect.

Additionally, cumulative impacts analysis for noise is incomplete. Analysis needs to be included past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future impacts. For example: The noise analysis doesn't include quantitative analysis of cumulative impacts from existing operations plus each alternative.

We are unable to determine greater sage-grouse impacts from the data presented within this DEIS and no avoidance, minimization, or mitigation has been presented to offset impacts. Accordingly, a reasonable range of alternatives have not been presented within the DEIS demonstrating that public concern regarding impacts to the greater sage-grouse have been analyzed.

We request that analysis by a qualified wildlife biologist and specialist wildlife acoustics be included within the FEIS so a minimum flight deck for air operations can be developed that does not negatively impact greater sage-grouse and bighorn sheep. We request that this flight deck be seasonal in nature, which would be defined by NDOW and species-specific.

OVERALL

Overall, upwards of 1,000 bighorn sheep have potential for adverse impacts associated with the various withdrawal areas, which represents 10% of Nevada's total population. A total of approximately 50 desert bighorn sheep ram tags have potential for impacts, representing nearly 14% of Nevada's total number of tags statewide. Additionally, NDOW and Nevada's sportsmen have cumulatively invested millions of dollars and tens of thousands of man hours into the numerous water developments on public land that will be withdrawn by the Preferred Alternative. These investments must not be thrown away. The water developments are invaluable to the success of Nevada's wildlife, have uplifted wildlife habitat, and increased populations, while at the same time, creating areas that are irreplaceable. Wildlife managers along with sportsmen must be allowed full access (at all times) to these water developments, the surrounding habitat, and the associated wildlife in perpetuity. The loss of these water developments or further limitations to public access in this region would be the permanent loss of prime areas for wildlife and hunting.

Wildlife Management and Public Access

An Access Management Plan (for all training areas) should be developed as a condition of approval that has gone through the public review process and vetted by cooperating agencies. Additionally, we request stronger language throughout the document that guarantees that the Navy "will" allow access to NDOW and sportsmen in perpetuity, instead of the current "may" allow access language. Without an Access Management Plan included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) that has gone through the public process, NBU will be unable to support the overall project.

Wildfire Management

Fire risk and rehabilitation for Navy-caused fires is not adequately addressed. We would like to see a Fire Management Plan, which includes the following:

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- Dedicated air attack resources (single engine air tankers at a minimum) stationed in Fallon;
- Modified use of flares and electronic equipment that poses as an ignition source within highfire risk areas throughout the year, not just May through October, using National Interagency Fire Center data or equivalent daily fire danger information; and
- A funding mechanism that guarantees the Navy has resources on an annual basis to actively suppress wildfires and to rehabilitate Navy-caused burned areas (within and outside of withdrawal areas).

The Fire Management Plan should be developed (for all training areas) as a condition of approval that has gone through the public review process and vetted by cooperating agencies. Without a Fire Management Plan included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) that has gone through the public process, NBU will be unable to support the overall project.

Mitigation

The Navy's approach to omit mitigation from the DEIS is incomplete, and therefore unacceptable. It is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and is essential for determining overall impacts from the Preferred Alternative, or any other alternative. Specific mitigation needs to be developed through coordination with NDOW and committed to within the NEPA document, prior to the issuance of a FEIS and associated Record of Decision. Without species-specific mitigation included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) that has gone through the public process, NBU will be unable to support the overall project.

NBU strongly supports multiple use management on our public lands. We also support the U.S. Navy and look forward to seeing a revised alternative and NEPA document that allows a reasonable solution for the FRTC's training needs and Nevada's wildlife, wildlife managers, and sportsmen.

Sincerely,



Nevada Bighorns Unlimited

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F.6.3.9.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. In regard to concerns about the B-17 area, the Navy would allow access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency and would set quotas and distribute permits, and maintain wildlife habitat. The Navy is working with NDOW on a MOA for bighorn sheep hunting on the B-17 range, a draft of which is included in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans). To the maximum extent possible, the Final EIS has been updated with details of this management plan. Details can be found in Chapter 2 and in Section 3.12 (Recreation), and a draft version of the proposed hunting program Memorandum of Agreement can be found in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans) of the Final EIS.

The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.

Regarding water developments, the Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and manage wildlife. The Navy currently has an Access Management Memorandum of Understanding with NDOW that would be updated (with a new MOA) after any ultimate Congressional Decision on an action.

The Navy has reviewed existing data on golden eagles and nest sites, and has performed ecological surveys in the Study Area. These supporting studies are available online at <https://frtcmodernization.com/>. Impacts to biological resources, including eagles are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources). Potential impacts to bald and golden eagles are analyzed on an individual animal basis (not just on effects to populations). Species protected under the MBTA are analyzed by major taxonomic groups within subcategories (e.g., passerines, shorebirds), and the impact analysis is conducted in terms of potential effects to populations of migratory birds. Based on the impact analysis presented in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources) for wildlife and special-status species, temporary direct impacts to bald and golden eagle populations from proposed aircraft operations and construction activities associated with the implementation of the Proposed Action would not be significant. Therefore, the Navy has determined that implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in the “taking” of bald or golden eagles, their nests, or their eggs as defined by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

Regarding “a definitive commitment to allow the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and sportsmen access to withdraw areas in perpetuity,” the Navy cannot allow the public to access the Bravo ranges without oversight, due to public health and safety concerns being that the area may contain unexploded ordnance and is within a Weapons Danger Zone and/or a Surface Danger Zone.

Regarding the request for an access management plan and other mitigations, the Navy has developed and proposed specific mitigation for each alternative that can be implemented and would avoid or minimize impacts. As such, alternatives include actions specifically designed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities. Mitigation measures specifically suggested and adopted can be found in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation).

Regarding impacts to the DVTA, hunting would remain allowable as managed currently by NDOW. NDOW would be allowed to access the area for managing Nevada's wildlife.

Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. However, this de-designation would not prohibit the use of these areas by recreationalists. Additionally, if the public is recreating in the area, the Navy would seek an alternate location to train until the area used by the public is available, as is currently done in the existing DVTA.

The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.

Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

The proposed B-16 and B-20 expansion areas are outside of the current mapped range of bighorn sheep and mule deer, and only the eastern portion of the proposed B-20 expansion area overlaps with year-round pronghorn range (Nevada Department of Wildlife (2017a)). However, mule deer were observed within the proposed B-20 expansion area during camera trap surveys conducted in support of this EIS (see Supporting Study: Final Wildlife Remote Camera Trapping Survey Report, available at <http://www.frtcmodernization.com>). In addition, the estimated 60-65 DNL dBA aircraft noise contours within the proposed B-17 expansion area overlies a portion of currently mapped bighorn sheep winter-lambing range (i.e., the flats at the southern end of the Fairview Range) and year-round range within the central Monte Cristo Mountains and southern Sand Springs Range. The estimated 70-75 DNL dBA contours would not appreciably change from existing conditions (see Figures 3.7-9 and 3.7-22). Given the estimated number of bighorn sheep within the vicinity of the existing B-17 and DVTA range areas are at an all-time high (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a), existing training operations are not having an effect on regional bighorn sheep populations. Therefore, it is expected that proposed training operations conducted within the proposed restricted areas (R-4805A and R4816S Low) and associated expansion areas at the same level as current training operations would not have a significant impact on bighorn sheep populations.

Within the FRTC region of influence, there are over 1 million acres of mapped bighorn sheep year-round range, over 51,000 acres of mapped bighorn sheep winter/lambing range, 5.6 million acres of mapped year-round pronghorn range, and 52,000 acres of mapped pronghorn crucial summer range. Navy operational doctrine dictates that during transiting, pilots avoid lambing areas. Therefore, impacts to these ungulate ranges would not have a significant or measurable impact to bighorn sheep populations.

Regarding impacts to the B-20 area, to clarify, the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is not part of the expansion under the Proposed Action and would remain open as it is currently. The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater NWR. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).

Again, this expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes. Currently three Special Use Airspace (SUA) units overlap the Stillwater and Fallon National Wildlife Refuges: Fallon North 1 MOA, R-4813A, and R-4813B. Under the Proposed Action, there are no proposed changes to the operating altitudes of the SUAs that overlap the Stillwater NWR, no changes in number of aircraft operations, and no changes in the approach and departure tracks of aircraft utilizing targets in B-20. The proposed B-20 expansion area that overlaps the NWRs is for a ground-based safety zone and not due to an increase or change in aircraft operations over the NWRs. Therefore, there would be no change in the BASH potential with implementation of the proposed action.

The following are some general operational changes that are implemented during aircraft operations to reduce threats from bird strikes, mission permitting:

- When practical, reduce low-level flight time.
- Reduce formation flying.
- Reduce airspeeds to allow birds to be seen sooner and lessen damage in event of a strike.
- Avoid areas with known raptor concentrations during summer, especially during 1000–1700 hours due to increased thermals (Naval Air Station Fallon, 2012).

With adherence to the NAS Fallon BASH Plan and use of the Avian Hazard Advisory System, there would be no significant impacts to bird or bat populations as no population-level effects to birds or bats would be expected.

Currently, all state management plans concentrate on habitat availability, wildfire, and land-based chronic noise sources. Greater sage grouse lek location data indicates that usage areas are east of the land areas proposed for withdrawal or acquisition. Sage grouse in these areas would be exposed to noise from aircraft overflights. Available science indicates that short-term noise intrusion does not play a significant role in lek success.

The Navy will work closely with BLM and NDOW to manage the sage grouse and other species on lands under the Navy's control. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any

commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.

The Navy has implemented and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce the occurrence of wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan, and where possible, proposed elements and goals of this plan were added to the Final EIS. For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).

As discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), the response to sonic booms or other sudden disturbance is similar among many wildlife species. Sudden and unfamiliar sounds usually act as an alarm and trigger a “flight” response; however, reaction to a given noise can vary widely depending on factors such as time of day, physical condition of the animal, physical environment, or whether other physical stressors are present. Although the startle effect of a sonic boom can be stressful to an animal, it is difficult to generalize animal responses to noise disturbances across species. Recent literature suggests a startle is a common response across a variety of species and ultimately leads to habituation. It has been reported that the intensities and durations of the startle response decrease as the number and frequency of exposures increase, suggesting no long-term adverse effects. It is recognized that short term impacts to individual animals may occur from sonic booms, however, overall no long-term adverse effects to populations are expected.

Given the historical use of the airspace and the coexistence of wildlife, animals within the MOA are likely habituated to aircraft overflights and associated noise, such as sonic booms.

Many of the above-listed behavioral and physiological responses to noise are within the range of normal adaptive responses to external stimuli, such as predation, that wild animals face regularly. In many cases, individuals would return to homeostasis or a stable equilibrium almost immediately after exposure to a brief stimulus such as an aircraft overflight or sonic boom. Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Section 3.10.3.1 (Potential Stressors) of the Final EIS was updated to incorporate the best available science regarding noise and startle effects on wildlife.

Regarding impacts to sportsmen and the community due to noise, the Navy does not anticipate any risk of hearing loss because noise would not rise to a level at which hearing loss would occur. Areas that could experience noise levels of 65 A-weighted decibels (dBA) or greater due to underlying Day-Night Level (DNL) contours above 65 dB are located in Churchill, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing counties. However, with intermittent aircraft operations coupled with the time most people spend indoors, it is very unlikely that individuals would experience noise exposure that would result in hearing loss.

The EIS includes several figures (Figure 3.7-32 and Figure 3.7-40) that depict where changes to noise levels would occur using existing and proposed noise contour data.

Regarding the modifications to airspace comments, the Navy has established Noise Sensitive Areas around wildlife refuges, incorporated areas, and certain tribal areas in the past. As part of the Proposed Action and alternatives, the Navy is proposing new Noise Sensitive Areas around the incorporated areas of Crescent Valley and Eureka. The establishment of these Noise Sensitive Areas is considered

compatible with military training activities and will include a 5-nautical-mile radius and an elevation of 3,000 feet AGL.

The Navy is required to train year-round and is unable to restrict flying during certain seasons. Based on available literature and the analysis presented in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically, Section 3.10.3.1 (Potential Stressors) of the Final EIS, impacts on sage grouse are expected to be minimal. However, the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) expressed concern regarding increased low-level overflights and requested the Navy undertake a study to further assess potential impacts. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the Record of Decision.

General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, as currently done. This same approach would also apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would continue to be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace). Proposed changes to airspace would not significantly impact recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts on general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).

The Navy's model for noise impacts included the quantitative analysis of potential cumulative impacts from existing operations (baseline) plus each alternative. See Section 4.4.7 (Noise) for the full cumulative impact analysis from noise. Military and construction activities, such as development of a new facility, demolition or renovation of existing facilities, or road construction/maintenance, make up the majority of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable Navy actions considered as part of the cumulative impacts of noise.

A detailed discussion of noise modeling is found in Section 3.7 (Noise), specifically Section 3.7.3 (Environmental Consequences). The results of the modeling include noise contour maps (see Figure 3.7-39), which provide a visual depiction of areas exposed to different noise levels associated with the Proposed Action. Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions where there would be overlap with the Navy's noise contours were noted to account for potential cumulative impacts.

Regarding impacts to bighorn sheep herds in the Study Area, as discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), the response to sonic booms or other sudden disturbance is similar among many wildlife species – sudden and unfamiliar sounds usually act as an alarm and trigger a “flight” response; however, reaction to a given noise can vary widely depending on factors such as time of day, physical condition of the animal, physical environment, whether or not other physical stressors are present, and others. Although the startling effect of a sonic boom can be stressful to an animal, it is hard to generalize animal responses to noise disturbances across species. Recent literature suggests a fright is a common response across a variety of species, and that this ultimately leads to habituation. It has been reported that the intensities and durations of the startle response decrease as the number and frequency of exposures increase, suggesting no long-term adverse effects.

Given the historical use of the airspace, and the persistence of aircraft operations and wildlife populations, wildlife within the MOA are likely habituated to aircraft overflights and associated noise (e.g., sonic booms).

Many of the above-listed behavioral and physiological responses to noise are within the range of normal adaptive responses to external stimuli, such as predation, that wild animals face on a regular basis. In many cases, individuals would return to homeostasis or a stable equilibrium almost immediately after exposure to a brief stimulus such as an aircraft overflight or sonic boom. The Final EIS has been updated to incorporate the latest information regarding noise and startle effects on wildlife.

Regarding the part of the comment about impacts to leks that fall within the zone of a 10-dBA increase, state management plans use L_{xx} (e.g., L_{10} and L_{90}) metrics for determining impacts on sage grouse. In the absence of this type of data, the Navy applied maximum decibel level (L_{max}), sound exposure level (SEL), the DNL, and equivalent sound level (L_{eq}) metrics to determine potential impacts. The Navy has determined that the analysis presented in the Final EIS is comprehensive and based on the best available science for assessing potential population impacts. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.

Regarding “NDOW document titled Acoustic Impacts and Greater Sage-grouse: A Review of Current Science, Sound Measurement Protocols, and Management Recommendations,” the Navy has reviewed the literature available on sage grouse and has added a more thorough discussion of the available science to the Final EIS.

Regarding noise and cumulative impacts, the Navy’s model for noise impacts included the quantitative analysis of potential cumulative impacts from existing operations (or the baseline) plus each alternative. See Section 4.4.7 (Noise) for the full cumulative impacts’ analysis on impacts from noise. Military activities and construction activities, such as development of a new facility, demolition or renovation of existing facilities, or road construction/maintenance make up the majority of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable Navy actions considered as part of the cumulative impacts of noise.

A detailed discussion of noise modeling is found in Section 3.7 (Noise), specifically Section 3.7.3 (Environmental Consequences). The results of the modeling include noise contour maps (see Figure 3.7-39), which provide a visual depiction of areas exposed to different noise levels associated with the Proposed Action. Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions were noted where there would be overlap with the Navy's noise contours to account for potential cumulative impacts.

Regarding the comment requesting that a qualified wildlife biologist and specialist wildlife be involved in the Final EIS, the Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.

Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis

indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.

Regarding the overall comment and wildlife management and public access, as the response states above, the Navy is not proposing to create an access management plan for all training areas as requested but rather to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with NDOW for the Bighorn Hunt Program on B-17. The Navy is also proposing to allow managed access to ranges for wildlife management activities by the USFWS and NDOW.

Regarding wildfire management, the Navy has and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan and, where possible, proposed plan elements and goals are included in the Final EIS; an outline of the Draft Wildland Fire Management Plan has been added to Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans). For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).

Regarding the Navy's approach to mitigation, the Navy has developed and proposed specific mitigation for each alternative that can be implemented and would avoid or minimize impacts. As such, alternatives include actions specifically designed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities. The Final EIS shows suggested mitigations and the adoption status of these mitigations in tables in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation).

Your comment has been included in the official project record. This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

F.6.3.10 Clinger, C. (Big Meadow Conservation District)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Carl	Clinger0	<p>To Whom It May Concern:</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide scoping comments on the Navy's Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) Modernization Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).</p> <p>We hold the grazing rights on part of the Humboldt Sink Allotment. The proposed action will negatively affect our ranching operations. We use the allotment as an integral part of our overall ranching operations. The proposed action is to withdraw lands on my allotment from BLM. According to the "Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Supporting Study: Livestock Grazing Allotment Study Final May 2018"</p> <p>The Humboldt Sink Allotment has been broken into two parts Humboldt Sink (Summer) and Humboldt Sink. The Plan States that the Humboldt Sink (Summer) is to be cut 41%. on Two occasions Vanamburg, Lisa CIV NAVFAC SW, ESWD Stated that the Document was in error, but for over three months there has been no confirmation of that "there is an error or what the error is". My understanding from BLM is that there is only one allotment and that it is shared by two Producers. Not having any truth to the impact on my allotment makes it very difficult to appropriately comment on the damage that FRTC is planing on doing to my operation with this EIS.</p> <p>Thank You</p> <p>Carl F. Clinger</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. the Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the AUM and allotment information where appropriate. The following specific grazing mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Policies and procedures in the NAS Fallon INRMP would continue to be implemented to avoid conflicts with livestock grazing. This includes routine monitoring of fence lines surrounding potentially hazardous areas to ensure that the fence is secure and cannot be crossed by people or animals; the monitoring area would be increased to include new perimeter fences on lands proposed for withdrawal. The Navy is proposing to provide funds for BLM to hire two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers who would assist with management of the additional area. The Standard Operating Procedures for handling cattle on the FRTC training ranges would be revised and implemented. Livestock friendly erosion controls would be used when performing construction activities on or adjacent to grazing land that is actively being used. The Navy acknowledges that it has the authority under 43 United States Code section 315q of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended, to make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered by the permit holders as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes. This authority has been incorporated into the Proposed Action. The Final EIS discusses the process that the Navy is proposing to use to determine payment amounts to each specific grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits.</p> <p>B-20's primary use is for advanced weapons training and large force exercises. It contains a variety of targets and target complexes and is capable of accommodating both live and inert ordnance. B-20 is not accessible by the public for safety reasons. Table 2-9 provides a complete list of training activities conducted at B-20. If the Navy moves the target area for B-20 to the southeast, the WDZ would change too and the border necessary for the B-20 range would extend into the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The target area needs to be in the location that it is currently proposed to occur for multiple reasons, some of which being that the Navy has surveyed the proposed target location for cultural resources and biological resources and found no significant impacts with the area proposed.</p> <p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in the Draft EIS in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics), under Alternative 3, minimum and maximum AUMs lost and lost value of AUMs would be higher as compared to Alternative 1 and 2. Table</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>3.13-20 represents allotments for the minimum and maximum allotment loss in AUMs annually under Alternative 3. Table 3.13-21 represents the direct minimum and maximum values of lost AUMs and lost value of AUMs by impacted counties under Alternative 3. The total permanent economic impacts (both direct and secondary) associated with lost federal land grazing for example in Churchill County range from a minimum loss of \$490,126 (\$375,249 in direct impacts and \$114,877 in secondary impacts) to a maximum loss of \$682,758 (\$522,730 in direct impacts and \$160,028 in secondary impacts) under Alternative 3 (Table 3.13-22) (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at http://frtcmodernization.com]). Table 3.13-23 represents employment impacts under Alternative 3 for affected counties; for instance, employment impacts for Churchill County would range from a loss of 6.2 (5.28 in direct impacts and 0.92 in secondary impacts) employees to a maximum loss of 8.61 (7.35 in direct impacts and 1.26 in secondary impacts) employees. Table 3.13-24 represents labor income losses. Lost grazing in Churchill County for example would consist of a minimum loss in labor income of \$137,771 (\$108,031 in direct impacts and \$29,740 in secondary impacts) to a maximum loss of \$183,854 (\$144,338 in direct impacts and \$39,516 in secondary impacts) under Alternative 3. Total economic impacts would be higher under Alternative 3 in comparison to Alternatives 1 and 2. By adding the overall economic impact from the decrease in AUMs (ranging from \$490,126 to \$682,758 [Table 3.13-22]) and the associated direct and secondary labor income loss (ranging from \$137,771 to \$183,854 [Table 3.13-24]) and comparing these figures to the total economic activity for the beef cattle ranching and farming sector in Churchill County (\$35 million), there would only be a reduction in economic output ranging from 0.016 percent to 0.024 percent. The reduction is significantly less when compared to the total economic activity for all sectors for Churchill County, which is 1.7 billion dollars (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at http://frtcmodernization.com], Table B-1). Economic losses associated with reduced AUMs would be similar in scale for Lander, Mineral, Pershing, and Plumas counties based on the percentage of lost revenue compared to sector and total economic activity. While there would be significant impacts to individual ranching operations, there would be no significant impacts to overall economic activity within the affected counties due to lost AUMs.</p> <p>As discussed in the transportation study that can be found online (see Supporting Study: Transportation Study [available at http://frtcmodernization.com]), morning and afternoon peak hour turning movement counts were conducted at 21 intersections that are expected to be affected by the Proposed Action. The data was collected between 6 December and 14 December 2016 by Navy contractors, with morning peak</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>period counts conducted between 0630 and 0830 and afternoon peak period counts occurred between 1600 and 1800. The counts were scheduled on mid-week days (Tuesdays through Thursdays) to minimize possible atypical conditions that could arise from extended weekends, if any. Refer to Appendix A of the Supporting Study for intersection count summaries. Given that the counts took place in December, a month when outdoor recreational activities (e.g., off highway vehicle [OHV] use) are expected to be lower than other months of the year, seasonal adjustment factors were applied to the existing counts. These seasonal adjustment factors were obtained from NDOT's Traffic Information Access (TRINA) database, and can be reviewed on-line at the NDOT web site (see https://www.nevadadot.com/doing-business/about-ndot/ndot-divisions/planning/traffic-information). NDOT maintains a network of traffic count stations along the state highway system (i.e., Interstate Highways, U.S. Highways, and State Routes). The majority of the count stations provide annual traffic volumes only, but several count stations in each district, referred to Automatic Traffic Recorder (ATR) stations, also provide the relative concentration of traffic by month and by day of week.</p> <p>Under NEPA, there is no required ratio relative to impacts and associated mitigation. Actions that support avoidance or minimization of impacts can be developed and implemented as part of each alternative. This was the approach taken for the action alternatives. As such, alternatives for the EIS incorporated actions specifically to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities. Those alternatives and associated actions were carried forward for analysis and if necessary, based on the level of impacts, additional management practices, mitigation, or other impact avoidance/minimization measures were included to further avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts.</p>

Navel Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Attn: Amy P. Kelly
Code EV21.AK
1220 Pacific High Way
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide scoping comments on the Navy's Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) Modernization Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

The Big Meadow Conservation District, BMCD, a District in Good Standing and authorized under the state of Nevada Department of Natural Resources and NRS 548, would like to inform you to our strong opposition to portions of the Navy's Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) Modernization Environmental Impact Statement. Although, BMCD believes in a Strong Well Trained Military, BMCD also believes that the FRTC is being overly Greedy in the amount of proposed growth and unwillingness to work with allotment holders and the Counties that they are significantly impacting.

BMCD is located in Pershing County, and will limit its comments to the B20 Area as it directly impacts Pershing County Residents. Pole Line Road North of B20 is an important Route for Pershing County Producers. The Proposed Closure of Pole line Road is greatly detrimental to Pershing County Economics i.e. the Proposed Iron Mine Rail Line, as well as the Movement of Large Heavy Farm Equipment from Fallon to Lovelock. The Closure is due to the potential of the one out of 8,000 Bombs that "might" fail and over shoot the intended target and land somewhere on or near the 15 miles of Roadway. Suggestions of moving the "New" Target Area 3 miles to the Southeast which would eliminate the need to Close the B20 Pole Line Rd. were met with the excuse that the Playa was to soft part of the year to allow truck traffic to the suggested Target area. It would be a minimal effort to build a road and pad to firm up the Playa area for the desired targets. This Target Area Relocation would also eliminate the current Proposed Impact on the Humboldt Sink allotments as well as reduce or eliminate the impact on the South Rochester and Copper Kettle Allotments.

It is estimated that the total loss of AUMs could exceed 10,992. If one were to round that number down to 10,000 and then assume that the grazing period is 10 months, which it tends to be less than that and then assume that the value of the animals is \$1,000 each for loss of AUMs that equal \$1M/Yr. of loss of animals produced in addition to the loss of ancillary business of selling/processing of those animals. Additionally, several allotment holders are being reduced to a point that the Ranch operation is no longer a viable operation. With this in mind, it would be reasonable that FRTC would work with Producers and the Counties to reduce/eliminate impacts whenever possible

The FRTC EIS is flawed in that the evaluation of the traffic on the B20 Pole Line Road was performed over only a Two-day period, which is nonsensical for a

remote roadway. BMCD feels that FRTC is being overly Restrictive on the Extremely low probability that a one of 8,000 Bomb battery failures would reach the B20 Pole Line Roadway. Since FRTC touts that they the "count craters" around the target area, it would seem more logical to Only Close the Roadway on the Rare occasion that there was a missing crater in the target area.

BMCD understands that the National Environmental Policy Act, (NEPA), under which the EIS is being developed, outlines a general policy of "Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate." BMCD requests that the Navy work with the Conservation District and Pershing County to Identify and implement all economically and technically feasible options to avoid and minimize impacts to Pershing County Ranching operations and other economic impacts on a 1:1 Ratio (i.e., completely Balance negative impacts).

Thank you for your consideration of these Comments:

Carl F. Clinger
Big Meadow Conservation District
Chairman

F.6.3.10.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the AUM and allotment information where appropriate. The following specific grazing mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Policies and procedures in the NAS Fallon INRMP would continue to be implemented to avoid conflicts with livestock grazing. This includes routine monitoring of fence lines surrounding potentially hazardous areas to ensure that the fence is secure and cannot be crossed by people or animals; the monitoring area would be increased to include new perimeter fences on lands proposed for withdrawal. The Navy is proposing to provide funds for BLM to hire two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers who would assist with management of the additional area. The Standard Operating Procedures for handling cattle on the FRTC training ranges would be revised and implemented. Livestock friendly erosion controls would be used when performing construction activities on or adjacent to grazing land that is actively being used.

The Navy acknowledges that it has the authority under 43 United States Code section 315q of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended, to make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered by the permit holders as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes. This authority has been incorporated into the Proposed Action. The Final EIS discusses the process that the Navy is proposing to use to determine payment amounts to each specific grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits.

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Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in the Draft EIS in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics), under Alternative 3, minimum and maximum AUMs lost and lost value of AUMs would be higher as compared to Alternative 1 and 2. Table 3.13-20 represents allotments for the minimum and maximum allotment loss in AUMs annually under Alternative 3. Table 3.13-21 represents the direct minimum and maximum values of lost AUMs and lost value of AUMs by impacted counties under Alternative 3. The total permanent economic impacts (both direct and secondary) associated with lost federal land grazing for example in Churchill County range from a minimum loss of \$490,126 (\$375,249 in direct impacts and \$114,877 in secondary impacts) to a maximum loss of \$682,758 (\$522,730 in direct impacts and \$160,028 in secondary impacts) under Alternative 3 (Table 3.13-22) (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at <http://frtcmodernization.com>]). Table 3.13-23 represents employment impacts under Alternative 3 for affected counties; for instance, employment impacts for Churchill County would range from a loss of 6.2 (5.28 in direct impacts and 0.92 in secondary impacts) employees to a maximum loss of 8.61 (7.35 in direct impacts and 1.26 in secondary impacts) employees. Table 3.13-24 represents labor income losses. Lost grazing in Churchill County for example would consist of a minimum loss in labor income of

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Under NEPA, there is no required ratio relative to impacts and associated mitigation. Actions that support avoidance or minimization of impacts can be developed and implemented as part of each alternative. This was the approach taken for the action alternatives. As such, alternatives for the EIS incorporated actions specifically to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities. Those alternatives and associated actions were carried forward for analysis and if necessary, based on the level of impacts, additional management practices, mitigation, or other impact avoidance/minimization measures were included to further avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts.

F.6.3.11 Colton, D. (Pacific Soaring Council)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Daniel	Colton	<p>Please accept this as formal comment to the proposed revisions to the Fallon Range Training Complex. I am submitting this comment as president of the Pacific Soaring Council (PASCO). PASCO is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the promotion, education and safety of soaring in the Western United States. Ensuring access to airspace is a key element of safety for glider pilots which rely on following the best weather conditions to stay aloft and continue their flights. PASCO represents approximately 744 glider pilots across Northern California and Nevada.</p> <p>The Great Basin, including the Fallon airspace is one of the most popular soaring regions in the Western United States for, recreational, contest and record flying. Pilots come to this area from all over the world to experience the amazing and unique soaring conditions. The proposal for the Fallon airspace expansions and modifications includes a new restricted area R-4805 directly impacts recreational, contest and record setting routes used by glider pilots flying from Minden, Truckee, Air Sailing, Ely and Tonopah airports</p> <p>Unlike powered flight, soaring is an activity in which success relies on weather conditions created by unique terrain features and airmass instability. The weather conditions found in the Great Basin are some of the best in the continental United States and make soaring flights in excess of 1000 km possible. However, these weather conditions do not follow lines on a map and deviations around airspace restrictions can limit such amazing, including world record soaring distance and airspeed, flights.</p> <p>PASCO stands opposed to the creation of additional restricted areas within the Great Basin. However, if the airspace expansions and modifications, including the new restricted area R-4805, must be approved, I would like to request that they be open for public use on weekends as this is when most recreational flying occurs. Contests, however, do include weekday flying and it is PASCO's desire that public use of the restricted area on contest days could be negotiated.</p> <p>PASCO respects and appreciates the need for military training routes and restricted airspace and it is our desire to support these activities while at the same time supporting public access to airspace for recreational, contest and record flying.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Daniel Colton President, Pacific Soaring Council</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Glider flying has always been allowed in any of the fifteen MOAs within the FRTC, and will continue to be allowed as part of the Proposed Action. General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p>

F.6.3.12 Cunningham, L. (Western Watersheds Project)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Laura	Cunningham	See attached comment letter, thank you.	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.



Laura Cunningham
California Director
Western Watersheds Project

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Working to protect and restore Western Watersheds and Wildlife

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego CA 92132

Uploaded to website: www.FRTCModerization.com

February 14, 2019

RE: Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the US Navy's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the proposed military lands expansion in central Nevada. Please accept these comments on behalf of Western Watersheds Project.

Western Watersheds Project (WWP) works to protect and conserve the public lands, wilderness, wildlife, and natural resources of the American West through education, scientific study, public policy initiatives, and litigation. WWP has offices and staff in Nevada and other western states. The management of grazing on public lands in Nevada is important to WWP members, supporters, and staff, who appreciate and use the public lands and wildlife there for a variety of reasons and will continue to do so into the future.

Background

The Navy initiated an aviation training modernization program, its *Ninety Days to Combat Required Training Capabilities Study*, which determined that present bombing ranges were too restrictive at the Fallon Range Training Complex in Nevada.

After a 2016 Notice of Intent to undertake an environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and an extended scoping period, the Navy developed several alternatives. Alternative 3, the Preferred Alternative, would request land withdrawals from public lands and restrict public access. Several bombing and training ranges would be enlarged, re-oriented, and moved.

The B-17 range in particular is proposed to be modernized to within tactically acceptable parameters: aircraft that fly faster and higher to drop live ordnance onto targets. It would be moved farther to the southeast.

These modifications would overlap overlap 3,200 acres of Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, and the B-20 Range would overlap the northern part of the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge complex, and restrict public access to those portions. The Fox Peak Area of Critical Environmental Concern would have 11,600 acres withdrawn. All or parts of the Clan Alpine and Job Peak Wilderness Study Areas will apparently be tagged for removal by Congress.

The proposal requests Congressional renewal of the 1999 Public Land Withdrawal of 202,864 acres (scheduled to expire in November 2021) of the current military lands. But the proposal also requests Congress to withdraw and reserve for military use up to an additional 618,727 acres of federal land. Also, 65,152 acres of private and state lands would also be acquired, a large impact to the local county economies and tax base.

This military range expansion proposal will have very large impacts to public lands in central Nevada.

Livestock Grazing

We attended the public scoping meeting in Gabbs, NV on December 10, 2018, where we had the opportunity to discuss aspects of grazing management with EIS personnel.

According to the EIS, the proposed boundary expansion would impact 17 grazing allotments managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and one Bureau of Reclamation grazing area. The BLM allotments include Bell Flat, Bucky O'Neill, Copper Kettle, Cow Canyon, Dixie Valley, Eastgate, Frenchman Flat, Horse Mountain, Le Beau Flat, Lahontan, Mountain Well-LaPlata, Phillips Well, Pilot-Table Mountain, Rochester, Salt Wells, Sheckler Pasture, and White Cloud.

The Navy proposes that if any part of an allotment is affected by the boundary expansion, then the whole allotment would need to be closed. The Navy looked into a grazing program to manage withdrawn lands in use as military training, bombing, and buffer lands, and concluded this was an incompatible use. The Navy analysis determined that livestock grazing would be incompatible with increased training and use of expanded bombing ranges and buffers.

Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would result in significant impact on livestock grazing due to the closure of approximately 356,400 acres of BLM allotments and 4,187 acres of Bureau of Reclamation grazing areas. This would amount to a loss of an estimated 7,920-10,992 AUMs. This amounts to about 6.93% of AUMs in the BLM

Carson City District, 0.04% of AUMs in the BLM Winnemucca District, and 0.53% of all AUMs in Nevada.

Alternative 3 would shift the B-17 bombing range away from a mountain range and closer to the town of Gabbs. State highway 361 would be relocated.

To monitor and mitigate these impacts, the Navy proposes to increase monitoring of new fences on withdrawn lands, and hire two “conservation law enforcement officers” to monitor the additional fence line so that stray cattle do not enter the expanded buffer and bombing ranges.

The Navy interprets the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 as amended giving the military the power to withdraw federal grazing allotments under circumstances of war-time. Grazing allotments in the proposed expansion zone would be closed in all alternatives.

The Navy says it has the authority to compensate permittees and pay them for their AUMs directly out of Navy coffers.

No mitigation measures are offered, however, which is concerning considering that we learned these AUMs will be most likely placed into existing allotments outside the expansion boundary and BLM land withdrawal area.

WWP discussed the details of this further with Naval NEPA staff at the Gabbs meeting. Would the Navy aid permittees in finding new allotments for their livestock? The answer was yes, the Navy after the Record of Decision is issued in January 2020 would meet with permittees and help negotiate compensations for their AUMs, and ‘find a way to reconfigure other allotments outside the expansion.’ Then livestock from the closed allotments would be placed into these other allotments.

We have large concerns about this action, including that it would occur after the ROD and without public review. This could potentially double livestock numbers into adjacent BLM allotments already at capacity for AUMs.

This proposed allotment reconfiguration and potential increase in AUMs needs NEPA review and public input, since areas both inside and outside the proposed expansion have populations of greater sage-grouse, Nelson’s bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope. The most appropriate time and place for the Navy to analyze the potential impacts of incorporating livestock from the closed allotments into other allotments is in the Navy’s current NEPA process.

In fact, because these indirect and cumulative impacts are *reasonably foreseeable*—the Navy itself has acknowledged that they are likely to occur—they must be studied now, in the current EIS. See 40 C.F.R. §§ 1508.7, 1508.8(b). See also *Save our Ecosystems v. Clark*, 747 F.2d 1240, 1246, n.9 (9th Cir. 1984) (“Reasonable forecasting and speculation is . . . implicit in NEPA, and we must reject any attempt by

agencies to shirk their responsibilities under NEPA by labeling any and all discussion of future environmental effects as crystal ball inquiry”) (internal citations omitted); *Kern v. Bureau of Land Mgmt.*, 284 F.3d 1062, 1075 (9th Cir. 2002) (“It is not appropriate to defer consideration of cumulative impacts to a future date when meaningful consideration can be given now”); *N. Plains Res. Council, Inc. v. Surface Transp. Bd.*, 668 F.3d 1067, 1078 (9th Cir. 2011) (“[P]rojects need not be finalized before they are reasonably foreseeable”); *Surfrider Found. v. Dalton*, 989 F. Supp. 1309, 1324 (S.D. Cal. 1998) (“The term ‘reasonably’ suggests that the agency must make a good faith effort to consider likely cumulative effects”).

Indirect effects are “caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable.” 40 C.F.R. § 1508.8(b). Cumulative impacts “result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions regardless of what agency (Federal or non-Federal) or person undertakes such other actions.” 40 C.F.R. § 1508.7. Impacts can result from individually minor actions taking place over a period of time. *Id.* In an EIS, the Service must disclose to the public “[w]hether the action is related to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant impacts.” 40 C.F.R. § 1508.27(b)(7). The EIS must “fully address” cumulative impacts. *Te-Moak Tribe v. U.S. Dep’t of the Interior*, 608 F.3d 592, 602 (9th Cir. 2010).

Here, the potential future increase in AUMs on allotments that are nearby or adjacent to closed allotments is both an indirect and cumulative impact that must be fully analyzed by the Navy in this EIS.

Future redistributions of AUMs from closed allotments are also likely “connected actions” under NEPA because there is a “but-for” causal relationship between the closure of grazing allotments if the bombing range is expanded, and the need for adding AUMs to other allotments. 40 C.F.R. § 1508.25(a)(1); *N. Plains Res. Council, Inc. v. Surface Transp. Bd.*, 668 F.3d 1067, 1087 (9th Cir. 2011). Without the range expansion, there would be no reason to increase grazing intensity on nearby areas to accommodate lost forage in the closed allotments. Connected actions must be analyzed in the same NEPA document. 40 C.F.R. § 1508.25; *Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center v. Bureau of Land Mgmt.*, 387 F.3d 989, 998–99 (9th Cir. 2004). “The purpose of this requirement is to prevent an agency from dividing a project into multiple actions, each of which individually has an insignificant environmental impact, but which collectively have a substantial impact.” *Great Basin Mine Watch v. Hankins*, 456 F.3d 955, 969 (9th Cir. 2006).

The region east of the proposed military range expansion harbors most of the regional high-quality sage-grouse habitat. Will additional AUMs be placed into this area? There are too many potentially significant impacts to this vague proposal on public lands and sensitive species to have a lack any environmental review.

Permittees may need to move livestock water structures out of the expansion lands and into new public lands, as well as sell water rights and obtain new rights. New

fences for allotment changes could impact sage-grouse due to collision mortality and the creation of new predator perching sites. These are significant impacts to adjacent public lands that need public input.

Conclusion

We agree with the Navy in not recommending the No Action Alternative, because this would not renew the current military withdrawal of lands currently in use as bombing ranges. If the entire area were to be relinquished to BLM, a clean-up of unexploded ordnance and other military uses would be expensive and pose dangers to the public.

But we are concerned that no *status quo* alternative was analyzed. There is no alternative that allows Congress to simply renew the current land withdrawal for the Fallon Range Training Complex. Reasons given for this, from discussions with NEPA personnel at the public meeting, were vague and unconvincing—such as ‘the need for more land.’ More efficient use of training scheduling, and more digital modeling of advanced bombing runs could be made use of on present ranges, based on other military training ranges such as in use by the US Air Force.

NEPA’s alternatives requirement serves to inform the public of “reasonable alternatives that would avoid or minimize impacts,” 40 C.F.R. § 1502.1, or that “might be pursued with less environmental harm.” *Lands Council v. Powell*, 395 F.3d 1019, 1027 (9th Cir. 2005). The EIS’s alternatives analysis must “present the environmental impacts of the proposal and the alternatives in comparative form, thus sharply defining the issues and providing a clear basis for choice among options by the decision-maker and the public.” 40 C.F.R. § 1502.14.

Failure to consider a status quo alternative violates NEPA, because without doing so, the Department cannot properly establish an environmental baseline to which it can compare the impacts of the action alternatives. Forty Most Asked Questions Concerning CEQ’s National Environmental Policy Act Regulations, 3A, 46 Fed. Reg. 18,013, 18,027 (Mar. 23, 1981); *see also Half Moon Bay Fisherman’s Marketing Ass’n v. Carlucci*, 857 F.2d 505, 510 (9th Cir. 1988) (“Without establishing the baseline conditions . . . there is simply no way to determine what effect the [action] will have on the environment, and consequently, no way to comply with NEPA”).

The Undersecretary of the Navy would sign the ROD. We note, however, that Congress still needs to appropriate funds for this proposed expansion even after any approval.

We are especially concerned that post-NEPA discussions and decisions are proposed for altering current grazing allotment boundaries and AUMs on adjacent BLM ranges. This needs to be analyzed now in the current EIS, because of the foreseeable significant impacts to sage-grouse and other resources on public lands.

Thank you,

Laura Cunningham



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F.6.3.12.1 Response

Thank you for your comments. The Navy has reviewed all comments received and made any necessary changes to the Final EIS.

Regarding your comments on the modifications of the Bravo Ranges, to clarify on the issue of the expansion lands, this expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge under Alternative 1 and 2. However, under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative), the Navy would propose to withdraw approximately 2,720 acres of land currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy and Department of Interior are discussing ways to mitigate this impact as part of the interagency process for preparing the legislative proposal for the Congressional withdrawal. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. This expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater NWR. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).

Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately

22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

Regarding grazing allotments, if a portion of an allotment were impacted, the Navy would not propose closure of the entire allotment, but rather the closure of the portion of the allotment that overlapped the land proposed for withdrawal.

The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives.

The following information has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.

Payment for Losses

The Navy would first consider costs associated with obtaining replacement forage and otherwise restoring/maintaining a permittee's existing operational capacity. Working with BLM and the permittee, the Navy would determine the costs necessary to replace the area/capacity removed from a grazing permit. These costs could include, but would not be limited to, preparing new allotment applications; complying with BLM environmental requirements and water rights studies; procuring private market replacement forage; shipping or transporting forage, cattle and/or ranch personnel and their horses and equipment; one-time relocation expenses associated with any full or partial transferring of operations to any new location(s); any reasonably anticipated lost profits arising as a result of operational downtime while restoring and/or relocating operations; and any other costs identified, which would be properly payable under 43 U.S.C. section 315q.

Should a permit holder decide not to seek replacement forage in conjunction with restoring operational capacity, or when restoring such capacity is not practicable, the Navy would make a good faith estimate of the financial impact the loss of that individual's permit would be expected to have on his or her ranching operation. The Navy would ask each permit holder to provide recent business operating

expenses associated with the permit, their total operating expenses, an estimate of that portion of income believed to be directly related to utilization of the permit, and total income and taxes. This information would be used to determine a payment amount to compensate for losses resulting from permit cancellation, including reasonably anticipated lost profits for what would otherwise have been the duration of the permit. If a permit holder does not wish to share their financial information, or if the information shared is incomplete, the Navy would make an estimate of the value of the losses based on existing information from other sources.

It is possible that a payment amount would be based both on replacement forage along with other operational restoration-related costs, and on the financial impact the loss of a permit would be expected to have on a ranching operation (i.e., part of the payment would be based on obtaining replacement forage to the extent practicable and the rest based on payment for losses to the extent obtaining replacement forage is not practicable). In those instances, the costs to restore operational capacity would first be determined, and the remaining payment amount would then be determined in accordance with the paragraph above discussing permits holders who may elect not to seek replacement forage capacity.

Payment for Allotment Improvements

Improvements such as corrals, fencing, wells, and other appurtenances that cannot be relocated are considered real property, similar to a building. the Navy would appraise the value of all real property owned by a permit holder and would offer fair market value for the purchase of any such real property. Equipment, such as relocatable water tanks, is not considered real property, and the permit holder would be afforded an opportunity to remove their equipment prior to cancellation of a permit.

Timing of Permit Cancellation

The Navy anticipates issuing its Record of Decision with respect to FRTC modernization in January 2020. However, any Congressional withdrawal of the area currently supporting grazing permits would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Similarly, any Congressional appropriation for implementing the FRTC Modernization action, which would include funds for making payments to grazing permit holders, would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Accordingly, the earliest the Navy would request that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) cancel any permit would be October 1, 2020.

If the Congressional withdrawal is enacted, and if Congress appropriates funds to implement the FRTC Modernization effort, the Navy would ask BLM to contact each affected permit holder. BLM would coordinate with the Navy on any action to initiate cancellation of a permit. Under 43 CFR Part 4100 Subpart 4110.4-2 (Decrease in Land Acreages), BLM would be required to provide two years advance notice of any permit cancellation. Once a given notification is made, the Navy, with assistance from BLM, would begin discussions with affected permit holders to determine payment amounts in accordance with the processes described herein.

Regarding cumulative impacts, Chapter 4 (Cumulative Impacts) lists past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions that have had or are expected to have impacts either within, or within distances of up to 30 miles from, the FRTC. This includes the counties of Churchill, Elko, Eureka, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, Pershing, and Washoe. In determining which projects to include in the cumulative

impacts analysis for a given resource area, the Navy made a preliminary determination regarding each past, present, or reasonably foreseeable action. Specifically, using criteria included in Section 4.2 (Approach to Analysis), the Navy determined whether a relationship exists such that the affected resource areas of the Proposed Action (included in this EIS) might interact with the affected resource area of a past, present, or reasonably foreseeable action. If no such potential relationship existed, the project was not carried forward into the cumulative impacts analysis. In accordance with CEQ guidance (Council on Environmental Quality 2005), those actions considered but excluded from further cumulative effects analysis are not catalogued in the Final EIS, because the intent is to focus the analysis on the meaningful actions relevant to inform any ultimate decision making.

Regarding concerns for sage-grouse, the Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.

Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species. The Navy has determined that the analysis presented in the Final EIS is comprehensive and based on the best available science for assessing potential population impacts. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.

Currently, state management plans focus on habitat availability, wildfire, and land-based chronic noise sources. Greater sage grouse lek location data indicates that they are east of the land areas proposed for withdrawal or acquisition. Sage grouse in these areas would be exposed to noise from aircraft overflights. Available science indicates that short-term noise intrusion does not play a significant role in lek success. The Navy would work closely with BLM and NDOW to manage sage grouse and other species on land under the Navy's control. Which is why, as stated earlier, the Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.

Regarding the status quo alternative, the Navy did analyze the Status Quo Alternative in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration." This alternative, also known as the "status quo" alternative, would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS.

As discussed in Section 1.5 (Training Needs and the Capabilities Evaluation Process), the FRTC as currently configured does not meet current or future requirements for tactically acceptable combat training. Despite continued changes in warfare technology, the existing FRTC bombing ranges have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As such, the FRTC does not currently have

enough land and airspace to accommodate realistic modern weapons delivery profiles and tactical ground mobility training.

Non-weapons training occurs within the DVTA, but nearby infrastructure, mining and geothermal development are encroaching on those activities. This encroachment places unrealistic limitations on non-weapons training and compromises aircrew safety, particularly in low-altitude, dark, and low-light conditions. As such, aircrew and Special Forces personnel are unable to safely train or train to tactically acceptable parameters within the DVTA.

The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.6.3.13 Donnelly, P. (Center for Biological Diversity)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Patrick	Donnelly	<p>The Center for Biological Diversity strongly objects to the proposed expansion of Fallon NAS. We are submitting the attached comments on behalf of 584 members and supporters. We requested an email address to direct these comments to and were denied. As such they are being submitted together, but as you can see on the attached spreadsheet, these are individual substantive comments from individual commenters and the Navy must treat each comment individually.</p> <p>We also object to lack of a status quo alternative. NEPA mandates a No Action alternative. The supposed No Action alternative presented in this EIS is actually an action, because it would alter the status quo and decommission Fallon. A true No Action alternative would continue the status quo withdrawal, which is what we are urging.</p> <p>This NEPA process is a sham and we object to this expansion of military activities and seizure of the public domain in the strongest possible terms.</p> <p>Again, the attached are 584 individual comments and should be treated as such.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding the comment on the status quo alternative, the Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative, also known as the “status quo” alternative, would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.</p> <p>Regarding the comment on the NEPA process, the purpose of the NEPA process is to ensure that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before any ultimate decisions are made and before actions are taken. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate.</p> <p>Public comments received during review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are an important part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. The purpose of the public comment process is to provide members of the public an opportunity to submit their comments and concerns regarding the Proposed Action, alternatives, and the analysis of potential environmental impacts. The Navy reviewed all comments submitted during review of the Draft EIS (November 2018 to February 2019). All comments received are included as part of the administrative record for the project. Comments received on the Draft EIS from public stakeholders--citizens, elected leaders, American Indian tribes and nations, regulatory agencies, and other interested parties--were used to revise and refine the analysis in the Final EIS. In response to public comment, the Navy carefully analyzed public suggestions for other basing and training solutions to the Proposed Action, reviewed reports and other documents prepared by independent sources, and made changes to the analysis and conclusions as applicable during the preparation of the Final EIS. The Navy documented public stakeholder engagement and how public comments were used to change and refine the analysis, as described in Section 1.9 (Public and Agency Participation and Intergovernmental Coordination). The Navy addressed all comments submitted during the Draft EIS review period with a response in the Final EIS.</p> <p>Individual comments submitted by the commenter are responded to as individual comments.</p>

F.6.3.14 Duerr, H. (Desert Pacific Exploration, Inc.)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Herb	Duerr	Please see attached letter from Herb and Naomi Duerr	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

Herb Duerr, P.G. and Naomi Duerr, P.G.

**Desert Pacific Exploration, Inc.
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February 14, 2019

BLM Carson City District
Attn: NAS Fallon FRTC
5665 Morgan Mill
Road, Carson City, NV 89701

Submitted Via Email to: BLM_NV_FRTC@blm.gov

**Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Fallon Range Training Complex
Modernization – Code: EV21.SG**

Dear BLM Reviewers:

We are Co-Owners of Desert Pacific Exploration, Inc. (DPE) and MinQuest, Ltd. (MinQuest), two mineral exploration companies located and incorporated in Nevada. We also participate in a number of exploration partnerships. Our comments are provided in response to the Fallon Naval Air Base's (FNAB) request for comment on its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) Modernization/Land Withdrawal to amend and expand the Navy's current land withdrawals within Churchill, Lyon, Mineral, Pershing, and Nye Counties, Nevada. The DEIS will also impact Lander and Eureka Counties under the proposed revised restrictions.

We are writing with concerns and comments regarding deficiencies and flaws we perceive to be associated with the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed land withdrawals for the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization. We also submitted comments to earlier drafts of the proposal in 2016 and 2018.

Our companies' primary mission is to find new mineral resources and assist other companies in bringing them to market. We explore in six western states, primarily in Arizona and Nevada. DPE owns nine unpatented mining claims (about 180 acres) known as Bell Flat located within the Broken Hills Mining District. This area is now included in Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) for additional land withdrawals for the FRTC. We have owned the mineral rights at Bell Flat for over 27 years (since approx. 1992). We also provide consulting services for various

Comments by Herb and Naomi Duerr

Page 1

companies with active exploration projects in portions of the area affected by FRTC's proposed withdrawals.

Before we continue, we would like to note that we strongly support our military and its training. However, we do not believe that proposed changes affecting any individual, group, or company should go unmitigated. We are committed to ensuring that our rights under the 1872 mining law are maintained and these rights are adequately addressed within the FRTC's EIS document. Additionally, as taxpayers we believe the socioeconomic impacts to the Counties and State should also be properly mitigated, and the full cost to withdraw the lands adequately addressed in a spreadsheet where one can view the total cumulative effect - both near term and in the future.

We believe the DEIS is deficient in addressing impacts to individuals and small companies, and to local and state governments, and does not provide an accurate assessment of the true cost of the proposal to the U.S taxpayers. The DEIS also contains inaccurate and misleading statements, leading to faulty conclusions, while using regional statistical data to obfuscate the impacts of the proposal.

The DEIS includes the following statements on page 27 of the Executive Summary:

"The incremental contribution of Alternative 3, viewed in conjunction with other projects in the area, would result in cumulatively significant impacts with respect to land use, mineral resources and mining, grazing, transportation, water resources, noise, and recreation" (emphasis added).

Further:

"The incremental contribution of Alternative 3 to cumulative impacts on socioeconomics would be appreciable. There would be a potential loss of revenue in some of the counties within the region of influence. However, for most counties these impacts would not rise to the level of significance. Nye County would experience a significant impact on their economic resources due to the cumulative nature of the U.S. Air Force's Nevada Test and Training Range Proposed Action and the Navy's Proposed Action."

"The incremental contribution of Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative) to cumulative impacts on geological resources, airspace, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, public health and safety, and environmental justice would not have the potential to contribute meaningfully to any potential significant cumulative impact with respect to these resource areas."

Although the above statements indicate that significant impacts **would** occur as a result of the proposal, it inappropriately minimizes the deleterious effect these impacts will have on local and state governments, as well as individuals and small companies.

We hold nine, unpatented lode mining claims (about 180 acres) known as Bell Flat in the area withdrawn for evaluation in 2016 and the expanded area to be withdrawn under the proposed federal action (Alternative 3). Our investment in these claims over the last 27 years totals over \$500,000, not including holding costs paid to the federal government to maintain our ownership. The holding costs exceed another \$50,000. Our investment has been made with the expectation of future earnings from these claims over the coming decades. This expectation is now severely diminished by the "segregation" or restriction of these lands for mineral entry by the federal government in 2016 and 2018, and the specter of the permanent withdrawal of these lands by the Navy.

Business Model

Mineral exploration is our profession and primary business, not a hobby. We are both professional geologists. We have been engaged in the business for the last 40 years, explore in six states and own many claims.

Like most mineral exploration companies, our business model involves staking claims and initiating exploration with our own funds, and then leasing properties for a fee to third parties for increased - and increasingly expensive - exploration paid for by the lessees. We can earn a royalty if a property goes into production. We also provide professional geologic consulting services, project management, and exploration services to others.

As part of the mining claim lease process, the lessee usually expands a small claim block to a larger size to cover an eventual mining footprint and to provide land for staging, operations, and minerals processing. The number of claims in a particular block typically expand and contract based on market fluctuations, whether the property is leased at the time, and the financial ability of the lessee to explore. The third-party investment typically totals many millions of dollars before a determination can be made as to how significant the subject property may be in terms of its ultimate mineral potential.

Bell Flat Property

Desert Pacific Exploration, Inc. owns the Bell Flat mining claims. The claims are in Churchill County in un-surveyed T14N, R35E and include portions of Sections 9 and 16. The property is located adjacent to and west of Nevada Hwy 361 near the boundary of Churchill and Mineral Counties (see Exhibit 1) and within the withdrawal area covered by the FRTC EA as initially proposed in 2016. It is adjacent to the Bell Mountain and Broken Hills Mining Districts, an area with high potential for mineral production. We have identified potentially economic deposits of gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, molybdenum, magnesium, antimony and arsenic on the property.

The 2018 expanded land withdrawal moved our property even further within the area to be withdrawn, and places a new, large bombing range in close proximity (See Exhibit 2). In Alternatives 1 and 2, we were still able to access the property, but Proposed Alternative 3 completely eliminates access to our claims.

The Bell Flat property shows evidence of ore-grade values for gold, silver, molybdenum, lead, zinc, and magnesium (a strategic mineral not mentioned in the DEIS). The fact that we have held onto and invested in the Bell Flat property since 1992 indicates our view of its potential. Not only are the mineral grades good, but the property is relatively flat, has room to process ore and is close to an existing highway, adding to its economic viability. Additionally, the high magnesium values with significant calcium grades make for a unique buffering agent for nearby mines facing acid generation on their heaps. This material can generate \$150 per ton. The property currently contains potential for 20 to 25 million tons of this material.

Loss of Earnings During the Six-Year Moratorium

Concurrent with the 2016 Notice of Application for Withdrawal Extension and Expansion for the Naval Air Station, Fallon, Nevada, the federal government instituted a "segregation" or moratorium on staking new mineral exploration claims within approximately 600,000 acres of land proposed for withdrawal by the Navy. This moratorium included our Bell Flat property.

Our Bell Flat property was leased and actively explored through 2015. The 2015 lease for this property included the responsibility of the lessee to pay the holding costs, increase the claim block size to approximately 210 claims (4200 acres), conduct extensive exploration, and pay royalties to DPE at time of production. Because the Bell Flat property was impacted by the moratorium and threatened by the proposed expansion of the withdrawal area, rather than enlarge the claim block, we reduced its size to only nine claims at the end of 2015.

We expected the mineral lands "segregation" to terminate in September 2018, and to be "back in business" after that time. Over the next four years we were planning to once again expand the claim block and conduct trenching, geologic sampling and drilling at the Bell Flat site. However, as of May 2018, the land our claims sit on was further "segregated" from mineral entry for an *additional four years* and thus, our work plans have gone by the wayside.

Not surprisingly, **due to the 2016 federal action**, we lost two prospective investors who had previously expressed great interest in the property, and **all interest from other investors in our Bell Flat property dried up**. The 2018 federal action of extended moratorium further hurt the economic potential of the property and placed us in a real bind. If we want to continue exploration on the Bell Flat property in the future, we must pay to keep our property in good standing through the six-year moratorium on staking new claims *without the ability* to recoup our costs, expand our claim block or realistically explore the property.

The continued segregation of lands from mineral entry and the specter of future permanent withdrawal creates considerable uncertainty. Continued exploration investment in the Bell Flat property at this time would not make business-sense for either DPE or third-party investors. Nevertheless, in case the federal withdrawal proposal fails to move forward, **we must continue to pay the annual filing fees** during the segregation period.

Loss of Future Income if Land Withdrawal Becomes Permanent

If the proposed withdrawal of some 900,000 acres is approved, we will never have the opportunity to expand our claim block, earn professional consulting fees from exploring the claims, or earn the royalty we had expected. Additionally, the resultant income to local communities from sales tax from exploration or mine development activities on the lands is forever lost.

The loss to our company is particularly egregious when future royalties from the Bell Flat claims are analyzed. As previously noted, whenever we lease a property to a third party, the lease includes a provision to expand the claim block, typically for a mile in every direction, with the new claims staked in our name at the lessee's cost. Thus, our nine claims (180 acres) would typically be expanded to at least 210 claims (4200 acres). Should the minerals be proven up and brought to market, our 210 claims would have conservatively netted us a minimum royalty of \$18 million over 20 years (Assumptions: \$25 base price per ton of ore (gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, molybdenum, magnesium, antimony and arsenic), 3% royalty, average 25 million tons ore total in the 210 claims).

In a nutshell, both our 30-year investment in this property and expectation of future earnings from this property have been permanently impaired by the federal government's 2016 and 2018 "segregation" actions, and the possible permanent withdrawal of lands. Our losses mount every day that we cannot lease, expand or reasonably explore our claim block.

Loss of Future Professional Services Income and Future Claim Income

As discussed, we also provide geologic consulting and exploration services for others. The land identified in the DEIS maps include areas with high potential for minerals. As mentioned in the opening pages of the supporting Mineral Potential report to the DEIS, the proposed withdrawal areas overlie portions or all of 20 different historic mining districts. The primary and most important locatable commodities in the withdrawal area are gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc and tungsten. Commodities of secondary importance include iron, molybdenum, uranium, diatomite, sodium, barite, antimony, optical quartz, mercury, manganese, magnesium, arsenic, fluorite, borates, calcium carbonate, and tin. **Nine of the above listed minerals are designated as critical and strategic minerals by Congress.** The DEIS glosses over this fact by eliminating several of these minerals from consideration and declaring that no mines are actively producing the other minerals within the proposed withdrawal areas.

Our companies explore for all minerals, but especially gold, silver and copper. There is significant potential for mineable deposits in the area proposed for withdrawal. Over the last 40 years, we have conducted exploration for other companies in this area, as well as held mining claims in this area for ourselves in addition to our Bell Flat claims. We certainly expected to stake more claims in this area going forward.

Remedy

The federal actions associated with this land withdrawal have rendered our claims far less valuable than they would be under the "no action" alternative. The federal government should reimburse us and other claim holders for our losses due to the moratorium placed on our property since 2015, and now extended for the next four years until 2022.

If the land should be permanently withdrawn, our future earnings and royalties should be compensated for. This compensation should include repayment of past and future claim fees to the Bureau of Land Management (starting in 1992), all of our expenditures for the improvement and advancement of the Bell Flat project, and loss of future projected lease income, geologic services income, and royalties.

PILT Payments and Appropriate Compensation

Typically, BLM makes Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) to government entities to compensate for the property taxes they would have collected if the land was private. The DEIS reports that PILT payments are capped based on the populations in each county. However, the PILT payments were calculated to offset property taxes on *multiple uses* of the land. This allowed the continued use of the land to provide additional income through mineral production and other uses.

If the lands under evaluation are transferred to the Navy, there will be a potential significant economic impact to local, state and federal governments. This fact is identified in the DEIS but the DEIS fails to calculate the impact of the proposed action on the above government entities over a single year, let alone for the duration of the withdrawal.

The Navy must compensate the local and state governments for their loss of income due to the loss or reduction of private economic use of the public lands. The taxes and fees paid to the Federal government through its regulatory agency, the Bureau of Land Management, should be calculated to address the true cost of Alternatives 1-3 so that Congress can adequately assess the impacts. Further, the federal government should compensate the local and state governments for potential lost production from withdrawn private lands, grazing, mining, geothermal, solar, wind, oil and gas activities and production. We suggest an ongoing fund that pays to the affected counties and State of Nevada for lost opportunities. This could be in lieu of PILT payments.

Deficiencies and Misstatements in the DEIS

We have commented on the Navy's EA and EIS Scoping Documents for the proposed withdrawal of lands at FRTC twice before. This time we have included the monetary impact to ourselves and to the communities that would be affected by the proposed withdrawal. We believe that the Navy has significantly underestimated the monetary impacts for the Proposed Actions. In doing so, the alternative sites rejected in California, Nevada, Utah, New Mexico and elsewhere for monetary reasons should be more skeptically reviewed.

Our review of the DEIS also indicates considerable deficiencies, misstatements and conflicting statements regarding a broad host of topics. This is especially so in the mineral, geothermal and oil sections. Geologists exploring and evaluating mineral resources in the areas of proposed withdrawal are making new discoveries. People familiar with the work can provide much improved and current data to a static report like the DEIS. These various items and new revelations are listed below:

- **Acquisition Costs:** First and foremost, a reasonable expectation by commenters is to be able to ascertain the true cost of a project on all affected parties. The DEIS asserts throughout the document that the government will rely on the fair market value approach to private land acquisition, although no actual values are provided. Additionally, no methodology for other types of compensation is provided. Further, no methodology to determine compensation was offered during discussions with Navy personnel during public meetings. Instead, the various staff at the meetings said they had a plan that would evaluate the various rights on a case-by-case basis.

Private lands, water rights, unpatented mining claims, grazing rights and other rights are prevalent throughout the Proposed Action areas. In order to determine the true cost of the withdrawal, it would seem in the best interest of Congress, taxpayers and the Navy itself to accurately budget the potential costs that have been identified in the DEIS. In order to evaluate and comment accurately and completely on the DEIS, it is vitally important to understand the cost to all affected parties.

- **Lost tax base:** The DEIS proposes acquisition of approximately 100 square miles of private lands. It is assumed that these lands will be removed from the tax base of Churchill, Mineral and Pershing Counties. We do not find this impact properly accounted for in the socioeconomic report or the DEIS. Instead, it is assumed that the land is taxed at a minimum amount, and the lost tax base could conservatively be estimated at \$100,000 annually based on similar lands held by us in different Counties within the State.
- **Lost fees:** Based on the Mineral Potential Report, fees due the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for unpatented mining claims will be permanently lost when the FRTC either purchases or forces abandonment. The current claims listed within the study area number 1,117. The 2019 cost of claim filing is \$165/claim to the BLM and \$12.50 to the County/State. Based on this data, a total of \$184,305 to the BLM and \$13,963 to the County will be lost annually. The DEIS does not acknowledge this loss nor the potential cost of acquisition of some of these unpatented claims. The loss of grazing fees, geothermal leases and other fees, leases and contributions are not listed. However, we estimate the impact to the federal coffers is conservatively estimated at an additional \$500,000.

- **Lost Production Minerals, Non-metallic Minerals, Geothermal and other mineral products:** The DEIS contractors did not conduct a detailed examination of the mineral and geothermal potential for this area. Rather, they appear to have produced a high school-level book report regarding the area of potential impact. This work appears to include Google searches, BLM reports on leasing and unpatented claim ownership, regurgitation of technical reports from the 1960's to the 1990's, and citation of more recent reports located away from the proposed withdrawal area, but within the air space impact zone.

The lack of hard data in the book report, including detailed sampling and up-to-date geologic mapping to ascertain potential critical and strategic minerals within the boundaries of the proposed withdrawal areas, is a significant flaw. Many of the "tech" driven minerals useful in today's world were not considered economically significant even 15 years ago. Therefore, the use of old data to determine the potential of the 35 minerals designated by Congress as critical and strategic is severely lacking.

The DEIS relies on a Mineral Potential Report submitted by a consulting group located in Arizona. This report cites significant impacts to mining and mineral exploration from all three Proposed Alternatives. The Socioeconomic Report produced by the University of Nevada relies on this limited study to ascertain the potential loss of mining potential. The DEIS relies on the above reports to address the economic impact to local, county and state governments affected by the withdrawals in Proposed Actions 1 through 3.

While the Minerals report identifies significant mineral potential, the Economic report down plays down the economic potential of these minerals and fails to list any value associated with the highlighted mineral potential. The DEIS relies on the Economic report for its findings. The resultant conflicts and failure to calculate potential losses to communities, counties and the State of Nevada provide considerable doubt as to the conclusions reached in the Socioeconomic report findings and the DEIS conclusions.

The Socioeconomic Report states that at least one potential metal mine, hiring from 100 to 300 people, could be lost. The report further states that the initial startup of this mine would involve the hiring of 200 to 600 people in the first 2 years.

Although not stated, secondary employment to service and support the mine could be an additional 100 people or more based on equivalent figures provided in the Grazing and Hunting scenarios in the Socioeconomic report. Based on our experience and the report's data, production from the hypothesized mine can be expected to last from 10 to 30 years, with average production of 90,000 ounces of gold per year. Although the Socioeconomic and Mineral Potential reports support the total production estimate, the report fails to accurately address this loss of income to either the private investors or

the local and state governments. No values have been suggested for acquisition costs for known economic to sub-economic projects like this. It is very likely more than one of these types of deposits exist within the 19 mining districts affected by the Proposed Actions.

Our job is to evaluate and explore for minerals. We have performed economic calculations to numerous exploration and mining companies for some 40 years. As such, we note the following: Mining jobs are some of the highest paying in the State of Nevada. Using an average wage of \$50,000 per employee for the minimum 100 projected employees (Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development lists the annual average as \$83,000), at a minimum, \$5 million in wages per year would be lost. Another \$1 million could be lost in secondary support jobs. An additional \$2 million or more would be lost to the State and local governments in net profits tax on the production based on the numbers used in the Socioeconomic report. There is also the loss of taxes to the federal government.

These are annual projections and do not address capital expenditures (minimum of \$50 million for the size of deposit estimated) for infrastructure and annual expenditures for operations (minimum of \$10 million). The initial loss projected by the Socioeconomic report is a minimum of +200 jobs and \$5 million in taxes to the State and Counties. Annually thereafter, the loss to tax base is \$5 to \$10 million depending on the profitability of the mine.

The above calculations are for a single mine at lowest expected rate of production listed in the Socioeconomic Report. We feel the DEIS falls woefully short in their estimation of potential for mining activity over the duration of the proposed withdrawal. Table 3.3-7 of the DEIS (based on the Mineral Resource report) lists six separate mining districts which have 100% High Potential for discovery and mining of minerals consisting of gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc and tungsten. An additional three districts have a 90% or better rating of High Potential in this same table.

We possess detailed files including past production and recent sampling, mapping and drilling for six mining districts which correlate well with the High Potential rankings of the Mineral Resource report. Our data and the Mineral Potential Report suggest up to six districts have exceptional qualities consistent with mine development of the quality suggested in the Socioeconomic Report.

Using our data and the same method of calculation above, the more likely loss to local and state governments is estimated at 600 to 3000 primary jobs, and 600 to 1000 secondary jobs annually, for a period of 10 to 40 years (average mine life depending on commodity). Lost estimated production could be from six million to as high as 40 million gold equivalent ounces or in Nevada tax dollars, \$129 million to \$800 million

over the life of the mine. This estimate in does not include the financial loss to communities, counties or the state from losses of sales tax.

The Mineral Potential and Socioeconomic reports further state that an additional industrial mine with hiring capacity could be lost. Mention of lost Geothermal generation potential is also listed.

Based on our data and that in the DEIS reports, we believe a more likely estimate is a High Potential for up to six mines, not the one mine indicated by the Socioeconomic Report. Each of these mines could employ 100 to 300 people with an average of 10 to 40 years of mine life. The direct and indirect impact to local communities, counties and the state have not been quantified in this report, nor has the cost of acquisition from the owners of these potential mines. The DEIS for the Fallon Naval Base indicates a No Change in Personnel. However, the loss of jobs and potential new wealth created from mining the local onsite resources should be considered in its entirety.

Table 3.3-8 and Figure 3.3-6 list an additional high probability of geothermal production available for exploitation within the proposed withdrawal area. There is no calculated cost for this loss or other losses inherent in the Proposed Actions portion. There are no proposed costs of acquisition to mitigate the losses to claim owners in the DEIS. Instead, there are statements that attest to the significant losses that will be incurred. Based on these facts, one must assume that the plan is to take the assets without reimbursement to their owners and investors, and to ignore the harm done to all governmental entities.

Deficiencies in the DEIS regarding mining and exploration are numerous. No mention of the nearby Gabbs Magnesium mine is made within the DEIS even though this mineral is considered critical and strategic (Table 3.3-6), and areas within the proposed withdrawal areas have similar geologic settings (like our Bell Flat claims). In fact, no mention of magnesium occurrences is made despite our previous comments indicating the potential economic presence of the same.

No mention of relatively recent discovery of oil west of Gabbs is made and in fact a very low probability of discovery of oil is given in Table 3.3-8. Mention of critical minerals from past mining activities was made. But since these areas are currently idle, a self-serving statement was made that the minerals were deemed to be insignificant.

The lack of understanding regarding mineral exploration and exploitation is apparent in the erroneous conclusion that no current mining operations exist for these strategic minerals, therefore there is no potential for additional discovery. Each mining district in Nevada was found and formed in the mid-19th century to the early 20th century. As knowledge of deposits grew and uses for minerals evolved, the various minerals were

mined at various opportune times. The Rawhide Mine is a prime example. Rawhide has been mined on and off for over the last 40 years, despite having been deemed abandoned and worthless prior to 1970.

The current DEIS provides little data on the mineral potential of the proposed withdrawal areas outside of some references obtained from historical public records. Most of the lands proposed for withdrawal have not been examined for their mineral potential since the mid 1970's and thus, the DEIS requires in-depth study and analysis of the potential for mineral, salable, oil, gas and geothermal resources.

Each claim owner's contact information is filed with the BLM. Yet the DEIS authors and contractors failed to approach most, if not all, stakeholders within the withdrawal areas for current data to assess the significance and validity of their claims. Instead, the consultants, BLM and Navy staff estimated the cost to withdraw these lands and compared the unknown costs to what it may cost to use existing military reservations in this and other surrounding States. This lack of accuracy may end up costing the U.S. taxpayers millions of dollars in acquisition costs and loss of local government jobs and income, and cost individuals and companies millions of dollars in lost production.

- **National security concerns** should be incorporated into the DEIS. The "Tech Revolution" has changed the nature of mineral exploration and extraction and broadened the number and amount of critical minerals used in everyday life. Recent innovations in technology have created a demand for minerals not previously explored for. Rare earths are considered a critical strategic component to the United States' welfare. Despite this, it is not apparent that work was done to quantify the potential for these minerals in the DEIS. Of note, the Chinese control over 97% of the rare earth minerals currently produced in the world and the only known rare earth site in the U.S. was recently bought by a Chinese consortium. The DEIS also left out several other minerals that exist but were not flagged as significant.
- **Economic and Fiscal Analysis:** Our detailed analysis of the impacts to the local and state governments show a significant impact to the region affected by these proposed withdrawals. In some cases, the DEIS identified lost opportunity costs. For example, loss of hunting-related jobs and losses due to the curtailment of large areas for grazing were addressed. Although this amounted to nearly \$2,000,000 annually, the impacts were considered "not significant." Our analysis shows that on top of the above amount, the loss of potential income to the State could reach \$5 million in revenues and taxes annually based on the Socioeconomic Report. Our calculations suggest this amount is low and could actually reach \$25 million or more.

The loss of annual fees to the BLM was not quantified, although it would have been easy to do so. The impacts to the Nevada BLM could reach \$700,000 or more a year in lost claim fees, leases and grazing fees.

Additionally, the loss of exploration dollars was not considered worth mentioning in the DEIS. The Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology compiles statistics for mineral exploration. Given the recent interest in geothermal exploration as well as mineral exploration, it is likely that these expenditures would exceed \$3 million or more annually.

The cumulative loss of jobs based on the DEIS and other supporting reports is about 150 per year. Lost earnings opportunities within the withdrawal area is estimated between \$5 million \$40 million annually. If the proposed withdrawal is implemented, the US Treasury stands to lose \$1.2 to \$2 million per year in fees and leases. This does not include taxable wages from the above lost jobs and corporate taxes from lost production.


No cost projections were made for acquisition of private lands, water rights, unpatented mining claims or grazing rights. The above fiscal impacts were not appropriately identified or itemized in the DEIS. This deficiency could ultimately add tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars to the cost of Proposed Actions.

Finally, insisting that individuals, small companies, rural communities, counties and Nevada take the economic brunt of these withdrawals with no economic mitigation is an abuse of the government's powers. If the plan to withdraw public lands is completed, those who now generate their livelihood from the use of the public lands need to be acknowledged and their losses mitigated with appropriate compensation

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the FRTC DEIS. Please keep our names on any distribution lists related to the progress of the proposed withdrawal.

We are supplying copies of our comments to our Governor and US representatives and are hopeful that further detailed review of the proposed withdrawal will be considered.

Sincerely,



Herb and Naomi Duerr

F.6.3.14.1 Response

Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Regarding the request for a spreadsheet with all payments, the Navy cannot provide this as it would be pre-decisional as the action would not go forward without any ultimate Congressional decision.

Regarding the quotations from the Executive Summary on impacts to Counties and socioeconomics, please see Chapter 4 (Cumulative Impacts) and Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics) of the Final EIS for a detailed analysis of these topics. Land use, mineral resources and mining, grazing, transportation, water resources, noise, and recreation, are all discussed in detail in Sections 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.9, 3.7, and 3.12 respectively.

Regarding impacts to mining claims, The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value.

For existing patented mining claims, the federal government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.

Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam demonstrating a valuable mineral deposit a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.

Regarding comments on PILT, a detailed Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) analysis is included in the Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report, available at <http://frtcmodernization.com> and discussed in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). There would be no change in PILT for Churchill, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing counties, and very little change in PILT for Lyon County. Therefore, there would be no significant impact from lost revenue from reduced PILT under any of the action alternatives.

Regarding the comment to review other locations for training, Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the Final EIS discusses various alternatives the Navy considered, including those suggested by the public. The Final EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for not carrying specific alternatives forward for further analysis.

While it would hypothetically be possible to develop training systems at Nellis Air Force Base, the United States (U.S.) Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training currently uses nearly all of the complex's available training capacity (time and space). Shared use of Nellis Air Force Base, as currently configured or as proposed, would not be able to support the intensity of both Navy and Air Force training, and therefore was not carried forward for further analysis.

Regarding the first comment on deficiencies stating that acquisition costs should be explained, the NEPA process does not detail the potential acquisition costs, as doing so would be pre-decisional. A decision on this action has not yet taken place. After any ultimate Congressional decision, the Navy would move forward with allocations and applications for funding, based on any ultimate Congressional decision and any mandates of it.

Regarding lost taxes and fees, these were analyzed in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics) regarding PILT and impacts to the mineral industry.

Regarding lost production of minerals, non-metallic minerals, geothermal and other mineral products, and the examination thereof, the Navy analyzed these items in compliance with NEPA.

Both the Mineral Potential Report and the Socioeconomics Report were used in the analyses of Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), and Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). The Navy used the best available science for these reports, and the subject matter expertise of the compilers of the reports were extensive, including that of Dr. Tom Harris of the University of Nevada, Reno.

Regarding the Bell Flat project, Bell Mountain has been excluded from the administrative withdrawal and would not be included in the withdrawal under the Preferred Alternative. If Alternative 1 or 2 were chosen by Congress and Bell Mountain is included in the withdrawal, the Navy would adjudicate the claims as described in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources). Bell Mountain Exploration Corporation (BMEC) is currently involved in permitting the mining operation and the completion of the BLM EA is expected in 2020. The Navy is working with the BMEC to identify ways in which the Navy's proposed action and BMEC's valid existing mining right and proposed mining operations can be de-conflicted, both for purposes of public safety and so as to leave BMEC's operations and interests unaffected by the proposed withdrawal to the maximum extent achievable consistent with training requirements.

Regarding the Gabbs Magnesium mine, the EIS does not mention it because it is not impacted by the Proposed Action. Regarding other areas of mineral exploration and exploitation mentioned in the comment, if they were outside of the Study Area, or the FRTC lands proposed for withdrawal or requested for acquisition, they would not be impacted by the Proposed Action, and were therefore not analyzed for impacts.

Regarding national security concerns, please see Chapter 1 (Purpose and Need) for the Navy's need of the Proposed Action in order to modernize the FRTC for updated training purposes for increased national security.

Finally, regarding the economic and fiscal analysis, the Navy underwent an extensive socioeconomic report which can be found on the frtcmmodernization.com website. This report was used in the analysis of impacts to each socioeconomic group that might be impacted by any action alternative and by the No Action Alternative. The Navy recognizes the potential socioeconomic impacts on the community. To mitigate these impacts, affected private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land and all compensable rights associated with that land acquired by the United States. Claim holders for mining and water would be compensated as described in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources) and Section 3.9 (Water Resources).

Pursuant to the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended (43 U.S.C. section 315q), as amended, the Navy would make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.6.3.15 Duke, R. (Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Rune	Duke	Please see attached.	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.



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February 4, 2019

Ms. Sara Goodwin
EIS Project Manager
Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG, 1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132-5190

Re: Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Ms. Goodwin,

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA), the world's largest aviation membership association, submit the following comment in response to the U.S. Navy's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) evaluating the potential impacts of modernizing the Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) at Naval Air Station Fallon, Nevada. We understand this proposal is being closely watched by many local and transient General Aviation pilots as it changes existing Special Use Airspace (SUA) dimensions and establishes new airspace areas. To help publicize the proposal and inform civil aviators, AOPA published an article on December 6, 2018, advertising the public meetings and soliciting comments. Our Western-Pacific Regional Manager advertised this article on Twitter, and we notified our members again on January 11, 2019, noting the comment period had been extended.

We appreciate the Navy considering our November 22, 2016, EIS public scoping comments; however, we do not believe that civil aviation's concerns were fully addressed and changes incorporated into the latest proposal to mitigate adverse impacts. The FRTC is a unique SUA complex as it is of significant size and composed of multiple complicated airspace areas of varying dimensions and times of designation. It is important to have clarity on airspace access and for there to be modifications that minimize the airspace's impact on civil aviation. The new SUA must contribute to an efficient and safe National Airspace System (NAS). We offer these additional comments on the Draft EIS to further identify opportunities to improve the SUA proposal.

Time of Use Needs Clarification

The existing FRTC SUA has scheduled times of activation but it can also be activated "other times by NOTAM." Pilots cannot adequately flight plan should this airspace be activated after they depart, which is possible if there is no advanced notification. Modern General Aviation aircraft can have over six hours of fuel endurance; however, having to deal with a long reroute due to SUA activation can lead to issues of the pilot not having enough fuel and thus being forced to divert to refuel. At least four hours, preferably six hours, of advanced notice is necessary to assist pilots with their flight planning and to help them avoid costly reroutes or the need for fuel diversions. The FAA states in JO 7400.2L, para. 21-2-4(b)(3)(e), "NOTAMs should be issued as far in advance as feasible to ensure widest dissemination of the information to airspace users. Normally, the minimum advance notice should be at least 4 hours prior to the activation time." Therefore, we believe the times of use for the

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existing SUA should be changed to "...by NOTAM at least 4 hours in advance of area activation," and all new SUA should utilize that same format.

AOPA encourages the airspace proponent to follow the guidance stated in JO 7400.2L, para. 2-3-7(a)(4), which promotes Restricted Area airspace changes be effective with the Sectional Chart date. Any change in airspace configuration, to include MOAs, should coincide with the VFR charting cycles to ensure the flying public is aware of the change. Safety could be significantly impacted should the airspace change be made before the change is charted and widely disseminated to pilots on the VFR Sectional chart.

Military Aircraft Should Equip with ADS-B

As we approach the FAA's January 2, 2020, ADS-B mandate, it is important the military embrace the safety enhancing benefits of this technology and ensure their air traffic automation systems integrate ADS-B surveillance information. When the mandate becomes effective, over 100,000 civil aircraft will be equipped with a system that can greatly reduce mid-air collisions and allow air traffic to identify aircraft in more areas than they can today with radar. In a remote area like FRTC where radar coverage may only exist at higher altitudes, ADS-B can improve the safety and efficiency of the airspace for military and General Aviation aircraft. The military should articulate their plans for FRTC resident aircraft to be ADS-B equipped, such that civil aircraft can view them with their traffic information display, and what the Navy's plan is for integrating ADS-B traffic information into the platforms used by the air traffic controllers responsible for the FRTC airspace.

Airspace Dynamic Deactivation Needs Documentation

During preflight planning pilots can access SUA information via NOTAMs and schedule information via SUA.FAA.gov. If a pilot sees the SUA overlying or near their departure or destination airport, such as at Derby Field Airport (KLOL) or Austin Airport (TMT), is scheduled to be active, the pilot has no choice but to amend their flight to arrive before the SUA's activation or after it is scheduled to be inactive. The General Aviation flying public does not have access to Letters of Agreement or other information that states air traffic control will coordinate with the military to give way to IFR General Aviation aircraft to allow them access during a SUA's scheduled utilization. It is not reasonable to think a pilot will expend the money and time to fly IFR under the possibility the scheduled time in SUA.FAA.gov is incorrect. Pilots flying IFR are trained that they should plan to not have any access to that airspace when the SUA is active and will delay their flight if their destination is located below the active SUA.

If there is to be "flexible use" or "dynamic deactivation" of the airspace formally documented with the FAA, that arrangement should be publicly disseminated so pilots can be informed that they will be provided egress or ingress to underlying airports with minimal delay. AOPA agrees this is a significant mitigation as it facilitates airport access, but only if pilots are told this is the case. Any arrangement must be noted for each airport in FAA publications utilized by pilots. For example, if it is the Navy's intention to release a MOA when IFR aircraft are transiting the airspace, it must be documented so civil aircraft operators understand they will receive airspace access with minimal delay. Without clear communication of the mitigation to the pilot community, it is effectively non-existent and ineffective.

AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION

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As the FRTC is large and located in a remote area, it is important consideration is given to medical aircraft that may need to expeditiously transit the airspace. We noted the Draft EIS makes allowances for these operations stating, "all emergency flights, both helicopter and fixed-wing, are given priority transit through the FRTC at all times. Desert Control ensures that real-time adjustments to airspace occur to expedite emergency aircraft and deconflict all Navy training events along the required routes or in the vicinity of fire suppression activities." This is an important mitigation but it is only effective if it is clearly communicated to civil operators. The military must identify how they will publicize this accommodation and what procedure civil pilots must follow to request it. It is also not clearly identified whether there is the capability for immediate recall of military aircraft given the communication infrastructure available. The military should commit to having the required radio infrastructure in place, and for military aircraft to remain in communication with air traffic control, so that this procedure is effective.

Walker MOA Complex Should be Considered

In June 2018, the U.S. Marine Corps notified the public that they were preparing an Environmental Assessment to support the establishment of the Walker MOA at the Marine Corps Mountain Warfighting Training Center near Bridgeport, California. The proposed SUA would be southwest of the FRTC but only a few nautical miles away. The geographical proximity of the Walker MOA airspace and the FRTC SUA concerns us that the two proponents are not coordinating their actions. The effects of both airspace actions need to be considered in parallel and cumulatively since the flying public will deal with their impacts simultaneously. The Navy must note in their final EIS how the Walker MOA's proximity was considered and how it might magnify the impacts on civil aviation flying in this area.

Reno MOA Expansion Concerning

As AOPA noted in our 2016 letter, the airspace proposal originally stated the Reno MOA's floor altitude would be lowered from 13,000 feet MSL to 1,200 feet AGL, eliminating the opportunity for General Aviation IFR aircraft flying point-to-point to duck under the MOA while it is active. We requested the proponent modify their request by raising the floor altitude to allow cardinal altitudes to be utilized at or above the minimum IFR altitude in this area. Unfortunately, we do not see that modification included in this latest draft. Allowing for IFR aircraft to transit this SUA at all times would minimize the economic impact on General Aviation. With this expansion, aircraft would now have to circumnavigate the entire Reno MOA, which would increase the cost for pilots flying in this area. A flight may need to fly tens of nautical miles out of their way to avoid active SUA. The cost per hour for operating a fighter jet is not insignificant, nor is the per hour cost of General Aviation aircraft.

Furthermore, we find the Draft EIS document inconsistent about what specific floor altitude is proposed for the Reno MOA. In several sections, including on page 3.10-126, it states the Reno MOA would be revised from a floor of 13,000 feet MSL to 1,200 feet AGL; however, on other pages, such as 3.6-15 and 3.6-22, it states Reno MOA's floor would be changed from 13,000 feet MSL to 1,500 feet AGL. We believe the Navy should allow for a higher floor altitude to not only accommodate IFR aircraft but also VFR aircraft conducting sightseeing operations in this area. The final EIS must resolve the discrepancy in altitudes and account for the concerns of operators who have historically flown under the Reno MOA.

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Conclusion

AOPA supports the Navy and their mission critical to our national defense. We believe the Navy's mission requirements can be met in a manner that will not cause an undue negative effect on General Aviation; however, the current proposal falls short of addressing General Aviation's concerns. As we noted in our letter from 2016, there are adverse impacts on IFR and VFR aircraft caused by this new SUA. We respectfully request the proponent review these previously stated concerns, and the ones noted in this letter, to ensure General Aviation's feedback is fully considered.

We appreciate you considering our comments on this important issue and we look forward to commenting on the aeronautical proposal circularized by the FAA in the near future. Please feel free to contact me at 202-509-9515 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Rune Duke
Senior Director, Airspace and Air Traffic

The Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA) is a not-for-profit individual membership organization of General Aviation Pilots and Aircraft Owners. AOPA's mission is to effectively serve the interests of its members and establish, maintain and articulate positions of leadership to promote the economy, safety, utility, and popularity of flight in General Aviation aircraft. Representing two-thirds of all pilots in the United States, AOPA is the largest civil aviation organization in the world.

AIRCRAFT OWNERS AND PILOTS ASSOCIATION

F.6.3.15.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Regarding time use needs clarification, all Navy usage of proposed airspace will be in accordance with JO7400.2.

General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, special use airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive airspace(s). Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).

Regarding the comment on military aircraft equip with ADS-B, the Navy would not implement airspace usage changes until the FAA approves and authorizes the airspace proposal, via Congressional action.

Regarding airspace dynamic deactivation and documentation, activities are scheduled through NAWDC and hazard zones are clear before commencement of hazardous activities. These activities are coordinated with the Range Safety Officer. The Navy would ensure that NAWDC Range Operations Manuals are maintained with current information, restrictions and compliance requirements. When there is inclement weather, the civilian would need to be under positive control or under IFR rules, which are already in place. Under IFR, aviators could be routed through or around the MOA. If under VFR, pilots can use see and avoid rules. With the exception of changes to MOA heights, general aviation would remain as it currently is. There would be no change to the General Aviation IFR or VFR traffic as a result of the Proposed Action, and therefore the Navy is not proposing mitigation for impacts.

Regarding emergency medical aircraft, the Navy's standard practice is to project emergency calls over the emergency frequency for emergency situations. The Navy maintains radio communication throughout the FRTC airspace.

Regarding consideration of the Walker MOA, the Walker MOA is outside of the FRTC airspace and is not compatible for use. There is an EA that has been completed, however, the airspace has not yet been implemented. This project was addressed in the Cumulative Impacts section in Chapter 4 under recreation with regard to impact to general aviators.

Regarding the Reno MOA specific floor altitude, it is proposed for 1,500 AGL. This has been made consistent in the Final EIS. While the floors of the proposed new MOAs are either 200 feet AGL (Duckwater and Smoke) or 1,200 feet AGL (Ruby, Zircon, and Diamond), general aviation pilots may still fly through a MOA under Visual Flight Rules. FRTC SUA, outside of active restricted areas, follows FAA guidance on MOA usage by civil aviation. NAWDC and Desert Control ATC would make provisions to sustain aerial access to private and public use land beneath the FRTC, and for terminal VFR and IFR flight operations where available. MOAs are always joint use in that VFR aircraft are not denied access, and IFR aircraft may be routed through the airspace. As such, civil traffic would continue to be authorized in all FRTC MOAs.

F.6.3.16 Dunivin, Z. (Bloomington Cooperative Living)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Zackary	Dunivin	<p>I am writing on behalf of Bloomington Cooperative Living, a 50 person residential community in Bloomington Indiana. We oppose this project on the grounds that public land that belongs to all Americans will be reserved for only a few to build tools of destruction. Our natural resources are precious and should be used for the good of all. Not just this countries citizens, but people all over the world. We hope you will reconsider claiming this land.</p> <p>Sincerely, Zackary Dunivin Board Member, Bloomington Cooperative Living</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p>

F.6.3.17 Ellsworth, M. (American Exploration & Mining Association)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Matthew	Ellsworth	<p>Please accept the attached (.pdf) comments in behalf of the American Exploration & Mining Association</p>	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.</p>



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February 13, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV 21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

VIA WEB: <https://frtcmodernization.com/Public-Involvement/Submit-Your-Comment>

RE: Comments on the November 2018 Fallon Range Training Complex Draft Environmental Impact Statement

The American Exploration & Mining Association (AEMA) appreciates the opportunity to submit unique comments regarding the *November 2018 Fallon Range Training Complex Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)*. We believe the DEIS is fundamentally flawed and needs to be substantially revised to include alternatives to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the adverse impacts to mineral discovery, exploration and production.

AEMA continues to have deep concerns about the size of the proposed expansion and the Navy's proposal to withdraw over 600,000 acres of land from mineral entry, to prohibit other multiple uses, and to reserve these lands solely for military use. We believe the Navy's proposed FRTC expansion will result in serious adverse impacts to the counties where the proposed expansion areas are located. We believe that expansion of the FRTC and ongoing mineral exploration and development are not mutually exclusive.

The DEIS needs to be substantially revised to include a detailed analysis of one or more alternatives to mitigate the "vast irreparable impact" to mineral resources described in the DEIS. We believe the DEIS Action Alternatives do not satisfy NEPA requirements to evaluate alternatives to avoid, minimize, and mitigate adverse impacts to the quality of the human environment; to comply with national policies, including policies that establish the need to increase production of domestic minerals; and to reconcile the alternatives with state and local plans.

President Trump's December 2017 Critical Minerals Executive Order ("EO") No. 13817 (which is mentioned in Section 3.3 of the DEIS), focuses on the need to increase the supply of domestic minerals. Unfortunately, the Action Alternatives in the DEIS conflict with the Administration's clear policy directives to reduce the nation's reliance on foreign minerals by increasing the exploration for and development of domestic minerals resources. The DEIS fails to disclose that the impacts of the proposed mineral withdrawals are inconsistent with EO 13817.

EO 13817 specifically recognizes the important role that domestic mineral supplies play in maintaining a strong economy, creating jobs, and improving our national security. In fact, this EO explicitly states that the military is one of the largest users of critical minerals. The availability of minerals and the need to reduce our reliance on foreign sources of minerals are established and urgent national policy issues that cannot be ignored and must be discussed in the DEIS. The failure of the DEIS to analyze these issues and

AEMA Comments

November 2018 Fallon Range Training Complex Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Page 2 of 2

disclose how the proposed mineral withdrawals could increase the country's reliance on foreign sources of minerals violates NEPA. The DEIS must include a detailed analysis of the impacts and tradeoffs associated with withdrawing up to 618,727 acres of lands that are currently open to operation of the Mining Law and renewing the withdrawal of the presently withdrawn 202,864 acres within the existing FRTC boundary.

The Navy's Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS also should include a request to Congress to authorize the release of 821,591 acres of WSAs in the counties impacted by the FRTC proposed withdrawals. If 821,591 acres exceeds the acres of WSAs in the affected counties, other WSAs in Nevada should be released as well to compensate the State, local communities and individual citizens for the impacts resulting from the proposed withdrawal.

Additional compensatory mitigation measures should include financial compensation to claim owners within the proposed withdrawal areas regardless of the discovery status of their claims, and whether the claim owner has a valid existing right defined by a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit that could withstand a validity examination. All claim owners have paid claims maintenance fees and many claim owners have invested substantial resources in exploring and developing their claims. Consequently, they should be fairly compensated for the investments they have made in their claims. No claims within the proposed withdrawal area should be subject to a validity examination to determine whether the claim qualifies for compensatory mitigation.

Lastly, the Navy's expansion area encompasses over 10,000 acres of private lands, minerals, and other interests within Pershing County which also would presumably be condemned by the Navy. This would remove these lands from Pershing County's tax roles as well as extinguish any possibility for economic development and mineral development on these lands in the future.

In conclusion, we urge the revision of the DEIS to address these issues critical to mineral production and rural economic health in Nevada. We also incorporate by reference the comments of AEMA member Pershing Gold Corporation. As though fully set forth herein.

Who We Are

AEMA is a 124-year old, 1,700 member national association representing the minerals industry with members residing in 42 U.S. states (including Nevada), seven Canadian provinces or territories, and 10 other countries. AEMA is the recognized national voice for exploration and access to public lands and represents the entire mining life cycle, from exploration to reclamation and closure.

Sincerely,



Matthew Ellsworth
Government Affairs

F.6.3.17.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

Regarding the comment on mitigating impacts, The Navy has developed and proposed specific mitigation for each alternative that can be implemented and would avoid or minimize impacts. As such, alternatives include actions specifically designed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities.

Regarding the size of the proposed land expansion area, the Navy received a variety of comments about reducing the extent of the proposed expansion of different Bravo ranges for a variety of reasons (specific to each commenter). For the majority of comments, reasons include the proposed withdrawal bringing Navy activities too close to property/housing in certain Bravo ranges as a result of the Proposed Action; it would cause the loss of mining claims, grazing allotments, and water resources; or, it would cause access loss for recreational purposes.

The Navy acknowledged the significance of the potential impacts and instead revised its proposal to only include the minimum 180-degree requirement for realistic training events; and reduced the size of the overall area requested and proposed for withdrawal, to the extent consistent with mission requirements.

The Navy added a figure in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS that illustrates the proposed withdrawal and requested acquisition lands included in the Draft EIS and highlights additional reductions that have been made to the proposed withdrawal and requested acquisition lands between the Draft and Final EIS under Alternative 3.

For the Navy to reach full tactics, techniques, and procedures compliance that would allow air and ground forces to train in a realistic 360-degree combat scenario for all training scenarios, the Navy would need to withdraw or acquire almost twice the amount of land requested under the Proposed Action (approximately 1.3 million acres), as well as make extensive revisions to special use and civilian airspace. The Navy considered this as an alternative, but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS due to disruptive impacts on the local area. For example, this alternative would greatly increase the amount of public lands that would need to be closed for weapons safety considerations.

Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis.

While it would hypothetically be possible to develop training systems at Nellis Air Force Base, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training currently uses nearly all of the complex's available training capacity (time and space). Nellis Air Force Base, as currently configured or as proposed, would not be able to support the intensity of both Navy and Air Force training, and therefore was not carried forward for further analysis.

The Navy has addressed the National Materials and Minerals Policy Research and Development Act of 1980 as well as the Executive Order 13817, and other National Policies as referenced in the comment by the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act, by discussing potential impacts on mineral resources in the EIS. These regulations have also been added to the list of regulations addressed by the analysis in the Final EIS. In the EIS, when a mineral resource potential is classified as either moderate or high, a lost exploration opportunity would represent a

significant impact on that mineral resources. The resource potential classification considers occurrences, geologic relationship, and historic production for each mineral resource. The availability of domestic sources of the minerals needed for the Nation's economy, security, and to support the manufacturing, energy, health care, and technology sectors are covered cumulatively in Chapter 4 (Cumulative Impacts), in Section 3.1 (Geological Resources), Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), and Section 3.13 (Socioeconomic Resources).

In regard to releasing WSAs, under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The Navy is not requesting the entire areas be de-designated. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

As discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), Federal land withdrawn from mineral entry would no longer be open to new mining claims, and the lands would be prohibited from future mineral exploration and development. Implementation of any of the action alternatives would result in potential significant impacts on exploration and development of locatable, leasable, and salable mineral resources.

In accordance with Navy policy, mining is not compatible within a surface danger zone of an operational range; this is not pre-decisional as it is Navy policy due to public health and safety impacts (see Section 3.14 [Public Health and Safety]). The Navy would continue to follow existing operating procedures that prohibit the collection of materials from any mining area and prohibit entry to mine shafts and mines. Navy training activities would not impact mining activities outside of the proposed withdrawal boundaries. Therefore, there is the potential for a loss of access to salable and locatable minerals and mines in the land requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition. Closing the property may also affect mineral management by limiting the availability of mineral transport within certain areas. For example, new public roads, railroads, or other rights of way that would transport minerals could not be located within the proposed closed areas of the Bravo ranges, which would limit the availability to access and transport locatable and salable minerals. Closing the property would also limit the available means to transport mineral resources like oil/gas pipelines or geothermal energy transmission lines.

The Final EIS further describes the process by which interested parties could pursue compatible geothermal development in a portion of the Dixie Valley Training Area. The proposed required design features are necessary in order for the Navy to meet necessary training requirements. Development of the required design features affords an opportunity for geothermal development that would otherwise be lost. The Navy is committed to working with the developer on a case-by-case basis and acknowledges

that complying with required design features could add cost to a potential geothermal development. This is addressed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

Regarding additional compensatory mitigation measures mentioned in the comment, The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value.

With regard to existing patented mining claims, the Federal Government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.

Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.

The Navy cannot accommodate locatable mining activities in the DVTA due to restrictions in authorities set forth in the Mining Law of 1872. The Draft EIS included an analysis of an alternative that examines the managed coexistence of mineral activities within the proposed FRTC expansion area. This alternative can be found in Section 2.5.6.2 (Mining on Live-Fire [Bravo] Ranges).

The Navy is not proposing to release more WSA than is necessary to fulfill training needs in the DVTA.

Requested management practices, monitoring, or mitigation measures have been assessed by the Navy between the Draft and Final EIS. These suggestions have been added in part or in their entirety to Chapter 5, Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation. This section has been updated with resource specific and a general table of suggestions and Navy responses in the Final EIS. Where able, the Navy has added text to the document on the implemented suggestions from the public scoping comments, public comment period, and from the Cooperating Agencies and Tribal Participants.

As such, alternatives for the EIS incorporated actions specifically to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities.

Those alternatives and associated actions were carried forward for analysis and if necessary, based on the level of impacts, additional management practices, mitigation, or other impact avoidance/minimization measures were included to further avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts.

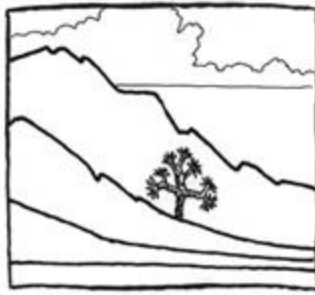
While a mineral withdrawal affects new mining claims, it does not affect existing, valid claims on public lands. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. For there to be a valid existing right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value. However, holders of existing claims on public land are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, the value of the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.

With regard to patented claims, the Government passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.

his type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

F.6.3.18 Emmerich, K. (Basin and Range Watch)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Kevin	Emmerich	<p>I apologize for any repeat comments. I attempted to send this in last week, but I am not sure it went through.</p> <p>The proposed expansion would take over 1,000 square miles of public and private land. It is a massive undertaking to try to comment on all of this in the time frame you have provided. Please extend this comment period by an additional 60 days. We are planning on submitting extensive comments, but think more time is necessary.</p> <p>Thank you</p>	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.</p> <p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Draft EIS was released for public review Nov. 16, 2018, for a 60-day public comment period, 15 days more than the required 45-day public review period under NEPA. The Navy extended the public comment period additional 30 days, to close Feb. 14, 2019, for a total of 90 days for public review of the Draft EIS. Public notices of the comment period extension were published in local newspapers and the <i>Federal Register</i>, and the Navy distributed postcards to the project mailing list (including attendees of the Draft EIS public meetings), letters to Indian Tribes, news releases to media, and emails to subscribers on the project website.</p>
Kevin	Emmerich	See Attached file	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.</p>



Basin and Range Watch

February 14th, 2019

To: Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

Comments uploaded to: <https://frtcmodernization.com/Public-Involvement/Submit-Your-Comment>

Re: Comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization DEIS

Basin and Range Watch is a 501(c)(3) non-profit working to conserve the deserts of Nevada and California and to educate the public about the diversity of life, culture, and history of the ecosystems and wild lands of the desert.

Background:

The Navy initiated an aviation training modernization program, its *Ninety Days to Combat Required Training Capabilities Study*, which determined that present bombing ranges were too restrictive at the Fallon Range Training Complex in Nevada.

After a 2016 Notice of Intent to undertake an environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and an extended scoping period, the Navy developed several alternatives. Alternative 3, the Preferred Alternative, would request land withdrawals from

public lands and restrict public access. Several bombing and training ranges would be enlarged, re-oriented, and moved.

The B-17 range in particular is proposed to be modernized to within tactically acceptable parameters: aircraft that fly faster and higher to drop live ordnance onto targets. It would be moved farther to the southeast.

These modifications would overlap 3,200 acres of Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, and the B-20 Range would overlap the northern part of the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge complex, and restrict public access to those portions. The Fox Peak Area of Critical Environmental Concern would have 11,600 acres withdrawn. All or parts of the Clan Alpine and Job Peak Wilderness Study Areas will apparently be tagged for removal by Congress.

The proposal requests Congressional renewal of the 1999 Public Land Withdrawal of 202,864 acres (scheduled to expire in November 2021) of the current military lands. But the proposal also requests Congress to withdraw and reserve for military use up to an additional 618,727 acres of federal land. Also, 65,152 acres of private and state lands would also be acquired, a large impact to the local county economies and tax base.

This military range expansion proposal will have very large impacts to public lands in central Nevada.

Government Shutdown:

Several cooperating agencies have been listed on this review. Most of the land in the proposed expansion area is under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, but some belongs to the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The Federal Aviation Administration was also partially shut down. These 3 agencies had no one available to answer any questions during the 35-day government shut down which occurred entirely within the open comment period for this DEIS review. You should add 35 days to this review to ensure that all the information is made available. You contractors cannot answer all the questions we had relating to these agencies.

Purpose and Need Statement:

The Purpose and Need Statement is designed to accommodate the needs of the Navy for this proposed expansion. But it fails to recognize the needs of all public and private land owners the expansion would impact. It is also not appropriate to use National Security in the Purpose and Need Statement. These are technological upgrades and the jury is out on how successful they would be. Furthermore, it is subjective to claim National Security needs are greater than maintaining the lives and careers of all the people who would be impacted by this expansion. The Need statement should also talk about how a No Action Alternative would maintain the economies of the counties the expansion would impact. AS it stands, no small communities would benefit economically from the expansion.

The Purpose and Need Statement should be rewritten to include the “Needs” of the several thousand people who would be impacted by this expansion. This would include miners, recreationists, ranchers, land owners, hunters and anglers, and local counties.

The following 2 paragraphs appear in the Purpose and Need Statement:

“The FRTC is the only location available to the Navy that can support, house, and train an entire Carrier Air Wing (upward of 60 aircraft and all aircrew and support crews) for advanced Strike Warfare, Electronic Warfare, and Air Warfare training. In fact, every Navy Carrier Air Wing trains at the FRTC prior to deployment as part of the Optimized Fleet Response Plan (an approximately 36-month cycle of maintenance, basic and integrated training, deployment, and sustainment).”

“The overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, range, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operations ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command. “

Response: The Purpose and Need Statement appears to be presenting a need to take more land to accommodate specific technologies. The DEIS should look at the existing base as well as other military installations to diversify and expand operations. By just taking public land away, the DEIS fails to consider all the reasonable alternatives. In many ways, the Purpose and Need Statement appears to be an attempt to accommodate bombs, planes and other equipment specifically build for this regional expansion. We want you to consider more options with the land you have.

The proposed expansion Purpose and Need is based on what looks like a narrow “Need” to accommodate equipment built for specific purposes.

From page 1-9:

“Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new

weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change.”

Response: The impacts to people and the environment from the expansion will be so large, we would like to suggest that Ninety Days to Combat be rewritten to accommodate the existing conditions or to use another military installation for expanded operations.

On Page 1-10, the DEIS lists the following needs for **Training Needs and the Capabilities Evaluation Processing**:

- *providing the most threat-realistic training environment available to deploying forces;*
- *developing and validating aviation TTP.*
- *These training requirements define tactical level guidance for the effective employment of weapons systems, platforms (specific aircraft and other vehicles), and forces. In other words, TTP identify the required combat skills a warfighter needs to repetitively practice prior to deployment to be ready to respond in an actual combat situation when deployed; •*
- *assessing warfighting requirements across all Strike Warfare missions; •*
- *providing independent assessments and recommendations to the Chief of Naval Operations regarding investments in or proposed changes to existing programs that may impact naval aviation; and*
- *promoting prioritization, rapid development, and delivery of new doctrine, technologies, and training.*

Response: None of these criteria require the expansion of the base and the closure of so much public lands.

On Page 1-11, the DEIS justifies **Weapons Release Training and Need for Expanded Range Area** because *“modern aircraft fly at higher altitudes, release munitions at targets from 10–12 miles away, and require a larger safety area surrounding the target area during training.”*

If safety is such an issue, it would make sense to provide a virtual reality alternative to choose from. Or perhaps use another existing military base as an alternative for these kinds of tests. While the DEIS claims that virtual reality is not an option, it would seem like the pilot would never see the target at 12 miles away, so the bombs and missiles would be fired and calculated

by a computer anyway. These alternatives are important as the proposed alternatives do not provide a status quo and will have severe impacts on public and private land owners.

Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives:

The DEIS fails to provide a REASONABLE Range of Alternatives. Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), you are required to provide a reasonable range of alternatives. NEPA was designed not just to protect the environment, but the health and lives of people too. The Council on Environmental Quality explains it here:

"The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was enacted to: declare a national policy which will encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment; to promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of man; to enrich the understanding of the ecological systems and natural resources important to the Nation; and to establish a Council on Environmental Quality. Sec. 2 [42 U.S. Code § 4321]."

And -

"The ultimate goal of the NEPA process is to foster excellent action that protects, restores, and enhances our environment. This is achieved through the utilization of environmental assessments (EAs) and environmental impact statements (EISs), which provide public officials with relevant information and allow a "hard look" at the potential environmental consequences of each proposed project."

<https://ceq.doe.gov/index.html>

<https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/G-CEQ-40Questions.pdf>

The DEIS only provides the NEPA required No Action Alternative and three slightly different alternatives that allow the approximate same acreage for the expansion of the training base.

The DEIS does not provide a Status Quo Alternative that allows the base to be renewed and to remain at its current acreage. The reason is that expanded operations cannot continue in the present situation.

But the No Action Alternative would give the existing base back to the Bureau of Land Management and that would create several hazards for the BLM to clean up. It is not likely to happen. The BLM is not supporting this alternative.

The DEIS fails to provide a realistic alternative that does not take additional public land but allows the Navy to keep its current land. This also fails to provide a reasonable alternative for the people who are greatly opposed to this expansion. The expansion will most likely have a

negative impact on the small communities and people that will be located closer to off-limits land as well as be subjected to more noise, safety disturbances as well as economic impacts. Many people in communities would lose access to grazing permits and mining claims. Counties would lose part of their property tax base. This would fall under NEPA as Environmental Justice.

The Navy will need to take about 65,000 acres of private lands. Some of the lands are owned by mining companies while other are owned by individuals. At the public meeting in Gabbs, Nevada, the Navy told us they had not even negotiated with land owners to acquire these lands. A Status Quo alternative would prevent the need to take these private lands.

Safety issues are a concern and there are reports of pilots bombing lands outside the existing range by accident. Moving the expansion so close to communities would increase this risk. A Status Quo alternative would eliminate the increased risk to adjacent areas.

While the Navy claims the Status Quo would not work for them, this alternative would meet the full requirements of NEPA to protect the environment and the people who would be impacted by the expansion.

We believe the elimination of this alternative makes the DEIS incomplete and the needs and risks to local people will be overlooked. Please add the Status Quo alternative back to the review.

Biological Resources:

We disagree that no meaningful impacts will happen to bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, and greater sage-grouse.

Most of the high-quality sage-grouse habitat is east of the proposed expansion, but there is also some good habitat within the bombing range. Noise impacts would be significant to sage-grouse, which are very sensitive to loud noise and ground disturbance. Noise impacts will increase with the proposed expansion.

How will combat training scare wildlife, or even cause mortality? Herds of antelope may roam these ranges and could be in harm's way. For example, range Bravo-16 will have Humvee combat training that fire .50 caliber machine guns from Humvee turrets, with a need to fire in a 360 degree circle. What will be the impacts to wildlife from this kind of live fire training?



.50 caliber machine gun
fired from turret.

F-18 fighter jets, EA-18G Growler aircraft, E-2C Hawkeye radar planes, helicopters supporting Navy SEAL training, and bombing and missile target runs. Some miss-fires and malfunctions such as control electronics lock out and battery failure on missiles and bombs happen, as admitted by the Navy, could send these munitions off target. How will this impacts wildlife and biological resources. In a past public meeting, a 75% accuracy of bombing targets was mentioned—can this be verified and analyzed?

More new fences will be built to exclude livestock and mark new boundaries. These can cause a collision mortality risk to sage-grouse, and even wildlife-friendly fence designs can hinder mule deer, bighorn sheep, and pronghorn antelope movements.

How will the Navy work with the Nevada Department of Wildlife to allow access to manage these resources when ranges are not hot?

Golden eagles nest in many of the mountains proposed for withdrawal—how will combat training and bombing impact nesting pairs, foraging, and home ranges of eagles?

Wilderness Values:

We are concerned that the Clan Alpine and Job Peak Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) will be recommended for removal, as the Navy requests Congressional legislation to undo these designations. The WSAs are adjacent to electronic ranges and ground convoy training areas, and the Navy told us at the Gabbs meeting that wilderness designations were not considered appropriate uses. This should be clarified.

Rural Community Quality of Life and Recreation:

The community of Gabbs will receive the brunt of impacts from reduced public lands access, reduced economic benefits for ranches, small mining, hunting, rockhounding, wildlife viewing, camping, four-wheel-drive touring, and tourism. The counties will lose tax bases of private lands. Bombing noise will increase, as well as aircraft flights. Hikers, desert explorers, Jeep tourists, and other recreational users will lose a huge variety of beautiful and scenic Nevada wildlands.

The Navy told us that they have not even begun to talk with private land owners about purchasing their properties inside the proposed withdrawal. Will miners be reimbursed for mining claims lost?

There are over 100 patented mining claims in the proposed withdrawal, and Nye County gets a percentage of the assessment each year—this will be lost.

Water rights will also be impacted, and will need to be relocated. With water resources becoming rarer across the west, how will new water sources be found in this arid region?

The B-17 range includes the entire pristine and remote Monte Cristo Range adjacent to Gabbs Valley. The Monte Cristos have unique geologic formations consisting of sculpted volcanic tuffs and multi-colored sedimentary hills and pinnacles.

The FRTC expansion will consume the Fairview Peak range and adjacent rugged foothills to the east of the existing B-17, all of which will be closed to public use, including interesting geological features such as a massive earthquake fault scarp.

Water Quality and Groundwater:

What toxic residues from bombing and combat training will leach into the regional groundwater? Chemicals and residues may not simply disintegrate over time, or may take years to degrade. This should be analyzed.

Cultural Resources:

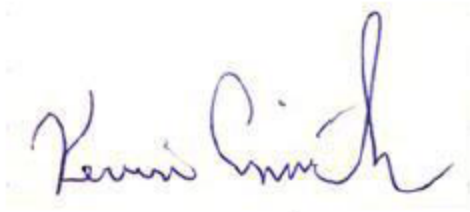
How will Native American rights of access be maintained to traditional areas?

Conclusion:

We ask for a Status quo Alternative to be analyzed in the Final EIS. There is no alternative that allows Congress to simply renew the current land withdrawal for the Fallon Range Training Complex. Reasons given for this, from discussions with NEPA personnel at the public meeting, were vague and unconvincing—such as ‘the need for more land.’ More efficient use of training scheduling, and more digital modeling of advanced bombing runs could be made use of on present ranges, based on other military training ranges such as in use by the US Air Force.

The Undersecretary of the Navy would sign the ROD. We note, however, that Congress still needs to appropriate funds for this proposed expansion even after any approval. Basin and Range watch

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin Emmerich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kevin" and last name "Emmerich" clearly distinguishable.

Kevin Emmerich

Laura Cunningham

Co-Founders

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Appendix: The photos on this page are provided by a Basin and Range Watch supporter. All these scenes are within the proposed military expansion area, and public access would be cut off.

F.6.3.18.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Regarding the request for a comment period extension, the Draft EIS was released for public review Nov. 16, 2018, for a 60-day public comment period, 15 days more than the required 45-day public review period under NEPA. The Navy extended the public comment period additional 30 days, to close Feb. 14, 2019, for a total of 90 days for public review of the Draft EIS. Public notices of the comment period extension were published in local newspapers and the *Federal Register*, and the Navy distributed postcards to the project mailing list (including attendees of the Draft EIS public meetings), letters to Indian Tribes, news releases to media, and emails to subscribers on the project website.

Regarding the government shutdown, the public comment period was extended as discussed in the response above, and responses from agencies such as the FAA, USFWS, and BLM would not have

occurred during the public comment period, but rather after it. Therefore, the government shutdown did not impact the public participation process as a part of compliance with NEPA.

Regarding the comments on background and the purpose and need for the Proposed Action, the purpose of the NEPA process is to ensure that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before any ultimate decisions are made and before actions are taken. The purpose and need is intended to focus specifically on the underlying purpose and need that the agency is responding to—in terms of its own mission requirements—while the needs and concerns of public and private land owners in the area are reflected in the overall development of the EIS and its discussion of various impacts. The Navy analyzed the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives, and the analysis is documented in the EIS. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and has updated the analysis where appropriate. Public comments received during scoping and review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are an important part of the NEPA process. The purpose of the public comment process is to provide members of the public an opportunity to submit their comments and concerns regarding the Proposed Action, alternatives, and the analysis of potential environmental impacts. The Navy reviewed all comments submitted during the scoping periods (August 26, 2016 through December 12, 2016) and during review of the Draft EIS (November 2018 to February 2019). All comments received are included as part of the administrative record for the project. Many commenters noted they submitted comments during the scoping process of the EIS but never received a formal response. Although the Navy is not required under NEPA to respond to scoping comments, the Navy did consider all scoping comments in preparing the Draft EIS and used them to shape the breadth and depth of the analysis in the Draft EIS. Section 1.9 (Public and Agency Participation and Intergovernmental Coordination), summarizes the public scoping comments received during the 2016 scoping efforts. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable. This expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).

This expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative) currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).

The proposed de-designation of Wilderness Study Area land is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and

without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVT, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. To clarify, under the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3), Fairview Peak would remain open and accessible for recreation purposes.

As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operations ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command. As required by the CEQ regulations, the Navy included the No Action Alternative. Input from the scoping process as described in Section 1.9 (Public and Agency Participation and Intergovernmental Coordination) also affected development of the alternatives.

The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) as the action alternatives, including training elsewhere. For example, the Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWC China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training.

While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts.

The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.

In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives

carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).

With respect to the commenter's suggestion that *Ninety Days to Combat* be rewritten, to do so would be out of the scope for this Proposed Action and a revision to it would not be part of the NEPA process. As to potentially accommodating training under existing conditions or using other installations, these scenarios are addressed in the FEIS. *Ninety Days to Combat* was written specifically to assess the FRTC's capacity to provide sufficient-realistic training now and into the foreseeable future.

Regarding the comment that none of the criteria require the expansion of the base and the closure of so much public lands, in order for the Navy to meet the training capabilities required to meet evolving current and future threats, the Navy needs to withdraw additional lands to be sure the areas are clear and ensure public health and safety in Weapons Danger Zones and Surface Danger Zones that are created from these training activities. The Navy also considered terrain features (e.g., mountains), existing civilian infrastructure (e.g., highways), known environmental concerns, and the concerns of local and regional populations in developing potential alternatives. Based on these screening factors, the Navy determined that more space was needed for adequate training and adequate safety distances from the public. The Navy then used the screening and sub-factors as described in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) to evaluate whether potential alternatives met the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action. In addition to the No Action Alternative, the Navy identified three action alternatives for detailed analysis in this EIS. Under all alternatives within this EIS, the Navy would conduct the same types of aviation and ground training at the same tempos as analyzed by the U.S. Pacific Fleet in Alternative 2 of the 2015 Military Readiness Activities at Fallon Range Training Complex, Nevada Final Environmental Impact Statement (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015a). The Navy would redistribute training activities for more efficient use of the training space. The alternatives considered include management practices intended to reduce environmental effects of training. Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation Measures) further discusses management practices.

Regarding the suggestion to use virtual reality training, although virtual training and simulators are an important aspect of training activities and are already utilized, there are numerous reasons they do not sufficiently re-create fully integrated real-life situations that may be encountered by military personnel in a combat environment. For example, as discussed in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS, virtual training and simulators cannot recreate the physical stresses (e.g., increased heart rate and adrenalin levels) that a live-fire exercise provides. The FRTC is the only location where an entire carrier air wing can train as a single unit conducting the full arc of the mission, including pre-flight planning, ordnance handling, in-air activities, weapons deployment, and post-flight briefing. This cannot be accomplished via full mission simulations.

With respect to the range of alternatives presented in the FEIS, the Navy respectfully contends that it is reasonable because the Navy identified action alternatives that meet the purpose and need, selection criteria, and would be feasible. In addition, the Navy has considered a substantial number of other scenarios (from within and from the public) for potential inclusion as action alternatives. Chapter 2

(Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis. While it would hypothetically be possible to develop training systems at Nellis Air Force Base, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training currently uses nearly all of the complex's available training capacity (time and space). Nellis Air Force Base, as currently configured or as proposed, would not be able to support the intensity of both Navy and Air Force training, and therefore was not carried forward for further analysis.

Regarding the lack of a status quo alternative, the Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative, also known as the "status quo" alternative, would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

As described in the Code of Federal Regulations (40 CFR 1500), it is the responsibility of the Federal Agency to implement the procedural provisions of the NEPA. Likewise, in accordance with NEPA, the Federal Agency makes the any ultimate decision. Regarding the comment that there should be a reasonable alternative for the people who are greatly opposed to the expansion, the Navy worked to minimize impacts to the greatest extent compatible, however, it would not analyze an alternative that did not meet the screening factors or the requirements of its purpose and need in the EIS. In the case of this EIS, the "decision-maker" refers to the Secretary of the Navy, or designee, who is responsible for the approval of the Record of Decision. The potential selection and approval of any alternative by the decision-maker will be based on a review of all relevant facts, impact analyses, and comments received via the EIS public participation process. In this instance, however, Congress would ultimately be responsible for any ultimate decision authorizing the requested withdrawal of public lands to establish an expanded FRTC. Congress can pick and choose alternatives or a combination thereof or create their own alternative, including any time frame for the withdrawal.

The Navy will sign a ROD after consideration of the Final EIS and public comments. The Navy will publish a Notice of Availability of the ROD in the Federal Register; distribute the ROD to tribes, agencies, interested parties, and local newspapers; and post it on the FRTC Modernization EIS website. The ROD will document the Navy's final decision on the Proposed Action (to include potentially identifying an action alternative as a proposal to be submitted to Congress for action), the rationale behind that decision, and any commitments to mitigation and monitoring. Congress will then review the Navy's proposal and ROD and will be the ultimate decision maker for this action.

Regarding the comment that negative impact on the small communities and people that will be located closer to off-limits land as well as economic impacts, over the past several decades Joint Land Use Studies have assisted in preserving and protecting the lethality and readiness of our nation's military. During that time, the Navy identified that the compatibility challenges that the military and communities

face go beyond the use of land. Joint Land Use Studies can also address encroachment challenges such as spectrum interference, unmanned aerial systems, and cyber vulnerabilities. In recognition of the broader challenges faced by our military and communities the Joint Land Use Study is being rebranded as the Compatible Use Plan. State and community driven Compatible Use Plans will continue to be the primary tool to promote compatible use in order to sustain the military missions. The Navy is not authorized currently to fund emergency services in Gabbs. Following any ultimate Congressional decision, it is anticipated that the U.S. Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment Program will provide technical and financial assistance to state and local governments to undertake Compatible Use and Joint Land Use Studies in response to Military Department compatibility concerns. Joint land use studies represent a planning process that promotes open, continuous dialogue among the Military, surrounding jurisdictions, and states to support long-term sustainability and operability of military missions. The last Joint Land Use Study was completed for NAS Fallon in May of 2015, and serves as a comprehensive strategic plan with specific implementation actions to address and prevent incompatible civilian development that could impair the operational utility of military missions or impact available resources (i.e., air, land, electromagnetic spectrum). Building off of the successful Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) focused on placement of energy projects, OEA is launching a new FFO in an effort to further the Compatible Use Program. In addition to assistance with energy placement, the new FFO is expanded to allow state and local governments to request funding to assist states and communities to work with their local military installations to promote and guide civilian development and activities which are compatible and support the long-term readiness and operability of military installations, ranges, special use air space, military operation areas and military training routes. This FFO allows states and communities to nominate their installation(s) and region for compatible use efforts. OEA will maintain a concurrent annual process for the military services to nominate installations for Compatible Use Plans (see <http://oea.gov/office-economic-adjustment-announcement-federal-funding-opportunity-ffo>).

Regarding the comment that, negative impact on the small communities and people that will be located closer to off-limits land as well as be subjected to more noise, and safety disturbances, under the U.S. Department of Defense Reauthorization, P.L. 105-85, Div. A, Title X, Section 1079, Nov. 18, 1997, 111 Stat. 1916, special use airspace actions are exempt from Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act because establishment of avoidance areas result in unacceptable and severe operational and safety concerns. The Navy acknowledges noise sensitive areas and has established Noise Sensitive Areas (such as around wildlife refuges, incorporated areas, and certain tribal areas) in the past. The Navy is proposing new Noise Sensitive Areas as part of the Proposed Action around the incorporated areas of Crescent Valley and Eureka. The establishment of these Noise Sensitive Areas is considered compatible with military training activities and will include a 5 nautical mile radius and an elevation of 3,000 feet AGL.

Regarding comments that communities would lose land, and access to grazing permits and mining claims, affected private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land and all compensable rights associated with that land acquired by the United States. Claim holders for mining would potentially be eligible for compensation as described in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources). Pursuant to the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended (43 U.S.C. section 315q), as amended, the Navy would make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered as a

result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes, see Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex).

Regarding the comment that counties would lose part of their property tax, a detailed analysis of PILT is located in the Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at <http://frtcmodernization.com>) and discussed in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). There would be no change in PILT for Churchill, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing counties, and very little change in PILT for Lyon County; therefore, there would be no significant impacts from lost revenues from reduced PILT under any of the action alternatives. However, there could be a modest reduction in revenues at the state level insofar as lost hunting opportunities could result in a reduction of funding sources for NDOW. The Navy worked a local Nevada scientist to develop the Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at <http://frtcmodernization.com>). The report found that hunting-related (touristic) economic losses would be similar in scale for Mineral, Pershing, and Nye counties based on the percentage of lost revenue compared to total economic activity (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at <http://frtcmodernization.com>], Table B-1). Therefore, no significant impacts would occur in the affected counties due to lost recreational or touristic opportunities.

Regarding the comment that the Navy has not yet negotiated with land owners, this is a true statement. The Navy would not begin to contact private landowners until after any ultimate Congressional Decision was made. Negotiation prior to that time would be pre-decisional.

Regarding safety issues of concern of off range ordnance, the Navy implemented operational changes in November 1989 to eliminate off-range munitions, including reorienting strafing/bomb run-in lines and increasing surveillance of all drops. These operational changes have been effective in reducing off-range ordnance occurrences. A Memorandum of Understanding between NAS Fallon and the Walker River Paiute Tribe establishing protocols for both the Indian Tribe and the Navy to follow in responding to potential future off-range ordnance incidents (e.g., notification and coordinating access to reservation lands) was signed on May 14, 2007. A Memorandum of Agreement between the Indian Tribe and Navy was signed on May 24, 2017, updating and clarifying procedures for addressing any future off-range ordnance incidents on the Reservation. The Navy is actively working with the Indian Tribe to seek a mutually-agreeable resolution for the issue of historical off-range ordnance present on the Reservation. An effort to locate and clear historic ordnance was conducted and the Navy implemented measures that seek to eliminate (or at least dramatically reduce) the possibility of off-range ordnance near the southern boundary of training range B-19.

Per Navy policy (OPNAVINST 3710.7 [Series]), the release of any air-to-surface ordnance should be accomplished within Restricted Airspace and all such releases should impact on Navy land. As required by the Department of Defense Military Munitions Rule Implementation Procedures (April, 2017), ordnance that inadvertently lands outside Navy property would be retrieved as soon as possible once the Navy learns that it has landed off range. NAS Fallon has conducted cleanup operations in the past and repaired facilities in accordance with tribal wishes, and is planning to conduct additional cleanup operations in the near future.

Regarding safety concerns with the expansion of the ranges closer to populations, the ranges are expanded in order to encompass the Weapons Danger Zones from exercises, and therefore areas outside of the expansion areas would remain safe as any weapons would be contained within the expanded areas.

As discussed earlier in this response, regarding the status quo alternative, the Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration).

Regarding comments on biological resources, the Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.

Regarding noise impacts to sage grouse, currently, all state management plans concentrate on habitat availability, wildfire, and land-based chronic noise sources. Greater sage grouse lek location data indicates that usage areas are east of the land areas proposed for withdrawal or acquisition. Sage grouse in these areas would be exposed to noise from aircraft overflights. Available science indicates that short-term noise intrusion does not play a significant role in lek success. The Navy will work closely with BLM and NDOW to manage the sage grouse and other species on lands under the Navy’s control. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.

As discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), the response to sonic booms or other sudden disturbance is similar among many wildlife species – sudden and unfamiliar sounds usually act as an alarm and trigger a “flight” response; however, reaction to a given noise can vary widely depending on factors such as time of day, physical condition of the animal, physical environment, whether or not other physical stressors are present, and others. Although the startling effect of a sonic boom can be stressful to an animal, it is hard to generalize animal responses to noise disturbances across species. Recent literature suggests a fright is a common response across a variety of species, and that this ultimately leads to habituation. It has been reported that the intensities and durations of the startle response decrease as the number and frequency of exposures increase, suggesting no long-term adverse effects. Given the historical use of the airspace, and the persistence of aircraft operations and wildlife populations, wildlife within the MOA are likely habituated to aircraft overflights and associated noise (e.g., sonic booms).

Many of the above-listed behavioral and physiological responses to noise are within the range of normal adaptive responses to external stimuli, such as predation, that wild animals face on a regular basis. In many cases, individuals would return to homeostasis or a stable equilibrium almost immediately after exposure to a brief stimulus such as an aircraft overflight or sonic boom. The Final EIS has been updated to incorporate the latest information regarding noise and startle effects on wildlife.

Regarding impacts of live fire training to herds of animals such as pronghorn, as with Alternative 1, estimated noise levels under Alternative 3 within proposed range expansion areas and revised SUA would likely elicit physiological and behavioral responses in avian and mammal species. As described in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources) under the general discussion on noise stressors, noise exposures on

wildlife would be anticipated to be less than significant for the following reasons: (1) individual animals would be expected to recover quickly from these responses, (2) exposures would be intermittent and infrequent as training activities consist of non-continuous events, and (3) short term behavioral responses would not be expected to affect individual animal fitness or have population-level effects. In addition, as estimated noise levels within the proposed range expansion areas would occur within the same habitats as found within the current range areas, the proposed expansion areas would be expected to contain the same wildlife species. As current training operations within the existing ranges have not significantly impacted wildlife species (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015), it is expected that the same training activities would also not have significant impacts on the same wildlife species within an immediately adjacent area (i.e., proposed range expansion areas).

Regarding munitions that may occur off target and impact wildlife and biological resources, Impacts associated with these military training activities would not be significant because although individual animals may be impacted by disturbance or strikes from ordnance, it is not anticipated that population-level effects would occur (see Section 3.10 [Biological Resources] for further detail). As far as accuracy of ordnance impacting targets, The WDZ accounts not only for weapon accuracy, but also for potential weapon failures, ricochets, or broaches (a broach occurs when a weapon impacts the ground, burrows underground, and re-surfaces in another area, before finally coming to rest). To ensure public safety, and per Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3710 and FAA Joint Order 7400.8, the Navy must both (1) control and restrict public use of any land that is within a WDZ, and (2) ensure that restricted airspace configuration matches WDZs.

The WDZ represents the entire expected weapon hazard pattern from weapon release to impact and detonation, based on a probability of containment accuracy of 99.99 percent. The outermost oval represents the farthest that the weapon may travel based upon release conditions and depicts the area that the weapon will fall within (with 99.99 percent accuracy). The inner oval considers all potential weapon flight paths or failure modes, to include the worst-case “long” (past the target) or worst-case “short” (not reaching the target) weapon impacts, along with weapon ricochets.

Regarding comments on new fencing, as discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), to minimize impacts on animals and animal movements (e.g., bighorn sheep, pronghorn), BLM-certified fencing would be installed in accordance with specifications outlined in BLM Handbook H-1741-1 (Fencing). Proposed perimeter fencing would include BLM-approved 4-foot high strand fencing. Perimeter fencing would not impact wildlife movements (including ability to access water resources) because special-status game species (e.g., mule deer) can jump 4-foot fence heights (as intended by fence design), pronghorn can move through fences installed with proper strand spacing, and wire height and spacing allow for passage of smaller animals (e.g., kit fox). This fencing is not anticipated to impact sage grouse, as individuals or leks were not observed in the proposed withdrawal or acquisition area during biological surveys, and are not likely to occur within the ground range boundaries per NDOW data (see Figure 3.10-27 [Greater Sage-grouse Occurrences and BLM Habitat and Management Areas Within the Region of Influence]).

Regarding how the Navy would work with the NDOW to allow access for management, the Navy currently has an Access Management Memorandum of Understanding with NDOW that would be updated (with a new MOA) after any ultimate Congressional Decision on an action. Regarding impacts to golden eagles, potential impacts to bald and golden eagles are analyzed on an individual animal basis

(not just on effects to populations). Species protected under the MBTA are analyzed by major taxonomic groups within subcategories (e.g., passerines, shorebirds), and the impact analysis is conducted in terms of potential effects to populations of migratory birds. Based on the impact analysis presented in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources) for wildlife and special-status species, temporary direct impacts to bald and golden eagle populations from proposed aircraft operations and construction activities associated with the implementation of the Proposed Action would not be significant. Therefore, the Navy has determined that implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in the “taking” of bald or golden eagles, their nests, or their eggs as defined by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

Regarding Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), the proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTAs, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

Regarding impacts to Gabbs, the Navy would implement a 3-nautical-mile radius and a surface-to-1,500 feet AGL airspace exclusion zone around the Gabbs airport to allow for safe arrivals and departures, as discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace). Further the potential relocation of SR 361 would not cut off access to Gabbs or Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park. The notional relocation corridor for the potential re-routing of SR 361 can be found in Section 3.5.3 (Environmental Consequences). In Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics) of the EIS, the Navy determined that there would be no significant impacts on tourist areas, such as Fairview Peak earthquake fault, Berlin Ichthyosaur State Historic Park, Middlegate Station, Sand Mountain Recreation Area, and Lahontan State Recreation Area because these areas would be available for public use. In addition, tourism activities would continue to be allowed on lands surrounding the proposed withdrawal and acquisition area. Gabbs and the other communities around the FRTC would be impacted by loss of access to public lands, recreation, and tourism equally.

Regarding mining claim comments, The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value.

For existing patented mining claims, the federal government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.

Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. The Secretary of the Interior

determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam demonstrating a valuable mineral deposit a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.

Regarding water rights, the Navy recognizes the potential impact of the loss of water rights on the community. The Navy would purchase private water rights as real property. Additionally, acquisition of water rights would be factored into the processes for valuing grazing and mining-related just compensation or other authorized payments as appropriate. As discussed in Section 3.9 (Water Resources), the Navy does not have the authority to assist water rights holders with other water rights actions (i.e. change applications).

Regarding loss of recreation in the Monte Cristo Range, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTAs and surrounding areas.

Regarding Fairview Peak, under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative), the Navy would not withdraw the area and therefore it would remain open for tourism or other public use.

Regarding water quality and groundwater, as discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities. The Navy continuously monitors its operations to find ways to minimize the use of hazardous materials and to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes. Any spills would be managed and cleaned up in accordance with applicable state and federal regulatory requirements. If any such spill were to exceed reportable quantities as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for regulated material, the event would be immediately reported to the NAS Fallon Environmental Division for appropriate action per the Integrated Contingency Plan (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2009). Additionally, the DoD created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure DoD compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations.

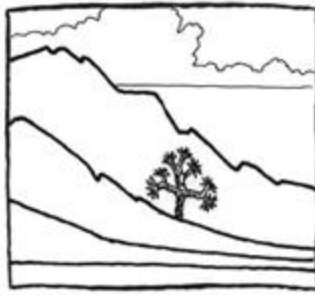
Lastly, Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3571.4, Operational Range Clearance Policy for Navy Ranges, establishes the policy and requirements for performing operational range clearance on Navy ranges in order to remove chemicals from the environment and reduce the degradation of them on ranges. While impact areas have been identified, specific target placement has not yet been determined. However, it is the Navy's intention to locate targets away from washes. The Navy has revised sections in the Final EIS, specifically in Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives), and Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety) with this information.

Regarding cultural resources, the Navy abides by stipulations found within the current 2011 PA between Nevada SHPO, BLM, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation with respect to withdrawn lands. Currently, existing withdrawn lands are managed under the prescriptions of the 2011 PA. The Navy is required to consult with the signatories of the 2011 PA (ACHP, SHPO & BLM) for approval of an amendment which adds the newly withdrawn lands. As part of this action, the Navy drafted an amendment of the 2011 PA for consultation and completion by 2021 (when the 2011 PA expires). This proposed amended 2011 PA would stipulate requirements for Navy cultural resources management of all Navy managed lands (withdrawn and purchased). Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources) of the Final EIS was updated regarding the PA process.

The Navy will continue to engage with all interested Tribes. This engagement will continue past the ROD, as the modernization would be implemented over the coming years. The Navy will avoid and/or minimize impacts on cultural resources wherever possible and follow Section 106 requirements. The Navy is committed to providing access to Tribes to the closed ranges and pushing for funding to conduct surveys in range “buffer” areas. The Navy will work with the tribes to prioritize survey areas. The Navy is working with the Nevada SHPO and ACHP to amend the current 2011 PA they are under for withdrawn lands. The Navy would complete Section 106 consultation on impacts due to loss of access for Tribes prior to the fencing of the newly withdrawn and acquired lands after any ultimate Congressional decision.

Regarding how Native American Rights of access would be maintained, the Navy would continue to coordinate with Indian Tribes on a case-by-case basis for access to traditional areas on ranges. In accordance with Executive Order 13175, *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments*, Department of Defense policies, the National Historic Preservation Act, and Navy instructions, the Navy engaged in Tribal consultations during scoping and following the public release of the Draft EIS. The Navy invited culturally affiliated Indian Tribes to participate in the NEPA process as Tribal Participants for this EIS (see Appendix C, Tribal Correspondence). The Navy invited these Indian Tribes to (1) participate in project meetings, (2) provide additional information related to cultural resources, (3) provide internal document review (e.g., the Class III Cultural Resources Inventory Report), and (4) review the draft reports in order to provide additional information regarding site locations during the development of the Draft EIS to assist the Navy in making the final determinations of eligibility of sites for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Navy invited and engaged in Government-to-Government consultations with the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada and the following federally recognized Indian Tribes: the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribes, Lovelock Paiute Tribe, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Summit Lake Paiute Tribe, Te-Moak Tribe of Western Shoshone Indians of Nevada (consisting of the Battle Mountain Band, Elko Band, South Fork Band, and Wells Band), Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, Walker River Paiute Tribe, Winnemucca Paiute Tribe, Yerington Paiute Tribe, and Yomba Shoshone Tribe. Appendix C (Tribal Correspondence) of the Final EIS was updated to include a summary of all outreach conducted by the Navy and official correspondence.



Basin and Range Watch

February 14th, 2019

To: Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

Comments uploaded to: <https://frtcmodernization.com/Public-Involvement/Submit-Your-Comment>

Re: Comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization DEIS

Basin and Range Watch is a 501(c)(3) non-profit working to conserve the deserts of Nevada and California and to educate the public about the diversity of life, culture, and history of the ecosystems and wild lands of the desert.

Background:

The Navy initiated an aviation training modernization program, its *Ninety Days to Combat Required Training Capabilities Study*, which determined that present bombing ranges were too restrictive at the Fallon Range Training Complex in Nevada.

After a 2016 Notice of Intent to undertake an environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and an extended scoping period, the Navy developed several alternatives. Alternative 3, the Preferred Alternative, would request land withdrawals from

public lands and restrict public access. Several bombing and training ranges would be enlarged, re-oriented, and moved.

The B-17 range in particular is proposed to be modernized to within tactically acceptable parameters: aircraft that fly faster and higher to drop live ordnance onto targets. It would be moved farther to the southeast.

These modifications would overlap 3,200 acres of Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, and the B-20 Range would overlap the northern part of the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge complex, and restrict public access to those portions. The Fox Peak Area of Critical Environmental Concern would have 11,600 acres withdrawn. All or parts of the Clan Alpine and Job Peak Wilderness Study Areas will apparently be tagged for removal by Congress.

The proposal requests Congressional renewal of the 1999 Public Land Withdrawal of 202,864 acres (scheduled to expire in November 2021) of the current military lands. But the proposal also requests Congress to withdraw and reserve for military use up to an additional 618,727 acres of federal land. Also, 65,152 acres of private and state lands would also be acquired, a large impact to the local county economies and tax base.

This military range expansion proposal will have very large impacts to public lands in central Nevada.

Government Shutdown:

Several cooperating agencies have been listed on this review. Most of the land in the proposed expansion area is under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management, but some belongs to the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The Federal Aviation Administration was also partially shut down. These 3 agencies had no one available to answer any questions during the 35-day government shut down which occurred entirely within the open comment period for this DEIS review. You should add 35 days to this review to ensure that all the information is made available. You contractors cannot answer all the questions we had relating to these agencies.

Purpose and Need Statement:

The Purpose and Need Statement is designed to accommodate the needs of the Navy for this proposed expansion. But it fails to recognize the needs of all public and private land owners the expansion would impact. It is also not appropriate to use National Security in the Purpose and Need Statement. These are technological upgrades and the jury is out on how successful they would be. Furthermore, it is subjective to claim National Security needs are greater than maintaining the lives and careers of all the people who would be impacted by this expansion. The Need statement should also talk about how a No Action Alternative would maintain the economies of the counties the expansion would impact. AS it stands, no small communities would benefit economically from the expansion.

The Purpose and Need Statement should be rewritten to include the “Needs” of the several thousand people who would be impacted by this expansion. This would include miners, recreationists, ranchers, land owners, hunters and anglers, and local counties.

The following 2 paragraphs appear in the Purpose and Need Statement:

“The FRTC is the only location available to the Navy that can support, house, and train an entire Carrier Air Wing (upward of 60 aircraft and all aircrew and support crews) for advanced Strike Warfare, Electronic Warfare, and Air Warfare training. In fact, every Navy Carrier Air Wing trains at the FRTC prior to deployment as part of the Optimized Fleet Response Plan (an approximately 36-month cycle of maintenance, basic and integrated training, deployment, and sustainment).”

“The overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, range, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operations ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command. “

Response: The Purpose and Need Statement appears to be presenting a need to take more land to accommodate specific technologies. The DEIS should look at the existing base as well as other military installations to diversify and expand operations. By just taking public land away, the DEIS fails to consider all the reasonable alternatives. In many ways, the Purpose and Need Statement appears to be an attempt to accommodate bombs, planes and other equipment specifically build for this regional expansion. We want you to consider more options with the land you have.

The proposed expansion Purpose and Need is based on what looks like a narrow “Need” to accommodate equipment built for specific purposes.

From page 1-9:

“Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new

weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change.”

Response: The impacts to people and the environment from the expansion will be so large, we would like to suggest that Ninety Days to Combat be rewritten to accommodate the existing conditions or to use another military installation for expanded operations.

On Page 1-10, the DEIS lists the following needs for **Training Needs and the Capabilities Evaluation Processing**:

- *providing the most threat-realistic training environment available to deploying forces;*
- *developing and validating aviation TTP.*
- *These training requirements define tactical level guidance for the effective employment of weapons systems, platforms (specific aircraft and other vehicles), and forces. In other words, TTP identify the required combat skills a warfighter needs to repetitively practice prior to deployment to be ready to respond in an actual combat situation when deployed; •*
- *assessing warfighting requirements across all Strike Warfare missions; •*
- *providing independent assessments and recommendations to the Chief of Naval Operations regarding investments in or proposed changes to existing programs that may impact naval aviation; and*
- *promoting prioritization, rapid development, and delivery of new doctrine, technologies, and training.*

Response: None of these criteria require the expansion of the base and the closure of so much public lands.

On Page 1-11, the DEIS justifies **Weapons Release Training and Need for Expanded Range Area** because *“modern aircraft fly at higher altitudes, release munitions at targets from 10–12 miles away, and require a larger safety area surrounding the target area during training.”*

If safety is such an issue, it would make sense to provide a virtual reality alternative to choose from. Or perhaps use another existing military base as an alternative for these kinds of tests. While the DEIS claims that virtual reality is not an option, it would seem like the pilot would never see the target at 12 miles away, so the bombs and missiles would be fired and calculated

by a computer anyway. These alternatives are important as the proposed alternatives do not provide a status quo and will have severe impacts on public and private land owners.

Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives:

The DEIS fails to provide a REASONABLE Range of Alternatives. Under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), you are required to provide a reasonable range of alternatives. NEPA was designed not just to protect the environment, but the health and lives of people too. The Council on Environmental Quality explains it here:

"The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was enacted to: declare a national policy which will encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment; to promote efforts which will prevent or eliminate damage to the environment and biosphere and stimulate the health and welfare of man; to enrich the understanding of the ecological systems and natural resources important to the Nation; and to establish a Council on Environmental Quality. Sec. 2 [42 U.S. Code § 4321]."

And -

"The ultimate goal of the NEPA process is to foster excellent action that protects, restores, and enhances our environment. This is achieved through the utilization of environmental assessments (EAs) and environmental impact statements (EISs), which provide public officials with relevant information and allow a "hard look" at the potential environmental consequences of each proposed project."

<https://ceq.doe.gov/index.html>

<https://www.energy.gov/sites/prod/files/G-CEQ-40Questions.pdf>

The DEIS only provides the NEPA required No Action Alternative and three slightly different alternatives that allow the approximate same acreage for the expansion of the training base.

The DEIS does not provide a Status Quo Alternative that allows the base to be renewed and to remain at its current acreage. The reason is that expanded operations cannot continue in the present situation.

But the No Action Alternative would give the existing base back to the Bureau of Land Management and that would create several hazards for the BLM to clean up. It is not likely to happen. The BLM is not supporting this alternative.

The DEIS fails to provide a realistic alternative that does not take additional public land but allows the Navy to keep its current land. This also fails to provide a reasonable alternative for the people who are greatly opposed to this expansion. The expansion will most likely have a

negative impact on the small communities and people that will be located closer to off-limits land as well as be subjected to more noise, safety disturbances as well as economic impacts. Many people in communities would lose access to grazing permits and mining claims. Counties would lose part of their property tax base. This would fall under NEPA as Environmental Justice.

The Navy will need to take about 65,000 acres of private lands. Some of the lands are owned by mining companies while other are owned by individuals. At the public meeting in Gabbs, Nevada, the Navy told us they had not even negotiated with land owners to acquire these lands. A Status Quo alternative would prevent the need to take these private lands.

Safety issues are a concern and there are reports of pilots bombing lands outside the existing range by accident. Moving the expansion so close to communities would increase this risk. A Status Quo alternative would eliminate the increased risk to adjacent areas.

While the Navy claims the Status Quo would not work for them, this alternative would meet the full requirements of NEPA to protect the environment and the people who would be impacted by the expansion.

We believe the elimination of this alternative makes the DEIS incomplete and the needs and risks to local people will be overlooked. Please add the Status Quo alternative back to the review.

Biological Resources:

We disagree that no meaningful impacts will happen to bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, and greater sage-grouse.

Most of the high-quality sage-grouse habitat is east of the proposed expansion, but there is also some good habitat within the bombing range. Noise impacts would be significant to sage-grouse, which are very sensitive to loud noise and ground disturbance. Noise impacts will increase with the proposed expansion.

How will combat training scare wildlife, or even cause mortality? Herds of antelope may roam these ranges and could be in harm's way. For example, range Bravo-16 will have Humvee combat training that fire .50 caliber machine guns from Humvee turrets, with a need to fire in a 360 degree circle. What will be the impacts to wildlife from this kind of live fire training?



.50 caliber machine gun
fired from turret.

F-18 fighter jets, EA-18G Growler aircraft, E-2C Hawkeye radar planes, helicopters supporting Navy SEAL training, and bombing and missile target runs. Some miss-fires and malfunctions such as control electronics lock out and battery failure on missiles and bombs happen, as admitted by the Navy, could send these munitions off target. How will this impacts wildlife and biological resources. In a past public meeting, a 75% accuracy of bombing targets was mentioned—can this be verified and analyzed?

More new fences will be built to exclude livestock and mark new boundaries. These can cause a collision mortality risk to sage-grouse, and even wildlife-friendly fence designs can hinder mule deer, bighorn sheep, and pronghorn antelope movements.

How will the Navy work with the Nevada Department of Wildlife to allow access to manage these resources when ranges are not hot?

Golden eagles nest in many of the mountains proposed for withdrawal—how will combat training and bombing impact nesting pairs, foraging, and home ranges of eagles?

Wilderness Values:

We are concerned that the Clan Alpine and Job Peak Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) will be recommended for removal, as the Navy requests Congressional legislation to undo these designations. The WSAs are adjacent to electronic ranges and ground convoy training areas, and the Navy told us at the Gabbs meeting that wilderness designations were not considered appropriate uses. This should be clarified.

Rural Community Quality of Life and Recreation:

The community of Gabbs will receive the brunt of impacts from reduced public lands access, reduced economic benefits for ranches, small mining, hunting, rockhounding, wildlife viewing, camping, four-wheel-drive touring, and tourism. The counties will lose tax bases of private lands. Bombing noise will increase, as well as aircraft flights. Hikers, desert explorers, Jeep tourists, and other recreational users will lose a huge variety of beautiful and scenic Nevada wildlands.

The Navy told us that they have not even begun to talk with private land owners about purchasing their properties inside the proposed withdrawal. Will miners be reimbursed for mining claims lost?

There are over 100 patented mining claims in the proposed withdrawal, and Nye County gets a percentage of the assessment each year—this will be lost.

Water rights will also be impacted, and will need to be relocated. With water resources becoming rarer across the west, how will new water sources be found in this arid region?

The B-17 range includes the entire pristine and remote Monte Cristo Range adjacent to Gabbs Valley. The Monte Cristos have unique geologic formations consisting of sculpted volcanic tuffs and multi-colored sedimentary hills and pinnacles.

The FRTC expansion will consume the Fairview Peak range and adjacent rugged foothills to the east of the existing B-17, all of which will be closed to public use, including interesting geological features such as a massive earthquake fault scarp.

Water Quality and Groundwater:

What toxic residues from bombing and combat training will leach into the regional groundwater? Chemicals and residues may not simply disintegrate over time, or may take years to degrade. This should be analyzed.

Cultural Resources:

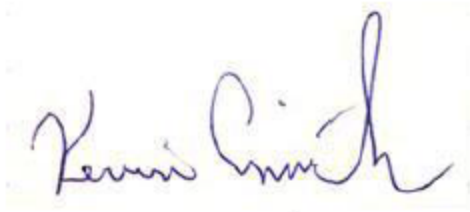
How will Native American rights of access be maintained to traditional areas?

Conclusion:

We ask for a Status quo Alternative to be analyzed in the Final EIS. There is no alternative that allows Congress to simply renew the current land withdrawal for the Fallon Range Training Complex. Reasons given for this, from discussions with NEPA personnel at the public meeting, were vague and unconvincing—such as ‘the need for more land.’ More efficient use of training scheduling, and more digital modeling of advanced bombing runs could be made use of on present ranges, based on other military training ranges such as in use by the US Air Force.

The Undersecretary of the Navy would sign the ROD. We note, however, that Congress still needs to appropriate funds for this proposed expansion even after any approval. Basin and Range watch

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin Emmerich".

Kevin Emmerich

Laura Cunningham

Co-Founders

Basin and Range Watch

PO Box 70

Beatty NV 89003

Appendix: The photos on this page are provided by a Basin and Range Watch supporter. All these scenes are within the proposed military expansion area, and public access would be cut off.

F.6.3.18.2 Response

Thank you for your participation in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Regarding the request for a comment period extension, the Draft EIS was released for public review Nov. 16, 2018, for a 60-day public comment period, 15 days more than the required 45-day public review period under NEPA. The Navy extended the public comment period additional 30 days, to close Feb. 14, 2019, for a total of 90 days for public review of the Draft EIS. Public notices of the comment period extension were published in local newspapers and the *Federal Register*, and the Navy distributed postcards to the project mailing list (including attendees of the Draft EIS public meetings), letters to Indian Tribes, news releases to media, and emails to subscribers on the project website.

Regarding the government shutdown, the public comment period was extended as discussed in the response above, and responses from agencies such as the FAA, USFWS, and BLM would not have

occurred during the public comment period, but rather after it. Therefore, the government shutdown did not impact the public participation process as a part of compliance with NEPA.

Regarding the comments on background and the purpose and need for the Proposed Action, the purpose of the NEPA process is to ensure that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before any ultimate decisions are made and before actions are taken. The purpose and need is intended to focus specifically on the underlying purpose and need that the agency is responding to—in terms of its own mission requirements—while the needs and concerns of public and private land owners in the area are reflected in the overall development of the EIS and its discussion of various impacts. The Navy analyzed the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives, and the analysis is documented in the EIS. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and has updated the analysis where appropriate. Public comments received during scoping and review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) are an important part of the NEPA process. The purpose of the public comment process is to provide members of the public an opportunity to submit their comments and concerns regarding the Proposed Action, alternatives, and the analysis of potential environmental impacts. The Navy reviewed all comments submitted during the scoping periods (August 26, 2016 through December 12, 2016) and during review of the Draft EIS (November 2018 to February 2019). All comments received are included as part of the administrative record for the project. Many commenters noted they submitted comments during the scoping process of the EIS but never received a formal response. Although the Navy is not required under NEPA to respond to scoping comments, the Navy did consider all scoping comments in preparing the Draft EIS and used them to shape the breadth and depth of the analysis in the Draft EIS. Section 1.9 (Public and Agency Participation and Intergovernmental Coordination), summarizes the public scoping comments received during the 2016 scoping efforts. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable. This expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).

This expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative) currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).

The proposed de-designation of Wilderness Study Area land is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and

without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVT, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. To clarify, under the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3), Fairview Peak would remain open and accessible for recreation purposes.

As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operations ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command. As required by the CEQ regulations, the Navy included the No Action Alternative. Input from the scoping process as described in Section 1.9 (Public and Agency Participation and Intergovernmental Coordination) also affected development of the alternatives.

The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) as the action alternatives, including training elsewhere. For example, the Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWC China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training.

While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts.

The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.

In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives

carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).

With respect to the commenter's suggestion that *Ninety Days to Combat* be rewritten, to do so would be out of the scope for this Proposed Action and a revision to it would not be part of the NEPA process. As to potentially accommodating training under existing conditions or using other installations, these scenarios are addressed in the FEIS. *Ninety Days to Combat* was written specifically to assess the FRTC's capacity to provide sufficient-realistic training now and into the foreseeable future.

Regarding the comment that none of the criteria require the expansion of the base and the closure of so much public lands, in order for the Navy to meet the training capabilities required to meet evolving current and future threats, the Navy needs to withdraw additional lands to be sure the areas are clear and ensure public health and safety in Weapons Danger Zones and Surface Danger Zones that are created from these training activities. The Navy also considered terrain features (e.g., mountains), existing civilian infrastructure (e.g., highways), known environmental concerns, and the concerns of local and regional populations in developing potential alternatives. Based on these screening factors, the Navy determined that more space was needed for adequate training and adequate safety distances from the public. The Navy then used the screening and sub-factors as described in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) to evaluate whether potential alternatives met the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action. In addition to the No Action Alternative, the Navy identified three action alternatives for detailed analysis in this EIS. Under all alternatives within this EIS, the Navy would conduct the same types of aviation and ground training at the same tempos as analyzed by the U.S. Pacific Fleet in Alternative 2 of the 2015 Military Readiness Activities at Fallon Range Training Complex, Nevada Final Environmental Impact Statement (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015a). The Navy would redistribute training activities for more efficient use of the training space. The alternatives considered include management practices intended to reduce environmental effects of training. Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation Measures) further discusses management practices.

Regarding the suggestion to use virtual reality training, although virtual training and simulators are an important aspect of training activities and are already utilized, there are numerous reasons they do not sufficiently re-create fully integrated real-life situations that may be encountered by military personnel in a combat environment. For example, as discussed in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS, virtual training and simulators cannot recreate the physical stresses (e.g., increased heart rate and adrenalin levels) that a live-fire exercise provides. The FRTC is the only location where an entire carrier air wing can train as a single unit conducting the full arc of the mission, including pre-flight planning, ordnance handling, in-air activities, weapons deployment, and post-flight briefing. This cannot be accomplished via full mission simulations.

With respect to the range of alternatives presented in the FEIS, the Navy respectfully contends that it is reasonable because the Navy identified action alternatives that meet the purpose and need, selection criteria, and would be feasible. In addition, the Navy has considered a substantial number of other scenarios (from within and from the public) for potential inclusion as action alternatives. Chapter 2

(Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis. While it would hypothetically be possible to develop training systems at Nellis Air Force Base, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training currently uses nearly all of the complex's available training capacity (time and space). Nellis Air Force Base, as currently configured or as proposed, would not be able to support the intensity of both Navy and Air Force training, and therefore was not carried forward for further analysis.

Regarding the lack of a status quo alternative, the Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative, also known as the "status quo" alternative, would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

As described in the Code of Federal Regulations (40 CFR 1500), it is the responsibility of the Federal Agency to implement the procedural provisions of the NEPA. Likewise, in accordance with NEPA, the Federal Agency makes the decision. Regarding the comment that there should be a reasonable alternative for the people who are greatly opposed to the expansion, the Navy worked to minimize impacts to the greatest extent compatible, however, it would not analyze an alternative that did not meet the screening factors or the requirements of its purpose and need in the EIS. In the case of this EIS, the "decision-maker" refers to the Secretary of the Navy, or designee, who is responsible for the approval of the Record of Decision. The potential selection and approval of any alternative by the decision-maker will be based on a review of all relevant facts, impact analyses, and comments received via the EIS public participation process. In this instance, however, Congress would ultimately be responsible for any ultimate decision authorizing the requested withdrawal of public lands to establish an expanded FRTC. Congress can pick and choose alternatives or a combination thereof or create their own alternative, including any time frame for the withdrawal.

The Navy will sign a ROD after consideration of the Final EIS and public comments. The Navy will publish a Notice of Availability of the ROD in the Federal Register; distribute the ROD to tribes, agencies, interested parties, and local newspapers; and post it on the FRTC Modernization EIS website. The ROD will document the Navy's final decision on the Proposed Action (to include potentially identifying an action alternative as a proposal to be submitted to Congress for action), the rationale behind that decision, and any commitments to mitigation and monitoring. Congress will then review the Navy's proposal and ROD and will be the ultimate decision maker for this action.

Regarding the comment that negative impact on the small communities and people that will be located closer to off-limits land as well as economic impacts, over the past several decades Joint Land Use Studies have assisted in preserving and protecting the lethality and readiness of our nation's military. During that time, the Navy identified that the compatibility challenges that the military and communities

face go beyond the use of land. Joint Land Use Studies can also address encroachment challenges such as spectrum interference, unmanned aerial systems, and cyber vulnerabilities. In recognition of the broader challenges faced by our military and communities the Joint Land Use Study is being rebranded as the Compatible Use Plan. State and community driven Compatible Use Plans will continue to be the primary tool to promote compatible use in order to sustain the military missions. The Navy is not authorized currently to fund emergency services in Gabbs. Following any ultimate Congressional decision, it is anticipated that the U.S. Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment Program will provide technical and financial assistance to state and local governments to undertake Compatible Use and Joint Land Use Studies in response to Military Department compatibility concerns. Joint land use studies represent a planning process that promotes open, continuous dialogue among the Military, surrounding jurisdictions, and states to support long-term sustainability and operability of military missions. The last Joint Land Use Study was completed for NAS Fallon in May of 2015, and serves as a comprehensive strategic plan with specific implementation actions to address and prevent incompatible civilian development that could impair the operational utility of military missions or impact available resources (i.e., air, land, electromagnetic spectrum). Building off of the successful Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) Federal Funding Opportunity (FFO) focused on placement of energy projects, OEA is launching a new FFO in an effort to further the Compatible Use Program. In addition to assistance with energy placement, the new FFO is expanded to allow state and local governments to request funding to assist states and communities to work with their local military installations to promote and guide civilian development and activities which are compatible and support the long-term readiness and operability of military installations, ranges, special use air space, military operation areas and military training routes. This FFO allows states and communities to nominate their installation(s) and region for compatible use efforts. OEA will maintain a concurrent annual process for the military services to nominate installations for Compatible Use Plans (see <http://oea.gov/office-economic-adjustment-announcement-federal-funding-opportunity-ffo>).

Regarding the comment that, negative impact on the small communities and people that will be located closer to off-limits land as well as be subjected to more noise, and safety disturbances, under the U.S. Department of Defense Reauthorization, P.L. 105-85, Div. A, Title X, Section 1079, Nov. 18, 1997, 111 Stat. 1916, special use airspace actions are exempt from Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act because establishment of avoidance areas result in unacceptable and severe operational and safety concerns. The Navy acknowledges noise sensitive areas and has established Noise Sensitive Areas (such as around wildlife refuges, incorporated areas, and certain tribal areas) in the past. The Navy is proposing new Noise Sensitive Areas as part of the Proposed Action around the incorporated areas of Crescent Valley and Eureka. The establishment of these Noise Sensitive Areas is considered compatible with military training activities and will include a 5 nautical mile radius and an elevation of 3,000 feet AGL.

Regarding comments that communities would lose land, and access to grazing permits and mining claims, affected private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land and all compensable rights associated with that land acquired by the United States. Claim holders for mining would potentially be eligible for compensation as described in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources). Pursuant to the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended (43 U.S.C. section 315q), as amended, the Navy would make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered as a

result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes, see Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex).

Regarding the comment that counties would lose part of their property tax, a detailed analysis of PILT is located in the Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at <http://frtcmodernization.com>) and discussed in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). There would be no change in PILT for Churchill, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing counties, and very little change in PILT for Lyon County; therefore, there would be no significant impacts from lost revenues from reduced PILT under any of the action alternatives. However, there could be a modest reduction in revenues at the state level insofar as lost hunting opportunities could result in a reduction of funding sources for NDOW. The Navy worked a local Nevada scientist to develop the Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at <http://frtcmodernization.com>). The report found that hunting-related (touristic) economic losses would be similar in scale for Mineral, Pershing, and Nye counties based on the percentage of lost revenue compared to total economic activity (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at <http://frtcmodernization.com>], Table B-1). Therefore, no significant impacts would occur in the affected counties due to lost recreational or touristic opportunities.

Regarding the comment that the Navy has not yet negotiated with land owners, this is a true statement. The Navy would not begin to contact private landowners until after any ultimate Congressional decision was made. Negotiation prior to that time would be pre-decisional.

Regarding safety issues of concern of off range ordnance, the Navy implemented operational changes in November 1989 to eliminate off-range munitions, including reorienting strafing/bomb run-in lines and increasing surveillance of all drops. These operational changes have been effective in reducing off-range ordnance occurrences. A Memorandum of Understanding between NAS Fallon and the Walker River Paiute Tribe establishing protocols for both the Indian Tribe and the Navy to follow in responding to potential future off-range ordnance incidents (e.g., notification and coordinating access to reservation lands) was signed on May 14, 2007. A Memorandum of Agreement between the Indian Tribe and Navy was signed on May 24, 2017, updating and clarifying procedures for addressing any future off-range ordnance incidents on the Reservation. The Navy is actively working with the Indian Tribe to seek a mutually-agreeable resolution for the issue of historical off-range ordnance present on the Reservation. An effort to locate and clear historic ordnance was conducted and the Navy implemented measures that seek to eliminate (or at least dramatically reduce) the possibility of off-range ordnance near the southern boundary of training range B-19.

Per Navy policy (OPNAVINST 3710.7 [Series]), the release of any air-to-surface ordnance should be accomplished within Restricted Airspace and all such releases should impact on Navy land. As required by the Department of Defense Military Munitions Rule Implementation Procedures (April, 2017), ordnance that inadvertently lands outside Navy property would be retrieved as soon as possible once the Navy learns that it has landed off range. NAS Fallon has conducted cleanup operations in the past and repaired facilities in accordance with tribal wishes, and is planning to conduct additional cleanup operations in the near future.

Regarding safety concerns with the expansion of the ranges closer to populations, the ranges are expanded in order to encompass the Weapons Danger Zones from exercises, and therefore areas outside of the expansion areas would remain safe as any weapons would be contained within the expanded areas.

As discussed earlier in this response, regarding the status quo alternative, the Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration).

Regarding comments on biological resources, the Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.

Regarding noise impacts to sage grouse, currently, all state management plans concentrate on habitat availability, wildfire, and land-based chronic noise sources. Greater sage grouse lek location data indicates that usage areas are east of the land areas proposed for withdrawal or acquisition. Sage grouse in these areas would be exposed to noise from aircraft overflights. Available science indicates that short-term noise intrusion does not play a significant role in lek success. The Navy will work closely with BLM and NDOW to manage the sage grouse and other species on lands under the Navy’s control. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.

As discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), the response to sonic booms or other sudden disturbance is similar among many wildlife species – sudden and unfamiliar sounds usually act as an alarm and trigger a “flight” response; however, reaction to a given noise can vary widely depending on factors such as time of day, physical condition of the animal, physical environment, whether or not other physical stressors are present, and others. Although the startling effect of a sonic boom can be stressful to an animal, it is hard to generalize animal responses to noise disturbances across species. Recent literature suggests a fright is a common response across a variety of species, and that this ultimately leads to habituation. It has been reported that the intensities and durations of the startle response decrease as the number and frequency of exposures increase, suggesting no long-term adverse effects. Given the historical use of the airspace, and the persistence of aircraft operations and wildlife populations, wildlife within the MOA are likely habituated to aircraft overflights and associated noise (e.g., sonic booms).

Many of the above-listed behavioral and physiological responses to noise are within the range of normal adaptive responses to external stimuli, such as predation, that wild animals face on a regular basis. In many cases, individuals would return to homeostasis or a stable equilibrium almost immediately after exposure to a brief stimulus such as an aircraft overflight or sonic boom. The Final EIS has been updated to incorporate the latest information regarding noise and startle effects on wildlife.

Regarding impacts of live fire training to herds of animals such as pronghorn, as with Alternative 1, estimated noise levels under Alternative 3 within proposed range expansion areas and revised SUA would likely elicit physiological and behavioral responses in avian and mammal species. As described in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources) under the general discussion on noise stressors, noise exposures on

wildlife would be anticipated to be less than significant for the following reasons: (1) individual animals would be expected to recover quickly from these responses, (2) exposures would be intermittent and infrequent as training activities consist of non-continuous events, and (3) short term behavioral responses would not be expected to affect individual animal fitness or have population-level effects. In addition, as estimated noise levels within the proposed range expansion areas would occur within the same habitats as found within the current range areas, the proposed expansion areas would be expected to contain the same wildlife species. As current training operations within the existing ranges have not significantly impacted wildlife species (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015), it is expected that the same training activities would also not have significant impacts on the same wildlife species within an immediately adjacent area (i.e., proposed range expansion areas).

Regarding munitions that may occur off target and impact wildlife and biological resources, Impacts associated with these military training activities would not be significant because although individual animals may be impacted by disturbance or strikes from ordnance, it is not anticipated that population-level effects would occur (see Section 3.10 [Biological Resources] for further detail). As far as accuracy of ordnance impacting targets, The WDZ accounts not only for weapon accuracy, but also for potential weapon failures, ricochets, or broaches (a broach occurs when a weapon impacts the ground, burrows underground, and re-surfaces in another area, before finally coming to rest). To ensure public safety, and per Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3710 and FAA Joint Order 7400.8, the Navy must both (1) control and restrict public use of any land that is within a WDZ, and (2) ensure that restricted airspace configuration matches WDZs.

The WDZ represents the entire expected weapon hazard pattern from weapon release to impact and detonation, based on a probability of containment accuracy of 99.99 percent. The outermost oval represents the farthest that the weapon may travel based upon release conditions and depicts the area that the weapon will fall within (with 99.99 percent accuracy). The inner oval considers all potential weapon flight paths or failure modes, to include the worst-case “long” (past the target) or worst-case “short” (not reaching the target) weapon impacts, along with weapon ricochets.

Regarding comments on new fencing, as discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), to minimize impacts on animals and animal movements (e.g., bighorn sheep, pronghorn), BLM-certified fencing would be installed in accordance with specifications outlined in BLM Handbook H-1741-1 (Fencing). Proposed perimeter fencing would include BLM-approved 4-foot high strand fencing. Perimeter fencing would not impact wildlife movements (including ability to access water resources) because special-status game species (e.g., mule deer) can jump 4-foot fence heights (as intended by fence design), pronghorn can move through fences installed with proper strand spacing, and wire height and spacing allow for passage of smaller animals (e.g., kit fox). This fencing is not anticipated to impact sage grouse, as individuals or leks were not observed in the proposed withdrawal or acquisition area during biological surveys, and are not likely to occur within the ground range boundaries per NDOW data (see Figure 3.10-27 [Greater Sage-grouse Occurrences and BLM Habitat and Management Areas Within the Region of Influence]).

Regarding how the Navy would work with the NDOW to allow access for management, the Navy currently has an Access Management Memorandum of Understanding with NDOW that would be updated (with a new MOA) after any ultimate Congressional Decision on an action. Regarding impacts to golden eagles, potential impacts to bald and golden eagles are analyzed on an individual animal basis

(not just on effects to populations). Species protected under the MBTA are analyzed by major taxonomic groups within subcategories (e.g., passerines, shorebirds), and the impact analysis is conducted in terms of potential effects to populations of migratory birds. Based on the impact analysis presented in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources) for wildlife and special-status species, temporary direct impacts to bald and golden eagle populations from proposed aircraft operations and construction activities associated with the implementation of the Proposed Action would not be significant. Therefore, the Navy has determined that implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in the “taking” of bald or golden eagles, their nests, or their eggs as defined by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

Regarding Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), the proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

Regarding impacts to Gabbs, the Navy would implement a 3-nautical-mile radius and a surface-to-1,500 feet AGL airspace exclusion zone around the Gabbs airport to allow for safe arrivals and departures, as discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace). Further the potential relocation of SR 361 would not cut off access to Gabbs or Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park. The notional relocation corridor for the potential re-routing of SR 361 can be found in Section 3.5.3 (Environmental Consequences). In Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics) of the EIS, the Navy determined that there would be no significant impacts on tourist areas, such as Fairview Peak earthquake fault, Berlin Ichthyosaur State Historic Park, Middlegate Station, Sand Mountain Recreation Area, and Lahontan State Recreation Area because these areas would be available for public use. In addition, tourism activities would continue to be allowed on lands surrounding the proposed withdrawal and acquisition area. Gabbs and the other communities around the FRTC would be impacted by loss of access to public lands, recreation, and tourism equally.

Regarding mining claim comments, The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value.

For existing patented mining claims, the federal government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.

Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. The Secretary of the Interior

determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam demonstrating a valuable mineral deposit a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.

Regarding water rights, the Navy recognizes the potential impact of the loss of water rights on the community. The Navy would purchase private water rights as real property. Additionally, acquisition of water rights would be factored into the processes for valuing grazing and mining-related just compensation or other authorized payments as appropriate. As discussed in Section 3.9 (Water Resources), the Navy does not have the authority to assist water rights holders with other water rights actions (i.e. change applications).

Regarding loss of recreation in the Monte Cristo Range, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTAs and surrounding areas.

Regarding Fairview Peak, under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative), the Navy would not withdraw the area and therefore it would remain open for tourism or other public use.

Regarding water quality and groundwater, as discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities. The Navy continuously monitors its operations to find ways to minimize the use of hazardous materials and to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes. Any spills would be managed and cleaned up in accordance with applicable state and federal regulatory requirements. If any such spill were to exceed reportable quantities as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for regulated material, the event would be immediately reported to the NAS Fallon Environmental Division for appropriate action per the Integrated Contingency Plan (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2009). Additionally, the DoD created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure DoD compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations.

Lastly, Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3571.4, Operational Range Clearance Policy for Navy Ranges, establishes the policy and requirements for performing operational range clearance on Navy ranges in order to remove chemicals from the environment and reduce the degradation of them on ranges. While impact areas have been identified, specific target placement has not yet been determined. However, it is the Navy's intention to locate targets away from washes. The Navy has revised sections in the Final EIS, specifically in Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives), and Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety) with this information.

Regarding cultural resources, the Navy abides by stipulations found within the 2011 PA between Nevada SHPO, BLM, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation with respect to withdrawn lands. Currently, existing withdrawn lands are managed under the prescriptions of the 2011 PA. The Navy is required to consult with the signatories of the 2011 PA (ACHP, SHPO & BLM) for approval of an amendment which adds the newly withdrawn lands. As part of this action, the Navy drafted an amendment to the 2011 PA for consultation and completion by 2021 (when the 2011 PA expires). This proposed amended 2011 PA would stipulate requirements for Navy cultural resources management of all Navy managed lands (withdrawn and purchased). Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources) of the Final EIS was updated regarding the PA process.

The Navy will continue to engage with all interested Tribes. This engagement will continue past the ROD, as the modernization would be implemented over the coming years. The Navy will avoid and/or minimize impacts on cultural resources wherever possible and follow Section 106 requirements. The Navy is committed to providing access to Tribes to the closed ranges and pushing for funding to conduct surveys in range “buffer” areas. The Navy will work with the tribes to prioritize survey areas. The Navy is working with the Nevada SHPO and ACHP to amend the current 2011 PA they are under for withdrawn lands. The Navy would complete Section 106 consultation on impacts due to loss of access for Tribes prior to the fencing of the newly withdrawn and acquired lands after any ultimate Congressional decision.

Regarding how Native American Rights of access would be maintained, the Navy would continue to coordinate with Indian Tribes on a case-by-case basis for access to traditional areas on ranges. In accordance with Executive Order 13175, *Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments*, Department of Defense policies, the National Historic Preservation Act, and Navy instructions, the Navy engaged in Tribal consultations during scoping and following the public release of the Draft EIS. The Navy invited culturally affiliated Indian Tribes to participate in the NEPA process as Tribal Participants for this EIS (see Appendix C, Tribal Correspondence). The Navy invited these Indian Tribes to (1) participate in project meetings, (2) provide additional information related to cultural resources, (3) provide internal document review (e.g., the Class III Cultural Resources Inventory Report), and (4) review the draft reports in order to provide additional information regarding site locations during the development of the Draft EIS to assist the Navy in making the final determinations of eligibility of sites for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Navy invited and engaged in Government-to-Government consultations with the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada and the following federally recognized Indian Tribes: the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribes, Lovelock Paiute Tribe, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Summit Lake Paiute Tribe, Te-Moak Tribe of Western Shoshone Indians of Nevada (consisting of the Battle Mountain Band, Elko Band, South Fork Band, and Wells Band), Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, Walker River Paiute Tribe, Winnemucca Paiute Tribe, Yerington Paiute Tribe, and Yomba Shoshone Tribe. Appendix C (Tribal Correspondence) of the Final EIS was updated to include a summary of all outreach conducted by the Navy and official correspondence.

F.6.3.19 Erquiaga, C. (Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Carl	Erquiaga	Please see attached	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy’s responses to your comments that were attached.



February 14, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering
Command Southwest
Code EV21.AK
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RE: COMMENTS – Comments FRTC Modernization Draft EIS

We appreciate this opportunity to comment on the NAS Fallon Range Training Complex modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP) is a national non-profit conservation organization working to guarantee all Americans quality places to hunt and fish. The TRCP works with our 58 formal partners and represents over 89,000 individual members nationally and more than 2,800 individuals throughout the state of Nevada. Given the resulting impacts to public access and wildlife management by the proposed expansion of the training ranges at NAS Fallon, the future management of these federal public lands is of great interest to us, our partners, and Nevada sportsmen - as these areas are renowned for world class hunting.

General Comments

While the Draft EIS addresses some concerns for sportsmen raised in scoping it is lacking in other areas and raises new concerns. Alternative 3 has been identified as the Navy's preferred alternative. The TRCP believes, while this is the only viable option proposed, there are still many concerns. There is still a concern that the No-Action alternative is not viable and fails to meet the requirements of NEPA.

Low Level Flight Exercises/Airspace: Primary Greater Sage Grouse habitat exists throughout the areas under airspace withdrawals in the FRTC modernization proposal. Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) has identified over 50 sage grouse leks under that airspace. Noise levels greater than 25 db have been documented to impact sage grouse, particularly while breeding and nesting. Seasonal timing and flight altitude restrictions should be designed to mitigate those impacts to grouse during breeding and nesting season in those areas identified by NDOW.

Wildfire: There is an extensive history of Navy exercise caused wildfire, both on and off the designated ranges. In 2017 nearly 23,000 acres were burned after a fire was ignited on the B-17 range. Potential safety concerns over on-range unexploded ordnance and limited access hampered fire control efforts to a great extent. Fire suppression efforts consisted primarily of allowing the fire to burn until it could be engaged off the range. Several other fires on public land have been ignited by flares used in Navy exercises. Much of the burned landscape returns as an annual cheat grass monoculture which is susceptible to repeated fires in subsequent years. On-range restoration is impossible due to safety concerns. The Navy should be required to create a comprehensive Fire Management Plan complete with dedicated funding for fire suppression and firefighting equipment as well as funding for restoration following wildfire. Fire apparatus and manpower should be staged near probable ignition points during high fire risk periods.

Feral Horses: Feral horses are common in the DVTa and are considered to be above appropriate management levels (AML). BLM must be allowed and encouraged to manage feral horse population levels at or below AML. Although no feral horses currently exist in the proposed B-17 or B-20 withdrawal areas the Navy must be prepared to remove feral horses immediately should animals emigrate from surrounding areas.

Range Specific Concerns

B-20

Wildlife: The southern boundary of the proposed withdrawal would be contiguous with the northern boundary of the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (SNWR) and would also include several sections of land that are within the refuge. The SNWR is a major migratory flyway stop over and nesting area for waterfowl and shore birds. Migratory routes between SNWR and points in north eastern Nevada, southern Idaho and northern Utah could be impacted by increased aircraft traffic from new directions under the proposal. Waterfowl flight patterns between SNWR and the Humboldt sink/Toulon could also be disrupted by range air traffic. Additionally, there is an increased risk of aircraft-avian collisions under the proposal. Potential impact and mitigation plans need to be developed in the FRTC modernization Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for these disruptions.

TRCP Proposed Alternative: We recommend that the southern boundary of B-20 be shifted north to provide an adequate buffer between the SNWR and the B-20 range. The EIS needs to identify and include an appropriate buffer. The draft states that any change in one boundary will automatically result in a shift to the opposing boundary. While this is true if the footprint size is indeed a hard and fast area, the document does not adequately demonstrate this to be true. An option for addressing these concerns for SNWR would be seasonal restrictions on direction of approach to the target and operating altitude. Those seasonal restrictions should include spring nesting periods and high use periods during fall/winter migration.

B-17 Range

Water Resources: Wildlife abundance, or lack thereof, is tied directly to the availability of quality year round habitat. In central Nevada's arid climate, water for wildlife is often the limiting component of quality habitat. Without adequate water, stable wildlife populations simply cannot exist. For that reason

there has been a concerted effort in Nevada, including areas identified in the FRTC modernization, to develop dependable water sources reserved specifically for wildlife. Within the current B-17 range and the proposed expansion (which would be closed to public access) there are at least seven water developments (guzzlers) designed for big game that are currently used by bighorn sheep, pronghorn, mule deer and other wildlife. These guzzlers were primarily funded by sportsmen's organizations and constructed mostly by volunteer sportsmen. In this same area there are also over 15 small game guzzlers designed to provide water for chukar and other various small wildlife. Estimated value of these guzzlers is over 1.5 million dollars. In order to protect this investment, NDOW personnel and volunteers need continued access to perform on-going inspection, maintenance and repair.

Hunting: Hunting large and small game, as well as waterfowl, is part of the custom and culture of Nevada. A 2011 study by the National Shooting Sports Foundation found hunting to be a major economic driver, contributing approximately \$219 million annually to Nevada's economy. Hunting is both a time honored tradition and an important part of many rural economies, and should be preserved throughout Nevada.

The draft EIS states that limited, controlled hunting for bighorn sheep within the range would continue. The TRCP is very grateful for that accommodation. However, the document also states hunting for mule deer, pronghorn, chukar and other small game would not be allowed. This will result in a considerable loss to the sporting community and will negatively impact the economy of Nevada. At many public meetings the Navy has explained the high accuracy and reliability of deployment of weapons systems with today's technology. The majority of Weapons Danger Zones (WDZ) is a safety buffer with increasing confidence and decreasing risk as you move away from actual targets. Therefore, provision should be made for weekend and holiday access to those parts of the range not within target areas when Navy training activities may temporarily cease.

Pronghorn: The current B-17 range and proposed expansion currently supports approximately 200 pronghorn in the Bell Mountain, Bell Flat, Little Bell Flat, Gabbs Wash, Fairview and Earthquake Faults areas. Pronghorn are dependent on guzzlers in these areas as well as sparse naturally occurring water sources. There are several big game guzzlers located in the proposed expansion designed specifically for use by pronghorn. Maintenance of these structures is required from time to time and NDOW needs guaranteed coordinated access for this task.

Pronghorn also depend heavily on water tanks maintained and filled by livestock permittees in this area. These livestock water sources greatly enhance the distribution and stability of pronghorn populations. A mitigation plan should be developed to provide this water source in the event livestock permits are cancelled. Filling of these structures at strategic times once or twice each year would require a minimal commitment and cost to the Navy. However, the benefit to the pronghorn population would be immense.

NDOW needs the ability to continue management of the pronghorn herd within B-17. A possible management tool would be, as pronghorn populations exceed carrying capacity, to provide NDOW with access to capture pronghorn from B-17 and relocate them to other areas. Hunting is another management tool used by NDOW. Pronghorn hunting in this area has become an important part of the custom and culture of Nevada as well as an important economic driver specifically for Fallon and

Churchill County. Therefore the final EIS needs to more closely study the feasibility of providing access to this area by pronghorn hunters as part of NDOW hunt units 181-184.

Chukar: The footprint of the proposed B-17 bombing range under Alternative 3 supports healthy populations of chukar on Fairview, Slate Mountains and Monte Cristo Ranges. Steep, rugged terrain with preferred vegetation, combined with the extensive guzzler network, provides ideal habitat for chukar. These mountain ranges are used extensively by chukar hunters from throughout Nevada and other states. The proposed expansion would eliminate public access to Slate Mountain and the Monte Cristo Range. The final EIS should further study the possibility of allowing timed and controlled access on weekends and holidays for hunting in areas not within target areas. Small game guzzlers in the area are the primary source of water for chukar populations and will require access for maintenance.

Mule Deer: B-17 and the proposed expansion currently support approximately 100 mule deer. Mule deer numbers increase in the winter from the neighboring Desatoya Mountains and Clan Alpine Range. Hunting of these mule deer occurs annually as part of the NDOW unit 181-184 tag quota. Again, public access for this hunt should be accommodated where feasible.

Bighorn Sheep: B-17 and the proposed expansion currently supports approximately 400 bighorn sheep across four primary mountain ranges; Monte Cristo Mountains, Fairview Peak, Slate Mountain, and the Sand Springs Range. NDOW reestablished bighorn in this area beginning in October 1996, through funding provided by various sportsmen's groups. Bighorn hunting in this area (NDOW hunt unit 181) began in 1999 and has provided opportunity to 165 hunters through 2018, with a total of 156 rams harvested. Each year ten percent of these permits are allocated to non-resident hunters who travel considerable distance and often hire professional guides to ensure their success. Since this unit opened, at least two rams have been harvested by "Heritage tag" holders. These Heritage tags are auctioned each year by NDOW as a means of raising funds for the bighorn sheep program and commonly sell for upwards of \$100,000 each. On February 9, 2019 a single Nevada Heritage Tag sold for \$155,000. Combined, all of these bighorn hunts provide a significant economic contribution to Nevada. As stated, the TRCP greatly appreciates the Navy's commitment to allow continued bighorn hunting. This access should be guaranteed in the legislation which will result from this EIS.

NAS Fallon has been very cooperative in the past allowing NDOW helicopter access for bighorn population surveys, disease surveillance, and obtaining transplant stock. Access for these projects will continue to be a necessary management tool in the future.

Dixie Valley Training Area (DVTA)

Wildlife: Pronghorn, mule deer, bighorn sheep, Greater Sage Grouse, chukar, quail, cottontail rabbits, migratory waterfowl and mountain lion are commonly found and hunted in the DVTA. The EIS needs to ensure that management and hunting opportunities would not be diminished. Within the proposed DVTA area there are nine (9) big game guzzlers and over 30 small game guzzlers. Again, these water developments have been paid for and constructed with sportsmen's dollars and volunteer time. These guzzlers reflect over one million dollars in value.

Low Level Flight Exercises: Greater sage grouse habitat exists within the DVTA, including a remnant lek in the Louderback Hills. Seasonal timing restrictions should be designed to mitigate those impacts to grouse during breeding and nesting season in those areas identified by NDOW. Additionally, Chalk Mountain is recognized by BLM and NDOW as an important lambing area for bighorn sheep. Seasonal timing restrictions during lambing must be designed to mitigate impacts.

Public access: The draft EIS does not adequately address why withdrawal of the DVTA is necessary. The proposed DVTA would expand control by the Navy to nearly 300,000 acres for non-ordnance ground training. The draft EIS states the area would be “open to recreation” but closed to development. The EIS needs to more clearly define what “open to recreation” means in terms of hunting and recreation.

TRCP Proposed DVTA Alternative: Rather than withdraw the entire DVTA, the Carson City BLM District should remain in control of the proposed withdrawal area and use a similar type of Special Land Management Overlay (SLMO) as proposed for the areas south of Highway 50 which were previously to be included in the DVTA. The SLMO will allow the Navy to have input on, and final authority over, proposed uses that may impinge on their mission. The TRCP recommends that the same SLMO be applied over the entire DVTA, or at least where feasible. Non-ordnance training would continue as it has and at the same time, public access would be maintained. This would also provide the flexibility for wildlife habitat improvement projects under BLM guidelines and preserve access and multiple use. Should the Navy go forward with a withdrawal of the DVTA, the EIS and subsequent legislation must clearly state that public access to DVTA cannot be limited during the life of the withdrawal authorization.

In summary, while the TRCP fully supports the United States military and understands the need for adequate training, sportsmen would prefer the Navy re-evaluate the purpose and need of the EIS so as to scale back withdrawal acreage to something more acceptable. Military technology changes at a rapid pace. The next great leap in technology may negate the need for large live ordnance training ranges through advances in UAVs, simulation or other methods of training and fighting. However, the public land withdrawn by this proposal will already be permanently contaminated and unsafe for future public access.

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to comment on this important project. We strongly encourage the Naval Air Station Fallon consider the issues raised and alternatives proposed in these comments during the development of the final EIS process. If you have any questions regarding our comments, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Respectfully,



Carl Erquiaga
Nevada Field Representative
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
1625 Golden Park Way
Fallon, NV 89406

F.6.3.19.1 Response

Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Regarding opening comments on recreation uses such as hunting and fishing, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas

Regarding concerns about the No Action Alternative, under this proposal, taking “no action” would mean that Congress would not extend the current land withdrawal, which expires in November 2021. Therefore, the land withdrawal would expire and FRTC lands would be reverted back as described under the No Action Alternative, this alternative does meet the requirements of NEPA. If the Secretary of the Interior decides that it is in the public interest to accept jurisdiction over lands proposed for relinquishment, it is authorized to revoke the withdrawal.

Regarding low level flight exercises or airspace and the greater sage grouse, currently, all state management plans concentrate on habitat availability, wildfire, and land-based chronic noise sources. Greater sage grouse lek location data indicates that usage areas are east of the land areas proposed for withdrawal or acquisition. Sage grouse in these areas would be exposed to noise from aircraft overflights. Available science indicates that short-term noise intrusion does not play a significant role in lek success. The Navy will work closely with BLM and NDOW to manage the sage grouse and other species on lands under the Navy’s control. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.

Regarding comments on wildfire, the Navy has implemented and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce the occurrence of wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan, and where possible, proposed elements and goals of this plan were added to the Final EIS; a Draft outline of the Wildland Fire Management Plan can be found in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans) in the Final EIS. For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).

Regarding feral horses, a portion of the northern B-20 overlaps the Humboldt BLM herd area. The BLM would continue to manage the majority of the Humboldt herd area and the Navy’s withdrawal of that portion of the area would not result in significant impacts to that population. The other overlapping areas occur in the Dixie Valley Training Area, which would continue to be managed by the BLM as encouraged by the comment.

Regarding comments on wildlife, this expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater NWR. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent

with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee). NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes. Currently three Special Use Airspace (SUA) units overlap the Stillwater and Fallon NWRs: Fallon North 1 MOA, R-4813A, and R-4813B. Under the Proposed Action, there are no proposed changes to the operating altitudes of the SUAs that overlap the Stillwater NWR, no changes in number of aircraft operations, and no changes in the approach and departure tracks of aircraft utilizing targets in B-20. The proposed B-20 expansion area that overlaps the NWRs is for a ground-based safety zone and not due to an increase or change in aircraft operations over the NWRs. Therefore, there would be no change in the BASH potential with implementation of the proposed action.

The following are some general operational changes that are implemented during aircraft operations to reduce threats from bird strikes, mission permitting:

- When practical, reduce low-level flight time.
- Reduce formation flying.
- Reduce airspeeds to allow birds to be seen sooner and lessen damage in event of a strike.
- Avoid areas with known raptor concentrations during summer, especially during 1000–1700 hours due to increased thermals (Naval Air Station Fallon, 2012).

With adherence to the NAS Fallon BASH Plan and use of the Avian Hazard Advisory System, there would be no significant impacts to bird or bat populations as no population-level effects to birds or bats would be expected.

Regarding comments that the Navy should move the boundary of B-20 north, the Navy considered this alternative I Section 2.5.4.6 (Shift or Reduce Bravo-20 to Avoid the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. Such a shift would lead to an overlap between a restricted airspace and local airspace routes. Local FAA routes immediately outside of the current FRTC airspace are not compatible with closures for a restricted airspace. Pilots heavily use the local FAA routes, currently routed between numerous military ranges and airspace (Mountain Home Air Force Base and Oregon National Guard Airspace to the north, Hill Air Force base to the east, and Nellis Air Force Base to the south). Standard routes for aircraft in the national airspace system surround the FRTC airspace; in the specific instance of B-20, airspace route V-6 is immediately north of the current B-20 MOA. Moving B-20 and its associated airspace north would impinge on flights arriving or departing the Reno International Airport and present a hazard to aviation safety.

The Navy also considered reducing the dimensions of the proposed B-20 withdrawal to avoid overlapping the Fallon NWR. As a consequence, the area available to accommodate a WDZ would also be reduced. This area could not accommodate a WDZ that meets the screening factor for air-to-ground tactically acceptable weapons release parameters. Specifically, this alternative would not meet the requirement for the 180° attack azimuth for Joint Direct Attack Munitions, as the WDZ in the suggested configuration would be significantly less than 180°. The reduced width of the WDZ would also decrease the range at which the Navy could employ Joint Direct Attack Munitions, further reducing the training realism. Additionally, reducing the Joint Direct Attack Munitions WDZs means the Navy would need to conduct any training that used the full firing distances for training realism at the already heavily utilized B-17. An increase in training events at B-17 would strain the Navy's ability to complete each of the

increased number of individual training events it would be forced to undertake at B-17 under this scenario, which would negatively impact the overall tempo for Advanced Integrated Strike Warfare.

The Navy considered this alternative but is not carrying it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment, tempo screening factors, or safety screening factors, and would not minimize impacts to civilian infrastructure or environmental impacts.

Regarding comments on B-17 and water resources, private water rights would be purchased as real property as necessary. Acquisition of water rights would be factored into the processes for valuing grazing and mining-related just compensation or other authorized payments as appropriate. As discussed in Section 3.9 (Water Resources), the Navy does not have the authority or the expertise to assist water rights holders with any other water rights actions (i.e. change applications).

Regarding comments on B-17 and hunting areas, the Navy would provide access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency that would set any quotas and distribute any permits, as well as maintenance of wildlife habitat. The Navy has developed a draft MOA in conjunction with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for this hunting program (further details are provided in Section 3.12, Recreation, of the Final EIS, and the Draft MOA is located in Appendix D, Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans). The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.

The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC. Hunting for other species such as, mule deer, pronghorn, chukar and other small game would not be compatible with the bombing range due to the level of public health and safety risk being too high. The Navy cannot allow the public to hunt in WDZs on any of the bombing ranges without the areas being cleared beforehand. The small hunting season and low number of tags for the bighorn sheep hunt make it compatible on the B-17 range, as the Navy would be able to control the number of people from the public on the range, and would be able to ensure to a reasonable level of safety that ordnance would be clear from these hunting areas.

Hunting areas and guzzlers in the DVTA would not be impacted by the Navy's Proposed Action.

Currently, all state management plans concentrate on habitat availability, wildfire, and land-based chronic noise sources. Greater sage grouse lek location data indicates that usage areas are east of the land areas proposed for withdrawal or acquisition. Sage grouse in these areas would be exposed to noise from aircraft overflights. Available science indicates that short-term noise intrusion does not play a significant role in lek success.

Regarding allowing access to ranges by the public during weekends and holidays when the target areas are not in use, the Navy cannot allow unmanaged access to the public within Weapons Danger Zones, as there may be public health and safety risks associated with access to these areas.

Regarding allowance of managed access by NDOW for pronghorn, chukar, mule deer, and bighorn sheep guzzler maintenance, the Navy currently has an Access Management Memorandum of Understanding with NDOW that would be updated (with a new MOA) after any ultimate Congressional Decision on an action. Therefore, pronghorn would continue to benefit from the water tanks. The Navy is not currently

proposing a hunt season for any species except the Bighorn Sheep as described in the Draft MOA in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans).

Regarding comments on wildlife in the DVTA, the Navy would continue to allow hunting of all species as currently managed, and management of guzzlers as currently managed would continue.

Regarding comments on the DVTA and low-level flight exercises and sage grouse, the Navy will work closely with BLM and NDOW to manage the sage grouse and other species on lands under the Navy's control. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.

Regarding lambing seasons, Navy operational doctrine dictates that during transiting, pilots avoid lambing areas.

Regarding the need to withdraw lands on the DVTA, in addition to the training activities that occur on the bombing ranges, the Navy also conducts critical non-hazardous training within the DVTA, such as Electronic Warfare training, Dynamic Targeting operations, Combat Search and Rescue, Naval Special Warfare, and other training activities. The DVTA has also not changed substantially in size or configuration since its creation in the 1990s. The DVTA must be retained and expanded to preserve a viable location to train the Navy's air and ground forces in these critical non-ordnance training activities.

F.6.3.20 Etchegaray, Fred and John (White Sage Grazing LLC)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Fred and John	Etchegaray	Please see the attached letter providing comment on the FRTC DEIS from Fred and John Etchegaray.	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

February 14, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

Submitted via online portal at www.FRTCModernization.com

RE: Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS

To Whom It May Concern:

We, Fred and John Etchegaray, hold the grazing permit on the La Beau Flat Allotment leased from the Masterpols and have held this lease for the past nine years as members of White Sage Grazing LLC. Each of the alternatives analyzed in the Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) Modernization Draft EIS (DEIS) would have severe negative impacts on our ranching operations and ability to make a living. We use the allotment as an integral part of our overall ranching operation. We have nowhere else to go with our cattle if we lose any grazing on the allotment. We also lease water rights from Masterpols at the well located on the existing B-17 Range. This is the only water source available to the allotment. Loss of use at this well would effectively shut down the entire grazing operation on the allotment.

We notice the Navy and demand just compensation for whatever losses we may suffer. At jeopardy are, without limitation, our adjudicated grazing allotments, water rights, right of ways, infrastructure, corrals, fences, watering facilities and also economic expectations for the future along with the expected additional expenses of maintaining our current ranching operation, and whatever other loss may occur. If this expansion occurs, we expect the Navy and the Government of the United States to make us whole.

We request that Navy simply continue to operate at the status quo with the current FRTC. We are always told that the pilots trained at Fallon NAS are the best in the world. The bombs are highly accurate and the space the Navy has is quite sufficient for the training of future pilots. Technology should shrink the Navy footprint, not expand it and Nevada should not have to give up more of its limited lands for uses such as ranching. The Navy needs more wise leadership to train pilots using the resources and land already available, not by grabbing more Nevada land.

If we have to live with one of the alternatives analyzed in the DEIS, we prefer Alternative 3. It results in the least impacts to our grazing operation on La Beau Flat allotment.

Allotted Grazing and Appurtenant Water Rights and Rights-of-Way Are Private Property

The economic value of our ranch is highly dependent upon our grazing permit on the allotment. Our ranch is appraised at a higher rate than it would be if no allotment existed and the grazing permit and appurtenant water rights are considered part of the realty (i.e., real, private property). In fact, our grazing permit and water rights on the allotment are as private property collateral on loans with real value. The Internal Revenue Service also considers the permit as a taxable property interest. As noted above, financing institutions, whose support is critical to continued livestock grazing and agricultural operations, consider the existence of the permit, and the reasonable expectation of land use which emanates therefrom, as an indispensable factor in determining to extend and continue financial support. Grazing permits are capitalized into the value of a ranch, so that when a buyer purchases a ranch, he actually pays for livestock production stemming from the private and federally managed lands, as well as additional property in the form of water rights, rights of way, and improvements also on both private and federally managed land areas.

The grazing on our allotment was recognized by Congress as having the character of a property right, interest or investment backed expectation when it enacted that portion of the Taylor Grazing Act which is found in 43 U.S.C § 315 (b) guaranteeing renewal of permits if denial of the permit would "impair the value of the grazing unit of the permittee, when such unit is pledged as security for any bona fide loan." Under the Taylor Grazing Act, a grazing permit is considered private property and is mandatorily attached to private "base property" – land or water.

The interest created in and owned by our predecessors on the allotment is a portion of the "surface estate" of the split estate. The split estate is further demonstrated by the stockwatering rights we have on the allotment. The property ownership on the allotment includes a "bundle-of-rights." McIntosh (2002) quotes a legal dictionary in defining the bundle-of-rights as: "...the collection of rights that constitute fee ownership in an object or realty (or interests in real estate). The bundle-of-rights includes, but is not limited to, the right to: sell, lease, use, give away, exclude others from and to retain. The bundle-of-rights is the list of options that an owner can exercise over his property." The term "fee" refers to the quality and character of ownership in a property.

"Sticks" within the bundle of rights on the allotment apply fully to all property rights on the allotment including those rights-of-way established prior to 1976 to allow access to the various infrastructure and water rights on the allotment. This includes Revised Statute (RS) 2477 rights-of-way for travel and access by people and livestock as well as RS 2339 and RS 2340 easements for water storage and rights-of-way for water conveyance (ditches, dams, pipelines, etc.).

There are many other sources not referenced above defining the private property-nature on the allotment, stockwater rights, and rights-of-way on the allotment. Please adequately analyze, consider and integrate the proposed action's impacts to our ranch's adjudicated forage base, water rights, and rights-of-way.

Take Every Effort to Avoid and Minimize Impacts

To this point, Navy has exerted minimal effort to find ways to avoid and minimize impacts to us. We ask that the Navy work with us and Masterpols to identify and implement all economically and

technically feasible options to avoid and minimize impacts to our ranching operation at a ratio of 1:1 (i.e., completely balance negative impacts). This could include the following options:

1. Minimize ground operations when livestock are present to avoid hazing, livestock stress, road degradation, unwanted spreading or moving of livestock, etc.;
2. Provide alternate livestock forage (may include seeding) on other federally administered land which the ranch is authorized to graze livestock;
3. Provide a livestock forage seeding on other private land owned/controlled by the ranch;
4. Provide alternative livestock watering source(s) on federally administered land which the ranch is authorized to graze livestock where forage was previously unused or underused due to lack of a viable water source;
5. Provide an alternative livestock watering source on private land owned/controlled by the ranch, in any area where forage was previously unused or underused due to lack of a viable water source;
6. Implement a Rangeland Improvement Project on federally administered land which the ranch is authorized to graze livestock which would improve livestock production, forage availability, or rangeland condition (e.g., fencing, weed control, brush management); , vegetation management); and/or
7. Implement a project on private land owned/controlled by the ranch which would improve livestock production, forage availability, or rangeland/ranch condition (e.g., fencing, weed control, brush management).

If any of the above actions are implemented and require a water right, the right must be held in the allotment owner's name.

Please incorporate adequate avoidance and minimization options in the proposed action and analyze such in the EIS.

Monetary Compensation If Avoidance and Minimization Cannot Fully Mitigate Impacts

As discussed above, we wish to keep our ranch intact. However, if after closely working with us it is determined that none of the avoidance and minimization measures outlined above can be implemented or the impact is not totally offset by the above avoidance and minimization measures, the Navy must mitigate the forage loss and loss of access to our water rights through direct monetary compensation. In fact, Congress has mandated compensation for grazing "losses" due to military withdrawals in 43 US Code, Title 43, Chapter 8A, Section 315q¹.

¹ Whenever use for war or national defense purposes of the public domain or other property owned by or under the control of the United States prevents its use for grazing, persons holding grazing permits or licenses and persons whose grazing permits or licenses have been or will be canceled because of such use shall be paid out of the funds appropriated or allocated for such project such amounts as the head of the department or agency so using the lands shall determine to be fair and reasonable for the losses suffered by such persons as a result of the use of such lands for war or national defense purposes. Such payments

There have also been many efforts completed, including many in Nevada and many NEPA documents, quantifying the value of grazing permits and livestock forage. There are also many examples of precedence in Nevada (and elsewhere) where entities, including the military, have done the right thing and compensated loss of grazing forage and water rights. This includes many mining projects and the Air Force at Nellis Air Force Base and Nevada Test and Training Range. The Navy must follow Congress' mandate and other precedent and do the right thing by adequately compensating ranchers, including us, for the lost economic outputs due to loss of forage and water access.

We request that the Navy consider the summary below of other efforts to quantify the value of grazing permits and forage and also summarizes other NEPA documents that had similar analysis. Further, we ask that the Navy incorporate in the EIS the analyses necessary to establish a platform for negotiations on compensatory mitigation of forage, water, and right-of-way loss. This would include working with some of the authors that performed the analysis in the references listed in the attached (e.g., and Nevada-specific, respected economists like Dr. Thomas Harris and Dr. Rangesan Narayanan).

Loss of Forage/AUM Mitigation: Value and Precedent

In 1999 funds were appropriated through the Nevada Legislature to create a Nevada Public Land Grazing Database and Economic Analysis. In 2000, the Nevada State Department of Agriculture asked the Nevada Association of Counties to assist in fulfilling this mandate. Resource Concepts, Inc. was contracted to help complete the database and analysis. The product of this effort is the report, *Nevada Grazing Statistics Report and Economic Analysis for Federal Lands in Nevada (Resource Concepts, Inc. March 26, 2001)*. Table 3 of the Report (p. 48) summarizes the economic impacts of 1 AUM of grazing in Nevada as follows:

Table 3. Economic Impacts of 1 AUM of Grazing in Nevada			
Value of AUMs = \$24.40			
AUM Increase or Loss = 1			
Value of Production per AUM (5 yr. Avg.) = \$24.40			
Impact	Direct Impacts	Indirect/Induced Impacts	Total Impacts
Total Industry Impacts	\$24.40	\$16.00	\$40.40
Total Labor Income Impact	\$3.40	\$4.00	\$7.40
Total Value-Added Impact	\$5.00	\$8.00	\$13.00
Total Employment Impacts	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total Economic Impacts ^a	\$29.40	\$24.00	\$53.40

Basically, for every AUM lost (or gained), the overall impact to the livestock producer himself in one year equaled \$29.40 (in 1999 dollars) in one year. However, to value an AUM in current (2019) dollars there must be adjustments based on inflationary changes since 1999.

shall be deemed payment in full for such losses. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to create any liability not now existing against the United States. (July 9, 1942, ch. 500, 56 Stat. 654; May 28, 1948, ch. 353, § 1, 62 Stat. 277).

Take the following as an example. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports an average inflation rate over the past 40 years (since 1976) to be about 3% per year (actually 2.96%). Applying a rate of 3% each year since 1999 gives a current value of one AUM to the producer only at \$52.00 per year.

When determine value of an AUM (loss or gain) using the analysis above, 1 AUM is currently worth \$52.00 per year to the producer alone. What is critical to understand is that AUM loss if typically forever. Forage/AUM loss impacts do not occur to ranchers as a one-time impact. If AUMs are diminished, the economic loss occurs year-after-year for as long as the rancher owns and operates the grazing permit where the AUM loss occurred. Take for instance the table below that shows the cumulative loss to the rancher (in 2018 dollars, not adjusted for future inflation), over 50 years (in 5 year increments), due to just one AUM loss (amounts rounded).

Year Interval	1	5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50
Cumulative value of 1 AUM	\$52	\$258	\$516	\$773	\$1031	\$1289	\$1547	\$1804	\$2062	\$2320	\$2578

Below are a select listing of other papers establishing or justifying quantification of grazing permit and/or AUM values. Note that these papers have many references cites that may also be considered in establishing value.

Stern, Bill Steven., "Permit value: A hidden key to the public land grazing dispute." 1998. Theses, Dissertations, Professional Papers. Paper 4782.

Rimbey, Neil R., L. Allen Torell, and John A. Tanaka, "Why Grazing Permits Have Economic Value." 2007. Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics 32(1):20-40.

Torell, L. Allen, E. Tom Barlett, and Frederick W. Obermiller, "The Value of Public Land Grazing Permits and the Grazing Fee Dilemma." Report 31, Range Improvement Task Force Cooperative Extension Service, New Mexico State University, college of Agriculture and Home Economics.

University of Nevada Report: Reno Technical Report UCED 2005/06-14 Updated Economic Linkages in the Economy of Eureka County

University of Nevada Report: Reno Technical Report UCED 2006/07-03, ANALYSIS OF IMPACTS OF PUBLIC LAND GRAZING ON THE ELKO COUNTY ECONOMY AND MOUNTAIN CITY MANAGEMENT AREA: ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF FEDERAL GRAZING IN ELKO COUNTY.

Recent NEPA Documents in Nevada Quantifying AUM Loss Impacts

Mount Hope Project EIS, p. 3-415:

"The grazing and agricultural service sectors of the Eureka County economy would be marginally affected by the reduction in AUMs associated with the Proposed Action due to the construction of the fence around 14,204 acres of the Project Area. The fence would exclude access to portions of the

Roberts Mountains and Romano Allotments and result in a reduction of 781 AUMs for approximately 70 years and 32 AUMs permanently from the development of the open pit. According to the Nevada Grazing Statistics Report and Economic Analysis for Federal Lands in Nevada (Resource Concepts, Inc. 2001), the total economic impact associated with each AUM equals \$53.40 (1999 dollars) (\$73.75 in 2012 dollars) annually. This value specifically estimates the direct, indirect, and induced impacts of industry output and added value of grazing in Nevada. Applying this value to the potentially and temporarily AUMs displaced under the Proposed Action, the total economic impact could be an annual reduction of \$41,705 (1999 dollars) (\$57,597 in 2012 dollars). This would be a \$15,539 (1999 dollars) (\$21,460 2012 dollars) impact resulting from displaced Romano Allotment AUMs and a \$26,166 (1999 dollars) (\$36,137 2012 dollars) impact resulting from displaced Roberts Mountain Allotment AUMs. While the impact may not be significant to the ranching community, the impact may be meaningful to individual ranch operations. However, it is important that this impact reflects the total economic impact not lost revenue for specific operators. The subsequent two paragraphs in greater detail the economic impact to grazing investigated in the Nevada Grazing Statistics Report and Economic Analysis for Federal Lands in Nevada Report.

The direct industry impacts to Nevada's economy from one AUM are estimated to be \$24.40 based on the total production value of grazing divided by the total AUMs. Indirect and induced impacts to the industry, estimated at \$16.00 per AUM, occur throughout the economy as a result of providing goods and services to the livestock industry and include other industrial sectors such as crops, construction, manufacturing, transportation, communication, utilities, and trade and services. Induced impacts include those caused by household consumption as a result of the direct and indirect impacts. In total, industry impacts were estimated to equal \$40.40 per AUM (1999 dollars).

The labor income impact estimates (total \$7.40 per AUM) are based on the wages and salaries of workers and proprietors' income. Total value-added impacts (\$13.00 per AUM) include impacts to wages and salaries, proprietors' income, other property income (i.e., interest, rent, royalties), and indirect business taxes (1999 dollars). Employment impacts based on \$24.40 direct industry impacts are too small to have any impact based on one AUM.

Based on the estimated direct, indirect, and induced economic impacts of one AUM (\$53.40), the economic value of the 781 AUMs reduced during the life of the Project equates to \$41,705.40 per year, or in sum \$2,919,378.00 over approximately 70 years. This represents approximately 2.7 percent of the economic value of all the allotments affected by the Project."

EA for Barrick Horse Canyon/Cortez Unified Exploration Project (HCCUEP) Plan of Operations Amendment for the Twin Declines for Underground Exploration, p. 3-134:

"The Proposed Action of 12 acres of surface disturbance would result in a grazing capacity reduction of less than 1 AUM; this would result in a direct impact of \$29.40/year and an indirect impact of \$24.00/year (Resource Concepts, Inc. 2001)."

Examples of Entities Providing Mitigation for AUM loss due to their actions

The US Air Force has publically acknowledged that they compensated ranchers, through agreement, for grazing losses due to activities at the Nevada Test and Training Range. Also, in 1998, the Air Force also compensated ranchers in Idaho for expansion of the Idaho Bombing Range. A rancher received compensation for 1252 AUM loss on the Juniper Draw Allotment at \$519.00 per AUM. The Air Force also acquired 780 AUMs from an adjoining allotment at \$416.00 per AUM for partial replacement of the ranchers AUM loss.

Mining companies, primarily Barrick and Newmont, have consistently compensated ranchers for impacts to grazing allotments and grazing loss due to mining activity.

Please see the Navy's responses to specific comments provided via table in Table F-9.

Conclusion

We are fifth generation ranchers and would like to see our children and grandchildren have the choice to be able to continue this lifestyle. There is no need for this over-expansion and huge takings. Nevada has lost enough ground. The Navy can come to grips with the circumstances and make do with what they presently have control over. Let the public and Nevada citizens maintain the right to graze, hunt and access the land that is ours. If not, please ensure that the impacts to us are fully mitigated and compensated. Please just do the right thing and be a good neighbor.

Sincerely,

Fred and John Etchegaray
P.O. Box 477
Eureka, Nevada 89316

Cc: Nevada Congressional Delegation

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F.6.3.20.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy would work with impacted ranchers on a case-by-case basis after any ultimate Congressional decision was made. Regarding impacts to grazing, the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to

holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives.

The following information has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.

Payment for Losses

The Navy would first consider costs associated with obtaining replacement forage and otherwise restoring/maintaining a permittee's existing operational capacity. Working with BLM and the permittee, the Navy would determine the costs necessary to replace the area/capacity removed from a grazing permit. These costs could include, but would not be limited to, preparing new allotment applications; complying with BLM environmental requirements and water rights studies; procuring private market replacement forage; shipping or transporting forage, cattle and/or ranch personnel and their horses and equipment; one-time relocation expenses associated with any full or partial transferring of operations to any new location(s); any reasonably anticipated lost profits arising as a result of operational downtime while restoring and/or relocating operations; and any other costs identified, which would be properly payable under 43 U.S.C. section 315q.

Should a permit holder decide not to seek replacement forage in conjunction with restoring operational capacity, or when restoring such capacity is not practicable, the Navy would make a good faith estimate of the financial impact the loss of that individual's permit would be expected to have on his or her ranching operation. The Navy would ask each permit holder to provide recent business operating expenses associated with the permit, their total operating expenses, an estimate of that portion of income believed to be directly related to utilization of the permit, and total income and taxes. This information would be used to determine a payment amount to compensate for losses resulting from permit cancellation, including reasonably anticipated lost profits for what would otherwise have been the duration of the permit. If a permit holder does not wish to share their financial information, or if the information shared is incomplete, the Navy would make an estimate of the value of the losses based on existing information from other sources.

It is possible that a payment amount would be based both on replacement forage along with other operational restoration-related costs, and on the financial impact the loss of a permit would be expected to have on a ranching operation (i.e., part of the payment would be based on obtaining replacement forage to the extent practicable and the rest based on payment for losses to the extent obtaining replacement forage is not practicable). In those instances, the costs to restore operational capacity would first be determined, and the remaining payment amount would then be determined in accordance with the paragraph above discussing permits holders who may elect not to seek replacement forage capacity.

Payment for Allotment Improvements

Improvements such as corrals, fencing, wells, and other appurtenances that cannot be relocated are considered real property, similar to a building. The Navy would appraise the value of all real property owned by a permit holder and would offer fair market value for the purchase of any such real property. Equipment, such as relocatable water tanks, is not considered real property, and the permit holder would be afforded an opportunity to remove their equipment prior to cancellation of a permit.

Timing of Permit Cancellation

The Navy anticipates issuing its Record of Decision with respect to FRTC modernization in January 2020. However, any Congressional withdrawal of the area currently supporting grazing permits would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Similarly, any Congressional appropriation for implementing the FRTC Modernization action, which would include funds for making payments to grazing permit holders, would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Accordingly, the earliest the Navy would request that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) cancel any permit would be October 1, 2020.

If the Congressional withdrawal is enacted, and if Congress appropriates funds to implement the FRTC Modernization effort, the Navy would ask BLM to contact each affected permit holder. BLM would coordinate with the Navy on any action to initiate cancellation of a permit. Under 43 CFR Part 4100 Subpart 4110.4-2 (Decrease in Land Acreages), BLM would be required to provide two years advance notice of any permit cancellation. Once a given notification is made, the Navy, with assistance from BLM, would begin discussions with affected permit holders to determine payment amounts in accordance with the processes described herein.

Regarding non-traditional roads, the Navy defers to the Department of the Interior and/or decisions of courts of appropriate jurisdiction with respect to making RS2477 determinations. In the absence of such determination, the EIS does not take a position with respect to any claimed RS2477 roads. In working with the BLM, no adjudicated RS2477 roads have been identified in the areas requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition. The Navy recognizes that there is loss of access to the areas withdrawn or acquired and potentially to non-traditional roads; however, where access to an area would no longer be available, there would be no reason to relocate the road to that area. With respect to areas that would still be open to public access generally even if a certain road would no longer be available, other means of access these areas would remain available, and therefore roads would not need to be relocated in this situation either.

Regarding the purpose and need for the Proposed Action (Alternative 3), in order for the Navy to reach full TTP compliance that would allow air and ground forces to train in a realistic 360-degree combat scenario for all training scenarios, the Navy would need to withdraw or acquire almost double the land as that requested under the Proposed Action (approximately 1.3 million acres), as well as make extensive revisions to special use and civilian airspace. The Navy considered this as an alternative, but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS because of potential significant and largely disruptive impacts to the local area. For example, this alternative would necessitate the re-routing of several major U.S. Highways (U.S. Route 50 and U.S. Interstate 80). Additionally, this alternative would greatly increase the amount of public lands that would need to be closed for weapons safety considerations.

Instead, the Navy settled for the minimum 180-degree requirement for realistic training events; and reduced the size of the overall area requested and proposed for withdrawal, to the extent consistent with mission requirements.

The Navy added a figure in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS that illustrates the withdrawal and acquisition lands included in the Draft EIS and highlights additional reductions that have been made to the withdrawal and acquisition lands between the Draft and Final EIS under Alternative 3.

Regarding socioeconomic impacts, the Navy worked with a local Nevada scientist, Dr. Thomas Harris, to develop the Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at <http://frtcmodernization.com>). The report found that hunting-related (touristic) economic losses would be similar in scale for Mineral, Pershing, and Nye counties based on the percentage of lost revenue compared to total economic activity (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at <http://frtcmodernization.com>], Table B-1). Therefore, no significant impacts would occur in the affected counties due to lost recreational or touristic opportunities.

The Navy is not basing payments for losses of grazing opportunities on AUM loss but using the process outlined in this response above and in the Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing). Please see the Navy's responses to specific comments provided via table in Table F-9.

Table F-9: Fred and John Etchegaray Sub-Matrix Comments and Responses

Page	Section / Paragraph	Draft EIS Text	Comment	Response
3.4-10	3.4.2.2	B-17 description	Again, the only water source available for the entire La Beau Flat allotment is the well on the existing B-17 Range (in the laydown area adjacent to SR 839) that is accessed daily by us to fill a water truck to haul to locations across the allotment.	The Navy is proposing to leave the La Beau Flat water source available
3.4-21	3.4.3.2 2nd paragraph	"permittees could potentially go out of business"	Please add language that identifies the very possible impact of us having to sell livestock, regardless of whether or not we "go out of business" which could create a heavy tax burden on the livestock sales receipts that were not part of our business plan.	<p>The Navy will work with permittees on a case-by-case basis to mitigate losses resultant from the cancelation of a permit. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. Parts 315-316o) provides the Navy authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. Specifically, Section 315q states:</p> <p>Whenever use for war or national defense purposes of the public domain or other property owned by or under the control of the United States prevents its use for grazing, persons holding grazing permits or licenses and persons whose grazing permits or licenses have been or will be cancelled because of such use shall be paid out of the funds appropriated or allocated for such project such amounts as the head of the department or agency so using the lands shall determine to be fair and reasonable for the losses suffered by such persons as a result of the use of such lands for war or national defense purposes. Such payments shall be deemed payment in full for such losses. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to create any liability not now existing against the United States.</p> <p>To paraphrase the authority, 43 U.S.C. Section 315q directs the Navy to make payments out of project funds for losses arising from permittees being denied use of their federal grazing privileges during the current permit period as a result of the grazing lands in question being used for national defense purposes...</p>

Table F-9: Fred and John Etchegaray Sub-Matrix Comments and Responses (continued)

Page	Section / Paragraph	Draft EIS Text	Comment	Response
				<p>(continued) Additionally, the Navy would be required under the USDI-BLM Grazing Regulations (43 CFR Part 4100) Subpart 4120.3-6 – Removal and Compensation for Loss of Range Improvements, to compensate for a loss of range improvements. The CFR regulation states:</p> <p>(c) Whenever a grazing permit or lease is cancelled in order to devote the public lands covered by the permit or lease to another public purpose, including disposal, the permittee or lessee shall receive from the United States reasonable compensation for the adjusted value of their interest in authorized permanent improvements placed or constructed by the permittee or lessee on the public lands covered by the cancelled permit or lease. The adjusted value is to be determined by the authorized officer. Compensation shall not exceed the fair market value of the terminated portion of the permittee's or lessee's interest therein. Where a range improvement is authorized by a range improvement permit, the livestock operator may elect to salvage materials and perform rehabilitation measures rather than be compensated for the adjusted value.</p> <p>(d) Permittees or lessees shall be allowed 180 days from the date of cancellation of a range improvement permit or cooperative range improvement agreement to salvage material owned by them and perform rehabilitation measures necessitated by the removal.</p> <p>The Navy shall use these authorities to determine payment amounts to individuals who may suffer losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of the proposed FRTC modernization action.</p> <p>The Final EIS further describes the process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected by the proposed action. This process evaluates the cost of providing replacement forage and/or the losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corals, fencing and other real property).</p>

Table F-9: Fred and John Etchegaray Sub-Matrix Comments and Responses (continued)

Page	Section / Paragraph	Draft EIS Text	Comment	Response
3.4-21	3.4.3.2 3rd paragraph	loss of grazing as a management tool	Please consider adding the possibility of working with us to allow scheduled and controlled targeted grazing in and adjacent to B-17 to reduce fuels and fire risk. Scheduled for times that would not conflict with training tempo.	The Navy has looked into the possibility of working with grazing permittees to schedule grazing on ranges extensively during the EIS drafting process. The Navy is unable to allow grazing on bombing ranges due to the needs of the permittees for scheduling and access, as well as public health and safety risks.
3.4-21	3.4.3.2 paragraph 5	acquisition of stockwater rights	We disagree with the need to acquire the stockwater rights for the well on the existing B-17 that provides the only water supply for the La Beau Flat allotment. The arrangement between Navy and us and our predecessors has worked for decades. This well is in a one or two area laydown area immediately adjacent to SR 839. In this case, we request that Navy simply continue with the arrangement and allow us access to this well and water right as has been done.	The renewal is subject to all valid and existing rights to real property. Otherwise rights would need to be extinguished (purchased) or moved. If a water resource has not been put to beneficial use, it is no longer a valid right. The Final EIS, Section 3.9 (Water Resources), has been updated to reflect that the Navy is not proposing any changes to the existing access in this area nor any changes to the water rights and well. The Navy is exploring options, including relinquishing the well and access road so that BLM could incorporate the property back into the public domain, and; renewal of this existing withdrawal and fencing the well and access so that unimpeded access from NV Route 839 could continue. Regardless of method of accommodation, the Navy intends to allow continued access to the well by the owner of the water right.
3.4-25	3.4.3.2.2	Grazing impacts on B-17	There is no discussion about how our water hauling areas would be affected. There is also no discussion how other access roads falling in the withdrawal areas would be closed. Many of these access roads are needed for water hauling and accessing salting areas, checking fences, etc. This needs to be clearly analyzed. The only water source for livestock in La Beau Flat allotment is the well on the current B-17. We lease the water from Masterpols who have the water right on the well. The Navy allows controlled access to the well to fill a truck for water hauling each day. We then ...	The renewal is subject to all valid and existing rights to real property. Otherwise rights would need to be extinguished (purchased) or moved. If a water resource has not been put to beneficial use, it is no longer a valid right. The Final EIS, Section 3.9 (Water Resources), has been updated to reflect that the Navy is not proposing any changes to the existing access in this area nor any changes to the water rights and well. The Navy is exploring options, including relinquishing the well and access road so that BLM could incorporate the property back into the public domain, and; renewal of this existing withdrawal and ...

Table F-9: Fred and John Etchegaray Sub-Matrix Comments and Responses (continued)

Page	Section / Paragraph	Draft EIS Text	Comment	Response
			<p>(continued) trucks the water to multiple locations including south down SR 839 over the pass near Rawhide to water hauling sites. This controlled access must be continued for this water right and water hauling. It should be clarified here.</p> <p>Regardless, access to this water right must be clarified. If not, what is the proposed alternative to ensure water for livestock in this allotment? How will impacted stockwater rights be addressed for takings, eminent domain, etc.? The arrangement with Navy for access to the well has worked for decades. This well is in a one or two acre laydown area immediately adjacent to SR 839. In this case, we request that Navy simply continue with the arrangement and allow access to this well and water right for the La Beau Flat. How will access to current water hauling sites for livestock be impacted? How will access to livestock gathering points, allotment fences (for maintenance), and other allotment infrastructure be impacted?</p>	<p>(continued) fencing the well and access so that unimpeded access from NV Route 839 could continue. Regardless of method of accommodation, the Navy intends to allow continued access to the well by the owner of the water right. The Navy is discussing water rights and values of allotments on a case-by-case basis with stakeholders. The Final EIS further describes the procedures and process by which the Navy will value the loss of access to grazing lands by permittees and the Navy's ability to purchase water rights as real property or pay for the eventual diversion of those water rights, pending coordination with the permittee.</p> <p>The Navy will work with permittees on a case-by-case basis to mitigate losses resultant from the cancelation of a permit. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. Parts 315-316o) provides the Navy authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. Specifically, Section 315q states:</p> <p>Whenever use for war or national defense purposes of the public domain or other property owned by or under the control of the United States prevents its use for grazing, persons holding grazing permits or licenses and persons whose grazing permits or licenses have been or will be cancelled because of such use shall be paid out of the funds appropriated or allocated for such project such amounts as the head of the department or agency so using the lands shall determine to be fair and reasonable for the losses suffered by such persons as a result of the use of such lands for war or national defense purposes. Such payments shall be deemed payment in full for such losses. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to create any liability not now existing against the United States...</p>

Table F-9: Fred and John Etchegaray Sub-Matrix Comments and Responses (continued)

Page	Section / Paragraph	Draft EIS Text	Comment	Response
				<p>(continued) To paraphrase the authority, 43 U.S.C. Section 315q directs the Navy to make payments out of project funds for losses arising from permittees being denied use of their federal grazing privileges during the current permit period as a result of the grazing lands in question being used for national defense purposes.</p> <p>Additionally, the Navy would be required under the USDI-BLM Grazing Regulations (43 CFR Part 4100) Subpart 4120.3-6 – Removal and Compensation for Loss of Range Improvements, to compensate for a loss of range improvements. The CFR regulation states:</p> <p>(c) Whenever a grazing permit or lease is cancelled in order to devote the public lands covered by the permit or lease to another public purpose, including disposal, the permittee or lessee shall receive from the United States reasonable compensation for the adjusted value of their interest in authorized permanent improvements placed or constructed by the permittee or lessee on the public lands covered by the cancelled permit or lease. The adjusted value is to be determined by the authorized officer. Compensation shall not exceed the fair market value of the terminated portion of the permittee's or lessee's interest therein. Where a range improvement is authorized by a range improvement permit, the livestock operator may elect to salvage materials and perform rehabilitation measures rather than be compensated for the adjusted value.</p> <p>(d) Permittees or lessees shall be allowed 180 days from the date of cancellation of a range improvement permit or cooperative range improvement agreement to salvage material owned by them and perform rehabilitation measures necessitated by the removal.</p> <p>The Navy shall use these authorities to determine payment amounts to individuals who may suffer losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of the proposed FRTC modernization action.</p> <p>The Final EIS further describes the process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected by the proposed action. This process evaluates the cost of providing replacement forage and/or the losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corals, fencing and other real property).</p>

Table F-9: Fred and John Etchegaray Sub-Matrix Comments and Responses (continued)

Page	Section / Paragraph	Draft EIS Text	Comment	Response
3.4-32	3.4.3.4	Alternative 3	The exact same comments we made regarding grazing impacts under Alternative 1 applies to Alternative 3 (and Alternative 2 for that matter).	Thank you for your comments, the Navy has carried over changes to all Alternatives as applicable.
3.4-32	3.4.3.4	Alternative 3	Alternative 3 is obviously the best alternative analyzed to reduce impacts to grazing at La Beau Flat allotment.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record.
3.4-33	Table 3.4-6	La Beau Flat	We are confused how over 18,000 less acres closed under Alternative 3 equate to the same range of AUM loss for La Beau Flat as Alternative 1. Is this correct?	Land acreages have been revised as a result of the reduction of proposed withdrawals. AUMs per allotment have also been verified during a re-run of the grazing restrictive analysis.
3.4-34	3.4.3.4	acquisition of stockwater rights	We disagree with the need to acquire the stockwater rights for the well on the existing B-17 that provides the only water supply for the La Beau Flat allotment. This is especially true under Alternative 3 where SR 839 will now not fall within B-17. The arrangement with Navy for access has worked for decades. This well is in one or two acre laydown area immediately adjacent to SR 839. In this case, we request that Navy simply continue with the arrangement and allow access to this well and water right for the La Beau Flat. It makes complete common- sense to do so, especially under Alternative 3.	<p>The Navy is discussing water rights and values of allotments on a case-by-case basis with stakeholders. The Final EIS, Section 3.9 (Water Resources), has been updated to reflect that the Navy is not proposing any changes to the existing access in this area nor any changes to the water rights and well. The Navy is exploring options, including relinquishing the well and access road so that BLM could incorporate the property back into the public domain, and; renewal of this existing withdrawal and fencing the well and access so that unimpeded access from NV Route 839 could continue. Regardless of method of accommodation, the Navy intends to allow continued access to the well by the owner of the water right.</p> <p>The Final EIS further describes the procedures and process by which the Navy will value the loss of access to grazing lands by permittees and the Navy's ability to purchase water rights as real property or pay for the eventual diversion of those water rights, pending coordination with the permittee.</p> <p>The Navy will work with permittees on a case-by-case basis to mitigate losses resultant from the cancelation of a permit...</p>

Table F-9: Fred and John Etchegaray Sub-Matrix Comments and Responses (continued)

Page	Section / Paragraph	Draft EIS Text	Comment	Response
				<p>(continued) The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. Parts 315-316o) provides the Navy authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. Specifically, Section 315q states:</p> <p>Whenever use for war or national defense purposes of the public domain or other property owned by or under the control of the United States prevents its use for grazing, persons holding grazing permits or licenses and persons whose grazing permits or licenses have been or will be cancelled because of such use shall be paid out of the funds appropriated or allocated for such project such amounts as the head of the department or agency so using the lands shall determine to be fair and reasonable for the losses suffered by such persons as a result of the use of such lands for war or national defense purposes. Such payments shall be deemed payment in full for such losses. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to create any liability not now existing against the United States.</p> <p>To paraphrase the authority, 43 U.S.C. Section 315q directs the Navy to make payments out of project funds for losses arising from permittees being denied use of their federal grazing privileges during the current permit period as a result of the grazing lands in question being used for national defense purposes.</p> <p>Additionally, the Navy would be required under the USDI-BLM Grazing Regulations (43 CFR Part 4100) Subpart 4120.3-6 – Removal and Compensation for Loss of Range Improvements, to compensate for a loss of range improvements. The CFR regulation states:</p> <p>(c) Whenever a grazing permit or lease is cancelled in order to devote the public lands covered by the permit or lease to another public purpose, including disposal, the permittee or lessee shall receive from the United States reasonable compensation for the adjusted value of their interest in authorized permanent improvements placed or constructed by the permittee or lessee on the public lands covered by the cancelled permit or lease. The adjusted value is to be determined by the authorized officer. Compensation shall not exceed the fair market value of the terminated portion of the permittee's or lessee's interest therein. Where a range improvement is authorized by a range improvement permit, the livestock operator may elect to salvage materials and perform rehabilitation measures rather than be compensated for the adjusted value...</p>

Table F-9: Fred and John Etchegaray Sub-Matrix Comments and Responses (continued)

Page	Section / Paragraph	Draft EIS Text	Comment	Response
				<p>(continued)</p> <p>(d) Permittees or lessees shall be allowed 180 days from the date of cancellation of a range improvement permit or cooperative range improvement agreement to salvage material owned by them and perform rehabilitation measures necessitated by the removal.</p> <p>The Navy shall use these authorities to determine payment amounts to individuals who may suffer losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of the proposed FRTC modernization action.</p> <p>The Final EIS further describes the process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected by the proposed action. This process evaluates the cost of providing replacement forage and/or the losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corals, fencing and other real property).</p>
3.4-42	3.4.3.5.3	Proposed mitigation for grazing losses	<p>Mitigation measures must be in the EIS, not pushed off to some future time. Navy must outline reasonable management practices or mitigation measure related to grazing losses. Generally, there are a host of things the Navy could do to lessen the impacts that we identified above. At a minimum, Navy must provide adequate compensation for AUM loss and allow continuation of the decades-long access to fill a water truck at the well adjacent to SR 839 on the existing B-17 that is used in La Beau Flat allotment.</p>	<p>The renewal is subject to all valid and existing rights to real property. Otherwise rights would need to be extinguished (purchased) or moved. If a water resource has not been put to beneficial use, it is no longer a valid right. The Final EIS, Section 3.9 (Water Resources), has been updated to reflect that the Navy is not proposing any changes to the existing access in this area nor any changes to the water rights and well. The Navy is exploring options, including relinquishing the well and access road so that BLM could incorporate the property back into the public domain, and; renewal of this existing withdrawal and fencing the well and access so that unimpeded access from NV Route 839 could continue. Regardless of method of accommodation, the Navy intends to allow continued access to the well by the owner of the water right.</p>

Table F-9: Fred and John Etchegaray Sub-Matrix Comments and Responses (continued)

Page	Section / Paragraph	Draft EIS Text	Comment	Response
3.4-42	3.4.3.5.3	"authority...to make payments"	43 USC 8A Section 315q mandates payment for grazing losses "out of the funds appropriated or allocated for such project." The Navy is not just "authorized" but mandated. If Congress appropriates funding for the FRTC modernization, the Navy is mandated to pay for grazing losses. Further, how is this not a specific mitigation measure when it is a mandate by Congress? The EIS should be clear about this mandate and the Navy simply do the right thing and quit skirting the intent of 3 USC 8A Section 315q. While the Navy may have never followed the law under 43 USC 8A Section 315q, above we provided specific examples how the Air Force has followed this mandate in Nevada and Idaho for both NTTR and Mountain Home.	<p>The Navy will work with permittees on a case-by-case basis to mitigate losses resultant from the cancelation of a permit. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. Parts 315-316o) provides the Navy authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. Specifically, Section 315q states:</p> <p>Whenever use for war or national defense purposes of the public domain or other property owned by or under the control of the United States prevents its use for grazing, persons holding grazing permits or licenses and persons whose grazing permits or licenses have been or will be cancelled because of such use shall be paid out of the funds appropriated or allocated for such project such amounts as the head of the department or agency so using the lands shall determine to be fair and reasonable for the losses suffered by such persons as a result of the use of such lands for war or national defense purposes. Such payments shall be deemed payment in full for such losses. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to create any liability not now existing against the United States.</p> <p>To paraphrase the authority, 43 U.S.C. Section 315q directs the Navy to make payments out of project funds for losses arising from permittees being denied use of their federal grazing privileges during the current permit period as a result of the grazing lands in question being used for national defense purposes.</p> <p>Additionally, the Navy would be required under the USDI-BLM Grazing Regulations (43 CFR Part 4100) Subpart 4120.3-6 – Removal and Compensation for Loss of Range Improvements, ...</p>

Table F-9: Fred and John Etchegaray Sub-Matrix Comments and Responses (continued)

Page	Section / Paragraph	Draft EIS Text	Comment	Response
				<p>(continued) to compensate for a loss of range improvements. The CFR regulation states:</p> <p>(c) Whenever a grazing permit or lease is cancelled in order to devote the public lands covered by the permit or lease to another public purpose, including disposal, the permittee or lessee shall receive from the United States reasonable compensation for the adjusted value of their interest in authorized permanent improvements placed or constructed by the permittee or lessee on the public lands covered by the cancelled permit or lease. The adjusted value is to be determined by the authorized officer. Compensation shall not exceed the fair market value of the terminated portion of the permittee's or lessee's interest therein. Where a range improvement is authorized by a range improvement permit, the livestock operator may elect to salvage materials and perform rehabilitation measures rather than be compensated for the adjusted value.</p> <p>(d) Permittees or lessees shall be allowed 180 days from the date of cancellation of a range improvement permit or cooperative range improvement agreement to salvage material owned by them and perform rehabilitation measures necessitated by the removal.</p> <p>The Navy shall use these authorities to determine payment amounts to individuals who may suffer losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of the proposed FRTC modernization action.</p> <p>The Final EIS further describes the process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected by the proposed action. This process evaluates the cost of providing replacement forage and/or the losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corals, fencing and other real property).</p>

Table F-9: Fred and John Etchegaray Sub-Matrix Comments and Responses (continued)

Page	Section / Paragraph	Draft EIS Text	Comment	Response
3.4-3	3.4.1.3.1	Analysis estimating potential loss of AUMs (based on Tech Memo)	The analysis is incorrect. The analysis shows certain areas as being over 4 miles from water but we haul water to locations in these areas. It is imperative that the water hauling locations be included as this opens up tremendous areas for grazing that the analysis currently shows are not used much at all. We request Navy and BLM sit down and look over maps of each of their allotments to make sure the analysis is valid about areas livestock access and where water haul locations are. It seems like there is a lot of missing information that we could help fill in. On-the-ground knowledge is always better than modeling.	The Navy has worked with ranchers and the BLM to identify all water hauling locations and has revised the AUM restricted analysis based on these revised locations of water. Potential impacts to grazing have been updated between the Draft and Final EIS.
3.4-3	3.4.1.3.1	livestock impacts	This section only focuses on AUM loss. "Grazing losses" are much more than just AUM loss. For the La Beau Flat allotment, the only water source currently providing stockwater is proposed to be removed from use. We haul water from this well every single day to troughs many miles from the well. Also, roads providing access to water haul locations, gathering spots, fence maintenance access, etc. will be closed that ALL have an economic burden on us. Economic impacts are much more than just AUM loss. Please include.	The Navy will work with permittees on a case-by-case basis to mitigate losses resultant from the cancellation of a permit. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. Parts 315-316o) provides the Navy authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. Specifically, Section 315q states: Whenever use for war or national defense purposes of the public domain or other property owned by or under the control of the United States prevents its use for grazing, persons holding grazing permits or licenses and persons whose grazing permits or licenses have been or will be cancelled because of such use shall be paid out of the funds appropriated or allocated for such project such amounts as the head of the department or agency so using the lands shall determine to be fair and reasonable for the losses suffered by such persons as a result of the use of such lands for war or national defense purposes. Such payments shall be deemed payment in full for such losses. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to create any liability not now existing against the United States.

Table F-9: Fred and John Etchegaray Sub-Matrix Comments and Responses (continued)

Page	Section / Paragraph	Draft EIS Text	Comment	Response
				<p>(continued)</p> <p>To paraphrase the authority, 43 U.S.C. Section 315q directs the Navy to make payments out of project funds for losses arising from permittees being denied use of their federal grazing privileges during the current permit period as a result of the grazing lands in question being used for national defense purposes.</p> <p>Additionally, the Navy would be required under the USDI-BLM Grazing Regulations (43 CFR Part 4100) Subpart 4120.3-6 – Removal and Compensation for Loss of Range Improvements, to compensate for a loss of range improvements. The CFR regulation states:</p> <p>(c) Whenever a grazing permit or lease is cancelled in order to devote the public lands covered by the permit or lease to another public purpose, including disposal, the permittee or lessee shall receive from the United States reasonable compensation for the adjusted value of their interest in authorized permanent improvements placed or constructed by the permittee or lessee on the public lands covered by the cancelled permit or lease. The adjusted value is to be determined by the authorized officer. Compensation shall not exceed the fair market value of the terminated portion of the permittee's or lessee's interest therein. Where a range improvement is authorized by a range improvement permit, the livestock operator may elect to salvage materials and perform rehabilitation measures rather than be compensated for the adjusted value.</p> <p>(d) Permittees or lessees shall be allowed 180 days from the date of cancellation of a range improvement permit or cooperative range improvement agreement to salvage material owned by them and perform rehabilitation measures necessitated by the removal.</p> <p>The Navy shall use these authorities to determine payment amounts to individuals who may suffer losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of the proposed FRTC modernization action.</p> <p>The Final EIS further describes the process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected by the proposed action. This process evaluates the cost of providing replacement forage and/or the losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corals, fencing and other real property).</p>

Table F-9: Fred and John Etchegaray Sub-Matrix Comments and Responses (continued)

Page	Section / Paragraph	Draft EIS Text	Comment	Response
3.5-36	3.5.3.4.2	Access on B-17 to stock well under Alternative 3	This is especially true under Alternative 3 where SR 839 will now not fall within B-17. The arrangement with Navy for access to the well has worked for decades to provide access to the stock well. This well is in one or two acre laydown area immediately adjacent to SR 839. In this case, we request that Navy simply continue with the arrangement and allow access to this well and water right for the La Beau Flat. It makes complete common- sense to do so, especially under Alternative 3.	The renewal is subject to all valid and existing rights to real property. Otherwise rights would need to be extinguished (purchased) or moved. If a water resource has not been put to beneficial use, it is no longer a valid right. The Final EIS, Section 3.9 (Water Resources), has been updated to reflect that the Navy is not proposing any changes to the existing access in this area nor any changes to the water rights and well. The Navy is exploring options, including relinquishing the well and access road so that BLM could incorporate the property back into the public domain, and; renewal of this existing withdrawal and fencing the well and access so that unimpeded access from NV Route 839 could continue. Regardless of method of accommodation, the Navy intends to allow continued access to the well by the owner of the water right.
3.5-40	3.5.3.5.3	Mitigation for access	Please outline a mitigation measure to continue with the arrangement for access to the stock well on existing B-17 that has worked for decades. This well is in one or two acre laydown area immediately adjacent to SR 839. In this case, we request that Navy simply continue with the arrangement and allow access to this well and water right for the La Beau Flat. It makes complete common- sense to do so, especially under Alternative 3.	The renewal is subject to all valid and existing rights to real property. Otherwise rights would need to be extinguished (purchased) or moved. If a water resource has not been put to beneficial use, it is no longer a valid right. The Final EIS, Section 3.9 (Water Resources), has been updated to reflect that the Navy is not proposing any changes to the existing access in this area nor any changes to the water rights and well. The Navy is exploring options, including relinquishing the well and access road so that BLM could incorporate the property back into the public domain, and; renewal of this existing withdrawal and fencing the well and access so that unimpeded access from NV Route 839 could continue. Regardless of method of accommodation, the Navy intends to allow continued access to the well by the owner of the water right.

F.6.3.21 Fite, K. (Wildlands Defense)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Fatie	fite	<p>Dear Navy,</p> <p>This is an initial comment by WildLands Defense on the proposed land expansion.</p> <p>WLD strongly opposes this expansion, and requests the Navy consider shrinking the area of the land it currently uses in order to protect the land, air quality and wildlife and health of people in the region.</p> <p>The Navy must also consider more efficient use of its existing training facilities - both at Fallon as well as at other facilities across te West.</p> <p>The Navy has already created Hellzones across public land.s I could not even clap in the Clan Alpine area because of the horrible and persistent noise of military overflights. These activities need to be reduced, not increased. Any wildlife having to live under this existing horrific noise footprint likely suffer significant stress and depleted populations due to the military activity. A full and thorough analysis of all the existing Navy (and any other military group/unit) disturbance across the region must be provided as part of this EIS effort. All direct, indirect and cumulative effects of this must be thoroughly assessed.</p> <p>The Navy's Fallon area land air and water and noise pollution footprint must also be thoroughly assessed.</p> <p>Also, how are the incessant contrails from Navy overflights impacting weather conditions, in particular causing gray skies and cloudiness?</p>	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Regarding comments on need for the expansion, as discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to wildlife, given the historical use of the airspace, and the persistence of aircraft operations and wildlife populations, wildlife within the Military Operations Areas are likely habituated to aircraft overflights and associated noise (e.g., sonic booms). Many of the above-listed behavioral and physiological responses to noise are within the range of normal adaptive responses to external stimuli, such as predation, that wild animals face on a regular basis. In many cases, individuals would return to homeostasis or a stable equilibrium almost immediately after exposure to a brief stimulus such as an aircraft overflight or sonic boom. The FEIS has been updated with any new and relevant information regarding individuals and make conclusions regarding potential impacts to individual, but most notable. For further information on noise impacts please see Section 3.7 (Noise).</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>What battery of weapons in planes and one ground will foreseeably be used here? What is being used at present? How dangerous are these to humans and animals?</p> <p>We will be submitting additional comments.</p>	<p>Regarding assertions that the Navy is increasing activities, there would not be an increase in training tempo with the implementation of the Proposed Action. The previous EIS did not anticipate a significant impact due to contrails, and this would not change with this EIS.</p> <p>Regarding comments on the noise analysis, noise modeling presented in Section 3.7 (Noise) included 24 representative locations throughout the FRTC that could be considered sensitive receptors, these areas include Austin, Kingston, the Yomba Tribal area, Reese River Valley, Antelope Valley, and Lander County. Noise Sensitive Areas that include a 5-nautical-mile radius and ground surface to 3,000 feet AGL avoidance buffer currently include Austin, Kingston, and the Yomba Tribal Settlement.</p> <p>Regarding the ordnance to be used, a list of ordnance being used is presented in Chapter 2.0 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives). The ordnance would not change under this EIS. For impacts to public health and safety or biological resources, please see Sections 3.10 (Biological Resources) and 3.14 (Public Health and Safety).</p>
Katie	Fite	<p>Dear Navy,</p> <p>Here are additional comments from WildLands Defense on the Fallon Expansion.</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Katie Fite Public Lands Director WildLands Defense</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy notes that an attachment was not provided on the website with this comment.</p>

F.6.3.22 Hadder, J. (Great Basin Resource Watch)

First	Last	Comment	Response
John	Hadder	<p>Great Basin Resource Watch PO Box 207 Reno, NV 89703</p> <p>February 14, 2019</p> <p>RE:Fallon NAS Modernization Draft EIS comments to: www.FRTCModernization.com</p> <p>We are opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and ask you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands.</p> <p>Taking over 606,685 acres of lands managed by the BLM for the sake of human uses and habitat - and closing 359,928 of those acres to the public will increase military-controlled lands in the area to nearly 1,000 square miles - quadrupling your area of control from 239,575 acres. The Fallon Range Training Complex has not offered an alternative in the Draft EIS that would lessen the acreage taken, other than no expansion at all. We suggest the EIS offer a median alternative.</p> <p>GBRW objects that the proposed alternative includes the elimination of 74,400 acres of Wilderness Study Areas in parts of the Clan Alpine Mountain, Job Peak and Stillwater Range WSAs, which virtually eliminates their value as a storehouse of biodiversity and places of solitude and non-motorized recreation.</p> <p>Supersonic Activities</p> <p>The FRTC modernization Proposed Action includes a proposal to increase the volume of the supersonic training area by laterally expanding the area (including "low supersonic") eastward. As a general policy, you say, "sonic booms shall not be generated below</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and has updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy has added tables discussing management practices, monitoring, and mitigation measures to the Final EIS in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation) to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts if applicable.</p> <p>Regarding comments to adopt a status quo alternative, the Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative, also known as the "status quo" alternative, would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.</p> <p>Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis.</p> <p>While it would hypothetically be possible to develop training systems at Nellis Air Force Base, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training currently uses nearly all of the complex's available training capacity (time and space). Nellis Air Force Base, as currently configured or as proposed, would not be able to support</p>

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		<p>30,000 feet of altitude. However, deviations from this general policy are authorized for tactical mission training that requires supersonic speeds at lower altitudes.” For example, mission-critical training activities in both air-to-air and air-to-ground combat tactics often require supersonic flight at lower altitudes in order to practice evading threats such as enemy surface-to-air and air-to-air missiles. When required, this mission-critical training will be conducted in the specified areas, and may be at altitudes as low as 11,000 feet above mean sea level. This is not compatible with wildlife and human needs”.</p> <p>Fallon National Wildlife Refuge Designated a site of international importance and a 'Globally Important Bird Area' these tremendously rich and diverse wetlands attract more than a quarter million waterfowl, as well as over 20,000 other water birds, It is visited by people from all over the world. The designated refuge is already a mere remnant of a formerly vast wetlands complex.</p> <p>No studies have verified that the goals and objectives for the Refuge can be maintained on the 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge requested for withdrawal as you state, or that other increased activities, such as supersonic flights, will not affect wildlife in the entire Refuge. Only non-expansion will allow public access and a thriving 'Globally Important Bird Area' to remain. Migrating birds have few other places to rest and feed in the Great Basin, their numbers are declining worldwide, climate change will have unforeseen affects, and your expansion could actually mean disaster for multiple species.</p> <p>Cultural Artifacts</p> <p>Can you guarantee that with low supersonic flights, errant bombs and planes, land transportation and closed areas that both previously surveyed and undiscovered cultural treasures such as prehistoric caves and burial sites will not be destroyed? Your materials state that “Steps are taken to eliminate or minimize impacts on eligible and unevaluated sites, and sites that are</p>	<p>the intensity of both Navy and Air Force training, and therefore was not carried forward for further analysis.</p> <p>Regarding the elimination of WSAs, under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>Regarding comments on supersonic activities and wildlife, as discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), the response to sonic booms or other sudden disturbance is similar among many wildlife species—sudden and unfamiliar sounds usually act as an alarm and trigger a “flight” response; however, reaction to a given noise can vary widely depending on factors such as time of day, physical condition of the animal, physical environment, or whether or not other physical stressors are present. Although the startle effect of a sonic boom can be stressful to an animal, it is hard to generalize animal responses to noise disturbances across species. Recent literature suggests a fright is a common response across a variety of species, and that this ultimately leads to habituation. It has been reported that the intensities and durations of the startle response decrease as the number and frequency of exposures increase, suggesting no long-term adverse effects.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>important to Native American tribes.” How can sites that have not yet been discovered be protected? What provisions will you make so sites are accessible for maintenance and sacred uses?</p> <p>GBRW has not been convinced that the majority of pilot training planned could not be accomplished by far less destructive means, such as stimulations. Please keep base operations at their status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>John Hadder, Director</p>	<p>Given the historical use of the airspace and the coexistence of wildlife, animals within the MOA are likely habituated to aircraft overflights and associated noise (e.g., sonic booms). Many of the above-listed behavioral and physiological responses to noise are within the range of normal adaptive responses to external stimuli (such as predation) that wild animals face on a regular basis. In many cases, individuals would return to homeostasis or a stable equilibrium almost immediately after exposure to a brief stimulus such as an aircraft overflight or sonic boom. Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Section 3.10.3.1 (Potential Stressors) of the Final EIS was updated to incorporate the best available data regarding noise and startle effects on wildlife. Under the U.S. Department of Defense Reauthorization, P.L. 105-85, Div. A, Title X, Section 1079, Nov. 18, 1997, 111 Stat. 1916, special use airspace actions are exempt from Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act because establishment of avoidance areas result in unacceptable and severe operational and safety concerns. Regarding comments on supersonic activities and humans, the Navy does not anticipate any risk of hearing loss because noise would not rise to a level at which hearing loss would occur. Areas that could experience noise levels of 65 A-weighted decibels (dBA) or greater due to underlying Day-Night Level (DNL) contours above 65 dB are located in Churchill, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing counties. However, with intermittent aircraft operations coupled with the time most people spend indoors, it is very unlikely that individuals would experience noise exposure that would result in hearing loss.</p> <p>The EIS includes several figures (Figure 3.7-32 and Figure 3.7-40) that depict where changes to noise levels would occur using existing and proposed noise contour data.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, the Navy acknowledges noise sensitive areas and has established Noise Sensitive Areas (such as around wildlife refuges, incorporated areas, and certain tribal areas) in the past. The Navy is proposing new Noise Sensitive Areas as part of the Proposed Action around the incorporated areas of Crescent Valley and Eureka. The establishment of these Noise Sensitive Areas is considered</p>

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			<p>compatible with military training activities and will include a 5 nautical mile radius and an elevation of 3,000 feet AGL.</p> <p>This expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative) currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>The following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes.</p> <p>Regarding cultural artifacts, in complying with Section 106, the Navy adheres to the procedures identified in the implementing regulations (36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 800). The responsibility for Section 106 compliance is the Navy's because it is the lead federal agency for the undertaking. As shown in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources), specifically Section 3.11.1.2 (Regulatory Framework), the Navy has established procedures for addressing its responsibilities with regard to historic properties, including consultation. This includes the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), Nevada SHPO, Indian Tribes, local governments and agencies, and other organizations or individuals. The ACHP will be given the opportunity to comment in accordance</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>with the procedures identified in 36 CFR 800. 5-7 should it be necessary. This process does not preclude the Navy from preemptive planning in order to assess the potential effects of the FRTC Modernization on Historic Properties for the purposes of this EIS.</p> <p>The Navy has completed cultural resources surveys in locations where there is a reasonable expectation of direct impact from the placement of targets and in construction areas. The Navy is consulting with Indian Tribes on the identification of any additional cultural resources and associated potential indirect impacts from the Proposed Action.</p> <p>Under the withdrawal and acquisition, the Navy acknowledges that it would be restricting access to cultural resources to a considerable extent. Consistent with Executive Order 13007, <i>Indian Sacred Sites</i>, the Navy will continue to work with Indian Tribes to develop protocols for access to cultural resources where compatible with mission requirements through the creation of an MOU.</p> <p>The Final EIS was updated with information, in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources) regarding Navy Section 106 consultation with the Nevada SHPO, ACHP and Indian Tribes, including the proposed amendment of the 2011 Programmatic Agreement establishing protocols for the future management of historic properties and any MOUs with Indian Tribes in association with the Proposed Action.</p> <p>The Navy will continue to engage with all interested Tribes. This engagement will continue past the ROD, as the modernization would be implemented over the coming years. The Navy will avoid and/or minimize impacts on cultural resources wherever possible and follow Section 106 requirements. The Navy is committed to providing access to Tribes to the closed ranges and pushing for funding to conduct surveys in range “buffer” areas. The Navy will work with the tribes to prioritize survey areas. The Navy is working with the Nevada SHPO and ACHP to amend the current 2011 PA they are under for withdrawn lands. The Navy would complete</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>Section 106 consultation on impacts due to loss of access for Tribes prior to the fencing of the newly withdrawn and acquired lands after any ultimate Congressional decision.</p> <p>Regarding the suggestion to use simulations, although virtual training and simulators are an important aspect of training activities and are already utilized, there are numerous reasons they do not sufficiently re-create fully integrated real-life situations that may be encountered by military personnel in a combat environment. For example, as discussed in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS, virtual training and simulators cannot recreate the physical stresses (e.g., increased heart rate and adrenalin levels) that a live-fire exercise provides.</p> <p>The FRTC is the only location where an entire carrier air wing can train as a single unit conducting the full arc of the mission, including pre-flight planning, ordnance handling, in-air activities, weapons deployment, and post-flight briefing. This cannot be accomplished via full mission simulations.</p>

F.6.3.23 Hendron, M. (Utah Soaring Association)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Michael	Hendron	<p>I am writing in regards to the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization proposal as it relates to airspace restrictions.</p> <p>I am president of the Utah Soaring Association (http://www.utahsoaring.org/), a glider flying club with nearly 100 members across the state and aircraft based at five airports in Utah. While our operations do not typically extend into Nevada, we support our sport of soaring broadly. We hold a soaring competition event in Nephi Utah each year and have had hundreds of attendees come to this area from across the country to enjoy the amazing flying conditions in the Great Basin. Many of those pilots and our members have flown in areas around the Fallon Range... an area at the heart of an amazing flying territory. Nevada is known around the world for terrain and weather conditions which allow amazingly long distance cross country flights, some over 500 miles, originating from airports such as Ely to the east of and Minden to the west. Minden is one of the strongholds of soaring, and is in fact the place where I started to learn to fly gliders as a young teenager. While this sport is not huge, it does have a strong and growing number of pilots, and it serves as a great ambassador to flying of all types. Our ranks include professional airline pilots, current and former military pilots, general aviation pilots, and enthusiasts dedicated to engineless flight.</p> <p>Here in Utah we are familiar with flying around restricted airspace, and flying in MOAs here in Utah. We understand the importance of these airspaces, and appreciate the ability for multiple uses of this valuable airspace where possible. It appears that under the most expansive proposal there are limited expansions of the restricted airspace and additional MOA space. While there were mentions of VFR traffic in the proposal, I didn't see any mention or discussion of glider traffic as part of the considerations of civilian traffic. Given that our cross-country flight paths are determined by the lift conditions on a given day and in a specific area, VFR corridors are of little use. We fly where we need to fly to stay aloft. And the fewer options we have, the greater the risk of landing out. (To give you a sense of what a cross-country sailplane flight track looks like, I've uploaded one pilot's plots of all yearly flights, including flying in central Nevada).</p> <p>We avoid restricted space when active, and many do avoid MOAs, but it is not uncommon for gliders to enter MOAs. Our preference with both types of space is to do whatever we can to coordinate with control centers and fly as safely as possible. Although our flights are VFR, many pilots do have transponders in their aircraft, and some may consider upgrades to ADSB.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Regarding comments on airspace restrictions for gliders, glider flying has always been allowed in any of the fifteen MOAs within FRTC, and will continue to be allowed as part of the Proposed Action. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance.</p> <p>General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>My comment is primarily to request that cross-country glider traffic be part of the consideration for these airspace and airspace management modifications. If there is a way to share the space effectively, in a safe way that does not entirely prohibit use or make it impractical, then it seems all parties can benefit. I would hope that these factors could be taken into consideration, including effective processes to enable glider pilots to know with some certainty when it is safe to traverse the Fallon Range Training Complex.</p> <p>I would be happy to provide more input, or arrange for other contacts who could provide input, if that would be valuable.</p> <p>Best regards, Michael Hendron President, Utah Soaring Association 801-709-4040</p>	

F.6.3.24 Henning, B. (Western States Racing Association)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Brandon	Henning	<p>Hello, my name is Brandon Henning and I am the President of Western States Racing Association that has held multiple off road events in the dead camel mountain range area of B16. Western States Racing association is an organization affiliated with American Motorcycle Association, MRANN, and AMA D36. Our club has not recently put on event there, but do plan to host events there in the future. We have had club New Years day rides as recently as four years ago. We would like the Navy to proceed with the Alternative 2 or Alternative 3. This way we could still have to opportunity to hold club events and motorcycle racings in the area. We would like to have a process to submit a request for use of the area. I did not notices a plan develops for this. Hopefully a good process can be achieved to allow this access on the weekends. Most our events are on the weekend, but sometimes during events there will need to be access during the week with coordination with the Navy. I am hoping the above alternatives are moved forward and a process is set up to keep access to the OHV riding area and still allow the Navy to expand there training complex.</p> <p>Thank you for your time,</p> <p>Brandon Henning WSRA President</p>	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. While OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20, OHV use would be allowed to continue within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after WSA designation removal by Congress.</p> <p>Topography and OHV trails similar to those that occur in the B-17 range area also occur in the Dixie Valley area or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationalists. These other public areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).</p> <p>The Navy is not proposing a process for the public to request use of the B-16 range for OHV events, due to the risk to public health and safety. The Navy cannot allow OHV users to ride around the Bravo ranges on the weekends, as they would need to be cleared prior to use, and the Navy would not be able to control where the OHV participants traveled, thus putting them at risk of encountering ordnance.</p>

F.6.3.25 Jefferson, B. K. (Fraternity of the Desert Bighorn)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Brett	Jefferson	<p>On behalf of the Fraternity of the Desert Bighorn (FDB), please accept this comment letter concerning the United States Navy's Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The mission of the membership of the FDB is to be unselfishly dedicated to the welfare and conservation of desert bighorn and Nevada's wildlife. We respectfully request that you take into consideration the impacts of proposed modernization strategies on desert bighorn sheep and other wildlife, their habitat, and impacts to public access by hunters and other outdoor groups. We believe solutions exist, and strongly urge you to work cooperatively with our partners, the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and Nevada Bighorns Unlimited (NBU), to develop realistic solutions and alternatives that will help achieve your mission while benefiting other stakeholders to the greatest extent possible.</p> <p>Upon review of the DEIS, we have significant concerns with the proposed alternatives and cannot support any of the 3 alternatives presented. Our concerns are related to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) access restrictions and/or closures; 2) direct and indirect adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat resources; 3) impacts of Navy-ignited wildfires and subsequent degradation or loss of wildlife habitat; and, 4) lack of mitigation. <p>Based on recent inquiries and discussions with NDOW and NBU, we offer the following general comments and recommendations for each of these primary concerns.</p> <p>A. Access restrictions and/or closures: Restricting or closing access hinders efforts of NDOW and NGO conservation volunteers in managing the wildlife and habitat for which the agency is responsible. NDOW and many conservation partners have invested substantial time and money on habitat improvements (particularly water developments) and bighorn sheep re-introductions within the proposed withdrawal. In reviewing the 3 alternatives, we believe that loss of access for bighorn sheep management, hunting and other recreation is inevitable.</p> <p>B. Adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat resources: The impacts of increased noise and munitions, construction of fences and other infrastructure which impact habitat quality and availability, and OHV use within proposed expanded military airspace and target areas are significant. Of particular</p>	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Regarding requests to work with your partners, the Navy is working with NDOW to create a MOA for the Managed Bighorn Sheep Hunt Program on B-17. The draft of this document can be found in the Final EIS in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans).</p> <p>Regarding access restrictions and/or closures, the Navy would continue to allow NDOW to access the ranges for management of wildlife per the updated MOU from 2000.</p> <p>Regarding direct or indirect adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat, the Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.</p> <p>Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.</p> <p>The proposed B-16 and B-20 expansion areas are outside of the current mapped range of bighorn sheep and mule deer, and only the eastern portion of the proposed B-20 expansion area</p>

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		<p>concern are low-level flights that have the potential for impacting bighorn sheep lambing areas and other wildlife such as sage grouse during lekking/brood-rearing season, and waterfowl breeding and staging habitat.</p> <p>C. Impacts of wildfires (Navy-ignited) and degradation or loss of wildlife habitat:</p> <p>Impacts to wildlife and habitat resources resulting from wildfires caused by live munitions and flares and subsequent conversion to annual grass dominated vegetation communities (cheatgrass) is of primary concern. Past rehabilitation efforts for fires started by Navy activities have been funded by NDOW, BLM, and local conservation groups. A finalized Fire Management Plan was not included within the DEIS and thus, is of significant concern.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>A completed "Fire Management Plan" should be included in the Final EIS/ROD which commits adequate funding and identifies procedures for implementing fire prevention, suppression, and rehabilitation strategies.</p> <p>A fully-funded and comprehensive wildlife resource mitigation plan should be incorporated into the Final EIS/ROD. A strategy for forming and enabling a Wildlife Working Group with the objective of enhancing wildlife populations, habitat resources, and hunting opportunities within and outside of the proposed withdrawal should be included.</p> <p>While FDB supports the important role that Fallon Naval Air Station has played for over 75 years, as well as the overall mission of the United States (U.S.) Navy, we cannot support any of the 3 alternatives presented in the DEIS. Desert bighorn sheep, pronghorn, mule deer, upland game birds and other game and non-game have been successfully restored through the cooperative efforts of sportsman, NDOW, the U.S. Navy and conservation organizations such as FDB. Considerable time and funding were used to achieve this success. Today, wildlife thrive within the proposed range expansion areas, and they are among the more popular public hunting areas in the state. For these reasons, FDB believes that the proposed expansions as well as the proposed alternatives must be reconsidered. The FDB stands ready to engage in development of such alternatives and solutions.</p>	<p>overlaps with year-round pronghorn range (Nevada Department of Wildlife (2017a). However, mule deer were observed within the proposed B-20 expansion area during camera trap surveys conducted in support of this EIS (see Supporting Study: Final Wildlife Remote Camera Trapping Survey Report, available at http://www.frtcmodernization.com). In addition, the estimated 60-65 DNL dBA aircraft noise contours within the proposed B-17 expansion area overlies a portion of currently mapped bighorn sheep winter-lambing range (i.e., the flats at the southern end of the Fairview Range) and year-round range within the central Monte Cristo Mountains and southern Sand Springs Range. The estimated 70-75 DNL dBA contours would not appreciably change from existing conditions (see Figures 3.7-9 and 3.7-22). Given the estimated number of bighorn sheep within the vicinity of the existing B-17 and DVTa range areas are at an all-time high (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a), existing training operations are not having an effect on regional bighorn sheep populations. Therefore, it is expected that proposed training operations conducted within the proposed restricted areas (R-4805A and R4816S Low) and associated expansion areas at the same level as current training operations would not have a significant impact on bighorn sheep populations. Within the FRTC region of influence, there are over 1 million acres of mapped bighorn sheep year-round range, over 51,000 acres of mapped bighorn sheep winter/lambing range, 5.6 million acres of mapped year-round pronghorn range, and 52,000 acres of mapped pronghorn crucial summer range. Navy operational doctrine dictates that during transiting, pilots avoid lambing areas.</p>

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			<p>Therefore, impacts to these ungulate ranges would not have a significant or measurable impact to bighorn sheep populations.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTAs and surrounding areas.</p> <p>The Navy would allow access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency and would set quotas and distribute permits, and maintain wildlife habitat.</p> <p>The Navy is working with NDOW on a MOA for bighorn sheep hunting on the B-17 range, a draft of which is included in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans). To the maximum extent possible, the Final EIS has been updated with details of this management plan. Details can be found in Chapter 2 and in Section 3.12 (Recreation), and a draft version of the proposed hunting program Memorandum of Agreement can be found in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans) of the Final EIS.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.</p> <p>The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and manage wildlife.</p>

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			<p>Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management by the BLM and NDOW to continue, cultural visits, bighorn sheep hunting, and events that are pre-coordinated with the Navy.</p> <p>Regarding wildfires, the Navy has and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan and, where possible, proposed plan elements and goals are included in the Final EIS; a draft outline has been added to the Final EIS in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans). For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).</p> <p>Regarding mitigation, the Navy has developed and proposed specific mitigation for each alternative that can be implemented and would avoid or minimize impacts. As such, alternatives include actions specifically designed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities.</p> <p>Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.</p>

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February 14, 2019

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Re: Fallon Range Training Complex – Modernization Draft EIS

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Fraternity of the Desert Bighorn (FDB), please accept this comment letter concerning the United States Navy's Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The mission of the membership of the FDB is to be unselfishly dedicated to the welfare and conservation of desert bighorn and Nevada's wildlife. We respectfully request that you take into consideration the impacts of proposed modernization strategies on desert bighorn sheep and other wildlife, their habitat, and impacts to public access by hunters and other outdoor groups. We believe solutions exist, and strongly urge you to work cooperatively with our partners, the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and Nevada Bighorns Unlimited (NBU), to develop realistic solutions and alternatives that will help achieve your mission while benefiting other stakeholders to the greatest extent possible.

Upon review of the DEIS, we have significant concerns with the proposed alternatives and cannot support any of the 3 alternatives presented. Our concerns are related to:

- 1) access restrictions and/or closures;
 - 2) direct and indirect adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat resources;
 - 3) impacts of Navy-ignited wildfires and subsequent degradation or loss of wildlife habitat;
- and, 4) lack of mitigation.

P.O. Box 27494, Las Vegas, NV, 89126-1494 | E-Mail: DesertBighorns@gmail.com | Website: www.DesertBighorn.com

Based on recent inquiries and discussions with NDOW and NBU, we offer the following general comments and recommendations for each of these primary concerns.

A. Access restrictions and/or closures:

Restricting or closing access hinders efforts of NDOW and NGO conservation volunteers in managing the wildlife and habitat for which the agency is responsible. NDOW and many conservation partners have invested substantial time and money on habitat improvements (particularly water developments) and bighorn sheep re-introductions within the proposed withdrawal. In reviewing the 3 alternatives, we believe that loss of access for bighorn sheep management, hunting and other recreation is inevitable.

Recommendation:

Work cooperatively with NDOW to finalize the *"Managed Access Program"* for inclusion into the Final EIS/Record of Decision to include: access commitments for wildlife/habitat management activities, hunting opportunities for bighorn sheep and other wildlife, and designated camping areas. Finally, NDOW has emphasized the need for an annual review of the Managed Access Program that provides an opportunity to implement adaptive management strategies and improve access opportunities where possible.

B. Adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat resources:

The impacts of increased noise and munitions, construction of fences and other infrastructure which impact habitat quality and availability, and OHV use within proposed expanded military airspace and target areas are significant. Of particular concern are low-level flights that have the potential for impacting bighorn sheep lambing areas and other wildlife such as sage grouse during lekking/brood-rearing season, and waterfowl breeding and staging habitat.

Recommendation:

Commitment by the Navy to dedicate funding to wildlife and habitat avoidance, minimization, and monitoring activities in the Final EIS/ROD.

C. Impacts of wildfires (Navy-ignited) and degradation or loss of wildlife habitat:

Impacts to wildlife and habitat resources resulting from wildfires caused by live munitions and flares and subsequent conversion to annual grass dominated vegetation communities (cheatgrass) is of primary concern. Past rehabilitation efforts for fires started by Navy activities have been funded by NDOW, BLM, and local conservation groups. A finalized Fire Management Plan was not included within the DEIS and thus, is of significant concern.

Recommendation:

A completed *"Fire Management Plan"* should be included in the Final EIS/ROD which commits adequate funding and identifies procedures for implementing fire prevention, suppression, and rehabilitation strategies.

D. Lack of mitigation:

Mitigation measures within the DEIS relative to potential impacts to wildlife, recreation, wildfire, and access for management activities are lacking.


Recommendation:

A fully-funded and comprehensive wildlife resource mitigation plan should be incorporated into the Final EIS/ROD. A strategy for forming and enabling a Wildlife Working Group with the objective of enhancing wildlife populations, habitat resources, and hunting opportunities within and outside of the proposed withdrawal should be included.

While FDB supports the important role that Fallon Naval Air Station has played for over 75 years, as well as the overall mission of the United States (U.S.) Navy, we cannot support any of the 3 alternatives presented in the DEIS. Desert bighorn sheep, pronghorn, mule deer, upland game birds and other game and non-game have been successfully restored through the cooperative efforts of sportsman, NDOW, the U.S. Navy and conservation organizations such as FDB. Considerable time and funding were used to achieve this success. Today, wildlife thrive within the proposed range expansion areas, and they are among the more popular public hunting areas in the state. For these reasons, FDB believes that the proposed expansions as well as the proposed alternatives must be reconsidered. The FDB stands ready to engage in development of such alternatives and solutions.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please contact us at the address or email below if you have questions or need additional clarification or assistance from FDB. We look forward to hearing from you on this vitally important matter.

Sincerely,



Matthew L. Blackburn
President



Brett K. Jefferson, P.L.S.
Legislative Affairs Committee Chair

The Fraternity of the Desert Bighorn is a 100% volunteer non-profit 501(c)(3) organization based in Las Vegas, Nevada, with members unselfishly dedicated to the welfare and conservation of Nevada's desert bighorn and other wildlife. Founded in 1964 by a handful of concerned conservation advocates at a time when the desert bighorn sheep population in Nevada was at a historic low of less than 2,000 animals, the Fraternity of the Desert Bighorn has worked over the last five decades to recover bighorn sheep populations in Southern Nevada now over 12,000 animals.

F.6.3.25.1 Response

Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Regarding requests to work with your partners, the Navy is working with NDOW to create a MOA for the Managed Bighorn Sheep Hunt Program on B-17. The draft of this document can be found in the Final EIS in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans).

Regarding access restrictions and/or closures, the Navy would continue to allow NDOW to access the ranges for management of wildlife per the updated MOU from 2000.

Regarding direct or indirect adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat, the Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.

Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

The proposed B-16 and B-20 expansion areas are outside of the current mapped range of bighorn sheep and mule deer, and only the eastern portion of the proposed B-20 expansion area overlaps with year-round pronghorn range (Nevada Department of Wildlife (2017a)). However, mule deer were observed within the proposed B-20 expansion area during camera trap surveys conducted in support of this EIS (see Supporting Study: Final Wildlife Remote Camera Trapping Survey Report, available at <http://www.frtcmodernization.com>). In addition, the estimated 60-65 DNL dBA aircraft noise contours within the proposed B-17 expansion area overlies a portion of currently mapped bighorn sheep winter-lambing range (i.e., the flats at the southern end of the Fairview Range) and year-round range within the central Monte Cristo Mountains and southern Sand Springs Range. The estimated 70-75 DNL dBA contours would not appreciably change from existing conditions (see Figures 3.7-9 and 3.7-22). Given the estimated number of bighorn sheep within the vicinity of the existing B-17 and DVTA range areas are at an all-time high (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a), existing training operations are not having an effect on regional bighorn sheep populations. Therefore, it is expected that proposed training operations conducted within the proposed restricted areas (R-4805A and R4816S Low) and associated expansion areas at the same level as current training operations would not have a significant impact on bighorn sheep populations.

Within the FRTC region of influence, there are over 1 million acres of mapped bighorn sheep year-round range, over 51,000 acres of mapped bighorn sheep winter/lambing range, 5.6 million acres of mapped year-round pronghorn range, and 52,000 acres of mapped pronghorn crucial summer range. Navy operational doctrine dictates that during transiting, pilots avoid lambing areas. Therefore, impacts to these ungulate ranges would not have a significant or measurable impact to bighorn sheep populations.

The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.

The Navy would allow access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency and would set quotas and distribute permits, and maintain wildlife habitat. The Navy is working with NDOW on a MOA for bighorn sheep hunting on the B-17 range, a draft of which is included in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans). To the maximum extent possible, the Final EIS has been updated with details of this management plan. Details can be found in Chapter 2 and in Section 3.12 (Recreation), and a draft version of the proposed hunting program Memorandum of Agreement can be found in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans) of the Final EIS.

The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.

The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and manage wildlife. The Navy currently has an Access Management Memorandum of Understanding with NDOW that would be updated (with a new MOA) after any ultimate Congressional Decision on an action.

Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management by the BLM and NDOW to continue, cultural visits, bighorn sheep hunting, and events that are pre-coordinated with the Navy.

Regarding wildfires, the Navy has and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan and, where possible, proposed plan elements and goals are included in the Final EIS; a draft outline has been added to the Final EIS in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans). For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).

Regarding mitigation, the Navy has developed and proposed specific mitigation for each alternative that can be implemented and would avoid or minimize impacts. As such, alternatives include actions specifically designed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities.

F.6.3.26 Kuhlman, R. (Backcountry Hunters and Anglers)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Russell	Kuhlman	<p>Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (BHA) is an international organization with state chapters throughout the United States and Canada, including Nevada. We are the fastest growing sportsman organization in the country and are dedicated to becoming the sportsman voice for wild public land, water and wildlife. The mission of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, and thus our Nevada Chapter, is to work to conserve and/or restore large intact wildlife habitat. The habitat in Northern Nevada are key areas in maintaining healthy wildlife populations, in turn providing quality opportunities to hunters and fishers. The chapter understands that as our military technology increases to meet the demands of today's battlefield, so must their need to train with those weapons. The need for our military to be prepared and well trained before entering combat is vital to our country's safety. However, one of the great things that sets our country apart from the rest of the world is our public lands and our freedom to recreate on them.</p> <p>With the withdrawal of 700,000 acres, which include public recreation land to maintain military readiness, has raised concerns with our members. Specifically the potential closing of 3,000 acres currently in the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. This refuge system is vital for waterfowl hunters in our state and offer the best public land hunting opportunity in the area for sportsman and women to pursue their passion. The additional proposed land withdrawal that includes a bighorn sheep hunting unit is also concerning. The chapter strongly suggests that you heed Nevada Department of Wildlife's (NDOW) advice to finalize the Managed Access Program for inclusion into the Final EIS/Record of Decision. The lack of assurances towards ensuring public access remains a significant concern and should be addressed before the Final EIS. The chapter is also in concert with NDOW in voicing our suggestion that the Navy allow additional opportunities for hunting pronghorn antelope, mule deer, and small game on an opportunistic basis. The largest concern the Nevada chapter of BHA has is how wildlife management will be handled both within and outside of the land</p>	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Regarding the loss of recreation comments, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, this expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and approximately 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative) currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>Regarding wildlife management comments, the proposed B-16 and B-20 expansion areas are outside of the current mapped range of bighorn sheep and mule deer, and only the eastern portion of the proposed B-20 expansion area overlaps with year-round pronghorn range (Nevada Department of Wildlife (2017a). However, mule deer were observed within the proposed B-20 expansion area during camera trap surveys conducted in support of this EIS (see Supporting Study: Final Wildlife Remote Camera</p>

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		<p>effected by the Fallon expansion. Designating current Wilderness Study Areas that are not included in the withdrawal into Wilderness may seem like a simple solution but our concern is how this will affect NDOW's effectiveness in maintaining their current wildlife management strategies. These management strategies include accessing and repairing water guzzlers that may require vehicle access. Access that would be denied if the area is designated Wilderness. Alternative designation such as Areas of Critical Environmental Concerns and National Recreation Areas are less restrictive than a Wilderness protection but will still provide protected habitat for all wildlife species. BHA members prize the tradition of a Wilderness hunt, as well as the typically high-quality habitat it provides wildlife due to lack of development and fragmentation. We recognize the hurdles presented by BLMs inconsistent interpretation of Wilderness wildlife management regulations at the district levels, often being far more restrictive than is allowed by law. Concurrently, we recognize that an administrative designation such as an ACEC can be undone by Management Plan Revision. We would like to see a stakeholder group work out which areas are best suited to a Wilderness designation and which with another protective Congressional designation such as an NCA. This procedure has been successfully accomplished in several similar situations and has become known as the Nevada way. The current EIS predicts no impact from noise on wildlife. The noise level outside of target areas is stated to be 65db average, with no data as to how that average was calculated. The literature indicates that even small increases from consistent ambient sound levels will prevent sage grouse from lekking. NDOW has a proven track record of managing vital species within the state and making sudden and drastic changes to their management plan may have undesired consequences to our state's wildlife.</p> <p>The Nevada chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers urges you to utilize the advice and guidance given to you by NDOW on how best to move forward with the expansion in regard to wildlife conservation and management.</p> <p>Thank you,</p>	<p>Trapping Survey Report, available at http://www.frtcmodernization.com). In addition, the estimated 60-65 DNL dBA aircraft noise contours within the proposed B-17 expansion area overlies a portion of currently mapped bighorn sheep winter-lambing range (i.e., the flats at the southern end of the Fairview Range) and year-round range within the central Monte Cristo Mountains and southern Sand Springs Range. The estimated 70-75 DNL dBA contours would not appreciably change from existing conditions (see Figures 3.7-9 and 3.7-22). Given the estimated number of bighorn sheep within the vicinity of the existing B-17 and DVTA range areas are at an all-time high (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a), existing training operations are not having an effect on regional bighorn sheep populations. Therefore, it is expected that proposed training operations conducted within the proposed restricted areas (R-4805A and R4816S Low) and associated expansion areas at the same level as current training operations would not have a significant impact on bighorn sheep populations.</p> <p>Within the FRTC region of influence, there are over 1 million acres of mapped bighorn sheep year-round range, over 51,000 acres of mapped bighorn sheep winter/lambing range, 5.6 million acres of mapped year-round pronghorn range, and 52,000 acres of mapped pronghorn crucial summer range. Navy operational doctrine dictates that during transiting, pilots avoid lambing areas. Therefore, impacts to these ungulate ranges would not have a significant or measurable impact to bighorn sheep populations.</p> <p>The Navy would provide access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency that would set any quotas and distribute any permits, as well as maintenance of wildlife habitat. The Navy is working with NDOW on a MOA for bighorn sheep hunting on the B-17 range, a draft of which is included in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans). To the maximum extent possible, the Final EIS has been updated with details of this management plan. Details can be found in Chapter 2 and in Section 3.12 (Recreation), and a draft version of</p>

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		Russell Kuhlman Nevada Chapter Coordinator Backcountry Hunters and Anglers	<p>the proposed hunting program Memorandum of Agreement can be found in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans) of the Final EIS. The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission. The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC. The Navy currently has an Access Management Memorandum of Understanding with NDOW that would be updated (with a new MOA) after any ultimate Congressional Decision on an action.</p> <p>Regarding Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>Regarding noise impacts, as discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), the response to sonic booms or other sudden disturbance is similar among many wildlife species – sudden and unfamiliar sounds usually act as an alarm and trigger a “flight” response; however, reaction to a given noise can vary widely</p>

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			<p>depending on factors such as time of day, physical condition of the animal, physical environment, whether or not other physical stressors are present, and others. Although the startling effect of a sonic boom can be stressful to an animal, it is hard to generalize animal responses to noise disturbances across species. Recent literature suggests a fright is a common response across a variety of species, and that this ultimately leads to habituation. It has been reported that the intensities and durations of the startle response decrease as the number and frequency of exposures increase, suggesting no long-term adverse effects. Given the historical use of the airspace, and the persistence of aircraft operations and wildlife populations, wildlife within the MOA are likely habituated to aircraft overflights and associated noise (e.g., sonic booms). Many of the above-listed behavioral and physiological responses to noise are within the range of normal adaptive responses to external stimuli, such as predation, that wild animals face on a regular basis. In many cases, individuals would return to homeostasis or a stable equilibrium almost immediately after exposure to a brief stimulus such as an aircraft overflight or sonic boom. The Final EIS has been updated to incorporate the latest information regarding noise and startle effects on wildlife.</p> <p>The EIS has included information on noise and its impacts to citizens and wildlife. Section 3.7.1.3.3 (Noise Effects) discusses the noise impacts to humans while Section 3.10.3.1.1 (Noise) discusses the impacts of noise on biological sources. The Navy procedure for addressing noise complaints has been added to Section 3.7.3.5.1 (Proposed Management Practices) so the public can better understand the process. Additionally, it is recommended that the Navy revise their range operations manual to include additional noise abatement locations (Section 3.7.3.5.3 [Proposed Mitigation]).</p> <p>While the DNL noise metric is the federal standard for analyzing the cumulative noise exposure from all aircraft operations, the DoD has developed additional metrics to supplement the noise analysis. These supplemental metrics and analysis tools provide</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>more detailed noise exposure information for the decision process and improve the discussion regarding noise exposure. The DoD Noise Working Group technical bulletin Using Supplemental Noise Metrics and Analysis Tools (U.S. Department of Defense, 2009) was used to determine the appropriate metrics and analysis tools for this EIS.</p> <p>Currently, all state management plans concentrate on habitat availability, wildfire, and land-based chronic noise sources. Greater sage grouse lek location data indicates that usage areas are east of the land areas proposed for withdrawal or acquisition. Sage grouse in these areas would be exposed to noise from aircraft overflights. Available science indicates that short-term noise intrusion does not play a significant role in lek success. The Navy will work closely with BLM and NDOW to manage the sage grouse and other species on lands under the Navy's control. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.</p> <p>Regarding how the noise analysis was done, The Navy's model for noise impacts included the quantitative analysis of potential cumulative impacts from existing operations (baseline) plus each alternative. See Section 4.4.7 (Noise) for the full cumulative impact analysis from noise. Military and construction activities, such as development of a new facility, demolition or renovation of existing facilities, or road construction/maintenance, make up the majority of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable Navy actions considered as part of the cumulative impacts of noise. A detailed discussion of noise modeling is found in Section 3.7 (Noise), specifically Section 3.7.3 (Environmental Consequences). The results of the modeling include noise contour maps (see Figure 3.7-39), which provide a visual depiction of areas exposed to different noise levels associated with the Proposed Action. Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions where there would be overlap with the Navy's noise contours were noted to account for potential cumulative impacts</p>

F.6.3.27 Litwin, M. (Paiute Pipeline Company)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Mark	Litwin	Paiute Pipeline Company's Comments on the Draft EIS dated November 2018 are provided in the attached letter.	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.
Mark	Litwin	Paiute Pipeline Company filed comments on the Draft EIS on February 13, 2019. This letter makes a correction to Paiute Pipeline's February 13, 2019 letter.	Thank you for your comment and participation in the NEPA process. The Navy would narrow down the exact acreages to be utilized in the follow-on NEPA process for the relocation of the portion of the pipeline that would be impacted if Alternative 3 were chosen by any ultimate Congressional decision. Your comment has been included in the official project record.



February 13, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

Re: Paiute Pipeline Company's comments on Draft Environmental Impact Statement Dated
November 2018 (Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization DEIS)

Dear FRTC EIS Project Manager:

In November 2018, the United States Department of Navy (Navy) issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Project (Project). Paiute Pipeline Company (Paiute) is an impacted party of this proposed Project. Paiute currently operates a high pressure natural gas transmission pipeline across land that would be removed from public use by the Project. Paiute is subject to the jurisdiction of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) under the Natural Gas Act of 1938 (NGA). In addition, Paiute is subject to the jurisdiction of the United States Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration.

On pages 2-9, 2-15, 3.2-33, and 3.2-44 of the DEIS, the following statement was made:

The Navy would have responsibility for planning, designing, permitting, funding, and constructing any realignment of the pipeline.

Paiute believes that under the FERC's jurisdiction and the NGA, Paiute has the responsibility for the planning, designing and constructing the realignment of the pipeline. Paiute also believes that under FERC's jurisdiction and the NGA, Paiute has the responsibility of obtaining any permits required for the construction and operation of the realigned pipeline. However, Paiute anticipates using the Navy's NEPA analysis to meet Paiute's NEPA obligations for the Project; and believes that the alternate routes for the relocated pipeline should be included in the Navy's NEPA analysis. Accordingly, Paiute proposes that the sentence should be modified as follows:

The Navy would have responsibility for funding all costs associated with any realignment of the pipeline.

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Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
February 12, 2019
Page 2

Additionally, the following sentence appears on pages 2-9 and 2-15 of the DEIS:

Site-specific environmental analysis and NEPA planning would be required before any potential relocation of the pipeline could occur, and the Navy would not utilize any portion of an expanded B-17 range (if implemented) that would overlap the existing pipeline unless and until any such re-routing of the pipeline has been completed and made available to the pipeline owner.

Paiute requests that this sentence be modified as follows:

Site-specific environmental analysis and NEPA planning would be required before any potential relocation of the pipeline could occur, and the Navy would not utilize any portion of an expanded B-17 range (if implemented) that would overlap the existing pipeline unless and until any such re-routing of the pipeline has been completed and ~~made available to~~ placed into service by the pipeline owner. (emphasis added)

On pages 3.1-40 and 3.1-49, the DEIS estimates that relocating the natural gas pipeline could disturb 219 acres and 146 acres for Alternatives 1 and 3, respectively. However, Paiute estimates that the disturbed acreages for installing the newly relocated pipeline in the DEIS would be 242 acres for Alternative 1 and 177 acres for Alternative 3. Paiute's estimates assume a 75-foot-wide right of way (permanent and temporary) for installing the new pipeline. The new pipeline would be approximately 26 miles in length for Alternative 1 and 19 miles in length for Alternative 3. In addition, Paiute has estimated that construction would also require additional temporary staging areas of five (5) acres and four (4) acres for alternatives 1 and 3, respectively. Paiute also notes that removal of the existing pipeline, if required, would disturb additional acreage that has been previously disturbed.

Paiute appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the DEIS. If you have any questions, contact me at 702.364.3195 or mark.litwin@swgas.com.

Very truly yours,



Mark A. Litwin
Vice President / General Manager

F.6.3.27.1 Response

Thank you for your comment and participation in the NEPA process. Regarding the segment of pipeline to be relocated, the Navy would coordinate with the Paiute Pipeline Company as appropriate after a Proposed Action has been determined by Congress. The Navy would purchase and pay for relocation of that portion of the pipeline that would need to be relocated. Using funding provided by the Navy, the Paiute Pipeline Company would be responsible for planning, designing, permitting, funding, and constructing any realignment of the pipeline. The real estate process will contain the terms of the agreement between the Navy and the Paiute Pipeline Company. A ROW application submitted to the BLM by the pipeline owner would formally identify any proposed reroute. Site-specific environmental analysis and NEPA planning would be required before any potential relocation of the pipeline could occur, and the Navy would not utilize any portion of an expanded B-17 range (if implemented) that would overlap the existing pipeline unless and until any such re-routing of the pipeline has been completed and made available to the pipeline owner. The BLM would have decision authority with respect to any proposed final routing subsequent to completion of site-specific environmental analysis.



February 14, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

Re: Correction: Paiute Pipeline Company's comments on Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Dated November 2018 (Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization DEIS)

Dear FRTC EIS Project Manager:

On February 13, 2019, Paiute Pipeline Company (Paiute) filed comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) dated November 2018 prepared by the United States Department of the Navy (Navy) related to the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization. On pages 3.1-40 and 3.1-49, the DEIS estimates that relocating the natural gas pipeline could disturb 219 acres and 146 acres for Alternatives 1 and 3, respectively.

In its February 13, 2019 letter, Paiute requested that the Navy revise the estimated disturbed acreage to 242 acres for Alternative 1 and 177 acres for Alternative 3. However, the estimated disturbed acres and the underlying details for the calculations were reversed for Alternatives 1 and 3 in the letter. Therefore, the estimated disturbed acreage for Alternative 1 should be revised to 177 acres and the estimated disturbed acreage for Alternative 3 should be revised to 242 acres.

Paiute apologizes for any inconvenience or confusion that this may cause. Again, Paiute appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the DEIS. If you have any questions, contact me at 702.364.3195 or mark.litwin@swgas.com.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark A. Litwin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first and last names being more prominent.

Mark A. Litwin
Vice President / General Manager

P.O. Box 94197 | Las Vegas, Nevada 89193-4197 | 702.876.7178

F.6.3.27.2 Response

Thank you for your comment and participation in the NEPA process. The Navy would narrow down the exact acreages to be utilized in the follow-on NEPA process for the relocation of the portion of the pipeline that would be impacted if Alternative 3 were chosen by any ultimate Congressional decision. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.6.3.28 Master pool, Jerome and Tara (White Sage LLC)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jerome and Tara	Masterpool	Attached is a PDF Navy EIS Comment	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

White Sage LLC
Jerome and Tara Masterpool
573 County Road 3525
Paradise, TX 76073

November 29, 2018

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

RE: Scoping Comment on Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization EIS

Thank you for the opportunity to provide scoping comments on the Navy's Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) Modernization Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). We ask that you incorporate the following comments into the proposed action and analyses:

We do not object to the Navy's need for training or for increasing your training facilities and welcome any opportunity to work with your authorized representatives to negotiate solutions for any problems your proposals may cause in our business operations.

From what we have learned about your proposals to date, we prefer to negotiate an outright sale of the entire ranch. Since we always try to work cooperatively with agencies and others, below we have indicated our preference for a peaceful negotiation that will result in a sale from willing seller to the U.S. We are sure that everyone would prefer to avoid the expensive and contentious process of condemnation through eminent domain and litigation.

As we understand your proposed action, you plan to purchase our patented lands. That action will make it impossible to continue our ranching operation. You also propose to withdraw land from our adjudicated grazing allotment which is an integral and essential part of our ranching operation.

As indicated below, at the very least the proposed actions will frustrate and deprive us of our investment backed expectations for which we expect to be fully compensated.

None of us at the ranch are attorneys or trained in law but we will attempt to use terminology as it is found in statutes and court decisions so everyone will understand what is being discussed. For example investment backed expectations is a phrase recognized by the Supreme Court in "*Penn Central Transportation Co. v City of New York* 438 U.S.104 (1978)" and has been used

Scoping Comment on Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization EIS
Jerome and Tara Masterpool December 4, 2016 Page 2

frequently since that decision. Use of the phrase (Investment backed expectations) by our courts has expanded to include "Taking" that occurs within non-patented lands. The presence of existing rights mentioned below is recognized in the savings clause of such laws as Taylor Grazing Act, NEPA, Rangelands Improvement Act, Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and many more federal and state statutes.

Our allotment contains property we own in the form of existing rights including water rights, easements, and forage preference that comprise a large portion of the valuation of our business. We are confident that the DOD Navy and the USDI BLM will be careful to protect our valid existing rights in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and other statutes. See for example Section VII of Public Law 94-579 Section 701 (h) which directs federal agencies as follows: "(h) All actions by the Secretary concerned under this Act shall be subject to valid existing rights."

Please discuss your recognition of these topics along with your plans to mitigate any actions that affect private rights in detail in the NEPA document you are preparing.

About Our Ranch

We (Jerome Masterpool, Tara Masterpool, and White Sage LLC) are the owners of the Le Beau Flat Allotment and the Campbell Creek Allotment. Your proposed expansion of the B-17 training area will be very damaging to our business interests. Our family business is also known as White Sage LLC. Property we own includes patented acreage and appurtenant existing rights throughout our adjudicated grazing allotments which are regulated by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

At this time the White Sage LLC holdings are leased to a third party. As is the nature of a ranch lease, the Lessee has leased the entire ranch including use of the valid existing rights owned by White Sage LLC. Cattle owned by the Lessee also serve as collateral for loans held by the Lessee as a necessary source of funds for operating costs.

In addition to the patented lands we hold title in equity to various water rights, rights of way, forage preference, and other existing rights as they exist in the fee lands where they occur including those lands controlled by BLM (i.e. adjudicated grazing allotments). Water rights and easements (rights-of-way) are a matter of property under state law. Under the Nevada water law, based on the doctrine of prior appropriation and beneficial use, our ranch established grazing rights for a distance of at least three miles from each water source; our water rights holdings are both vested prior to passage of statutory law and appropriated under Nevada statute. Also, as recognized by federal law, our ranch established easements and rights of way for travel through our grazing area by our livestock and ourselves as well as conveyance of water. Range development projects within

Scoping Comment on Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization EIS
Jerome and Tara Masterpool December 4, 2016 Page 3

our grazing allotments are also our property since the construction was completed with money contributed by ranchers into the Range Improvement Fund; a trust fund controlled by Dept of Interior.

Establishment of property held in equity means that claims have attached to the BLM controlled lands and effectively severed our entire allotment areas from the category of public land or federal enclave. Property established by our predecessors in interest has preempted substantial portions of federal regulations regarding public lands. Please keep in mind that property is defined under the laws of the various states and in our case that includes water rights, easements, rights-of-way, forage preference, etc., administered under the substantive and procedural laws of the State of Nevada. The U.S. Supreme Court has supported this idea repeatedly, for example: "What we hold is that following the act of 1877, if not before, all non-navigable waters then a part of the public domain became *public juris*, subject to the plenary control of the designated states ... with the right in each to determine for itself to what extent the rule of appropriation or the common-law rule in respect of riparian rights should obtain; California Oregon Power co. v. Beaver Portland Cement Co., 295 U.S. 142, 163 (1935)".

With the creation of the BLM our grazing areas were further severed from the whole through the process of adjudication which recognized a private property known as "*forage preference*" which is the modern version of grazing right. Adjudication effectively removed the ownership of the surface estate from the federal hands and at this time jurisdiction needed for police powers has not been restored which would seem to limit the solutions to Navy expansion to either negotiation or litigation

Our ranch is comprised of patented lands, adjudicated BLM controlled allotment, private property such as water rights, rights of way, easements, and forage preference all of which are components of a grazing unit or farm unit under the homestead entry laws.

PLEASE NOTE: Details about the nature, value, and scope of our property rights will be provided to the authorized officer as we negotiate mitigation of the Navy action and/or sale of our ranch.

Allotted Grazing and Appurtenant Water Rights and Rights-of-Way Are Private Property

We have relied on reference material for the following discussion that includes: the Eureka County Nevada Master Plan Natural Resources and Land Use Element and the Ph.D. dissertation by Angus McIntosh (2002) "*Property Rights on Western Ranches; Federal Rangeland Policy and a Model for Valuation*".

Financing institutions, whose support is critical to continued livestock grazing and agricultural operations, consider the existence of the permitted grazing of forage

Scoping Comment on Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization EIS
Jerome and Tara Masterpool December 4, 2016 Page 4

preference, and the reasonable expectation of land use which emanates therefrom, as an indispensable factor in determining to extend and continue financial support. Permitted grazing (number of livestock and period of time) is capitalized into the value of a ranch. A decision to purchase a ranch is based on the ability of that ranch to produce and sell livestock. A ranch purchase decision means the buyer essentially pays for livestock production stemming from the private and federally managed lands, as well as additional property in the form of water rights, rights of way, and improvements on both private and federally managed land areas. The economic value of our ranch is highly dependent upon our permitted grazing on the allotments. Our ranch is valued or appraised at a higher rate than it would be if no permit existed. Our forage preference, easements, and appurtenant water rights are considered part of the realty (i.e., real, private property). Our grazing preference, permitted use, and water rights on the allotment are accepted as private property collateral with real value. The Internal Revenue Service also considers the permit as a taxable property interest.

The grazing on our allotment was recognized by Congress as having the character of a property right, interest or investment backed expectation when it enacted that portion of the Taylor Grazing Act which is found in 43 U.S.C § 315 (b) guaranteeing renewal of permits if denial of the permit would "impair the value of the grazing unit of the permittee, when such unit is pledged as security for any bona fide loan." Under the Taylor Grazing Act, a grazing permit is considered private property and is mandatorily attached to private "base property" – land or water

Allotments for grazing in Nevada, including ours, were originally identified and adjudicated on the basis of water right ownership. Our "right to graze" is a property interest appurtenant to livestock watering rights. All property, including water rights, is founded in the power of the State of Nevada, even property existing within lands controlled by federal agencies. The nature of Nevada water rights reflects the split estate concept developed on western lands which was included under Mexican law and continued when our area became Territory of the United States. The interest created in and owned by our predecessors on the allotment is a portion of the "surface estate" of the split estate. McIntosh (2002) further describes this right in terms of the travel by livestock to the place where a livestock watering right is used has established livestock grazing rights-of-way for access to each water source that is based on the normal travel of livestock that are grazing as they approach or leave the water location. The split estate is demonstrated by the stock-watering rights we possess on the allotment.

Our property ownership includes a "bundle-of-rights." McIntosh (2002) quotes a legal dictionary in defining the bundle-of-rights as: "...the collection of rights that constitute fee ownership in an object or realty (or interests in real estate). The bundle-of-rights includes, but is not limited to, the right to: sell, lease, use, give

Scoping Comment on Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization EIS
Jerome and Tara Masterpool December 4, 2016 Page 5

away, exclude others from, and to retain. The bundle-of-rights is the list of options that an owner can exercise over his property." The term "fee" refers to the quality and character of ownership in a property. McIntosh illustrates the bundle of rights as a bundle of "sticks" with each representing a distinctive action available only to a property owner.

"Sticks" within our bundle of rights apply fully to all property rights on our allotment including those rights-of-way established prior to 1976 to allow access to the various infrastructure and water rights on the allotment. This includes Revised Statute (RS) 2477 rights-of-way for travel or access by people and livestock as well as RS 2339 and RS 2340 easements for water storage and rights-of-way for water conveyance (ditches, dams, pipelines, etc.).

There are many other sources not referenced above defining the private property-nature of our grazing allotment, stockwater rights, and rights-of-way on the allotment.

Please adequately analyze, consider and integrate the proposed action's impacts to our ranch's adjudicated forage base, water rights, and rights-of-way.

Mitigation --- Take Every Effort to Avoid and Minimize Impacts

We understand that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), under which the EIS is being developed, outlines a general policy of "Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate." We ask that the Navy work with us to identify and implement all economically and technically feasible options to avoid and minimize impacts to our ranching operation at a ratio of 1:1 (i.e., completely balance negative impacts).

Through close coordination and scheduling, allow us to graze the areas under the allotment;

1. Minimize ground operations when livestock are present to avoid hazing, livestock stress, road degradation, unwanted spreading or moving of livestock, etc.;
2. Provide alternate livestock forage (may include seeding and removal of invasive trees such as Pinyon Pine and Utah Juniper) on other federally administered land which the ranch is authorized to graze livestock;
3. Provide alternative livestock watering source(s) on federally administered land which the ranch is authorized to graze livestock where forage was previously unused or underused due to lack of a viable water source;
4. Provide an alternative livestock watering source in any area where forage was previously unused or underused due to lack of a viable water source;
5. Implement a Rangeland Improvement Project on federally administered land which the ranch is authorized to graze livestock which would improve livestock production, forage availability, or rangeland condition (e.g., fencing,

Scoping Comment on Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization EIS
Jerome and Tara Masterpool December 4, 2016 Page 6

weed control, brush management, Pinyon-Juniper control); , vegetation management); and/or

If any of the proposed actions include development of livestock or irrigation water and the appropriation for a water right, the water right must be held in our ranch's name.

Please incorporate adequate avoidance and minimization options in the proposed action and analyze such in the EIS.

Monetary Compensation If Avoidance and Minimization Cannot Fully Mitigate Impacts

Please Note: We wish to keep our ranch intact or sell it in its entirety.

If after closely working with us it is determined that none of the avoidance and minimization measures referred to above can be implemented or the impact is not totally offset by the avoidance and minimization measures, the Navy must mitigate the forage loss, loss of access, loss of our water rights, and loss of business income through direct monetary compensation.

In fact, Congress has mandated compensation for grazing "losses" due to military withdrawals in 43 US Code, Title 43, Chapter 8A, Section 315(q)

"Whenever use for war or national defense purposes of the public domain or other property owned by or under the control of the United States prevents its use for grazing, persons holding grazing permits or licenses and persons whose grazing permits or licenses have been or will be canceled because of such use shall be paid out of the funds appropriated or allocated for such project such amounts as the head of the department or agency so using the lands shall determine to be fair and reasonable for the losses suffered by such persons as a result of the use of such lands for war or national defense purposes. Such payments shall be deemed payment in full for such losses. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to create any liability not now existing against the United States. (July 9, 1942, ch. 500, 56 Stat. 654; May 28, 1948, ch. 353, § 1, 62 Stat. 277)."

Values of "grazing permits", livestock forage, and water rights within federally controlled lands have been determined in several locations in Nevada and included in federal NEPA documents. There are many examples of precedence in Nevada (and elsewhere) where entities, including the military, have done the right thing and compensated loss of grazing forage, loss of investment backed expectations, and loss of the use of property such as water rights and rights-of-way. As explained above, details about the nature, value, and scope of our

Scoping Comment on Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization EIS
Jerome and Tara Masterpool December 4, 2016 Page 7

property rights will be provided to your representative who has proper delegation of authority to negotiate mitigation of the Navy action and/or sale of our ranch.

Please include detailed and factual analysis of this subject in your EIS. We expect no less from NASFallon as you move towards the "Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization".

Sincerely



Jerome Masterpool
White Sage LLC



Tara Masterpool
White Sage LLC

F.6.3.28.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Pursuant United States Code section 315q of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended, the Navy would make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered by the permit holders as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes. Such payments would be made under all of the action alternatives. The Final EIS discusses the process that the Navy is proposing to use to determine payment amounts to each individual affected grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits.

For any acquisition of privately-owned property, private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land and any compensable rights associated with the land acquired by the United States due to the proposed expansion. Just compensation would be determined by calculating the fair market value of parcels in accordance with federal appraisal rules codified in the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions.

The Navy, as part of the proposed action, would acquire water rights within the proposed withdrawal areas if such water rights can be maintained for beneficial use. If a condition of the water right can be modified (e.g., the point of use moved outside of the withdrawal areas), then the water right would not be acquired by the Navy. If wells are associated with the water right, then the Navy would evaluate on a case-by-case basis the disposition of the well (e.g., continued beneficial use or capping of the well).

In regards to the water source located in the B-17 range, the Navy would allow for access so that the allotment user(s) could continue to access this water resource

The following specific grazing mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Policies and procedures in the NAS Fallon INRMP would continue to be implemented to avoid conflicts with livestock grazing. This includes routine monitoring of fence lines surrounding potentially hazardous areas to ensure that the fence is secure and cannot be crossed by people or animals; the monitoring

area would be increased to include new perimeter fences on lands proposed for withdrawal. The Navy is proposing to provide funds for BLM to hire two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers who would assist with management of the additional area. The Standard Operating Procedures for handling cattle on the FRTC training ranges would be revised and implemented. Livestock friendly erosion controls would be used when performing construction activities on or adjacent to grazing land that is actively being used.

F.6.3.29 Netherton, S. (Friends of Nevada Wilderness, The Wilderness Society and the Conservation Lands Foundation)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Shaaron	Netherton	Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments. The attached letter is from Friends of Nevada Wilderness, The Wilderness Society and the Conservation Lands Foundation. Shaaron	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.



February 14, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering
Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

www.FRTCModernization.com

RE: Comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization EIS

Dear Sir or Madam:

Thank you for the opportunity to present comments on the draft EIS. This letter is on behalf of the Board of Directors, staff, volunteers and the 10,000 supporters of Friends of Nevada Wilderness who recreate on public lands in Nevada, including those lands being considered for expansion of the Fallon Range Training Complex. It is also on behalf of the members of The Wilderness Society and the Conservation Lands Foundation. Some of the more popular areas that our collective members have enjoyed for decades include the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, Stillwater Range and Desatoya Mountains Wilderness Study Areas and the Fallon and Stillwater National Wildlife Refuges.

Overview of Comments

Our comments focus on the following categories:

- The inadequate and erroneous statements about Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas throughout the document. The Final EIS should correct these errors and expand the analysis on the impacts to Wilderness resources.
- A request that the Final EIS contain a reconfigured alternative for the Dixie Valley Training Area. One that would better serve military needs while protecting Wilderness resources and lessening the amount of land that would need to be withdrawn from public domain.
- Additional comments on other resources and sections of the DEIS.

Wilderness Resources

The DEIS appears to have relied on erroneous information about Wilderness conservation lands. The background information in *Appendix 1* (at the end of these comments) is provided for a better understanding of the history of these Wilderness conservation lands and the status of these lands today. It is important that these inaccuracies in the DEIS be corrected within the FTRC EIS to assure accurate information and credibility of the document. Additionally, the analysis of the impacts to these Wilderness lands as a result of proposed WSA de-designation for military expansion is either incorrect or non-existent.

Wilderness values go far beyond “recreation”. As a reminder, we have included language directly from the Wilderness Act of 1964.

SECTION 2. (a) In order to assure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition, it is hereby declared to be the policy of the Congress to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of Wilderness. For this purpose there is hereby established a National Wilderness Preservation System to be composed of federally owned areas designated by Congress as “Wilderness areas”, and these shall be administered for the use and enjoyment of the American people in such manner as will leave them unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as Wilderness, and so as to provide for the protection of these areas, the preservation of their Wilderness character, and for the gathering and dissemination of information regarding their use and enjoyment as Wilderness; and no Federal lands shall be designated as “Wilderness areas” except as provided for in this Act or by a subsequent Act.

DEFINITION OF WILDERNESS

(c) A Wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of Wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value.

Examples of False or Misleading Statements about WSAs in the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization DEIS

Land Use [Executive Summary Page 13]

Wilderness Study Area: an area for further study to determine whether it meets criteria to be designated by the U.S. Congress as a Wilderness Area [Executive Summary Page 13 (53)]

This definition of WSAs within the DEIS is false. ALL WSA's meet Wilderness Criteria. See the background information in Appendix 1 for the process that determined the Wilderness qualification of WSAs. All currently existing WSAs meet all the necessary criteria for Wilderness designation. These WSAs are the crown jewels of BLM lands.

3.2 Land Use Bravo-20 [Page 3.2-23]

Stillwater Range WSA

In an evaluation of the Stillwater Range WSA, the BLM determined that the Stillwater Range WSA no longer contains Wilderness characteristics.

This statement in the FTRC DEIS is false, and is a misinterpretation of the 1991 BLM Nevada Statewide Wilderness Report. In fact, the report quoted unequivocally states that "the Wilderness values described in the Section 2(c) criteria of the Wilderness Act of 1964 are present in the WSA" [Nevada BLM Statewide Wilderness Report 1991, VOLUME IV - CARSON CITY and ELY DISTRICTS pg IV-40]. Refer to Appendix 1 background information on the Nevada WSAs for clarification of WSA Wilderness characteristics

Dixie Valley Training Area [3.2-25]

Clan Alpine WSA

The Clan Alpine Mountains WSA is BLM land located east of the DVTA outside of the existing and proposed DVTA area.

This statement is false. Not only are 22,381 acres of the Clan Alpine WSA are within the proposed DVTA expansion, the military proposes that these acres of WSA be eliminated by Congress.

The BLM does not find the northern half of the WSA and the area around the periphery of the WSA suitable for Wilderness.

This statement is misleading as presented, implying there are no Wilderness values in these areas. BLM's recommendations are very old and have limited value in an analysis of impacts on Wilderness Resources.

Job Peak WSA

The BLM has determined that the Job Peak WSA does not contain Wilderness characteristics.

This statement in the FTRC DEIS is false and is a misinterpretation of the 1991 BLM Nevada Statewide Wilderness Report. Refer to Appendix 1 background information on the Nevada WSAs for clarification of WSA Wilderness characteristics. Not only does the entire WSA have Wilderness characteristics, much of it has extensive cultural resource values that were identified by the Fallon Tribes. The Tribes submitted an ACEC proposal to the Carson City BLM about the need to protect these values. The BLM in their draft Resource Management Plan identified a large portion of the WSA as the Fox Peak ACEC.

The boundary of the proposed military withdrawal was drawn to exclude most of the proposed Fox Peak ACEC. It is now unclear if the BLM intends to protect this sensitive cultural area in their final Resource Management Plan.

3.12.3.2.4 Dixie Valley Training Area

Land Withdrawal and Acquisition pg 3.12-31

Though these remaining WSA areas would be managed as WSA, none of them contain Wilderness characteristics. Therefore, there would be no significant impact on recreation because of the withdrawal or acquisition under alternative 1.

Land Withdrawal and Acquisition pg 3.12-46

Though these remaining WSA areas would be managed as WSAs, none of the Stillwater WSA, Job Peak WSA, or the Clan Alpine WSA retain Wilderness characteristics. None of the areas proposed for WSA designation removal contain Wilderness characteristics.

Both of the above statements from the FTRC DEIS are totally false. All of these areas have Wilderness characteristics and requesting the de-designation of nearly 75,000 acres of wilderness study areas along with withdrawing them from public land is in a fact a significant impact to those Wilderness resources.

Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (LWCs)

The mandate for the BLM to identify LWCs comes directly out of FLPMA: [Sec. 201. [43 U.S.C. 1711] (a)] *"The Secretary shall pre-prepare and maintain on a continuing basis an inventory of all public lands and their resource and other values (including, but not limited to, outdoor recreation and scenic values), giving priority to areas of critical environmental concern. This inventory shall be kept current so as to reflect changes in conditions and to identify new and emerging resource and other values."* Lands with Wilderness Characteristics (outside of WSAs and Designated Wilderness Areas) are an important part of the continuing inventory of resource and other values on public lands.

In 2013 FNW inventoried lands in the Stillwater Range and submitted the information to the Carson City District office in late 2013. The November 2014 Carson City District Resource Management Plan Revision Report on Lands with Wilderness Characteristics found that these areas do indeed meet the requirements for LWC. In the 2014 Carson City District Office Draft RMP, the BLM Preferred Alternative (E) identified two LWCs (Stillwater Additions and Job South) in the vicinity of FTRC Dixie Valley Training Area expansions.

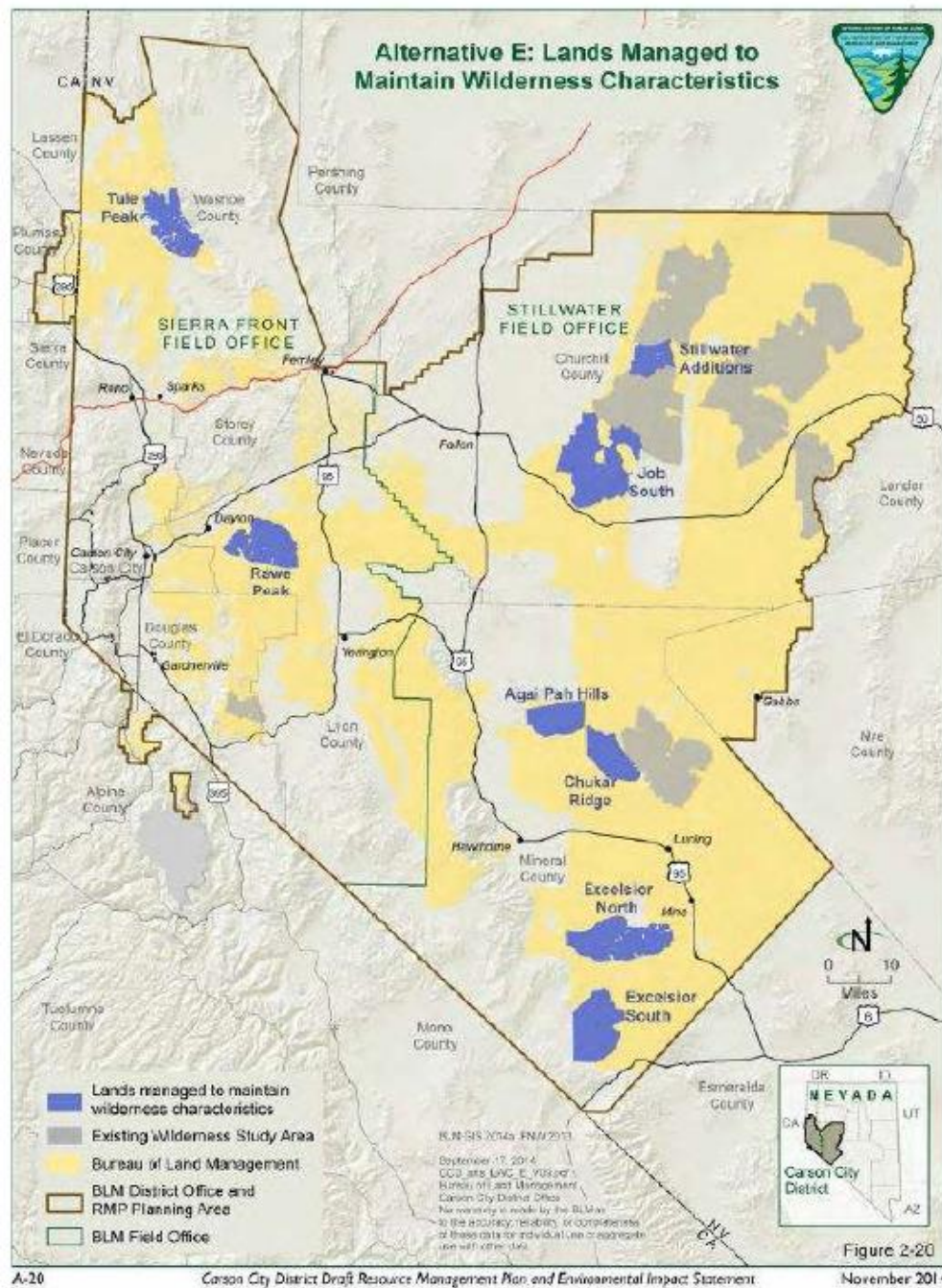
False Information about LWCs the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization DEIS

Dixie Valley Training Area pg 3.2-25

Although there are no lands with Wilderness characteristics within the DVTA, a recent inventory of BLM land identified four units with Wilderness characteristics. They include the Stillwater Range Subunit, Mountain Well, Diamond Canyon, and Job Peak (subunit B and G). All of these units are in the Stillwater Range west of the existing DVTA and outside of the proposed expansion area (Bureau of Land Management, 2014d).

The statement in the FTRC DEIS about these lands being outside of the DVTA is clearly untrue. The draft EIS does not include maps that show the inventoried lands with Wilderness characteristics but these units are most definitely there. The Preferred Alternative E of the 2014 Draft EIS for the Carson City RMP identified two LWC units (the Stillwater Additions and the Job Peak South) which clearly overlap with the Navy requested withdrawal lands (see map below). The impacts to these LWC lands also needs to be addressed in the analysis of impacts to Wilderness Resources. Cumulatively the military is proposing to withdraw 18,305 acres in the

Stillwater Additions LWC and 12,422 acres of in the South Job LWC for a total of 30,727 acres of additionally impacted Wilderness quality lands.



A-20

Carson City District Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

November 2014

Conservation Designations and the Dixie Valley Training Areas - A win-win Solution

1.5 Training Needs and the Capabilities Evaluation Process

1.5.4 Non-Weapons Training Need and the Current Range Capability

The existing DVTA is a non-live-fire training area on Navy-managed land that is generally open to public use... Infrastructure, mining, and geothermal development existing near the DVTA has degraded training realism and potentially compromise aircrew safety, particularly in low-altitude, dark, and low-light conditions. If allowed to continue unabated, aircrew and Special Forces personnel would be unable to safely train or train to tactically acceptable parameters within the DVTA.

Through evaluation of the FTRC Modernization DEIS and from conversations with Naval staff and contractors, it is apparent that the Dixie Valley Training Area (DVTA) would not be suitable for Navy training operations today, if the majority of the area surrounding the training area were not protected for Wilderness conservation through formally recognized WSAs and BLM administratively recognized LWCs. The only reason the Navy is able to consider expanding operations into the surrounding areas is because the Wilderness conservation protections have precluded the “infrastructure, mining, and geothermal development” that can “degrade training realism and potentially compromise aircrew safety, particularly in low-altitude, dark, and low-light conditions.” It is also obvious that the reason the Navy wants to expand the DVTA is to assure that the surrounding area will not be compromised by future development. Wilderness designation for the Stillwater Range, Job Peak, Clan Alpine and Desatoya Mountains would provide the strongest assurances for the Navy that the areas surrounding the DVTA would not be compromised in the future by development.

A Conservation Proposal to Support the Military in the Dixie Valley Training Area

We would like the military to consider a conservation proposal that would include a combination of National Conservation Area and Wilderness to provide maximum protection for Wilderness values, wildlife habitat and cultural resources.

We are proposing a National Conservation Area for the Stillwater Range (about 284,000 acres) that would also include Wilderness designation for the Stillwater and Job Peak WSAs. Some of the highlights would include:

- The Stillwater Range would remain undeveloped and available for military training without dangerous developments and low-light conditions.
- The Stillwater Range would remain undeveloped to protect cultural resources and be consistent with ACEC proposals by the Tribes. The Stillwater Range, located along the shore of ancient Lake Lahontan, is extremely important for its cultural values. An excellent source of information about the importance of these cultural resources can be found in the book *In the Shadow of Fox Peak: An Ethnography of the Cattail-Eater Northern Paiute People of Stillwater Marsh* By Catherine S. Fowler
- The Stillwater Range would retain its Wilderness qualities protected either by the National Conservation Area and/or Wilderness proposals.
- The Stillwater Range would retain its high quality wildlife habitat especially for bighorn sheep and other important species.
- The National Conservation Area would still be managed by the BLM and 113,000 acres of public lands would no longer need to be withdrawn from the public domain by the Navy. The Navy could use these

lands and be assured that they would not be developed. However, the public will continue to own them and access would be assured in the future.

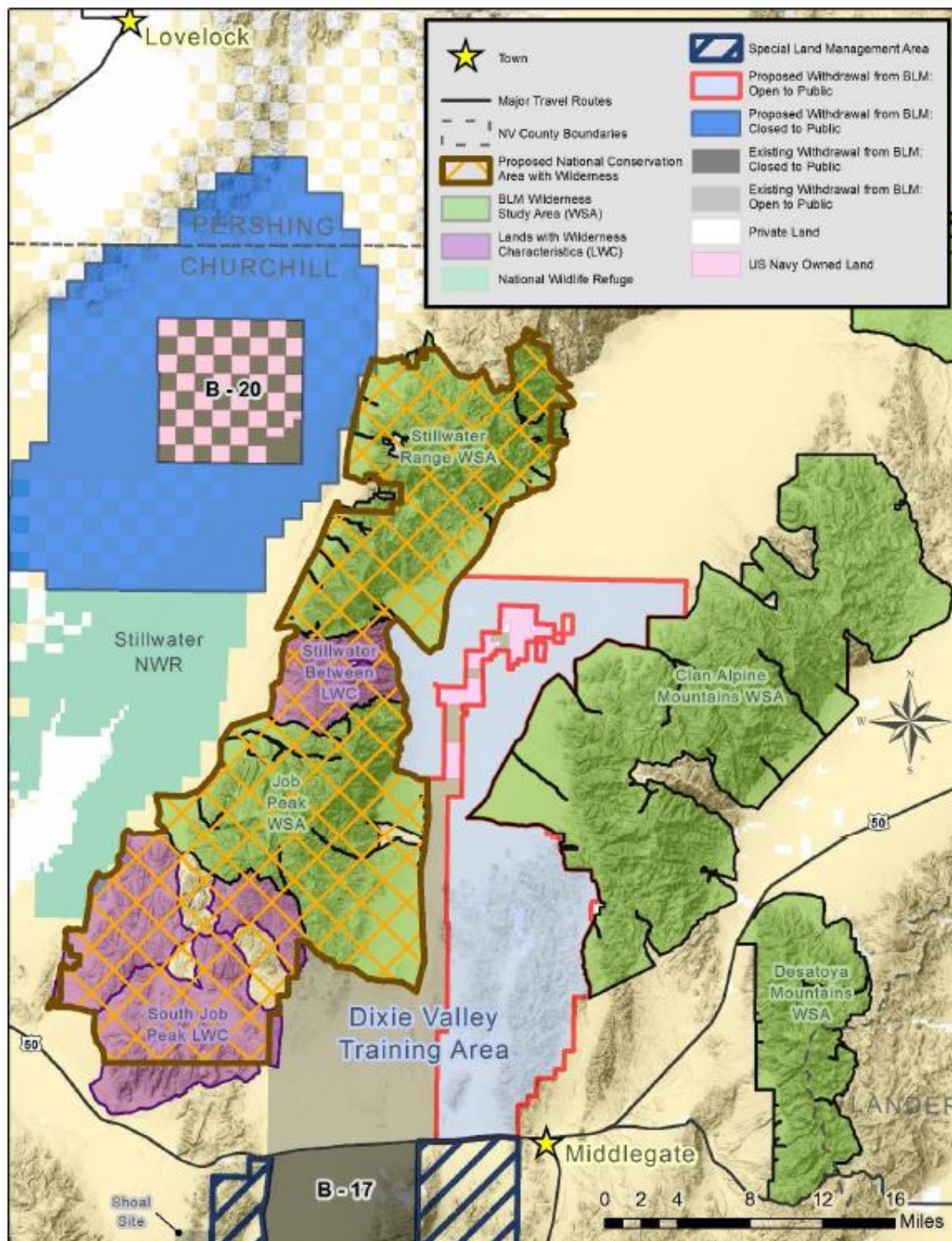
- Currently the Navy is proposing to withdraw about 247,000 acres of public lands in Dixie Valley Training Area and take them out of the public domain. Our proposal would limit the amount of withdrawn land in the DVTA to about 134,000 acres. That would reduce the need for withdrawing 113,000 acres. Additionally, the conservation proposal would be in perpetuity and would not have to be renegotiated through Congress every 20 years.



The Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Area

Additionally, Wilderness designation for the **Clan Alpine Mountains**, **Desatoya Mountains** and **Gabbs Valley Range** would further support the Navy by keeping out developments that might be incompatible with military operations. Wilderness designation will ensure development, encroachments, and obtrusive terrestrial lights will not impact the viability of the DVTA for as long as the Navy needs to conduct training there. We would look forward to working with the Navy and our delegation to ensure any routes and access needs within these proposals are clearly identified.

Conservation Proposal for Dixie Valley Training Area





Jobs Peak Wilderness Study Area



Clan Alpine Range Wilderness Study Area



Other Perspectives on Wilderness and Military Withdrawals

Below is the contracted information from the Rand Corporation commissioned by the US Air Force about proposed military withdrawals for the Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR). These findings are also applicable for other military withdrawals, including the Navy proposed withdrawal for the Dixie Valley Training Area (DVTA).

The Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR) and Proposed Wilderness Areas
Issues Affecting the NTTR's Land Withdrawal Renewal- Rand Corporation 2016 pgs 18-20

https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR1105.html

Wilderness Can Be a Useful Tool for the [Military]

Wilderness is not always bad for the [Military]. In fact, in some cases, Wilderness areas on other federal lands actually can benefit [Military] testing, training, and other installation and range operations. Wilderness areas can help prevent encroachment and incompatible development near installations and test and training ranges. Wilderness is a tool that could benefit [Military] operations by helping to prevent encroachment on nearby BLM, FWS, and other federal lands.

First, Wilderness status protects an area from human structures being built on it, such as wind farms, solar towers, private homes, and resort developments. All of them are key encroachment concerns for the [Military]. Second, Wilderness areas help protect biodiversity. Loss of biodiversity can be a significant encroachment concern because as biodiversity declines, more species tend to become threatened and endangered species (T&ESs) or other species of concern. This means that their habitat needs special protection, which can restrict military testing and training operations... Wilderness areas on BLM... can help protect the species' habitat and help prevent it from becoming a T&ES.

Thus, ironically, Wilderness on BLM lands and proposed Wilderness areas on the [Military] lands actually benefits the [Military] by helping to prevent encroachment, even though it restricts the [Military] on those lands. Given this situation, the [Military] should try to take advantage of Wilderness as a tool in places where it can help the [Military] and other [training] operations.

Wildlife Concerns

Access restrictions and/or closures

Restricting or closing access hinders efforts of NDOW and non-profit conservation volunteers in managing the wildlife and habitat for which the agency is responsible. NDOW and many conservation partners have invested substantial time and money on habitat improvements and bighorn sheep re-introductions within the proposed withdrawal.

We recommend that the military work cooperatively with NDOW to finalize the "Managed Access Program" for inclusion into the Final EIS/Record of Decision along with an annual review of the Managed Access Program that

provides an opportunity to implement adaptive management strategies and improve access opportunities where possible.

Adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat resources

The impacts of increased noise and munitions, construction of fences and other infrastructure (which impact habitat quality and availability) and OHV use within proposed expanded military airspace and target areas are significant. Of particular concern are low-level flights that have the potential for impacting bighorn sheep lambing areas, Greater Sage-Grouse during lekking/brood-rearing season, and waterfowl breeding and staging habitat. We recommend that the Navy dedicate funding to wildlife and habitat avoidance, minimization, and monitoring activities in the Final EIS/ROD.

Impacts of wildfires (Navy-ignited) and degradation or loss of wildlife habitat

Impacts to wildlife and habitat resources resulting from wildfires caused by live munitions and flares and subsequent conversion to annual grass dominated vegetation communities (cheatgrass) is of primary concern. Past rehabilitation efforts for fires started by Navy activities have been funded by NDOW, BLM, and local conservation groups. A finalized Fire Management Plan was not included within the DEIS and thus, is of significant concern. We recommend that the Navy includes a completed "Fire Management Plan" in the Final EIS/ROD which commits adequate funding and identifies procedures for implementing fire prevention, suppression, and rehabilitation strategies. We would also recommend that the Fallon Range Training Complex maintain a re-load base with a dedicated single engine air attack plane to quickly drop retardant on fires started by military activities.

Lack of mitigation

Mitigation measures within the DEIS relative to potential impacts to wildlife, recreation, wildfire, and access for management activities are lacking. We recommend the Navy incorporates a fully-funded and comprehensive wildlife resource mitigation plan into the Final EIS/ROD. A strategy for forming and enabling a Wildlife Working Group with the objective of enhancing wildlife populations, habitat resources, and rehabilitation strategies.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the draft EIS. We look forward to working with the Navy in the future.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shaaron Netherton
Executive Director
Friends of Nevada Wilderness



FRIENDS of NEVADA WILDERNESS

Paul Spitler
Director of Wilderness Policy
The Wilderness Society



Jocelyn Torres
Nevada Program Director
Conservation Lands Foundation



Conservation
Lands
Foundation
Protecting America's Heritage

F.6.3.29.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

Regarding the need to de-designate Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), the proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. Any such de-designation would not prohibit the use of the area by recreationalists.

Regarding statements about WSAs, the Navy used the best available information to inform its statements and analyses and disagrees that these statements are erroneous. Portions of the following WSAs would be included in Congressional withdrawal legislation, removing the WSA designation: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres; 12 percent of the WSA), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres; 47 percent of the WSA), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres; 11 percent of the WSA) (Figure 3.2-8). The de-designation of portions of the WSAs would not reduce a disproportionate share of relevant wilderness characteristics in such a way that it would eliminate the potential for these areas to be designated as wilderness in the future. Management of the remaining WSAs (outside the proposed expansion lands) would continue according to policy and regulations related to the WSAs. The BLM has stated ongoing Navy operations in the SUA over these WSAs diminish solitude opportunities and could adversely impact wilderness designation. Similarly, although the South Stillwater and Clan Alpine Herd Area/Herd Management Areas overlap the DVTA, there would be no change to the current land use or land management of these areas.

The proposed DVTA expansion would overlap 11,600 acres of the BLM's proposed Fox Peak ACEC (24 percent), resulting in the BLM changing the boundaries of the proposed Fox Peak ACEC to remove those areas within the DVTA. The Navy is not proposing to change the management or designated land use within the revised ACEC boundary. The construction of the proposed Job Peak Electronic Warfare Site would be north of the Fox Peak ACEC. There are transmission corridors as well BLM planning and utility corridors within the boundary of the DVTA. Action Alternatives would not affect the current configuration of utilities within the proposed DVTA boundary. However, it would limit the ability to improve existing and proposed transmission lines within the DVTA.

Regarding the configuration of the DVTA, it is necessary in the configuration that was analyzed due to training requirements and lack of other available space that would fit that similar configuration. Military Training activities on the DVTA would continue to be compatible with the various activities that may take place on the DVTA because the range would continue to be open to the public.

As noted in Section 2.3.2.4.2 (Public Accessibility), allowable public uses of the lands would not change from current conditions, including hunting, camping, hiking, fishing, off-highway vehicle use, site visits, and grazing. Current utilities and associated ROWs would be allowed to remain; however, there would be limited public access (Table 2-2). In the event that Congress should approve the proposed land

withdrawal, the Navy would determine which ROWs presented in Table 3.2-4 would be compatible with the expanded range and any ROWs that would be acquired by the Navy. The public would not be allowed to access the three proposed electronic warfare sites, and fencing would be installed around these sites (up to 15 acres total).

Regarding impacts to Land Use and changes to the section, the Navy analyzed potential social impacts, including impacts on customs and culture, in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). In addition, the Navy addresses impacts on resource areas that contribute to customs and culture in separate sections in the Final EIS, such as land use (Section 3.2), mining (Section 3.3), grazing (Section 3.4), cultural resources (Section 3.11), recreation (Section 3.12), and cumulative impacts (Chapter 4). Section 3.2, Land Use, has been updated based on public comments and information between the Draft EIS and Final EIS.

Regarding the mitigation suggestions for a conservation proposal, the proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTa, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. The Navy is only proposing to de-designate the portions of the WSAs proposed for training use in the DVTa. The Navy is not proposing to de-designate other parts of WSAs as they are not necessary for fulfilling mission requirements. The Navy is not proposing to create any new access roads, recreation area or facilities in this area. The Navy recognizes that there would be loss of access to certain withdrawn or acquired areas and potentially to non-traditional roads, but such roads would not be relocated, as there would still be other means of accessing available areas.

Regarding comments on access restrictions and/or closures, the Navy would continue to allow NDOW to manage resources in the ranges and the DVTa through an updated MOU (an update to the current 2000 MOU between NDOW and the Navy).

Regarding comments on adverse impacts to wildlife and habitat, the Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.

Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

Regarding impacts of wildfires, the Navy has and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan and, where possible, proposed plan elements and goals are included in the Final EIS; a draft outline of the plan can be found in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans). For further information on

wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).

Regarding mitigation comments, the Navy has developed and proposed specific mitigation for each alternative that can be implemented and would avoid or minimize impacts. As such, alternatives include actions specifically designed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities.

F.6.3.30 Norman, S. (Reno Gem and Mineral Society)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Stephen	Norman	<p>There are many collecting spots that people have been using for many years. There is the earthquake historical markers. We prospect in the higher elevations in the Fairview Peak area on the west of Dixie Valley and Fairview Valley. These are amazing agates, jaspers, crystal filled geodes, quartz, petrified wood and fossils. The Middelgate, Eastgate, Quartz Mt, Bell Canyon and Buffalo Canyon areas are especially used by people in Nevada and a lot of tourist also frequent the areas. There is also lots of collecting, hiking in the Gabbs area.</p> <p>We would ask you to please reserve some of this fine land for recreational use. Nevada is known for its rocks and minerals and it would be a shame to lose so much of these valuable resources.</p> <p>Stephen Norman Secretary Reno Gem and Mineral Society</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>Regarding loss of recreation, The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.</p> <p>The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses in the Bravo ranges, as there are too many recreationalists and it is difficult to control the number or people that would be allowed on range. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationalists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationalists.</p> <p>Implementing Alternative 3 (the Navy's Preferred Alternative) would prevent public access to several important recreation resources, including the BLM's proposed Middelgate Extensive Recreation Management Areas. Unlike Alternatives 1 and 2, this alternative would not close portions of the BLM's proposed Salt Wells Extensive Recreation Management Area, Sand Springs Range, and Fairview Peak. Middelgate Station, Dixie Valley, and Gabbs would remain open for recreation under the Proposed Action.</p>

F.6.3.31 Parachou, T. (Thomas Precision Welding)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Thomas	Parachou	<p>I support Alternative 3, with some additional revisions. I believe your current plan is nothing more than an unnecessary land-grab. This land grab will negatively impact the rural economies of Northern Nevada, which rely heavily on recreation dollars. This area holds a highly historic value to many, and it is an asset of great enjoyment to my family. I have ridden my motorcycle in the areas affected by this expansion for more than twenty years. Nevada's rural economy relies greatly on recreation and we have been losing assets at an unacceptable rate. The last creditable impact report was at 1.59 billion dollars of economic impact for Nevada only residents in 2006. This report reflected an economic benefit based on only 20% OHV ownership, a number which is growing. This is a very large group and I can say with confidence they share my opinion.</p> <p>The major concern of the OHV community is the loss of recreational opportunities connected to the expansion of Bravo 16 and 17. Bravo 16's expansion will eliminate about 60 miles of trails in that area. Special events should have the ability to access this area a few times a year. The Bravo 17 Shift alternative is a welcome option. It would allow continued use of the area around Middlegate Station, a very popular OHV destination. I would suggest the Bravo 17 southern boundaries use existing roads and barriers to mark it clearer. The area around Highway 361 to the east should remain open for OHV access, thus minimizing highway travel. The Bravo 17 Shift alternative would allow for continued access around the Fairview Peak/Earthquake Fault road, at Bell Flat Well approximately one-half mile north of the Churchill County Line. It would be a logical boundary line.</p> <p>I would like to insist that extra effort be made to insure Middle Gate Station and Gabbs are supported by including routes and trails officially connecting these locations with Sand Mountain recreation area. I feel the historic Gas Station on 722 should be a staging area and potentially could have bathrooms built in time.</p> <p>I could support the Navy's need for better training opportunities with</p>	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Regarding a reduction in the withdrawal area, the Navy added a figure in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS that illustrates the proposed withdrawal and requested acquisition lands included in the Draft EIS and highlights additional reductions that have been made to the proposed withdrawal and requested acquisition lands between the Draft and Final EIS under Alternative 3.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to economics, the Navy recognizes the potential socioeconomic impacts on the community. To mitigate these impacts, affected private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land and all compensable rights associated with that land acquired by the United States. Claim holders for mining and water would be compensated as described in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources) and Section 3.9 (Water Resources). Pursuant to the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended (43 U.S.C. section 315q), as amended, the Navy would make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to recreation and the Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV) community, OHV use would continue to be allowed within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and potentially within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>these issues fully addressed. I am hopeful that this will not be the cause of the destruction Middlegate station, the only remaining Pony Express Station of its kind. Please note losing recreation opportunities is a loss for all Americans. Please do not further this loss with this unnecessary expansion in its current form.</p> <p>Thomas Parachou Thomas Precision Welding 775-413-0111</p>	<p>Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after any removal of Wilderness Study Area designation by Congress. Due to safety reasons, OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20. Regarding Middlegate station and Gabbs, the Proposed Action would avoid the Pony Express Station and impacts to Middlegate and Gabbs. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.</p>

F.6.3.32 Plouviez, P. (Bench Creek Ranch Co. LLC)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Paul	Plouviez	<p>All of my comments are included in the attached letter. This same letter has been sent to the Navy via FedEx delivery. Thank you</p>	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached. The Navy is not proposing to acquire the Bench Creek property nor is it proposing to restrict livestock grazing on the property or in the DVTA.</p>

Paul Plouviez
Bench Creek Ranch Co. LLC
943 Edgecliff Drive
Reno, NV 89523

February 12, 2019

FRTC EIS Project Manager
Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

RE: Comment on Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Navy's Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). We ask that you incorporate the following comments into the proposed action and analyses:

Comments about what we read in the DEIS

Having read as much of the Draft EIS Document and attachments as possible in the time available, we can only conclude that your proposed withdrawal of lands (for the purpose of expanding Navy training areas) will cause us many problems. Your actions will cause problems and cost us a lot of money. At the very least, the proposed actions will frustrate and deprive us of our investment backed expectations for which we expect to be fully compensated. Please consider that this letter serves as notice that if your proposed expansion of the NASFallon training areas is approved by Congress, and we suffer any loss whatsoever, the Navy and the Government of the United States will be required to make us whole.

This Draft EIS Document includes a number of erroneous, misleading, and even false statements and you must correct the statements before your NEPA evaluation will meet the requirements of federal statutes and the CEQ. At this time, your NEPA document fails to be based on facts that are derived from systematic and objective collection of data, followed by decision-making that fully analyzes both technical and economic considerations.

Following is a small example of false or misleading statements. Our primary concern is the effect on our ranch as a business and our source of livelihood. We have depended on reference material but have not cited those sources in the following. This is not intended to be a complete list but it will illustrate the nature of the deficiencies in your EIS document:

**Comment on Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS
Bench Creek Ranch Co. LLC February 12, 2019 Page 4**

compensated. These actions also jeopardize those who hold liens on our property including a company known as American AgCredit.

None of us at the ranch are attorneys or trained in law but we will attempt to use terminology as it is found in statutes and court decisions so everyone will understand what is being discussed. For example investment backed expectations is a phrase recognized by the Supreme Court in "*Penn Central Transportation Co. v City of New York* 438 U.S.104 (1978)" and has been used frequently since that decision. Use of the phrase (Investment backed expectations) by our courts has expanded to include "Taking" that occurs within non-patented lands. The presence of existing rights mentioned below is recognized in the savings clause of such laws as Taylor Grazing Act, NEPA, Rangelands Improvement Act, Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and many more federal and state statutes.

Our allotments contain property we own in the form of existing rights including water rights, easements, and forage preference that comprise a large portion of the valuation of our business. We are confident that the DOD Navy and the USDI BLM will be careful to protect our valid existing rights in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and other statutes. See for example Section VII of Public Law 94-579 Section 701 (h) which directs federal agencies as follows: "(h) All actions by the Secretary concerned under this Act shall be subject to valid existing rights."

Please discuss your recognition of these topics along with your plans to mitigate any actions that affect private rights in detail in the NEPA document you are preparing.

About Our Ranch

We (Bench Creek Ranch Co. LLC) are the owner of the Bench Creek Ranch in Churchill County NV, located at 43333 Austin Highway. Property we own includes some 306 patented acres and appurtenant existing rights throughout two adjudicated grazing allotments which are regulated by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Our two allotment areas include Dixie Valley Allotment (#03018) which currently provides 6,336 Animal Unit Months (AUM) of forage and Mountain Wells-La Plata Allotment (#03039) which currently provides 8,004 AUMs of forage.

Our ranch supports 1250 head of cattle that includes 14,340 AUMs from BLM controlled lands for 12 months a year and 55 of the cattle graze on our deeded land. At this time the Bench Creek Ranch is leased to a third party. As is the nature of a ranch lease, the Lessee has leased the entire ranch including use of the valid existing rights owned by Bench Creek Ranch Co. LLC. Cattle owned by the Lessee also serve as collateral for loans held by the Lessee as a necessary source of funds for operating costs.

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In addition to the patented lands we hold title in equity to various water rights, rights of way, forage preference, and other existing rights as they exist in the fee lands where they occur including those lands controlled by BLM (Allotments). Water rights and easements (rights-of-way) are a matter of property under state law. Under the Nevada water law, based on the doctrine of prior appropriation and beneficial use, our ranch established grazing rights for a distance of at least three miles from each water source; our water rights holdings are both vested prior to passage of statutory law and appropriated under Nevada statute. Also, as recognized by federal law, our ranch established easements and rights of way for travel through our grazing area by our livestock and ourselves as well as conveyance of water. Range improvements within our grazing allotments are also our property since the construction was completed with money contributed by ranchers into the Range Improvement Fund; a trust fund controlled by Dept of Interior.

With the creation of the BLM our grazing areas were further severed from the whole through the process of adjudication which recognized a private property known as "forage preference" and is the modern version of grazing right. Adjudication effectively removed the ownership of the surface estate from the federal hands and at this time jurisdiction needed for police powers has not been restored which would seem to limit the solutions to Navy expansion to either negotiation or litigation..

Our ranch is comprised of patented lands, adjudicated BLM controlled allotments, private property such as water rights, rights of way, easements, and forage preference all of which are components of a grazing unit or farm unit under the homestead entry laws.

PLEASE NOTE: Details about the nature, value, and scope of our property rights will be provided to the authorized officer as we negotiate mitigation of the Navy action and/or sale of our ranch.

Allotted Grazing and Appurtenant Water Rights and Rights-of-Way Are Private Property

We have relied on reference material for the following discussion that includes: the Eureka County Nevada Master Plan Natural Resources and Land Use Element and the Ph.D. dissertation by Angus McIntosh (2002) "Property Rights on Western Ranches; Federal Rangeland Policy and a Model for Valuation".

Financing institutions, whose support is critical to continued livestock grazing and agricultural operations, consider the existence of the permitted grazing of forage preference, and the reasonable expectation of land use which emanates therefrom, as an indispensable factor in determining to extend and continue financial support. Permitted grazing (number of livestock and period of time) is capitalized into the value of a ranch. A decision to purchase a ranch is based on

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Bench Creek Ranch Co. LLC February 12, 2019 Page 6

the ability of that ranch to produce and sell livestock. A ranch purchase decision means the buyer essentially pays for livestock production stemming from the private and federally managed lands, as well as additional property in the form of water rights, rights of way, and improvements on both private and federally managed land areas. The economic value of our ranch is highly dependent upon our permitted grazing on the allotments. Our ranch is valued or appraised at a higher rate than it would be if no permit existed. Our forage preference, easements, and appurtenant water rights are considered part of the realty (i.e., real, private property). In fact, we hold deeds, liens, and operating loans that consider our grazing preference, permitted use, and water rights on the allotment as private property collateral with real value. The Internal Revenue Service also considers the permit as a taxable property interest.

The grazing on our allotment was recognized by Congress as having the character of a property right interest or investment backed expectation when it enacted that portion of the Taylor Grazing Act which is found in 43 U.S.C § 315 (b) guaranteeing renewal of permits if denial of the permit would "impair the value of the grazing unit of the permittee, when such unit is pledged as security for any bona fide loan." Under the Taylor Grazing Act, a grazing permit is considered private property and is mandatorily attached to private "base property" – land or water

Allotments for grazing in Nevada, including ours, were originally identified and adjudicated on the basis of water right ownership. Our "right to graze" is a property interest appurtenant to livestock watering rights. All property, including water rights, is founded in the power of the State of Nevada, even property existing within lands controlled by federal agencies. The nature of Nevada water rights reflects the split estate concept developed on western lands which was included under Mexican law and continued when our area became Territory of the United States. The interest created in and owned by our predecessors on the allotment is a portion of the "surface estate" of the split estate. McIntosh (2002) further describes this right in terms of the travel by livestock to the place where a livestock watering right is used has established livestock grazing rights-of-way for access to each water source that is based on the normal travel of livestock that are grazing as they approach or leave the water location. The split estate is demonstrated by the stock-watering rights we possess on the allotment.

Our property ownership includes a "bundle-of-rights." McIntosh (2002) quotes a legal dictionary in defining the bundle-of-rights as: "...the collection of rights that constitute fee ownership in an object or realty (or interests in real estate). The bundle-of-rights includes, but is not limited to, the right to: sell, lease, use, give away, exclude others from, and to retain. The bundle-of-rights is the list of options that an owner can exercise over his property." The term "fee" refers to the quality and character of ownership in a property. McIntosh illustrates the bundle of rights as a bundle of "sticks" with each representing a distinctive action available only to a property owner.

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"Sticks" within our bundle of rights apply fully to all property rights on our allotment including those rights-of-way established prior to 1976 to allow access to the various infrastructure and water rights on the allotment. This includes Revised Statute (RS) 2477 rights-of-way for travel or access by people and livestock as well as RS 2339 and RS 2340 easements for water storage and rights-of-way for water conveyance (ditches, dams, pipelines, etc.).

There are many other sources not referenced above defining the private property-nature of our grazing allotment, stockwater rights, and rights-of-way on the allotment.

Please adequately analyze, consider and integrate the proposed action's impacts to our ranch's adjudicated forage base, water rights, and rights-of-way.

Mitigation --- Take Every Effort to Avoid and Minimize Impacts

We understand that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), under which the EIS is being developed, outlines a general policy of "Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate." We ask that the Navy work with us to identify and implement all economically and technically feasible options to avoid and minimize impacts to our ranching operation at a ratio of 1:1 (i.e., completely balance negative impacts).

If any of the proposed actions include development of livestock or irrigation water and the appropriation for a water right, the water right must be held in our ranch's name.

Please incorporate adequate avoidance and minimization options in the proposed action and analyze such in the EIS.

Monetary Compensation If Avoidance and Minimization Cannot Fully Mitigate Impacts

Please Note: We wish to keep our ranch intact or sell it in its entirety.

If after closely working with us it is determined that none of the avoidance and minimization measures referred to above can be implemented or the impact is not totally offset by the avoidance and minimization measures, the Navy must mitigate the forage loss, loss of access, and loss of our water rights through direct monetary compensation.

In fact, Congress has mandated compensation for grazing "losses" due to military withdrawals in 43 US Code, Title 43, Chapter 8A, Section 315(q)

"Whenever use for war or national defense purposes of the public domain or other property owned by or under the control of

**Comment on Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS
Bench Creek Ranch Co. LLC February 12, 2019 Page 8**

the United States prevents its use for grazing, persons holding grazing permits or licenses and persons whose grazing permits or licenses have been or will be canceled because of such use shall be paid out of the funds appropriated or allocated for such project such amounts as the head of the department or agency so using the lands shall determine to be fair and reasonable for the losses suffered by such persons as a result of the use of such lands for war or national defense purposes. Such payments shall be deemed payment in full for such losses. Nothing contained in this section shall be construed to create any liability not now existing against the United States. (July 9, 1942, ch. 500, 56 Stat. 654; May 28, 1948, ch. 353, § 1, 62 Stat. 277)."

Values of "grazing permits", livestock forage, and water rights within federally controlled lands have been determined in several locations in Nevada and included in federal NEPA documents. There are many examples of precedence in Nevada (and elsewhere) where entities, including the military, have done the right thing and compensated loss of grazing forage, loss of investment backed expectations, and loss of the use of property such as water rights and rights-of-way. As explained above, details about the nature, value, and scope of our property rights will be provided to your representative who has proper delegation of authority to negotiate mitigation of the Navy action and/or sale of our ranch.

Please include detailed and factual analysis of this subject in your EIS. We expect no less from NASFallon as you move towards the "Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization".

Sincerely



Paul Plouviez
For Bench Creek Ranch Co. LLC

F.6.3.32.1 Response

Thank you for your comment and participation in the NEPA process. The Navy is not proposing to acquire the Bench Creek property nor is it proposing to restrict livestock grazing on the property or in the DVTA.

The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value.

For existing patented mining claims, the federal government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.

Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam demonstrating a valuable mineral deposit a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.

Regarding the fourth issue, the Navy would offer fair market value for private property and go through a lawful process of acquisition on a case-by-case basis pending any ultimate Congressional decision.

Regarding the fifth point about security guards, to clarify, the Navy is proposing the establishment of two Conservation Law Enforcement Officer positions at NAS Fallon. Part of the duties of these officers would include monitoring of the added fence line. These positions would not be in place unlawfully.

Regarding the final point, the Navy has further described the process by which it proposes to handle existing rights on lands proposed for withdrawal or requested for acquisition in the Final EIS.

Regarding comments to allow grazing on the FRTC ranges, the Navy worked with grazing permittees throughout the Draft EIS process, and though discussions came to the conclusion that grazing would not be compatible with the needs of grazers, nor with training needs on the FRTC ranges. The DVTA would continue to be open for grazing.

Regarding fires, the Navy has and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan and, where possible, proposed plan elements and goals are included in the Final EIS. For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).

The Navy anticipates issuing its Record of Decision with respect to FRTC modernization in January 2020. However, any Congressional withdrawal of the area currently supporting grazing permits would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Similarly, any Congressional appropriation for implementing the FRTC Modernization action, which would include funds for making payments to grazing permit holders, would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Accordingly, the earliest the Navy would request that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) cancel any permit would be October 1, 2020.

If the Congressional withdrawal is enacted, and if Congress appropriates funds to implement the FRTC Modernization effort, the Navy would ask BLM to contact each affected permit holder. BLM would coordinate with the Navy on any action to initiate cancellation of a permit. Under 43 CFR Part 4100 Subpart 4110.4-2 (Decrease in Land Acreages), BLM would be required to provide two years advance notice of any permit cancellation. Once a given notification is made, the Navy, with assistance from BLM, would begin discussions with affected permit holders to determine payment amounts in accordance with the processes described herein.

F.6.3.33 Powell, J. (JP Aerospace)

First	Last	Comment	Response
John	Powell	<p>We have a flight facility at the top edge of the Carson MOA. The border of the moa is on our southern property line.</p> <p>We have conducted high altitude balloon and airship operations in the area for the past 30 years.</p> <p>Last October we completed a two year aircraft certification process for a new airship with theFederal aviation Administration. This was done with close coordination with Fallon Naval Ar station as the first series of flights are to be conducted for our site. The first flight wa conducted last October.</p> <p>We have conducted high altitude and airship research and development in high altitude operations for the Air Force and Navy.</p> <p>In addition to airship flights we conduct high altitude balloon research flights from the site. The landing area for the balloon instruments is throughout Dixie valley in the areas that are proposed to be closed.</p> <p>The site consists of several buildings and two launch aprons for the airships.</p> <p>We are concern how the bombing range expansion will impact our operations.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>John Powell President JP Aerospace jpowell@jpaerospace.com 916-858-0185</p>	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. To clarify statements from this comment, the DVTA would not be closed to the public. The Navy will continue to coordinate airspace activities with the JP Aerospace program as applicable.</p>

F.6.3.34 Schwartz, B. (American Wild Horse Campaign)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Brieanah	Schwartz	<p>To whom it may concern:</p> <p>These comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement, (EIS No. 20180272), are submitted on behalf of the American Wild Horse Campaign ("AWHC").</p> <p>AWHC is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the American wild horse in viable free-roaming herds for generations to come, as part of our national heritage. Our grassroots efforts are supported by a coalition of over 60 historic preservation, conservation, horse advocacy and animal welfare organizations.</p> <p>Please see our comments in the attached PDF.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Brieanah Schwartz, Esq.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate.</p> <p>Regarding wild horse and burro management, a portion of the northern B-20 overlaps the Humboldt BLM herd area. The BLM would continue to manage the majority of the Humboldt herd area and the Navy's withdrawal of that portion of the area would not result in significant impacts to that population. The other overlapping areas occur in the Dixie Valley Training Area, which would continue to be managed by the BLM.</p> <p>Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.</p>



February 14, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

To whom it may concern:

These comments on the *Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement*, (EIS No. 20180272), are submitted on behalf of the American Wild Horse Campaign ("AWHC").

AWHC is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the American wild horse in viable free-roaming herds for generations to come, as part of our national heritage. Our grassroots efforts are supported by a coalition of over 60 historic preservation, conservation, horse advocacy and animal welfare organizations.

I. OVERVIEW

The Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS was drafted to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of expanding land ranges and modifying associated airspace configurations in the Fallon Range Training Complex ("FRTC") and Special use Airspace. AWHC is primarily concerned with the 24 Herd Areas ("HAs"), totaling approximately 1.5 million acres, and 24 Herd Management Areas ("HMAs"), totaling approximately 2.4 million acres that are within the FRTC region of influence. Specifically, AWHC wants to ensure that the one HMA and two HAs which overlap two of the proposed FRTC expansion areas continue to provide protections and habitat for the wild horses and burros who live there. As stated in the EIS, the areas of most concern are: the eastern Dixie Valley Training Area ("DVTA") which overlaps 47,580 acres of the Clan Alpine HMA, the western DVTA which overlaps 7,600 acres of the South Stillwater HA, and the northern B-20 which overlaps 20,400 acres of the Humboldt HA.

In 1971, Congress enacted the Wild Horse Act ("WHA") out of concern that wild horses were "disappearing from the American scene." 16 U.S.C. § 1331. Declaring that "wild horses are living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the West," and "contribute to the diversity of life forms within the Nation and enrich the lives of the American people," Congress directed that wild horses "shall be protected from capture, branding, harassment, [and] death" and "be considered in the area where presently found, as an integral part of the natural system of the public lands." *Id.* To implement that mandate, Congress declared that BLM shall "protect and manage wild free-roaming horses and burros as components of the public lands," and provided that "[a]ll management activities shall be at the minimal feasible level." 16 U.S.C. § 1333(a). Under the Act, BLM manages wild horses on public lands within HMAs, which are "established

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for the maintenance of wild horse . . . herds,” 43 C.F.R. § 4710.3-1, in the areas they used in 1971.43 C.F.R. § 4700.0-5(d).

AWHC is aware that there are different systems of categorizing, managing and protecting wild horses and burros that are found within HAs versus HMAs. This distinction is an important issue for this EIS as it pertains to the wild horses and burros living in both the project area and adjacent areas. Therefore, as an initial matter, AWHC asks that the Final EIS expand upon and clearly define the Navy’s responsibilities to wild horses and burros in HAs versus wild horses and burros in HMAs.

The EIS also notes that the Bureau Land Management (“BLM”) will maintain responsibility of management for wild horses and burros in the area. However, the EIS also states that the Navy has a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) with the BLM for the management of horses and burros on the lands requested for withdrawal or proposed acquisition. Yet, a copy of this MOU was not included with the EIS for review by the public. Therefore, it is unclear how the Navy and the BLM agreed to manage any horses within this area. While the EIS states that the Navy would consult with the BLM on issues pertaining to the wild horses and burros in the area, AWHC remains concerned that the protection of the wild horses and burros in their natural habitat is not at the forefront of this effort and therefore requests that this MOU be published for public review and comment as well.

As described in more detail below, it is AWHC’s position that:

- The EIS must provide more detail as to all HAs affected by this project, how each HA will be affected, and the exact plan that the Navy has for management of any and all wild horses or burros that are found within areas where an HA and project area overlap.
- The EIS must provide more detail as to all HMAs affected by this project, how each HMA will be affected, and the exact plan that the Navy has for management of any and all wild horses or burros that are found within areas where an HMA and project area overlap.
- The EIS must explicitly state if there is a management plan to be implemented by the Navy for HAs or HMAs within, or adjacent to, the project area.
- The EIS must explicitly state that a separate National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”) process is required before any wild horses or burros are removed from the project area or adjacent areas.

For these reasons, AWHC strongly urges the Navy to engage in a more meaningful analysis of the reasonable alternatives to, and impacts of, expanding the project area into existing HAs and HMAs.

II. DISCUSSION

The EIS fails to accurately state much of its wild horse information. As its currently drafted, neither decision-makers nor the public can undertake an “informed comparison” because the wild horse information is not accurate throughout the EIS. *Nat. Res. Def. Council v. U.S. Forest Serv.*, 421 F.3d 797, 813 (9th Cir. 2005). *Half Moon Bay Fisherman’s Marketing Ass’n v.*

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Carlucci, 857 F.2d 505, 510 (9th Cir. 1988) (“Without establishing the baseline conditions . . . there is simply no way to determine what effect the [action] will have on the environment, and consequently, no way to comply with NEPA”).

An important aspect of this deficiency is the missing MOU. As discussed above, the Navy must provide the public with a copy of the MOU it has with the BLM to manage horses within the project area. The public must be allowed to review and comment on any and all plans that the Navy has to manage or remove wild horses or burros in HAs or HMAs that overlap with the project area. In addition, such actions would each, individually require a separate NEPA process with a separate public comment period.

A. B-16

Bravo-16 (“B-16”) is located southwest of Fallon, Nevada. This area, and the surrounding areas, are composed of lands managed by the Navy and the BLM. The EIS states that there are no wild horse or burro HMAs within the B-16 area or the proposed expansion area. However, the EIS does note that the Horse Mountain HA is located to the south of the existing and proposed B-16 area. However, the EIS claims that there are presently no wild horses in this area.

The EIS also states that there are no known wild horses or burros within the B-16 withdrawal area. The Horse Mountain HA is located south of B-16, but the EIS states that “all of the wild horses were removed from this area in 2000.” Finally, the EIS also concludes that should horses be found in the B-16 area, the BLM would be notified and the horses would be removed in accordance with the WHA.

AWHC asks that the Navy add language to this section which would acknowledge that the removal of wild horses and burros by the BLM is an agency action which requires proper NEPA notice and analysis before the wild horses could be rounded up or removed.

B. B-17

Bravo-17 (“B-17”) is south and southeast of Fallon, Nevada. The existing and proposed B-17 area is comprised of federally managed land, managed by the Navy and BLM, and non-federal land used for mineral prospecting. The EIS states that the Pilot Mountain HA and HMA are located south of the existing B-17 range. However, the EIS fails to identify how the HA or HMA may be impacted by the project.

The EIS even contradicts itself regarding the horses of the Pilot Mountain HA and HMA. On page 277, the EIS states that there are no known HAs or HMAs within the B-17 area, and that no wild horses or burros are known to occur in the area *or the adjacent area*. Yet, the next sentence, in the same paragraph, notes that the Pilot Mountain HA and HMA are located south of the proposed B-17 range. Simply put, the EIS cannot state both sentences as factual. The Final EIS must determine how the horses of the Pilot Mountain HA and HMA will be affected by the proposed project and must acknowledge that there are wild horses and burros adjacent to the proposed B-17 range.

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Finally, the EIS also concludes that should horses be found in the B-17 area, the BLM would be notified and the horses would be removed in accordance with the WHA. Therefore, AWHC also asks that the Navy add language to this section which would acknowledge that the removal of wild horses and burros by the BLM is an agency action which requires proper NEPA notice and analysis before the horses could be rounded up or removed.

C. B-20

Bravo-20 ("B-20") is located northeast of Fallon, Nevada. Much of the area surrounding B-20 is a checkerboard management and ownership pattern of federal and non-federal lands. The federal lands are managed by the Navy, the BLM, the Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Churchill County. The EIS states that the Humboldt HA is located to the north of the existing B-20 area, and a portion of the HA is noted as "within the proposed expansion area." The EIS also admits that there are horses that occur in this area, even though it seems to conclude that because the BLM did not designate this area as an HMA, these horses are in some way exempt from further consideration for protection in their habitat. In reality, wild horses within Herd Areas are still federally protected under the law, and therefore are not exempt from protection under the WHA or from consideration of management in this EIS.

The EIS improperly designates the Stillwater HMA as a WSA. This should be remedied in the Final EIS. The EIS also states nothing about mitigating or protecting the horses that would occur in either the Stillwater or Humboldt designated areas. Instead, the EIS notes that the BLM would be contacted to remove any horses or burros found before construction, in accordance with the WHA. Yet the EIS fails to explicitly state that removal of wild horses or burros from a designated and protected areas requires the NEPA process.

Therefore, AWHC again asks that this EIS be amended to acknowledge that the removal of wild horses and burros by the BLM is an agency action which requires proper NEPA notice and analysis before the horses could be rounded up or removed.

D. Dixie Valley Training Area

The Dixie Valley Training Area ("DVTA") is located north and south of U.S. Route 50, east of Fallon, Nevada. The DVTA comprises of Navy fee owned and withdrawn land. The BLM manages the majority of the land within the existing and proposed DVTA area, but the area also includes Navy-managed land. The EIS states that the proposed expansion areas for the DVTA include the Clan Alpine and the South Stillwater HMAs. While the EIS notes that the majority of the herd was removed from the Clan Alpine HMA, stating that the majority was removed is not the same as stating that the HMA was zeroed out, i.e. wild horses and burros are still present in this area. To this end, the EIS even notes that the herds have rebounded. Therefore, it is clear that there are still horses present and entitled to protections under the WHA, and the Final EIS should clearly state a plan for management of these protected horses and burros.

Later the EIS states that the BLM is proposing to re-designate the South Stillwater HMA as an HA, "meaning that the area would no longer be managed for those horses." In reality, wild horses within Herd Areas are still federally protected under the law, and therefore are not exempt

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from protection under the WHA or from consideration of management in this EIS. Further, until this action is conducted through the proper NEPA process by the BLM, and through revision of the Resource Management Plan, the South Stillwater HMA is still a federally designated HMA for active management of wild horses under the authority of the WHA. Therefore, this distinction must be explicitly explained in the Final EIS.

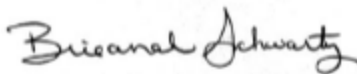
III. CONCLUSION

For the reasons explained above, AWHC believes that the above requests for additional information and analysis is the minimum required to satisfy the WHA and NEPA and its implementing regulations. We hope that Navy will seriously consider the foregoing comments when preparing the Final EIS.

I expect that the Navy will provide the level of detail described and requested above, which is necessary for the agency's informed decision making. The above-mentioned concerns and information must be fully analyzed in the Final EIS and adequately considered by the Navy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Brieanah Schwartz, Esq.
Government Relations and Policy Counsel
9326 Willow Creek Dr., Apt. F
Montgomery Village, MD 20886
(240) 912-6397

American Wild Horse Campaign PO Box 1733 Davis, CA 95617

F.6.3.34.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate.

Regarding wild horse and burro management, a portion of the northern B-20 overlaps the Humboldt BLM herd area. The BLM would continue to manage the majority of the Humboldt herd area and the Navy's withdrawal of that portion of the area would not result in significant impacts to that population. The other overlapping areas occur in the Dixie Valley Training Area, which would continue to be managed by the BLM.

F.6.3.35 Seidman, A. (Safari Club International)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Anna	Seidman	Please see attached comment letter from Safari Club International	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.



February 14, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

**Re: Safari Club International Comments on Draft Environmental Impact
Statement for Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization**

Dear Sir or Madam:

Safari Club International (SCI) submits this comment letter to strongly recommend that the U.S. Navy revise its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) and abandon its efforts to withdraw any additional federal land or acquire non-federal land where such withdrawals and acquisitions would close lands to hunting, undermine access to hunting opportunities and/or detrimentally impact wildlife conservation and management efforts being carried out by the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). To the extent that national security requires some modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex, SCI recommends that the U.S. Navy withdraw from public use only the minimum amount of land needed to accomplish those goals. Moreover, to the extent it must withdraw or acquire lands, the U.S. Navy should choose lands that will minimize the impacts to Nevada's wildlife. SCI requests that the U.S. Navy find solutions that will satisfy national security needs while protecting our nation's desert wildlife, their habitat and the recreational opportunities that help to conserve them.

Safari Club International

Safari Club International, a nonprofit IRC § 501(c)(4) corporation, has approximately 50,000 members worldwide, many of whom live and hunt in Nevada. SCI's missions include the conservation of wildlife, protection of the hunter, and education of the public concerning hunting and its use as a conservation tool. SCI chapters and members in Nevada have helped contribute to the conservation of Nevada's wildlife populations and have a direct stake in making certain that this important resource remains available for the public to enjoy.

SCI Does Not Agree With The Proposed Alternatives

The Draft EIS discusses three possible alternative courses of action, all of which restrict or prohibit hunting and other recreational activities. While SCI is pleased that Alternative 3, with the least restrictions on hunting, is currently the preferred alternative, that alternative still contains significant restrictions. SCI asked that the Navy revise that alternative (or create a new alternative) with no or fewer restrictions, as discussed below.

Safari Club International - Washington DC Office
501 2nd Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002 • Phone 202 543 8733 • Fax 202 543 1205 • www.safariclub.org

SCI Comments on Draft EIS for Fallon Range Complex Modernization
February 14, 2019
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Alternative 1

Alternative 1 would close areas B-16, B-17, B-19 and B-20 to hunting. The drafters of the Draft EIS acknowledged that the modifications proposed by this alternative would have major consequences for those who hunt in the areas affected by the modernizations: “[T]he expanded land in the B-16 withdrawal area would still be lost to hunting activities. Therefore expanding B-16 would significantly impact hunting.” *Id.*

Area B-17 is presently the home of an annual bighorn sheep hunt, which is held when the range on B-17 is inactive. Alternative 1 would close this area to hunting and end that bighorn sheep hunt. 3.12-28. In addition, Alternative 1 would make Fairview Peak no longer available to wildlife hunters who visit the peak. 3.12-27.

The drafters acknowledged that the Alternative 1’s planned expansion of the B-17 would also affect wildlife habitat. The proposed withdrawal area includes habitat for bighorn sheep, mule deer, and pronghorn, including “wintering lambing habitat for bighorn sheep within and along the existing perimeter of B-17 and crucial summer habitat for the pronghorn in the eastern portion of the requested withdrawal.” 3.12-28. As a result of all these changes, the drafters had no choice but to acknowledge that “expanding B-17 under Alternative 1 *would significantly impact hunting.*” 3.12-28 (emphasis added).

Finally, Alternative 1 would interfere with access to hunting opportunities on other federal land in area B-20 that is currently open to hunting. The alternative, if implemented, would close public access to 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge and 1,920 acres of adjacent Churchill County Conservation Easements. The public would also lose access to popular hunting areas within Sand Springs and around Fairview Peak. 3.12-35.

For all these reasons, SCI opposes Alternative 1 and recommends that the U.S. Navy not select it.

Alternative 2

Alternative 2, if implemented, would impose less impact on hunters than Alternative 1, but its implementation would still result in significant detriment to hunting and wildlife. The same closures to area B-16 and restrictions on regional area access required for Alternative 1 would apply to Alternative 2.

Unlike Alternative 1, Alternative 2 would allow bighorn sheep hunting in area B-17. The Draft EIS suggests that the hunts can be carried out through a “joint” memorandum of agreement between NDOW and the U.S. Navy. 3.12-37. SCI strongly agrees that NDOW should be involved in the management of any hunting program that takes place on federal land in Nevada. Joint management should ensure that the state remains the primary decision-maker for the management of wildlife.

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Although Alternative 2 will allow limited bighorn sheep hunting in area B-17, implementation of the alternative will still result in what the drafters refer to as a “negative impact to hunting activities on the proposed expansion land.” The expansion of the B-17 area will result in losses of existing hunting opportunities for pronghorn, mule deer, chukar, waterfowl, and small game. 3.12-38.

The drafters note that Alternative 2 will have similar impacts as Alternative 1 with respect to access to hunting activities in B-20 on the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge and Churchill County Conservation Easements. 3.12-40.

While the drafters stress that Alternative 2 would impose less impact on hunting opportunities and access, they summarize the impact of Alternative 2 as having significant impacts on recreation. 3.12-41. SCI opposes Alternative 2.

Alternative 3

The drafters have designated Alternative 3 as the preferred alternative, stating that it “best meets the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action while allowing the greatest amount of public land access and use.” Executive Summary at 8. While Alternative 3 may provide more hunting access than Alternatives 1 and 2, it nevertheless significantly restricts hunting opportunities and access and interferes with wildlife management and conservation.

Alternative 3 would impose similar restrictions on hunting within area B-16 as would Alternative 1 and would similarly interfere with access to hunting opportunities in the vicinity of area B-16. 3.12-42.

The configuration of area B-17 in Alternative 3 imposes fewer restrictions on hunting, but the area encompassed within B-17 continues to include habitat for bighorn sheep, mule deer, and pronghorn. In particular, the area includes wintering lambing range for bighorn sheep within and along the existing perimeter of B-17 and crucial summer habitat for the pronghorn in the eastern portion of the requested withdrawal. 3.12-44. SCI supports the Memorandum of Agreement addressed in Alternative 2 concerning this area.

The access restrictions imposed by Alternative 3 are the same for Alternative 2. 3.12-45.

Despite the reduction of impacts on hunting and wildlife conservation, the drafters summarize “implementation of Alternative 3 would have significant impacts on public recreation.” 3.12-49. Thus, SCI also opposes Alternative 3 and urges the U.S. Navy to revise this alternative or adopt an alternative that does not impact recreation and wildlife conservation.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The U.S. Navy expresses its willingness to adopt an alternative that will restrict hunting opportunities and access despite acknowledging that, besides its recreational value, hunting plays an important role in NDOW’s management and conservation efforts: “[H]unting activities

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provide an ecological service, particularly when managed with NDOW tag limits in facilitating long-term population health.” 3.12-26.

The U.S. Navy should not adopt a plan that imposes these detrimental effects on hunting and wildlife conservation. In 1993 in Nevada, the state legislature made the following declaration concerning the importance of hunting to the state:

The Legislature declares that hunting permitted by law in this State:

1. Is a valuable activity in the management of game mammals and game birds.
2. Results in financial support for conservation programs that benefit many species, including nongame wildlife.
3. Is an excellent source of food, recreational opportunities and employment.
4. Contributes significantly to the economy of this State and the quality of life of its citizens.
5. Provides a beneficial use for firearms, archery equipment and other legal weapons used to take game mammals and game birds, following the pioneer spirit of Nevada.

Nev. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 501.102 (West). SCI strongly recommends that the U.S. Navy create an alternative that does not interfere with hunting in Nevada. A plan to modernize the Fallon Range Training Complex should not require hunters in Nevada to give up hunting opportunities and access and should not interfere with NDOW’s ability to regulate hunting and to manage and conserve the state’s wildlife. SCI recommends that the U.S. Navy reject all three current alternatives and revise Alternative 3 or develop one that will not have the detrimental impacts that each of the alternatives will cause. SCI further recommends that if the U.S. Navy must move forward with the modernization plan, that it adopt an alternative that has the very least possible impact on hunting, habitat, wildlife management and conservation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. If you have any questions about this comment letter, please contact Anna Seidman, Director of Legal Advocacy and International Affairs, at aseidman@safariclub.org.

Sincerely,



Paul Babaz
President, Safari Club International

F.6.3.35.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

Regarding comments on loss of hunting, the Navy would allow access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt under Alternative 2 and 3 (Preferred Alternative). NDOW would be the managing agency and would set quotas and distribute permits, and maintain wildlife habitat. The Navy is working with NDOW on a MOA for bighorn sheep hunting on the B-17 range, a draft of which is included in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans). To the maximum extent possible, the Final EIS has been updated with details of this management plan. Details can be found in Chapter 2 and in Section 3.12 (Recreation), and a draft version of the proposed hunting program Memorandum of Agreement can be found in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans) of the Final EIS.

The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.

The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and manage wildlife. The Navy currently has an Access Management Memorandum of Understanding with NDOW that would be updated (with a new MOA) after any ultimate Congressional Decision on an action.

Regarding other recreational opportunities, the Navy cannot allow other recreational uses in the B-17 range, as it is Navy policy that these ranges are generally closed to the public. Allowing hunting and special events would work only as managed access through strict Naval control to ensure public health and safety and scheduling of training events. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationalists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationalists.

The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.

In order for the Navy to reach full TTP compliance that would allow air and ground forces to train in a realistic 360-degree combat scenario for all training scenarios, the Navy would need to withdraw or acquire almost double the land as that requested under the Proposed Action (approximately 1.3 million acres), as well as make extensive revisions to special use and civilian airspace. The Navy considered this as an alternative, but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS because of potential

significant and largely disruptive impacts to the local area. For example, this alternative would necessitate the re-routing of several major U.S. Highways (U.S. Route 50 and U.S. Interstate 80). Additionally, this alternative would greatly increase the amount of public lands that would need to be closed for weapons safety considerations. Instead, the Navy settled for the minimum 180-degree requirement for realistic training events; and reduced the size of the overall area requested and proposed for withdrawal, to the extent consistent with mission requirements.

The Navy added a figure in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS that illustrates the withdrawal and acquisition lands included in the Draft EIS and highlights additional reductions that have been made to the withdrawal and acquisition lands between the Draft and Final EIS under Alternative 3.

The following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes.

Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheep hunting, and events that are pre-coordinated with the Navy.

The Navy cannot meet its purpose and need and the screening factors required for the Proposed Action under the request from this comment not to impact access or hunting in the Study Area.

F.6.3.36 Sorenson-Groves, D. (National Wildlife Refuge Association)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Desiree	Sorenson-Groves	<p>Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest Attention: Code EV21.SG 1220 Pacific Highway Building 1, 5th Floor San Diego, CA 92132</p> <p>Dear Sir/Madam:</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Project.</p> <p>The National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) is a national not for profit wildlife conservation organization focused on the protection and enhancement of the National Wildlife Refuge System, the world's largest system of lands and waters dedicated to wildlife conservation. NWRA also works closely in local communities with nearly 200 affiliated refuge Friends organizations who also have a strong interest in any proposal that impacts the integrity of the National Wildlife Refuge System and its component refuges.</p> <p>We have reviewed the Draft EIS for the proposed Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization project, and are greatly concerned about the proposal to massively expand the size of the training range from approximately 200,000 acres to over 800,000 acres. In particular, we are concerned about the impacts to both Fallon National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and Stillwater NWR, as well the impacts to public use on all 600,000 acres of lands being proposed for withdrawal.</p> <p>We reiterate our December 16, 2016 scoping comments regarding our strong recommendation that the expansion of the live-fire bombing Range B-20 from 41,000 acres to 221,000 acres be reduced in size to lessen the impacts to Fallon and</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy added a figure in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS that illustrates the proposed withdrawal and requested acquisition lands included in the Draft EIS and highlights additional reductions that have been made to the proposed withdrawal and requested acquisition lands between the Draft and Final EIS under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative).</p> <p>This expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative) currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDW, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS). The Navy and Department of Interior are discussing ways to mitigate this impact as part of the interagency process for preparing the legislative proposal for the Congressional withdrawal. The Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is not a part of the proposed expansion area under the Proposed Action. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>Stillwater refuges. The proposed expansion would include 3,200 acres of Fallon NWR, and would reach the northern boundary of Stillwater NWR. Although only a portion of this expansion is intended to include additional target areas and new construction, we are well aware of operations on other Department of Defense lands where additional construction, ground-based activities, and target areas are expanded after the initial planning documents are completed. Therefore, we believe the ultimate impacts will likely be larger than anticipated in the Draft EIS.</p> <p>We appreciate the Navy's proposal to develop a Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to allow some level of refuge management on the 3,200 acres of Fallon NWR that the Navy proposes to withdraw for its own use. However, we oppose the Navy's withdrawal of these lands, which have been part of the Fallon NWR since 1931. The lands should remain in control of the Fallon NWR for wildlife conservation purposes.</p> <p>We look forward to reviewing a Final Environmental Impact Statement which no longer includes existing national wildlife refuge lands to be included within an air-to-surface live-fire bombing range.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Desiree Sorenson-Groves, Vice President, Government Affairs</p>	

F.6.3.37 Spicer, J. (Runcer Leasing Inc.)

First	Last	Comment	Response
John	Spicer	<p>To Whom It May Concern:</p> <p>I recently became aware of the Navy's newest alternative (Alternative 3) that is being proposed for the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization. The proposed alternatives (1, 2, and 3) will directly impact the following lands owned by Runcer Leasing Inc in different ways:</p> <p>Please see my comments (attached).</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration as you plan for this very important enhancement to the Navy's operations.</p> <p>If you have any questions, please contact me at: Email: ap2001spicer@yahoo.com Ph: 734-259-9198</p> <p>Best Regards,</p> <p>John Patrick Spicer President, Runcer Leasing Inc.</p>	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.</p>

December 20, 2018

John Patrick Spicer
President, Runcer Leasing Inc.
12112 Hunters Creek Dr.
Plymouth MI, 48170

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

Re: Comments to the US Navy on behalf of Runcer Leasing Inc. regarding the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization EIS:

To Whom It May Concern:

I recently became aware of the Navy's newest alternative (Alternative 3) that is being proposed for the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization. The proposed alternatives (1, 2, and 3) will directly impact the following lands owned by Runcer Leasing Inc in different ways:

Patented Mining Claims (located in T13, R32E, Sections 1 & 12):

1. Don
2. Tungsten
3. Turtle
4. Vikings Daughter

Unpatented Lode Mining Claims

1. Scheelite Extension (located in Sec. 1, T13, R32E)
2. Moonlight 1 (located in Sec. 12, T13, R32E)

The above mentioned mining lands contain lode mine workings that are historical producers of scheelite (an ore mineral for tungsten). Three of the patented claims (Don, Tungsten, and Turtle) include the main mine workings of the historical Nevada Scheelite Mine. This mine is not currently in operation, but over its history, it has produced over 200,000 tons of scheelite ore.

Under Alternatives 1 and 2, the proposed action would completely eliminate the potential for future mining operations on these lands. In addition, the four patented mining claims (Don, Tungsten, Turtle, and Vikings Daughter) are private (non-federal) land for which other valuable business uses are also possible.

Under Alternative 3 (the "Preferred" alternative), the 6 mining claims are not within the Navy's proposed boundaries, but they are located within the "Special Land Management Overlay". This is an area that would require additional approvals from the Navy to determine acceptable activities. The Navy would also have authority to restrict certain activities altogether in this area. At this point, it is not clear exactly what the restrictions would be. My understanding from a poster-session discussion at the public meeting in Hawthorne, NV on Dec. 10th, is that the primary concern of the Navy in this area is

electromagnetic interference. But this has not been clearly articulated, and it is possible that restrictions would change over time as the Navy's needs change. Regardless, I would like the Navy to understand that any restrictions placed on this area would have an impact on the value of the land and on potential business operations that could take place there.

Runcer Leasing Inc. has water rights to a well that is located ~4.5 miles to the southeast on a dry lake bed. There is a 4 inch pipe and three pumping stations. The water would be needed to support mining operations or other business operations. The proposed action may impact those water rights and the right-of-way for the pipeline and pumps. But it is difficult to tell from the maps provided by the Navy. It would be very helpful for planning purposes if the Navy could provide a more detailed map of the B17 range (e.g. A *.KML file that can be read into Google Earth) so that I can compare the location of my well with the boundaries of the Navy's plan.

Runcer Leasing Inc. also owns two unpatented placer claims (located in Sec. 21, T12, R32E):

1. Dad 1
2. Dad 2

These two claims are located at a former mill site of the Nevada Scheelite Mine (~9.5 miles south of the main mine site, off of highway 839). There is potential for additional mineral recovery at this site from mine tailings. At this time, it doesn't appear that these two claims would be directly impacted by the proposed alternatives. However, closure of route 839 would likely eliminate the possibility of developing this site. Also, any limitations on the main mine site (mentioned above) could impact the economic viability of developing this site, as the operations are related.

I would also like to stress that the uncertainty of the Navy's process (with multiple alternatives) and lengthy time-frame is affecting my ability to plan with respect to the property. As I mentioned earlier, the mining property is currently not in operation. I would like to either sell the land or to determine potential alternative value-generating uses. If the land will be purchased by the Navy in 1-2 years, it is difficult to market it for sale, and it might not make sense to invest in improvements. But if it will not be purchased, then alternative plans can be made. It would be helpful if the Navy can provide greater certainty of the plan and associated timing as soon as possible.

Overall, from my perspective, Alternatives 1 and 2 are more preferred than Alternative 3. This is because it is difficult to determine how my land would be impacted by the "Special Land Management Overlay." I would prefer the certainty of selling the property outright, rather than being left with a property that has additional restrictions (i.e. limitations on use) and therefore diminished overall value. If the Navy is not going to purchase my land, then I would like to have no additional restrictions placed on the land.

Thank you for your consideration as you plan for this important enhancement to the Navy's operations.

If you have any questions, please contact me at:

Best Regards,

John Patrick Spicer
President, Runcer Leasing Inc.

F.6.3.37.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Including the claims referenced in this comment. For your four patented mining claims listed, valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value. With regard to existing patented mining claims, the Federal Government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.

For your two unpatented lode mining claims, holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.

Regarding the reasoning for not allowing mining on Bravo ranges, in accordance with Navy policy, mining is not compatible within a surface danger zone of an operational range. The Navy would continue to follow existing operating procedures that prohibit the collection of materials from any mining area and prohibit entry to mine shafts and mines. Navy training activities would not impact mining activities outside of the proposed withdrawal boundaries. Therefore, there is the potential for a loss of access to salable and locatable minerals and mines in the land requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition. Closing the property may also affect mineral management by limiting the availability of mineral transport within certain areas. For example, new public roads, railroads, or other rights of way that would transport minerals could not be located within the proposed closed areas of the Bravo ranges, which would limit the availability to access and transport locatable and salable minerals. Closing the property would also limit the available means to transport mineral resources like oil/gas pipelines or geothermal energy transmission lines.

Regarding the 6 mining claims within the area that is proposed as the DVTA under Alternative 1 and 2 and as a Special Land Management Overlay under Alternative 3, as described in Section 2.3.4.4.1 (Land Acquisition and Withdrawal), unlike Alternative 1, the Navy would not withdraw land south of U.S. Route 50 as DVTA. Rather, the Navy proposes designation of this area as a Special Land Management Overlay. This Special Land Management Overlay will define two areas (one east and one west of the B-17 range) as Military Electromagnetic Spectrum Special Use Zones. These two areas, which are public lands under the jurisdiction of BLM, will not be withdrawn by the Navy and would not directly be used for land-based military training or managed by the Navy. The area does include an existing right-of-way

for a current Navy communication site. Otherwise, these two areas would remain open to public access and would be available for all appropriate uses, including mining for locatable and leasable mineral resources. However, prior to issuing any decisions on projects, permits, leases, studies, and other land uses within the two special use zones, BLM would be required to consult with NAS Fallon.

Regarding water rights mentioned in the comment, the Navy, as part of the proposed action, would acquire water rights within the proposed withdrawal areas if the water right can be maintained for beneficial use. If a condition of the water right can be modified (e.g., the point of use moved outside of the withdrawal areas), then the water right would not be acquired by the Navy. If wells are associated with the water right, then the Navy will evaluate on a case-by-case basis the disposition of the well (e.g., continued beneficial use or capping of the well). The Navy acknowledges that there may be impacts that have yet to be defined and will continue to develop and incorporate mitigation measures as necessary.

Regarding the request for larger maps, large versions of the maps were provided on the website and geographic information system (GIS) analysis utilizing available data was used to determine features within the area, which are addressed throughout the EIS, appendices, and supplement studies (available at www.frtcmodernization.com).

The Navy has added more detail to the process and methodology for valuating and acquiring mining claims and other real property in the Final EIS.

F.6.3.38 Stanley, J. (Canvasback Gun Club/Stillwater Farms Inc.)

First	Last	Comment	Response
John	Stanley	See attachment	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

February 14, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command
Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

RE: Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Environmental Impact Statement

Dear U.S. Navy:

Canvasback Gun Club/Stillwater Farms Inc. (the "Club"), is a private sportsmen and women's waterfowl hunting organization that has been in existence in the Stillwater Marsh since 1928. The Club property, now surround by the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex, consists of approximately 6,254 acres. The Club has a current membership of 118 and there are approximately 85 residences located within the Club property. The Club property and wetlands are managed for waterfowl and waterfowl hunting. Club members utilize the Club and the surrounding federal lands throughout the year for a wide-array of activities, including but not limited to, waterfowl hunting, chukar and sage-grouse hunting, big game hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing and photography, and hiking. In addition, the Club property is used for purposes of youth outdoor education. We ask that you strongly consider these public comments during revisions to the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

We acknowledge that from public scoping feedback the United States Navy (Navy) made modifications to the B-17 area to lessen impacts to wildlife and sportsmen; however, upon detailed review of the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3) included within the DEIS, major wildlife and sportsmen access concerns remain. Our concerns lie within B-17, B-20, the Dixie Valley Training Area, and the proposed modification of airspace. Although the B-16 and B-19 areas will also have negative impacts to wildlife, we have only minor concerns with these areas in comparison to the others.

B-17 AREA

Our concerns with this area relate to big game, small game, and other avian species and their habitat. We also have concerns with the lack of a definitive commitment to allow the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and sportsmen access to withdraw areas in perpetuity.

Big Game – The bighorn sheep herds that occur within this area are managed as part of NDOW Management Unit 181, which has a population of approximately 380 animals. It is important to note that bighorn sheep are a special status species listed on the Bureau of Land Management's Sensitive Species list statewide. A number of big game water developments occur within the area proposed for withdraw. In addition to mule deer and pronghorn antelope tags, a total of 16 desert bighorn sheep tags may be adversely impacted by the withdrawal proposed in this area. These tags provide once in lifetime recreational opportunities to Nevada's sportsmen and women as well as non-residents, and a substantial economic benefit to Churchill County and Nevada. Over the past 30 years, sportsmen, conservationists, and various government agencies have worked tirelessly to

develop this into a thriving herd that is now one of the most sought-after herds to hunt by sportsmen and women.

Also note, that the Bell Mountain and Bell Flat areas provide important habitat for over 200 pronghorn antelope and that these areas are also of concern for the Club.

Small Game and Other Avian Species – The proposed withdraw area associated with B-17 overlaps numerous areas of occupied chukar habitat, which also provides significant recreational opportunities to Club members, as well as, Nevada's sportsmen and women. Additionally, a number of small game water developments occur within the proposed withdrawal area. In addition to avian game species, golden eagles should be considered, as they are federally protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Reviews of existing data show that a number of golden eagle nest sites occur within the proposed withdrawal area and these sites have significant potential for negative impacts as a result of the proposed withdrawal.

We request that the Navy include a definitive commitment to allow the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and sportsmen access to withdraw areas in perpetuity. We also request that the Navy develop an access management plan (AMP) and allow adequate opportunity for public and cooperating agency involvement in its development. We also request the AMP be included with the FEIS or as a condition of approval for the project. The AMP should also include a significant funding mechanism to ensure that any damage resulting to wildlife habitat and/or water developments from Naval operations are adequately addressed in a timely manner. This funding mechanism should not only provide compensation for damage to habitat and water development structures resulting from Naval operations but should also include conservation funding to improve wildlife habitat within the Naval Complex. The Club would request that the funding mechanism be administered by a working group of interested stakeholders, including but not limited to, wildlife interests, conservation interest, and grazing interests.

DIXIE VALLEY TRAINING AREA

Our concerns with this area relate to big game, small game, and other avian species and their habitat. Please note that although this area has been identified as "open to the public", we have concerns that this may not remain open in perpetuity. The definition of "open to the public" has not been provided and the duration has not been identified. As such, we have reviewed the impacts based on a worst-case scenario. However, it should be noted that even if these areas remain open, there will still be negative impacts to the resources outlined below. We also have concerns with the lack of a definitive commitment to allow the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) access to withdrawal areas in perpetuity. Alternative mechanisms exist to ensure that these areas remain open to public access and achieve the Navy's goals, i.e. National Conservation Areas and/or WSA/Wilderness designations.

Big Game - This area overlaps NDOW Management Units 182 and 183, which have bighorn populations of approximately 340 and 320 animals, respectively. Additionally, a number of big game water developments occur within the area that would be impacted by the proposed withdrawal. It is also important to note that these areas provide significant recreational opportunities, including, but not limited to, big game hunting. In addition to mule deer and pronghorn tags within this area, a total of approximately 25 desert bighorn sheep tags may be

negatively impacted by the proposed withdrawal in this area. Significant concerns exist specific to impacts to bighorn sheep lambing as well as impacts to hunters.

Small Game and Other Avian Species – The proposed withdrawal area associated with the Dixie Valley Training Area overlaps numerous areas of occupied chukar habitat, which also provides significant recreational opportunities to Nevada's sportsmen and women. Additionally, a number of small game water developments occur within the proposed withdrawal area. In addition to avian game species, golden eagles should be considered as they are federally protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Review shows that golden eagle nest sites occur within the proposed withdrawal area and these sites have significant potential for negative impacts. Concerns also exist relating to impacts to chukar and the sportsmen and women that hunt in addition to potential impacts to nesting golden eagles.

We request that the Navy include a definitive commitment to allow the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and sportsmen access to withdraw areas in perpetuity. We also request that the Navy develop an access management plan (AMP) and allow adequate opportunity for public and cooperating agencies involvement in its development. We also request the AMP be included with the FEIS or as a condition of approval for the project. Furthermore, we request that the FEIS support land designations that ensure public access in perpetuity, i.e. National Conservation Areas and/or WSA/Wilderness designations, or a combination thereof.

B-20 AREA

The primary concern with this withdrawal area is its proximity to the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (SNWR), and proximity to and withdraw of Fallon National Wildlife Refuge lands. Specifically, impacts to those migratory bird species and the sportsmen that utilize them are of issue.

The wetland complex associated with the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is Nevada's largest. The Stillwater Marsh area has been a historic stopover point for migratory waterfowl during their spring and fall migration as well as an important nesting site for many waterfowl, marsh, and shorebirds. Peak numbers of 250,000 ducks, 10,000 geese, and 13,000 tundra swans occur during good water years (USFWS, 1985). This wetland complex has been documented and cited in numerous pieces of literature, including but not limited to Garone (1961), Reisner and Bates (1990), and USFWS (1985), as a critically important production area and migratory stopover along the Pacific Flyway. Significant concerns exist associated with interrupting the migration corridor leading to and from this wetland complex, negative impacts upon the birds using this area as a stopover as well as negative impacts upon those birds using this area for nesting purposes. Additionally, according to SNWR's most knowledgeable and preeminent waterfowl biologist the wetlands area just north of SNWR and currently within the B-20 withdrawal has historically supported waterfowl populations of up to 30,000 birds on wetter years.

This SNWR also serves as an important area for recreationists such as bird watchers and waterfowl hunters. Great concern exists specific to potential negative impacts upon these individuals utilizing this area.

Noise impacts to the sportsmen community (Stillwater Farms Inc./Canvasback Gun Club) have been demonstrated within the Noise Study but not addressed within this DEIS. Degradation of the waterfowl complex and land values has not been addressed within the DEIS.

Review shows that golden eagle nest sites occur within the proposed withdrawal area and these sites have significant potential of negative impacts.

We request that the Navy explore modifications to lessen noise impacts so they don't increase at the SNWR and Stillwater Farms Inc./Canvasback Gun Club. We also request that the Navy shift the B-20 area one to two miles north so that the bombing area is not immediately adjacent to the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. This will not only aid in lessening potential impacts from ordinance but also will allow sportsmen access to waterfowl that often use this flooded area (just north of the current refuge boundary) during wetter years. Furthermore, we request that the current bird aircraft/animal strike hazard (BASH) of maintaining a minimum 3,000 feet over refuges be adopted as an enforceable Navy regulation over both SNWR and Stillwater Farms Inc./Canvasback Gun Club.

MODIFICATIONS TO AIRSPACE

We have concerns regarding the proposed expansion of special use air space and the reconfiguration of existing airspace throughout northern Nevada and especially the flight deck at which training operations will take place. Specifically, the potential for adverse impacts to species such as greater sage-grouse and bighorn sheep exist associated with the noise from training activities close to the ground. Impacts to bighorn sheep breeding and lambing, as well as greater sage-grouse breeding and nesting could be detrimental.

Bighorn sheep habitat/lambing areas:

The following bighorn sheep populations appear to correspond directly or adjacent to Points of Interest within the Noise Study and DEIS.

Points within herds:

- Points 14 & 15 – Fairview/Slate Herd: Increase of 0.4 dBA and 0.2 dBA respectively
- Point 21 – Virginia Mountains herd (not applicable to noise increase per the Noise Study)
- Point 16 – Clan Alpines: Increase of 1.5 dBA
- Point 23 – Middle Toiyabes: Increase of 1.0 dBA

Points adjacent to herds:

- Point 5 – Clan Alpine herd: Increased of 1.7 dBA
- Point 12a – Desotoyas herd: Increase of 1.5 dBA

The bighorn sheep Points of Interest show no significant increase but upon review of the Alternative 3 section of the Noise Study (specifically the data associated with Figure 3.7-40), there are several herds that will have noise increases of at least 10 dBA and others that will increase by 3 and/or 6 dBA. These significant impacts are not acknowledged anywhere in the DEIS. Accordingly, the analysis of bighorn sheep impacts is misleading as the points of interest are not representative of overall impacts (i.e., the DEIS only discusses data for those herds that will have the lowest impacts).

Noise Study shows portions of the following in the 10 dBA increase zone:

- Toiyabe herd,
- Middle Toiyabe herd,
- South Toiyabe herd,
- Mt. Jefferson herd, and
- Gabbs Valley Range herd.

Noise Study shows portions of the following herds in 3 and/or 6 dBA increase zone:

- Gabbs Valley Range herd,
- Monte Cristo herd, and
- Stillwaters herd.

We are unable to determine bighorn sheep impacts clearly from the data presented within this DEIS and no avoidance, minimization, or mitigation has been presented to offset impacts.

Greater Sage-grouse:

Best available science is not included within the analysis. For example: Numerous publications exist that were not cited in the DEIS that have more thorough metrics for analyzing impacts to greater sage-grouse leks. These can be found within the NDOW document titled *Acoustic Impacts and Greater Sage-grouse: A Review of Current Science, Sound Measurement Protocols, and Management Recommendations* (NDOW, 2018).

Noise didn't include sage-grouse lek baseline noise data collection. Current standard for lek noise impacts is 10dBA above baseline (NDOW, 2018), which was not used in this analysis. Furthermore, the modeled baseline values for lek Points of Interest are extremely high. Other studies (including those discussed by NDOW [2018]) show baseline lek values that are upwards of 30 dBA quieter than those modeled within the DEIS.

The Noise Study for the DEIS includes the following Points of Interest that appear to be on or adjacent to leks, though they are not actually called lek points within the DEIS:

- Point 23 Kingston (Kingston lek) – 1 dBA
- Point 12a (Buffalo Hills Lek) – 1.5 dBA
- Point 12b (Silver Creek 4 lek) – 1 dBA
- Close proximity to leks: Point 3 (6 dBA), Point 7 (1.7 dBA)

Our review of the Noise Study data shows that over 50 leks fall within the zone of a 10 dBA increase, which is not mentioned within the DEIS and is considered a significant impact, subject to mitigation; as per best available science, similar Department of Interior impacts analysis, and NDOW protocols. The analysis of greater sage-grouse impacts appears misleading as the Points of Interest are not representative of overall impacts and the methods used to evaluate impacts are incorrect.

Additionally, cumulative impacts analysis for noise is incomplete. Analysis needs to be included past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future impacts. For example: The noise analysis doesn't include quantitative analysis of cumulative impacts from existing operations plus each alternative.

We are unable to determine greater sage-grouse impacts clearly from the data presented within this DEIS and no avoidance, minimization, or mitigation has been presented to offset impacts. Accordingly, a reasonable range of alternatives have not been presented within the DEIS demonstrating that public concern regarding impacts to the greater sage-grouse have been analyzed.

We request that analysis by a qualified wildlife biologist and specialist wildlife acoustics be included within the FEIS so a minimum flight deck for air operations can developed that does not negatively impact greater sage-grouse and bighorn sheep. We request that this flight deck be seasonal in nature, which would be defined by NDOW and species-specific.

OVERALL

Overall, upwards of 1,000 bighorn sheep have potential for adverse impacts associated with the various withdraw areas, which represents almost 10% of Nevada's total population. A total of approximately 43 desert bighorn sheep ram tags have potential for impacts, representing nearly 14% of Nevada's total number of tags statewide. Additionally, NDOW and Nevada's sportsmen have cumulatively invested millions of dollars and tens of thousands of man hours into the numerous water developments on public land that will be withdrawn by the Preferred Alternative. These investments must not be thrown away. The water developments are invaluable to the success of Nevada's wildlife, have uplifted wildlife habitat, and increased populations, while at the same time, creating areas that are irreplaceable. Wildlife managers along with sportsmen must be allowed full access (at all times) to these water developments, the surrounding habitat, and the associated wildlife in perpetuity. The loss of these water developments or further limitations to public access in this region would be the permanent loss of prime areas for wildlife and hunting.

Wildlife Management and Public Access

An Access Management Plan (for all training areas) should be developed as a condition of approval that has gone through the public review process and vetted by cooperating agencies. Additionally, we request stronger language throughout the document that guarantees that the Navy "will" allow access to NDOW and sportsmen in perpetuity, instead of the current "may" allow access language. Without an Access Management Plan included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) that has gone through the public process, the Club will be unable to support the overall project.

Wildfire Management

Fire risk and rehabilitation for Navy-caused fires is not adequately addressed. We would like to see a Fire Management Plan, which includes the following:

- Dedicated air attack resources (single engine air tankers at a minimum) stationed in Fallon;
- Modified use of flares and electronic equipment that poses as an ignition source within high fire risk areas throughout the year, not just May through October, using National Interagency Fire Center data or equivalent daily fire danger information; and
- A funding mechanism that guarantees the Navy has resources on an annual basis to actively suppress wildfires and to rehabilitate Navy-caused burned areas (within and outside of withdraw areas).

The Fire Management Plan should be developed (for all training areas) as a condition of approval that has gone through the public review process and vetted by cooperating agencies. Without a

Fire Management Plan included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) that has gone through the public process, Club will be unable to support the overall project.

Mitigation

The Navy's approach to omit mitigation from the DEIS is unacceptable. It is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and is essential for determining overall impacts from the Preferred Alternative, or any other alternative. Specific mitigation needs to be developed through coordination with NDOW and committed to within the NEPA document, prior to the issuance of a FEIS and associated Record of Decision. Without species-specific mitigation included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) that has gone through the public process, the Club will be unable to support the overall project.

The Club strongly supports multiple use management on our public lands. We also support the U.S. Navy and look forward to seeing a revised alternative and NEPA document that allows a reasonable solution for the FRTC's training needs and Nevada's wildlife, wildlife managers, and sportsmen.

Sincerely,

John David Stanley, Jr.

John David Stanley, Jr., President
Canvasback Gun Club/Stillwater Farms, Inc.

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- Nevada Department of Wildlife. 2018. *Acoustic Impacts and Greater Sage-grouse: A Review of Current Science, Sound Measurement Protocols, and Management Recommendations*. Habitat Division. Nevada Department of Wildlife. February 2018 Update.
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- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). 1985. *Stillwater Wildlife Management Area Including Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Annual Narrative Report for calendar year 1985*. Fallon, N

F.6.3.38.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. In regard to concerns about the B-17 area, the Navy would allow access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency and would set quotas and distribute permits, and maintain wildlife habitat. The Navy is working with NDOW on a MOA for bighorn sheep hunting on the B-17 range, a draft of which is included in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and

Plans). To the maximum extent possible, the Final EIS has been updated with details of this management plan. Details can be found in Chapter 2 and in Section 3.12 (Recreation), and a draft version of the proposed hunting program Memorandum of Agreement can be found in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans) of the Final EIS.

The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.

Regarding water developments, the Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and manage wildlife. The Navy currently has an Access Management Memorandum of Understanding with NDOW that would be updated (with a new MOA) after any ultimate Congressional Decision on an action.

The Navy has reviewed existing data on golden eagles and nest sites, and has performed ecological surveys in the Study Area. These supporting studies are available online at <https://frtcmmodernization.com/>. Impacts to biological resources, including eagles are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources). Potential impacts to bald and golden eagles are analyzed on an individual animal basis (not just on effects to populations). Species protected under the MBTA are analyzed by major taxonomic groups within subcategories (e.g., passerines, shorebirds), and the impact analysis is conducted in terms of potential effects to populations of migratory birds. Based on the impact analysis presented in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources) for wildlife and special-status species, temporary direct impacts to bald and golden eagle populations from proposed aircraft operations and construction activities associated with the implementation of the Proposed Action would not be significant. Therefore, the Navy has determined that implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in the “taking” of bald or golden eagles, their nests, or their eggs as defined by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

Regarding “a definitive commitment to allow the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) and sportsmen access to withdraw areas in perpetuity,” the Navy cannot allow the public to access the Bravo ranges without oversight, due to public health and safety concerns being that the area may contain unexploded ordnance and is within a Weapons Danger Zone and/or a Surface Danger Zone.

Regarding the request for an access management plan and other mitigations, the Navy has developed and proposed specific mitigation for each alternative that can be implemented and would avoid or minimize impacts. As such, alternatives include actions specifically designed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities. Mitigation measures specifically suggested and adopted can be found in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation).

Regarding impacts to the DVTA, hunting would remain allowable as managed currently by NDOW. NDOW would be allowed to access the area for managing Nevada’s wildlife.

Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan

Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. However, this de-designation would not prohibit the use of these areas by recreationalists. Additionally, if the public is recreating in the area, the Navy would seek an alternate location to train until the area used by the public is available, as is currently done in the existing DVTA.

The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.

Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

The proposed B-16 and B-20 expansion areas are outside of the current mapped range of bighorn sheep and mule deer, and only the eastern portion of the proposed B-20 expansion area overlaps with year-round pronghorn range (Nevada Department of Wildlife (2017a)). However, mule deer were observed within the proposed B-20 expansion area during camera trap surveys conducted in support of this EIS (see Supporting Study: Final Wildlife Remote Camera Trapping Survey Report, available at <http://www.frtcmodernization.com>). In addition, the estimated 60-65 DNL dBA aircraft noise contours within the proposed B-17 expansion area overlies a portion of currently mapped bighorn sheep winter-lambing range (i.e., the flats at the southern end of the Fairview Range) and year-round range within the central Monte Cristo Mountains and southern Sand Springs Range. The estimated 70-75 DNL dBA contours would not appreciably change from existing conditions (see Figures 3.7-9 and 3.7-22). Given the estimated number of bighorn sheep within the vicinity of the existing B-17 and DVTA range areas are at an all-time high (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a), existing training operations are not having an effect on regional bighorn sheep populations. Therefore, it is expected that proposed training operations conducted within the proposed restricted areas (R-4805A and R4816S Low) and associated expansion areas at the same level as current training operations would not have a significant impact on bighorn sheep populations.

Within the FRTC region of influence, there are over 1 million acres of mapped bighorn sheep year-round range, over 51,000 acres of mapped bighorn sheep winter/lambing range, 5.6 million acres of mapped year-round pronghorn range, and 52,000 acres of mapped pronghorn crucial summer range. Navy operational doctrine dictates that during transiting, pilots avoid lambing areas. Therefore, impacts to these ungulate ranges would not have a significant or measurable impact to bighorn sheep populations.

Regarding impacts to the B-20 area, to clarify, the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) is not part of the expansion under the Proposed Action and would remain open as it is currently. The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater NWR.

Again, this expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee). The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes. Currently three Special Use Airspace (SUA) units overlap the Stillwater and Fallon National Wildlife Refuges: Fallon North 1 MOA, R-4813A, and R-4813B. Under the Proposed Action, there are no proposed changes to the operating altitudes of the SUAs that overlap the Stillwater NWR, no changes in number of aircraft operations, and no changes in the approach and departure tracks of aircraft utilizing targets in B-20. The proposed B-20 expansion area that overlaps the NWRs is for a ground-based safety zone and not due to an increase or change in aircraft operations over the NWRs. Therefore, there would be no change in the BASH potential with implementation of the proposed action.

The following are some general operational changes that are implemented during aircraft operations to reduce threats from bird strikes, mission permitting:

When practical, reduce low-level flight time.

Reduce formation flying.

Reduce airspeeds to allow birds to be seen sooner and lessen damage in event of a strike.

Avoid areas with known raptor concentrations during summer, especially during 1000–1700 hours due to increased thermals (Naval Air Station Fallon, 2012).

With adherence to the NAS Fallon BASH Plan and use of the Avian Hazard Advisory System, there would be no significant impacts to bird or bat populations as no population-level effects to birds or bats would be expected.

Currently, all state management plans concentrate on habitat availability, wildfire, and land-based chronic noise sources. Greater sage grouse lek location data indicates that usage areas are east of the land areas proposed for withdrawal or acquisition. Sage grouse in these areas would be exposed to noise from aircraft overflights. Available science indicates that short-term noise intrusion does not play a significant role in lek success.

The Navy will work closely with BLM and NDOW to manage the sage grouse and other species on lands under the Navy's control. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.

The Navy has implemented and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce the occurrence of wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan, and where

possible, proposed elements and goals of this plan were added to the Final EIS. For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).

As discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), the response to sonic booms or other sudden disturbance is similar among many wildlife species. Sudden and unfamiliar sounds usually act as an alarm and trigger a “flight” response; however, reaction to a given noise can vary widely depending on factors such as time of day, physical condition of the animal, physical environment, or whether other physical stressors are present. Although the startle effect of a sonic boom can be stressful to an animal, it is difficult to generalize animal responses to noise disturbances across species. Recent literature suggests a startle is a common response across a variety of species and ultimately leads to habituation. It has been reported that the intensities and durations of the startle response decrease as the number and frequency of exposures increase, suggesting no long-term adverse effects. It is recognized that short term impacts to individual animals may occur from sonic booms, however, overall no long-term adverse effects to populations are expected

Given the historical use of the airspace and the coexistence of wildlife, animals within the MOA are likely habituated to aircraft overflights and associated noise, such as sonic booms.

Many of the above-listed behavioral and physiological responses to noise are within the range of normal adaptive responses to external stimuli, such as predation, that wild animals face regularly. In many cases, individuals would return to homeostasis or a stable equilibrium almost immediately after exposure to a brief stimulus such as an aircraft overflight or sonic boom. Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Section 3.10.3.1 (Potential Stressors) of the Final EIS was updated to incorporate the best available science regarding noise and startle effects on wildlife.

Regarding impacts to sportsmen and the community due to noise, the Navy does not anticipate any risk of hearing loss because noise would not rise to a level at which hearing loss would occur. Areas that could experience noise levels of 65 A-weighted decibels (dBA) or greater due to underlying Day-Night Level (DNL) contours above 65 dB are located in Churchill, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing counties. However, with intermittent aircraft operations coupled with the time most people spend indoors, it is very unlikely that individuals would experience noise exposure that would result in hearing loss.

The EIS includes several figures (Figure 3.7-32 and Figure 3.7-40) that depict where changes to noise levels would occur using existing and proposed noise contour data.

Regarding the modifications to airspace comments, the Navy has established Noise Sensitive Areas around wildlife refuges, incorporated areas, and certain tribal areas in the past. As part of the Proposed Action and alternatives, the Navy is proposing new Noise Sensitive Areas around the incorporated areas of Crescent Valley and Eureka. The establishment of these Noise Sensitive Areas is considered compatible with military training activities and will include a 5-nautical-mile radius and an elevation of 3,000 feet AGL.

The Navy is required to train year-round and is unable to restrict flying during certain seasons. Based on available literature and the analysis presented in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically, Section 3.10.3.1 (Potential Stressors) of the Final EIS, impacts on sage grouse are expected to be minimal.

However, the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) expressed concern regarding increased low-level overflights and requested the Navy undertake a study to further assess potential impacts. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the Record of Decision.

General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, as currently done. This same approach would also apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would continue to be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace). Proposed changes to airspace would not significantly impact recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts on general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).

The Navy's model for noise impacts included the quantitative analysis of potential cumulative impacts from existing operations (baseline) plus each alternative. See Section 4.4.7 (Noise) for the full cumulative impact analysis from noise. Military and construction activities, such as development of a new facility, demolition or renovation of existing facilities, or road construction/maintenance, make up the majority of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable Navy actions considered as part of the cumulative impacts of noise.

A detailed discussion of noise modeling is found in Section 3.7 (Noise), specifically Section 3.7.3 (Environmental Consequences). The results of the modeling include noise contour maps (see Figure 3.7-39), which provide a visual depiction of areas exposed to different noise levels associated with the Proposed Action. Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions where there would be overlap with the Navy's noise contours were noted to account for potential cumulative impacts.

Regarding impacts to bighorn sheep herds in the Study Area, as discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), the response to sonic booms or other sudden disturbance is similar among many wildlife species – sudden and unfamiliar sounds usually act as an alarm and trigger a “flight” response; however, reaction to a given noise can vary widely depending on factors such as time of day, physical condition of the animal, physical environment, whether or not other physical stressors are present, and others. Although the startling effect of a sonic boom can be stressful to an animal, it is hard to generalize animal responses to noise disturbances across species. Recent literature suggests a fright is a common response across a variety of species, and that this ultimately leads to habituation. It has been reported that the intensities and durations of the startle response decrease as the number and frequency of exposures increase, suggesting no long-term adverse effects.

Given the historical use of the airspace, and the persistence of aircraft operations and wildlife populations, wildlife within the MOA are likely habituated to aircraft overflights and associated noise (e.g., sonic booms).

Many of the above-listed behavioral and physiological responses to noise are within the range of normal adaptive responses to external stimuli, such as predation, that wild animals face on a regular basis. In many cases, individuals would return to homeostasis or a stable equilibrium almost immediately after

exposure to a brief stimulus such as an aircraft overflight or sonic boom. The Final EIS has been updated to incorporate the latest information regarding noise and startle effects on wildlife.

Regarding the part of the comment about impacts to leks that fall within the zone of a 10-dBA increase, state management plans use L_{xx} (e.g., L_{10} and L_{90}) metrics for determining impacts on sage grouse. In the absence of this type of data, the Navy applied maximum decibel level (L_{max}), sound exposure level (SEL), the DNL, and equivalent sound level (L_{eq}) metrics to determine potential impacts. The Navy has determined that the analysis presented in the Final EIS is comprehensive and based on the best available science for assessing potential population impacts. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.

Regarding “NDOW document titled Acoustic Impacts and Greater Sage-grouse: A Review of Current Science, Sound Measurement Protocols, and Management Recommendations,” the Navy has reviewed the literature available on sage grouse and has added a more thorough discussion of the available science to the Final EIS.

Regarding noise and cumulative impacts, the Navy’s model for noise impacts included the quantitative analysis of potential cumulative impacts from existing operations (or the baseline) plus each alternative. See Section 4.4.7 (Noise) for the full cumulative impacts’ analysis on impacts from noise. Military activities and construction activities, such as development of a new facility, demolition or renovation of existing facilities, or road construction/maintenance make up the majority of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable Navy actions considered as part of the cumulative impacts of noise.

A detailed discussion of noise modeling is found in Section 3.7 (Noise), specifically Section 3.7.3 (Environmental Consequences). The results of the modeling include noise contour maps (see Figure 3.7-39), which provide a visual depiction of areas exposed to different noise levels associated with the Proposed Action. Past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions were noted where there would be overlap with the Navy's noise contours to account for potential cumulative impacts.

Regarding the comment requesting that a qualified wildlife biologist and specialist wildlife be involved in the Final EIS, the Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.

Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.

Regarding the overall comment and wildlife management and public access, as the response states above, the Navy is not proposing to create an access management plan for all training areas as requested but rather to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with NDOW for the Bighorn Hunt

Program on B-17. The Navy is also proposing to allow managed access to ranges for wildlife management activities by the USFWS and NDOW.

Regarding wildfire management, the Navy has and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan and, where possible, proposed plan elements and goals are included in the Final EIS; an outline of the Draft Wildland Fire Management Plan has been added to Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans). For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).

Regarding the Navy's approach to mitigation, the Navy has developed and proposed specific mitigation for each alternative that can be implemented and would avoid or minimize impacts. As such, alternatives include actions specifically designed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities. The Final EIS shows suggested mitigations and the adoption status of these mitigations in tables in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation).

Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.6.3.39 Turcke, P. (BlueRibbon Coalition)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Paul	Turcke	Please accept the attached comments on behalf of our client the BlueRibbon Coalition. If you experience transmission or other difficulties, please contact me at pat@msbtlaw.com.	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.



February 14, 2019

Submitted electronically at <https://frtcmodernization.com>

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

RE: Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization – DEIS Comments

Dear FRTC EIS Project Manager:

Please accept these comments from our client the BlueRibbon Coalition/Sharetrails.org (BRC) in regards to the above-described Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) Modernization. If you have questions or require further information about this submission please contact Paul Turcke (pat@msbtlaw.com) or 208-331-1800) and the information listed below.

BRC is a nonprofit corporation that champions responsible recreation and encourages individual environmental stewardship. BRC has members in all 50 states, including Nevada and Eastern California. These include active member organizations such as the Pine Nut Mountains Trail Association, Nevada Four Wheel Drive Association, California Four Wheel Drive Association, Sierra Trail Dogs and Dust Devils Motorcycle Clubs, and other similar organizations, whose comments we concur in and hereby incorporate by reference herein. These and other BRC members use various motorized and non-motorized means to access public lands, specifically including off-road vehicle (ORV) travel within and nearby the project area. These uses include casual recreational use, as well as organized/competitive events conducted under special recreation permits or similar authorizations. BRC has a long-standing interest in the protection of the values and natural resources addressed in this process, and regularly works with land managers to provide recreation opportunities, preserve resources, and promote cooperation between public land visitors.

BRC fully supports the mission and efforts of our men and women in service, including those training in, or supported by the training efforts at, the Fallon Range Complex. We appreciate that the FRTC is the Navy's premier integrated strike warfare training complex, supporting combat elements of PACFLT, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, U.S. Marine Corps, Naval Special Warfare Command, and others. We also appreciate the existing withdrawal will expire in 2021, and that various actions, including acquisition and/or reconfiguration of current federal and non-federal lands, airspace and infrastructure

BRC FRTC Modernization DEIS Comments – Page 1

are necessary to provide training facilities essential to maintaining combat readiness in a changing world.

We have reviewed the November, 2018 DEIS and generally support Alternative 3, the preferred alternative. BRC, along with its partners, previously submitted input on this project, and we appreciate that some of that input has been incorporated into the Alternative 3 configurations of the B-16 and B-17 training polygons. In particular, we appreciate the reconfiguration of the boundaries and particularly the B-17 shift, which will allow for continuing public access near Middlegate Station, a popular ORV destination. We also appreciate that Alternative 3 “would allow access for racing events, like the Vegas to Reno, on B-16, B-17, and B-20.” DEIS at 23. These permitted events are very important to the ORV recreation community, particularly in Nevada. If bighorn sheep hunting will be accommodated within the new FRTC (which we also support) it is only fair and appropriate that limited and specially-permitted events also be a recognized opportunity.

Notwithstanding these encouraging developments, there is no way to sugarcoat the fact that Alternative 3 will eliminate 424,466 acres of presently-accessible public lands. *Id.* We ask that you adopt several measures to minimize and mitigate these significant adverse impacts.

Legal Background and NEPA

For BRC and many stakeholders, this project occurs in a relatively uncommon context, with the Department of Defense as a lead agency. Still, we must be cognizant of the potential, if not likelihood, of an eventual legal challenge, particularly from preservationist special interests with salaried staff attorneys emboldened by a legal deck stacked in their favor and an often-sympathetic judiciary. We therefore wish to frame and review some key aspects of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

NEPA “is our basic national charter for protection of the environment.” 40 C.F.R. § 1500.1. NEPA embodies a Congressional desire “to foster and promote the general welfare, to create and maintain conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony, and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of future generations of Americans.” 42 U.S.C. § 4331(a). NEPA’s operative EIS requirement is triggered by federal action which may “significantly affect[] the quality of the human environment....” *Id.* at § 4332(2)(C) (emphasis added). The “human environment” “shall be interpreted comprehensively to include the natural and physical environment and the relationship of people with that environment.” 40 C.F.R. § 1508.14. NEPA is a purely procedural statute designed to “insure that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made and before actions are taken.” 40 C.F.R. § 1500.1(b).

An agency’s compliance with NEPA is subject to judicial review under the Administrative Procedure Act’s “arbitrary and capricious” standard of review. See, 5 U.S.C. § APA 706(2). Courts generally look to see if the agency took a sufficiently “hard look” and will approve an EIS process which “fostered informed decision-making and public participation.” *National Parks & Conservation Ass’n v. U.S. Dept. of Transp.*, 222 F.3d 677, 680 (9th Cir. 2000). Critical to NEPA’s procedural scheme is the mandatory duty to consider in an EIS a sufficient range of alternatives to the proposed action. 42 U.S.C. § 4332(C). This discussion of alternatives “is the heart” of an EIS. 40 C.F.R. § 1502.14. A reviewing court applies a “rule of reason” to determine if the range of alternatives considered was sufficient. *Friends of Yosemite Valley v. Kempthorne*, 520 F.3d 1024, 1038 (9th Cir. 2008). The “existence of a viable but unexamined alternative renders the [EIS] inadequate. An agency must look at every reasonable

alternative, with the range dictated by the nature and scope of the proposed action, and sufficient to permit a reasoned choice.” *Alaska Wilderness Recreation & Tourism Ass’n v. Morrison*, 67 F.3d 723, 729 (9th Cir. 1995).

This does not mean the agency is locked into the precise formulation outlined in the DEIS. The agency has some latitude in adapting to information gleaned during the NEPA process, such as evolving science or public feedback. An agency must prepare a supplemental NEPA document if “[t]he agency makes substantial changes in the proposed action that are relevant to environmental concerns.” 40 C.F.R. § 1502.9(c)(1)(i). A supplement is required “[i]f the final action departs substantially from the alternatives described in the draft EIS.” *Russell Country Sportsmen v. U.S. Forest Service*, 668 F.3d 1037, 1045 (9th Cir. 2011). Supplementation is not required if “(1) the new alternative is a ‘minor variation of one of the alternatives discussed in the draft EIS’ and (2) the new alternative is ‘qualitatively within the spectrum of alternatives that were discussed in the draft EIS.’” *Id.* (numbering and italics in original; quoting Forty Most Asked Questions Concerning CEQ’s NEPA Regulations, 46 Fed.Reg. 18026, 18035 (Mar. 23, 1981)).

In light of these principles, we focus on several key opportunities to improve Alternative 3 and mitigate the loss of public access and recreational opportunity.

Boundary Adjustments

The B-17 shift should be clarified, or slightly modified, to reduce unnecessary impacts, promote order, and provide for continuing public access. The northeastern boundary of B-17 should be modified, which will allow for a clear and recognizable boundary and allow ORV users to continue access to existing roads and trails in this area. Specifically, we propose that a new dirt road be constructed/designated for travel along the northeastern boundary that connects existing roads to State Highway 361. Alternatively, the boundary could be defined along the existing road lying approximately one-half mile north of the Churchill/Mineral Counties boundary, which connects the Fairview/Earthquake Fault Road from Bell Flat to State Highway 361. This adjustment would be consistent with the use of Nevada SR 839 and Simpson Road for other boundaries, and would represent a minor or insubstantial change that could be accommodated within the existing definition of Alternative 3.

Absent this change, there will be significant and unnecessary disruption of transportation and access in this area, with adverse effects to recreational/aesthetic and socioeconomic interests, not to mention to physical resources as users are further displaced to other riding areas.

Offsets to Mitigate Loss of Recreation Opportunity

In addition, the agency should go further to incorporate adjustments and designation changes to offset the impacts associated with eliminating access to nearly half a million acres of public land. See, e.g., DEIS at 23 (describing legislative withdrawal of WSA status for specified areas). These should occur both within and beyond the project area. For example, areas within or adjacent to existing BLM designations, such as the Nightingales SRMA, could be redesignated as National Recreation Areas or National Conservation Areas, with specific language to provide statutory protection to recreation and other uses. Similarly, existing WSAs should be revisited, released to multiple-use status and/or incorporated into new statutorily-described units. Additional sites that are excellent candidates for one

or more of these strategies include the area east of State Highway 361, the Desakota Mountains, the WSA in the Desatoya Mountains, riding areas and connections near the existing Sand Mountain Area and the Middle Gate Station/Gabbs areas and associated routes. While some will brush these suggestions aside as being outside the scope of analysis, this is, as we have noted, a unique project which justifies unique solutions. Congressional engagement will be necessary, as well as a greater than normal degree of cooperator involvement, including by BLM. BRC is committed to working alongside any participants, agency staff and/or elected officials to specify and help implement some of these adjustments.

Absent the aforementioned recognition and protection of recreational opportunity, we are sadly well qualified to predict the evolution of our members' death by a thousand cuts. Anti-access advocates will defend any remaining WSAs, specially designated or nearby areas, and redouble their efforts to allege impacts or justifications for restrictions on certain forms of human activity.

CONCLUSION

We ask that appropriate changes be made to address BRC's concerns. We appreciate this opportunity to participate in the modernization process and to work alongside the Department, cooperators and stakeholders to chart the best path forward through these challenges. Please consider our comments, and do not hesitate to contact us in the ongoing process.

Respectfully submitted,



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F.6.3.39.1 Response

Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Regarding comments on loss of recreation, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. Be

Regarding Off-Highway-Vehicle (OHV) use, OHV use would continue to be allowed within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and potentially within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after any removal of Wilderness Study Area designation by Congress. Due to safety reasons, OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20.

Topography and OHV trails similar to those in B-17 also occur in the DVTA or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).

Regarding the request to adjust boundaries of the withdrawal and acquisition areas, the Navy acknowledged the significance of the potential impacts and instead revised its proposal to only include the minimum 180-degree requirement for realistic training events; and reduced the size of the overall area requested and proposed for withdrawal, to the extent consistent with mission requirements.

The Navy added a figure in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS that illustrates the proposed withdrawal and requested acquisition lands included in the Draft EIS and highlights additional reductions that have been made to the proposed withdrawal and requested acquisition lands between the Draft and Final EIS under Alternative 3.

For the Navy to reach full tactics, techniques, and procedures compliance that would allow air and ground forces to train in a realistic 360-degree combat scenario for all training scenarios, the Navy would need to withdraw or acquire almost twice the amount of land requested under the Proposed Action (approximately 1.3 million acres), as well as make extensive revisions to special use and civilian airspace. The Navy considered this as an alternative, but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS due to disruptive impacts on the local area. For example, this alternative would greatly increase the amount of public lands that would need to be closed for weapons safety considerations.

Regarding the offsets to mitigate loss of recreation opportunity, the Navy is not proposing to de-designate additional WSA areas outside of the areas that are proposed for withdrawal under the Proposed Action.

Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowable in the DVTA along with OHV use.

Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheep hunting, and events that are pre-coordinated with the Navy.

Regarding other areas suggested for change from one designation to another, the Navy does not have the authority to request or make changes to lands that are outside of its withdrawal or acquisition.

The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis.

F.6.3.40 Villa, T. (RGGGS Land & Minerals, LTD., L.P.)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Terry	Villa	<p>The following comments are being submitted by RGGGS Land & Minerals, LTD., L.P. (RGGGS), related to the U.S. Navy's proposed expansion of the Fallon Range Training Complex via the EIS public comment period. These comments are specific to the proposed expansion of the Bravo 20 Complex. RGGGS is the owner of certain Patented Mining Claims within and near the Buena Vista Hills, within Sections 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 10, Township 24 North - Range 34 East of the Mount Diablo Meridian, Churchill County, Nevada. Nevada Iron LTD (Nevada Iron) holds the Mining Lease to the said RGGGS Patented Mining Claims, with plans of developing the Buena Vista Iron Mine. Nevada Iron claims that the expansion of the Bravo 20 Complex as proposed by the Navy would force termination of Nevada Iron's Buena Vista Mine project, as the proposed Bravo 20 expansion would completely eliminate Nevada Iron's ability to transport Buena Vista Mine product from the mine site to the Huxley Rail Siding. Nevada Iron claims that their planned rail corridor between the Buena Vista Mine and the Huxley Rail Siding is their only viable shipping option.</p> <p>Nevada Iron claims that they have communicated these concerns with the Navy over the past several years via lobbying efforts, public meetings, and by submitting public comments related to the Navy's proposed project. If the Bravo 20 Complex expansion is approved and Nevada Iron is forced to terminate their mine development efforts, RGGGS will likely be permanently impacted due to the inability of future mineral development and extraction within their Patented Mining Claims. RGGGS respectfully requests Navy's re-evaluation of the Bravo 20 Complex expansion with respect to the impact on Nevada Iron's proposed development of the Buena Vista Mine. If the proposed expansion of the Bravo 20 Complex is approved, RGGGS requests Navy approval for development and use of Nevada Iron's corridor within the expanded Bravo 20 Complex, between the Buena Vista Mine and the Huxley Rail Siding.</p>	<p>The Navy has been working with the Nevada Iron LTD (Nevada Iron) and the Buena Vista Mine stakeholders to create a solution to this transportation challenge. The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources). For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value.</p> <p>For existing patented mining claims, the federal government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary. Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam demonstrating a valuable mineral deposit a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.</p>

F.6.3.41 VonSeggern, D. (Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club)

First	Last	Comment	Response
David	VonSeggern	see attached	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club

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**SIERRA
CLUB**

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February 11, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132
electronic: <https://frtcmodernization.com>

Re: Comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) Modernization Draft
Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)

Introduction

On behalf of the Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club and its nearly 6,500 members in Nevada and the Eastern Sierra, we are submitting these comments to the Navy on the FRTC Modernization DEIS. Many of our members live near or recreate on public lands in the Navy's proposed expansion areas and are very concerned about the potential impacts of the proposed Modernization on our public lands and the inability to use these lands after withdrawal.

Like many other public lands users, we are extremely interested in what kind of manager the Navy will be in the future on the additional 606,664 acres of public lands which are proposed to be withdrawn (preferred Alternative 3) from multiple-use management as well as the additional large proposed airspace expansions. We, as public land users, are more familiar with land and resource management by federal and state agencies, and have little to no experience with how military services carry out their stewardship responsibilities. Previously, we prepared extensive scoping comments in order to ensure the best possible EIS is written to address public concerns and specifically those of our membership. The Sierra Club in general supports the training mission of the US Navy, provided it is justified. Our interest is in how the Navy plans to avoid, minimize, mitigate, and compensate for the environmental impacts caused by military activities and for the massive losses of access to our public lands and resources under the proposed Modernization.

General Comments

From thousands of feet up in a jet, it may look like these lands are unoccupied; but that could not be farther from the truth. Nevadans and others make a living on these lands, hunt, hike, camp, explore or otherwise enjoy recreation on these lands; and indigenous peoples are culturally and religiously tied to these lands. Many of our members use the roads, climb the mountains, ride our horses, navigate the backcountry in motor vehicles, enjoy the wildlife, and view the open spaces

on the public lands proposed to be withdrawn by the Modernization plan. Losing access to the proposed closed areas means we will be unable to continue to do most of these things on most of 800,000 acres in central Nevada when the proposed withdrawal area is added to that currently under withdrawal. Here is a table of the land use for the 4 largest military installations in Nevada (other installations are meaningful in comparison).

unit	acres (millions) under control	
FRTC	0.983	after preferred alternative
NTTR	3.251	after preferred alternative
NNTT	0.870	
Hawthorne	0.147	
total	5.251	

This total area constitutes a significant cumulative spatial impact on the state of Nevada. It can be referenced to the total acreage of Nevada at 71.546M acres. The military control area would then, if both NTTR and FRTC expansions are realized, comprise 7.3% of the state's area. For comparison, the total acreage of designated wilderness in Nevada ([Wilderness Connect](#)) is 3.448M acres (4.8% for the state). Another important comparison is with mining in Nevada. According to BLM's Nevada state office, active claims totaled roughly 3.7M total acres in September 2017 (most recent data available). Very few mining claims are in the exploration/production phase though. More to the point may be the total acreage in the Nevada Department of Environmental Protection (NDEP) permit records for "Plan of Operation", which reflects the amount of disturbance at any point in time in the state for mining. In November 2015 (most recent data available), that amounted to approximately 70,000 acres, about 7% of the area proposed to be withdrawn for FRTC.

One major problem we have with the DEIS is the "No Action" alternative. The "No Action" Alternative presented is not "no action" because it involves ceasing use of the current FRTC. There is considerable discussion of what exactly the "no action" alternative means in the legal literature and court rulings. McCold and Saulsbury argue in a 1998 paper entitled "[Defining the no-action alternative for national environmental policy act analyses of continuing actions](#)" that BOTH continuing the activity without modification AND discontinuing the activity should be analyzed. In the case of this DEIS, only the latter was presented (but hardly discussed); it should be added. In the case of the broad, impactful activity currently at FRTC, it seems reasonable to examine the alternative of continuing the activity without modification as an option between discontinuing it entirely and expanding it.

Specifically, a pragmatic "No Action" alternative that simply keeps the status quo should be one of a "reasonable range of alternatives", one that merely extends the current withdrawal for another 20 years. A complete removal of the FRTC would be harmful to both the Navy and to the local Nevada communities it supports with jobs and purchasing. Section 2.5.3 on "Alternate Training Locations" suggests that the cost of moving elsewhere for the Navy will be in the billions of dollars. The sunk costs in FRTC would certainly be lost. We strongly object that the public was not presented with such an alternative in the DEIS. The alternatives presented leave

us with choosing between a complete abandonment of the FRTC or an enormous expansion of it with no meaningful mitigation. **Thus we cannot support any of the alternatives in the DEIS.**

A second problem we have with the DEIS is the limited span of alternatives (neglecting no-action). Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA in 40 CFR 1502.14(a) require agencies to "...rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all *reasonable* alternatives." In explanation, 32 CFR 989.8(b) states "'Reasonable' alternatives are those that meet the underlying purpose and need for the proposed action and that would cause a reasonable person to inquire further before choosing a particular course of action." The action alternatives 1, 2, and 3 in this DEIS do not fully constitute an evaluation of reasonable alternatives. There is little in degree that distinguishes the three action alternatives; for instance, the total acreage to be subjected to withdrawal is 618,727 in Alt. 1, 618,727 in Alt. 2 (same as Alt. 1), and 606,664 acres in Alt. 3. This limitation of the scope of the alternatives is based in Section 2.5 of the DEIS ("Alternatives Considered But Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis") where any reasonable alternatives are dismissed because they do not meet the highest requirements of the modernization. This section seems to blithely exclude any and all meaningful alternatives through a rigid and unassailable statement of need. **Why really, we ask, can't the 3.2 million acres in south-central Nevada that is now the NTTR be utilized for Navy training?** The DEIS should have carefully examined the one most likely of the areas named in Section 2.5, or perhaps some combination of them, as an Alternative 4, in order to meet its modernization requirements.

We even went so far in our scoping comments to offer a list of elements of a possible alternative that would be meaningful in comparison to the limited ones offered. Here, from p. 14 again:

1. Reduce the acreage of the proposed closures in Bravo 17 by closing only necessary bombing corridors, not the entire area.
2. Provide for better corridors for general and commercial aviation through the FRTC - to reduce fuel usage and carbon loads of commercial and general aircraft avoiding the existing dangerous corridor.
3. Allow diverse public uses and access to closed areas in Bravo 17 on specific days and times.
4. Maintain the current buffer between Bravo 20 military operations and the northern boundary of the Stillwater NWR.
5. Close Bravo 16 and conduct all necessary remediation before returning these lands to the BOR and re-opening them to the public.
6. Reduce any additional proposed public land withdrawals by providing for NASF training needs at other military-controlled areas in Nevada or other states.

7. Reduce any additional proposed public land withdrawals by providing for any additional training needs of NASF with simulations in advanced 3-D digital-projection training "rooms."
8. Budget for additional NASF staff to adequately meet the increased natural resource management requirements for the expansion lands under Modernization.
9. Provide adequate mitigation and compensation for unavoidable adverse impacts under Modernization on NWRs, rural communities and tribes, and public lands and resources as well as on state and federal management agencies.

Following our argument against the sufficiency of the alternatives in the DEIS, we find a major deficiency: Not considering computer simulation as an alternative to real flight for training. No section or page of the DEIS can be cited here because this is an omission. Again our scoping comments of 12/7/2016 contained this wording on p. 14:

"Reduce any additional proposed public land withdrawals by providing for any additional training needs of NASF with simulations in advanced 3-D digital-projection training 'rooms.'"

The phrase "simulation training" was not found in the DEIS. The word "simulation" was only found once and that was in relation to electronic warfare (Table 2.9 on p. 2-47). The word "simulator" is found only once in the DEIS — p. 2 of Introduction (p. 42 of document) where it states:

"The Navy uses *simulators* to provide early skill repetition and enhance teamwork through classroom learning and computer training; however, there is no substitute for live training in a realistic environment. To reduce the potential for substantial loss of life among US service men and service women in combat, the Navy must train like they will be required to fight. This is achieved by continuously analyzing what occurred during past conflicts and making the changes necessary to improve future warfighting tactics."

This statement is a very inadequate for avoiding consideration of simulation as an alternative. Legal decisions surrounding NEPA require that the EIS preparer take a hard look at alternatives. Here, the DEIS seems to have dismissed the alternative entirely. Although the rationale for doing so may be sound, we, the public, do not know that because of the failure of the DEIS to present it in any detail. In *Natural Resources Defense Council v. Callaway*, 524 F.2d 79 (2d Cir. 1975), the court found that:

"Although there is no need to consider alternatives of speculative feasibility or alternatives which could be changed only after significant changes in governmental policy or legislation, the EIS must still consider such alternatives to the proposed action as may partially or completely meet the proposal's goal and it must evaluate their comparative merits."

The DEIS fails to adhere to this, and many similar, rulings. We do not feel that simulation training is "speculative" because it is already widely used throughout the US military and

because there is already advanced simulation training being conducted at FRTC. There are, in fact, many advantages to simulation training, none of which are mentioned in this DEIS: lower cost, higher safety, more controlled training, and wider variation in battle and bombing scenes. Not the least in this case is that the use of simulations could avoid the need for withdrawing over 600,000 acres of public land from multiple use. The main rationale for the proposed withdrawal is the need to have a true 3-D, 360° (all azimuths), type of training for pilots, as expressed in Section 2.5.4. But this can be easily simulated in 3-D virtual-reality training rooms. Indeed, such simulations, at a remarkably realistic level, are available in commercial software for home computers. We can only imagine how much more complex, sophisticated, and effective military-designed simulations would be.

Aside from the above overarching comments, we find the DEIS to be basically well organized and well written. Our remaining comments here are directed at specific items in the DEIS that are unclear or that we feel are still inadequately addressed.

Specific Comments

2 Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

p. 2-50, Sec. 2.5.1: “Continue Training...in the Current Configuration” The DEIS argues that the status quo does not begin to meet the requirements. But it is also stated that the requirements have no change “in type or tempo” of training activities. If we understand “type” correctly, there is a very large change in type of training that underpins this proposed action — the 360° requirement. The language therefore seems inconsistent.

3 Analysis of Impacts

Note that there is no major subject heading like “3.0 Analysis of Impacts” such as for major sections 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. This must be an oversight. It also needs to be added to the Table of Contents on p. iii.

p. 3.2-52 and 53, Table 3.2-8: The DEIS concludes there is “less than significant impacts on land use” for all 3 alternatives. We are baffled by this conclusion when Nevadans face the partial loss of an ACEC, loss of parts of the Fallon NWR, loss of substantial parts of three Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), and loss of public access to most of the proposed expansion acres. Acquisition of private checkerboard parcels is also of concern.

p. 3.1-15, Sec. 3.1.2.1.5 (Farmland): The DEIS dismisses the capacity of soils in the proposed area of the expansion to support human food or livestock feed production. This is based on current climatic and socioeconomic conditions. Future advances in hybridization, or genetic modification, of seeds may change the assumptions while future climate changes may increase precipitation in the area. Are past, current, and future ordnance explosions liable to contaminate soils to such a degree that they are unusable? Such analysis may belong in the Cumulative Impacts part of the DEIS where it is now not treated with any detail (Sec. 4.4.1.3). No

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monitoring of ongoing soil contamination from training exercises is currently taking place, nor any proposed.

p. 3.1-32, Sec. 3.1.3.1: The DEIS says "...target areas are actively managed in the Range Sustainment Program by regularly removing used ordnance and maintaining the landscape to ensure long-term sustainability." Can all used ordnance truly be removed? Exploded ordnance? What is the composition of the explosive ordnances? Any heavy or toxic metals? The analysis here is insufficient to assure the reviewer that no significant impact will result.

p. 3.1-51, Sec. 3.1.3.5.3: This paragraph states that no mitigation measures are warranted. This seems suspect, especially because DEIS doesn't address the level of soil contamination due to exploded ordnance.

p. 3.2-1, Sec. 3.2: Land Use

The removal of all WSA acreage within the proposed withdrawal area is a significant matter. It is not clear to the reviewer why this cannot simply remain WSA for another 20-year withdrawal timespan if Congress awards the Navy its request. In addition, 3,200 acres of Fallon National Wildlife Refuge would be appropriated under joint Navy/USFWS management. Churchill County Conservation Easements (1,920 acres) would also fall into the same category. No mitigation for these losses are proposed. We strongly oppose the appropriation of these wildlife refuge areas. These lands should remain as is and not be included in the expansion, based on the principle of incompatible use. Simply, a wildlife refuge does not belong within a bombing range. Fox Peak ACEC boundary would be changed to eliminate 11,600 acres, a significant loss of cultural lands and of wildlife habitat. The DEIS also states that some "utility planning corridors" would be lost. With regard to the preferred alternative, we do not accept the DEIS conclusion on p. 3.2-51 that "...under Alternative 3, land use impacts within the region of influence would be considered less than significant."

Section 3.3: Mining and Mineral Resources

The word "geothermal" occurs hundreds of times in the DEIS, and so has not lacked attention. Not only are geothermal resources thought to exist within the DVTa but also in many parts of the proposed expansion of the B areas. Many of these areas are described as having "high" geothermal potential in the DEIS. See our comments under Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). Section 3.8.2.2: In spite of several references to "climate change", the DEIS does not mention the [DoD Climate Change Adaptation Roadmap](#) which, for the DoD, is an important document related to military readiness, robustness, and sustainability. We ask that the final EIS include a discussion of what the expanded FRTC may need to deal with, climate-wise, in the years ahead as Nevada becomes hotter and likely drier.

Section 3.10-1: Biological Resources

It is evident that the DEIS has gathered a great amount of existing data together to support its claims of no significant impact. However it doesn't appear that any of the biological surveys were done in the areas with direct impact, so there's no way to know if impacts are significant or not. In order to determine significance, analysis of the affected environment needs to include:

- Biological surveys for special status species (plants & animals) **within the areas** where land disturbance will take place.
- Appropriately scaled maps that show:
 - special status species within the disturbance areas
 - special status species within the Weapons Danger Zones
 - special status wildlife species within the highest decibel noise contour maps

Since biological surveys were not done for the proposed areas of disturbance, they should be required to be completed prior to land disturbance. Consequently, minimization and mitigation measures need to be included in the final EIS for any special status species associated with the vegetation community of the disturbance area. For example, 3,576 acres of Baileys Greasewood Shrubland will be impacted in B-17. Burrowing owls (USFWS Bird of Conservation Concern) occur in B-16 and B-17 in greasewood vegetation. Will burrowing owl surveys be completed prior to land clearing activities? If owls are found, what measures will be taken to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts?

p. 3.10-163, Section 3.10.3.1.1: Here it is concluded in Table 3.10-29 that “Implementation of Alternative 3 would not result in significant impacts on biological resources.” But, taking the estimate of direct ground disturbance of 5,882 acres for Alternative 3 from p. 21 of the Executive Summary, we maintain that the size of this is a significant impact itself. It’s equivalent to 9 square miles – an area roughly the size of the town of Winnemucca, Nevada and twice the size of the town of Fallon, Nevada. Even the largest mine in Nevada, Goldstrike Mine, does not take that much of our public land.

p. 3.12-1, Sec. 3.12: Recreation

In the opening paragraph of this section, the DEIS seems to diminish already the recreation importance of our public lands by saying “... as well as other discernible areas where the public regularly recreates.” We emphasize that “discernible” is an inappropriate qualifier. In Nevada much recreation occurs sparsely and may not be “discernible”, but this does not lessen the value for the person or persons engaging in recreation. These activities essentially go “under the radar” and leave little to no trace and are often not discussed beyond family and friends. ALL of the proposed withdrawn public lands should be considered recreation area. We maintain that all the withdrawal area overlaps totally with recreation area. All 3 alternatives take well over 300,000 acres out of public use for recreation. The offer of Alternative 3 for a small (temporal and spatial) sheep-hunting season and for possible organized road races is hardly a mitigation of the enormous negative impact.

p. 3-12-2, Sec. 3.12.2: “Nevada ... has one of the smallest populations” is not correct. Currently (<http://worldpopulationreview.com/states/>), Nevada is 32nd in population among US states, with over 3 million people, and is hardly among the smallest.

p. 3.13-1, Sec. 3.13: Socioeconomics

This section concludes that there will be no significant impact to total economic activity within affected counties. This is based on including multiplier effects so that direct, indirect, and induced amounts are taken into account. Some economic loss is considered due to restriction on mining and geothermal energy, but the extent of this loss is unpredictable and assumes no extensive development in both cases.

p. 3.13-19, Sec. 3.13.2.3.6: Geothermal. Geothermal energy production in Nevada is a critical part of the baseload electrical power supply in Nevada due to their 24/7 operations. The DEIS rightly notes that Nevada is #1 in the nation in terms of geothermal energy use per capita and that geothermal energy supplies NVEnergy with more power than either solar or wind sources (2018 data). The closure of large areas to possible geothermal energy production would be a serious impact to the state because geothermal is the major renewable energy source as of 2018. Large tracts of high potential for geothermal exist in affected areas (see Section 3.3). According to the DEIS, the Governor's Office of Energy estimated that the economic benefit of geothermal developments was \$5M per MW of generating capacity, or about \$1.2B overall, to the economy of Nevada. **Is this \$1.2B annual, or cumulative? Please clarify.** Can a similar calculation be made for the economic benefit of the entire FRTC at present? This would be an interesting comparison and would be informative about the Navy's "no-action" alternative.

p. 3.13-31, last paragraph (Leasable): The DEIS indeed states "It is reasonably foreseeable that exploration drilling would occur on all existing geothermal leases and that additional geothermal leases would be sought within the Study Area, including in the proposed Dixie Valley Training Area." In spite of the broad attention given to geothermal in the DEIS, no estimate is given of what the economic impact might be of the proposed withdrawal. Using current rates, say over the last 10-20 years, of geothermal development in the area around the proposed expansion of FRTC, at least a crude estimate could be made of the economic value of potential geothermal energy to the counties and to the state. A range of estimates should be made, from low to high, based on variable assumptions.

p. 3.13-44, Table 3.13-26. In this interesting table, the Navy summarizes the effect of the No Action alternative to be no net economic change overall while Fallon and Churchill County could have significant impact. **Thus, closing FRTC would not necessarily negatively impact the economy of the area? This seems grossly wrong.**

p. 3.14-11, Sec. 3.14.2.1.6: Electromagnetic Energy Safety. It is claimed that "Interference with cell phone signals and Global Positioning System (GPS) devices can occasionally occur during operations...." The extent of that is not estimated or reported here. It is also claimed that "The Navy is not authorized to intentionally jam civilian communication bands." But this does not address *inadvertent* jamming, which may occur frequently, according to anecdotal accounts?

4 Cumulative Impacts

p. 4-1, Sec. 4.1: Cumulative impacts are defined in 40 CFR part 1508.7 as "the impact on the environment that results from the incremental impact of the action when added to the other past,

present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency (federal or non-federal) or person undertakes such other actions.”

p. 4-2, Sec. 4.2.1: This EIS delimits the geographic extent for analyzing cumulative impacts to Churchill, Elko, Eureka, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, Pershing, and Washoe counties. But the proposed expansion of FRTC is synergistic with another expansion currently under consideration at NTTR in Nye County; the two withdrawals must be fully analyzed together for contribution to cumulative impacts. In fact the DEIS must address the cumulative effects of **ALL military operations** in Nevada, including the 301,507 acre expansion of the 2,949,603 acre Nevada Test and Training Range and the extreme environmental effects of operating the Nevada Test Site (~864,000 acres) for nuclear testing for many decades. The Navy’s proposed military acquisition of another 683,880 acres (including 424,466 acres with restricted public access) is cumulative for Nevada residents and visitors, as well as for biological resources at the landscape level.

p. 4-20, Sec. 4.4.1.3: The cumulative impact of exploded munitions in the B areas is not provided in sufficient detail. Decades of training with explosives will disturb and contaminate soils to a high degree and make remediation difficult to impossible in some places. See comment under Section 3.1. The DEIS states “The effects of lead or explosive contaminants on soils from the use of high-explosive munitions would be long term and localized on Bravo ranges.” Lead, and many other toxic materials, have a definite cumulative effect because they are not easily neutralized in their place. How will the Navy assure that all areas can always be remediated?

p. 4.25, Sec. 4.4.5.2: The expansion would severely affect future plans for Interstate I-11 if the I-11 B-1 alternative is preferred by highway planners. See <https://www.nevadadot.com/projects-programs/programs-studies/future-i-11-alternatives-analysis-las-vegas-valley-to-i-80>. FRTC is already greatly impacting Nevada airspace; this expansion would now affect major transportation alignments also, possibly removing optimum alignments from consideration.

p. 4-33, Sec. 4.4.10.2: The DEIS states

“Under the Proposed Action, noise from aircraft and weapons firing, launch, and impact (Section 3.7, Noise; and Section 3.10.3.1.1, Noise) as well as energy stressors like electromagnetic radiation and lasers (Section 3.10.3.1.2, Energy Stressors within the Proposed Expansion Area) may elicit short-term physiological and behavioral responses to wildlife species, including special-status species. Exposed individuals would be expected to quickly recover from these responses, and exposure would be intermittent and infrequent. The short-term behavioral and physiological responses are not expected to affect the fitness of individuals. Therefore, population-level effects to wildlife species would not occur. The intensity of effects of disturbance and strike stressors on wildlife species may be considered minor.”

What is this determination based on? What scientific studies and/or research support these claims?

p. 4-37, Sec. 4.4.12: Recreation. The proposed alternatives 1, 2, and 3 all will withdraw from public use about 600,000 acres of suitable recreation land, which is now being used by hikers; bikers; campers; climbers; OHV, ATV, and motorcycle riders; rockhounds; hunters; anglers; photographers; birders; and more. The concessions offered by Alternative 3 are indeed minimal. A shortened bighorn sheep hunt in a very limited area of B-17 is a small offering to hunters. A promise to allow popular racing events to continue, subject to approvals, is also a small offering. Most OHV, ATV, and motorcycle excursions are done singly or in small groups without organization; the extent of this use is hard to quantify due to its nature. Most of the individuals doing these activities don't have an interest in organized racing events. Certainly, the withdrawal of large tracts will decrease the amount of motorized activities on public land and thereby possibly increase its protection. However, the analysis does not directly compare the degradation of land due to military training to the degradation now occurring due to public motorized activity.

p. 4-39, Sec. 4.4.13.2: Changes in PILT payments are not anticipated in the DEIS, except for Lyon County. The analysis claims "There would be no significant impact associated with lost sales and tax revenues." Where is the analysis to back up this claim? On the contrary, preceding sections have shown that there will be severe negative impacts on the total public use of withdrawn lands; because they are part of the multi-billion per year outdoor recreation industry in Nevada, we cannot accept a claim that there will be no lost revenues when these activities cease on withdrawn lands.

p. 4-45, Sec. 4.4.14.2: "Contaminated Site Management". Over 20 projects are listed that are aimed at remediating contaminated mining, or other, sites. How will activities at these sites be continued and monitored after withdrawal? Whatever agency is handling the project thought that it was important — will these projects just be terminated, thereby threatening air, soil, and water quality?

p. 4-47, Sec. 4.5: In summary, it is claimed that "The incremental contribution of Alternative 1, Alternative 2, or Alternative 3, viewed in conjunction with other projects in the area, would result in cumulatively significant impacts with respect to the following resource areas: land use, mineral resources and mining, grazing, transportation, water resources, noise, and recreation." This is a fairly long list of areas to be impacted and the cumulative effect across these categories can't be ignored. The DEIS clearly shows that there are not only significant cumulative impacts in a temporal sense but also cumulative impacts in a spatial sense. Moreover, the broad categories of impacts (15 subsections under Section 4.4 Cumulative Impact Analysis) is also of great concern. We can think of few, if any, NEPA-covered projects in Nevada, including the Yucca Mountain Project, that have had so comprehensive a set of impacts as the FRTC expansion.

5 Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation

p. 5-1, Sec. 5.1.2: The DEIS claims that "In many cases, SOPs [Standard Operating Procedures] result in incidental environmental, socioeconomic, and cultural benefits..." This should really

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say “benefits and impacts” because SOPs will surely often involve damage to the environment from training activities, for example.

p. 5-2, Sec. 5.1.4: The DEIS states “Monitoring is an important component of the Navy’s natural resources management strategy....” It refers the reader to the “INRMP for NAS Fallon” for detailed information on monitoring programs. We suggest excising the relevant information from the INRMP and incorporating it as a table here in the text. At the least, a URL link to the INRMP and any updates is needed here. Unless this is done, we have no idea of the scope of the monitoring.

p. 5-3, Sec. 5.2.2.2: Only paleontological monitoring of construction sites is mentioned. We strongly feel that monitoring of soils for toxic chemicals related to exploded ordnances needs to be done on a long-term basis. This monitoring should be done at sites where there is a high concentration of such events.

p. 5-7, Sec. 5.8.2.2: Referring back to Section 3.7.3, the DEIS claims no additional monitoring measures are needed when expanding the airspace and doing training activities which require a much larger use of current plus proposed new airspace. This is difficult to accept. It seems obligatory for the Navy to validate this claim by placing a few noise sensors in spots that will be subject to the highest increases in noise levels. Anecdotal noise reports will surely continue after the proposed expansion — how does the Navy record and track them? Will they be accessible by the public?

p. 5-11, Sec. 5.10.2.2: No new groundwater monitoring programs are proposed, although current monitoring would be extended to new bombing ranges. The 5-year Range Sustainability Environmental Program already has monitoring as a key feature. No mention is made though of what specific contamination tests are made on well samples. What exact chemicals are monitored?

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Anne Macquarie". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Anne" and last name "Macquarie" clearly legible.

Anne Macquarie, Chair, Executive Committee
Toiyabe Chapter of Sierra Club

F.6.3.41.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

Regarding comments on land management, agency land management responsibilities will be determined by Congress as part of any ultimate decision on the withdrawal. The Navy's training and testing activities are in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations concerning the impact of explosives and associated chemical constituents in the soils environment both on and off range. Munitions constituents are not considered recalcitrant to biodegradation like some other organic chemicals commonly known as groundwater and soil contaminants at hazardous waste sites. The Navy conducts Range Conditions Assessments as part of the Navy's Range Sustainment Environmental Program Assessment every five years. The most recent Range Conditions Assessment for FRTC was completed in 2015 (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015b). A team of environmental and operational range experts evaluated the history of range use within FRTC ranges, the types and quantities of munitions or military expended materials used and their chemical constituents, range location, spatial distribution of activities, available environmental data, environmental regulatory requirements, and compliance efforts. The Range Conditions Assessment information and data were derived from site visits, personnel interviews, archive search reports, and document reviews conducted in 2013 and 2014. The review team's findings, based on these data, concluded that the range and training operations are in compliance with environmental laws and policies, and there are no munitions constituents migrating off of the ranges.

Regarding impacts to recreation as the comment mentions, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTa and surrounding areas.

Regarding the No Action Alternative comments, under this proposal, taking "no action" would mean that Congress would not extend the current land withdrawal, which expires in November 2021. Therefore, the land withdrawal would expire and FRTC lands would be reverted back as described under the No Action Alternative. If the Secretary of the Interior decides that it is in the public interest to accept jurisdiction over lands proposed for relinquishment, it is authorized to revoke the withdrawal. Should any ultimate decision be made to revoke the withdrawal, the Secretary of the Interior shall publish in the Federal Register an appropriate order that shall:

1. terminate the withdrawal and reservation;
2. constitute official acceptance of full jurisdiction over the lands by the Department of the Interior; and
3. state the date upon which the lands will be opened to the operation of some or all of the public lands laws, including the mining laws.

If the Secretary of the Interior concludes that decontamination is not practicable or economically feasible of all or part of the former FRTC or that the land cannot be decontaminated sufficiently to be

opened to operation of some or all of the public land laws, or if Congress does not appropriate funds for the decontamination of such land, the Secretary of the Interior shall not be required to accept the proposed land for relinquishment.

Regarding comments on reasonable alternatives, alternatives for the EIS incorporated actions specifically to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities. Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the Final EIS discusses various alternatives the Navy considered, including those suggested by the public. The Final EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for not carrying specific alternatives forward for further analysis.

While it would hypothetically be possible to develop training systems at Nellis Air Force Base, the United States (U.S.) Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training currently uses nearly all of the complex's available training capacity (time and space). Shared use of Nellis Air Force Base, as currently configured or as proposed, would not be able to support the intensity of both Navy and Air Force training, and therefore was not carried forward for further analysis.

Those alternatives and associated actions were carried forward for analysis and if necessary, based on the level of impacts, additional management practices, mitigation, or other impact avoidance/minimization measures were included to further avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts.

Regarding item 1 of the scoping comments listed, the Navy reduced the size of B-17 to the maximum extent possible between the Draft and Final EIS. However, the Navy cannot allow access to the Weapons Danger Zones around target areas and therefore is requesting that area be withdrawn.

Regarding item 2 of the scoping comments listed, the Navy is working and has worked with the FAA on airspace needs. General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, as currently done. This same approach would also apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would continue to be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace). Proposed changes to airspace would not significantly impact recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts on general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).

Regarding item 3 of the scoping comments listed, the Navy is proposing managed access to B-17 during specific days and times, as discussed under Alternative 2 and 3 for managed access. The Proposed Action would allow access for racing events on B-17. The Navy will also allow hunting on B-17 once a year with permits and required Navy instruction. The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses in the B-17 range, as it is Navy policy that these ranges are generally closed to the public. Allowing hunting and special events would work only as managed access through strict Naval control to ensure public health and safety and scheduling of training events. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationalists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the

mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationalists.

Regarding item 4 of the scoping comments listed, the Navy is not proposing to withdraw the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. Due to the Weapons Danger Zone, it would not be able to maintain the buffer requested under any of the action alternatives. This expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater NWR. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee). NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes. Currently three Special Use Airspace (SUA) units overlap the Stillwater and Fallon NWRs: Fallon North 1 MOA, R-4813A, and R-4813B. Under the Proposed Action, there are no proposed changes to the operating altitudes of the SUAs that overlap the Stillwater NWR, no changes in number of aircraft operations, and no changes in the approach and departure tracks of aircraft utilizing targets in B-20. The proposed B-20 expansion area that overlaps the NWRs is for a ground-based safety zone and not due to an increase or change in aircraft operations over the NWRs. Therefore, there would be no change in the BASH potential with implementation of the proposed action.

The following are some general operational changes that are implemented during aircraft operations to reduce threats from bird strikes, mission permitting:

- When practical, reduce low-level flight time.
- Reduce formation flying.
- Reduce airspeeds to allow birds to be seen sooner and lessen damage in event of a strike.
- Avoid areas with known raptor concentrations during summer, especially during 1000–1700 hours due to increased thermals (Naval Air Station Fallon, 2012).

With adherence to the NAS Fallon BASH Plan and use of the Avian Hazard Advisory System, there would be no significant impacts to bird or bat populations as no population-level effects to birds or bats would be expected.

Regarding item 5 of the scoping comments listed, the Navy is not proposing to close B-16 as it is necessary for training purposes.

Regarding item 6 of the scoping comments listed, the Navy has reviewed alternatives for training at other locations. Other locations are scheduled such that there would not be room in the schedule for the necessary training that is accomplished at the FRTC to coincide with current training at these other locations.

Regarding item 7 of the scoping comments listed and other following comments on simulations with computers, although virtual training and simulators are an important aspect of naval training, there are numerous ways in which they do not sufficiently re-create fully integrated, real-life situations that may be encountered in a combat environment. For example, as discussed in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS, virtual training and simulators cannot re-create the physical stresses, such as increased heart rates and adrenalin levels, that a live-fire exercise provides.

The FRTC is the only location where an entire carrier air wing, consisting of more than 60 aircraft and associated support crews, can train as a single unit conducting the full arc of the mission, including pre-flight planning, ordnance handling, in-air activities, weapons deployment, and post-flight briefing. This cannot be accomplished via simulations.

Regarding item 8 of the scoping comments listed, the Navy is proposing to establish two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers at NAS Fallon. Part of the duties of these officers would include monitoring of the added fence line. The Navy will adjust staffing needs as necessary pending any ultimate Congressional decision and future needs.

Regarding item 9 of the scoping comments listed, the Navy has developed and proposed specific mitigation for each alternative that can be implemented and would avoid or minimize impacts. As such, alternatives include actions specifically designed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities.

Regarding specific comments on Chapter 2, in order for the Navy to reach full TTP compliance that would allow air and ground forces to train in a realistic 360-degree combat scenario for all training scenarios, the Navy would need to withdraw or acquire almost double the land as that requested under the Proposed Action (approximately 1.3 million acres), as well as make extensive revisions to special use and civilian airspace. The Navy considered this as an alternative, but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS because of potential significant and largely disruptive impacts to the local area. For example, this alternative would necessitate the re-routing of several major U.S. Highways (U.S. Route 50 and U.S. Interstate 80). Additionally, this alternative would greatly increase the amount of public lands that would need to be closed for weapons safety considerations.

Instead, the Navy settled for the minimum 180-degree requirement for realistic training events; and reduced the size of the overall area requested and proposed for withdrawal, to the extent consistent with mission requirements.

The Navy added a figure in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS that illustrates the withdrawal and acquisition lands included in the Draft EIS and highlights additional reductions that have been made to the withdrawal and acquisition lands between the Draft and Final EIS under Alternative 3.

The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative, also known as the “status quo” alternative, would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

Regarding the analysis of impacts, the approach to analysis, including significance criteria for potential impacts, are presented in the Final EIS for each resource section. The approach to analysis and significance criteria varies but was developed based on applicable laws, regulations, and policies for

each resource area. In addition, context, intensity, and relevant thresholds were considered when determining significance.

Regarding impacts to land use, the Navy analyzed potential social impacts, including impacts on customs and culture, in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). In addition, the Navy addresses impacts on resource areas that contribute to customs and culture in separate sections in the Final EIS, such as land use (Section 3.2), mining (Section 3.3), grazing (Section 3.4), cultural resources (Section 3.11), recreation (Section 3.12), and cumulative impacts (Chapter 4). Between the Draft and Final EIS, the Navy re-evaluated impacts and some of the significance determinations may have changed slightly based on public input and best available science.

Regarding comments on soils, the Navy's training and testing activities are in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations concerning the impact of explosives and associated chemical constituents in the soils environment both on and off range.

Regarding the range sustainment program, the safety of the public and military personnel is of utmost importance to the Navy. As discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities. The Navy continuously monitors its operations to find ways to minimize the use of hazardous materials and to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes. Spills would be managed and cleaned up in accordance with applicable state and federal regulatory requirements. If a spill were to exceed reportable quantities as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for regulated material, it would be immediately reported to the NAS Fallon Environmental Division for appropriate action per the Integrated Contingency Plan (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2009).

Additionally, the Department of Defense created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure Department of Defense compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations.

Lastly, the Navy complies with Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3571.4, Operational Range Clearance Policy for Navy Ranges, which establishes the policy and requirements for performing operational range clearance on Navy ranges. Under this program the impact areas are routinely swept of ordnance and target debris. This debris is disposed of or, if possible, recycled in accordance with all applicable regulations.

Regarding Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) and the proposed de-designation, the proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

Regarding comments on mining and mineral resources, geothermal, and climate change, the Navy is not proposing to increase the types or levels of training activities under any alternative. Therefore, there would be no increase in greenhouse gas emissions. See Section 3.8 (Air Quality), specifically Sections 3.8.3.2.9 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions), 3.8.3.3.9 (Greenhouse Gases), and 3.8.3.4.9 (Greenhouse Gases) of the Final EIS for more information.

Regarding comments on biological resources, multiple ecological surveys were performed in support of the EIS. These supporting studies can be found on the FRTC project website at, <https://frtcmodernization.com/>. These studies include but are not limited to:

- Avian Survey Report
- Bat Survey Report
- Burrowing Owl Survey report
- Fish Survey Report
- Greater Sage-grouse Survey Report
- Plant Community Surveys and Mapping Report
- Raptor Survey report
- Rare Plants Survey Report
- Small Mammal Survey Report
- Wetland Survey Report
- Wildlife Camera Trap Survey report
- Wildlife Species Documented on Existing Navy-Administered FRTC Lands and Proposed FRTC Expansion Areas, Nevada

Regarding comments on the significance determinations for biological resources, populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

Regarding comments on recreation, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTAs and surrounding areas.

Regarding comments on Nevada's population, the Navy has updated the text in Section 3.12 to reflect that Nevada's population is ranked as 32nd in the nation.

Regarding comments on Socioeconomics, a detailed Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) analysis is included in the Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report, available at <http://frtcmodernization.com> and discussed in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). There would be no change in PILT for Churchill, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing counties, and very little change in PILT for Lyon County. Therefore, there would be no significant impact from lost revenue from reduced PILT under any of the action alternatives.

Regarding comments on geothermal energy, the Final EIS further describes the process by which interested parties could pursue compatible geothermal development in a portion of the Dixie Valley Training Area. The proposed required design features are necessary for the Navy to meet training requirements. Development of the required design features affords an opportunity for geothermal development that would otherwise be lost. The Navy acknowledges that complying with required design features could add cost to a potential geothermal development; however, the Navy is committed to working with the developer on a case-by-case basis. This is addressed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

Regarding comments on the table in the Socioeconomics section, the impacts under the No Action Alternative would be highly speculative. The Navy has reviewed these impact determinations and revised them based on public comments and the best available science as applicable.

Regarding electromagnetic energy safety comments, at the present time, the Navy will not interfere with civilian use of the electromagnetic spectrum, including GPS. Operations on the FRTC purposely avoid broad conflict with civilian systems. NAWDC and NAS Fallon coordinate and will continue to coordinate with infrastructure providers and spectrum users to avoid conflicts.

Regarding cumulative impact comments, Chapter 4 (Cumulative Impacts) lists past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions that have had or are expected to have impacts either within, or within distances of up to 30 miles from, the FRTC. This includes the counties of Churchill, Elko, Eureka, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, Pershing, and Washoe. In determining which projects to include in the cumulative impacts analysis for a given resource area, the Navy made a preliminary determination regarding each past, present, or reasonably foreseeable action. Specifically, using criteria included in Section 4.2 (Approach to Analysis), the Navy determined whether a relationship exists such that the affected resource areas of the Proposed Action (included in this EIS) might interact with the affected resource area of a past, present, or reasonably foreseeable action. If no such potential relationship existed, the project was not carried forward into the cumulative impacts analysis. In accordance with CEQ guidance (Council on Environmental Quality 2005), those actions considered but excluded from further cumulative effects analysis are not catalogued in the Final EIS, because the intent is to focus the analysis on the meaningful actions relevant to inform decision making.

The Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR) Military Land Withdrawal at Nellis Air Force Base and the FRTC Modernization EIS are distinct and separate actions based on their mission, type of training activities, and training schedules.

The Proposed Action for NTTR was evaluated in Chapter 4 (Cumulative Impacts) in the Final EIS. There would be no overlap between the residents or resources affected by aircraft noise in the FRTC range areas and those affected by aircraft noise in the areas surrounding the NTTR (see Figure 4-1, 4-2, and 4-3). However, the Navy determined based on the analysis in the Final EIS that Nye County would experience a significant impact on recreation and economic resources due to the cumulative nature of the NTTR Proposed Action (see Chapter 4 [Cumulative Impacts], Sections 4.4.12 [Recreation] and 4.4.13 [Socioeconomic Resources]) and the FRTC Preferred Alternative and the loss of lands for recreation activities such as hunting, which generate economic resources for the county (see Section 3.13 [Socioeconomic Resources]). The Navy is working and will continue to work with Nye County and other impacted counties to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts when feasible and consistent with the Navy's authority.

As discussed previously in this response regarding hazardous materials and wastes, the safety of the public and military personnel is of utmost importance to the Navy. As discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities.

Regarding the I-11 project, the Navy is in contact with the I-11 project managers and would coordinate as necessary if the projects were to need coordination.

Regarding noise and biological resources, as discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), the response to sonic booms or other sudden disturbance is similar among many wildlife species. Sudden and unfamiliar sounds usually act as an alarm and trigger a “flight” response; however, reaction to a given noise can vary widely depending on factors such as time of day, physical condition of the animal, physical environment, or whether other physical stressors are present. Although the startle effect of a sonic boom can be stressful to an animal, it is difficult to generalize animal responses to noise disturbances across species. Recent literature suggests a startle is a common response across a variety of species and ultimately leads to habituation. It has been reported that the intensities and durations of the startle response decrease as the number and frequency of exposures increase, suggesting no long-term adverse effects. It is recognized that short term impacts to individual animals may occur from sonic booms, however, overall no long-term adverse effects to populations are expected

Given the historical use of the airspace and the coexistence of wildlife, animals within the MOA are likely habituated to aircraft overflights and associated noise, such as sonic booms.

Many of the above-listed behavioral and physiological responses to noise are within the range of normal adaptive responses to external stimuli, such as predation, that wild animals face regularly. In many cases, individuals would return to homeostasis or a stable equilibrium almost immediately after exposure to a brief stimulus such as an aircraft overflight or sonic boom. Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Section 3.10.3.1 (Potential Stressors) of the Final EIS was updated to incorporate the best available science regarding noise and startle effects on wildlife.

Regarding the analysis for cumulative impacts and recreation, off-highway vehicles (OHV) use would continue to be allowed within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and potentially within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after any removal of Wilderness Study Area designation by Congress. Due to safety reasons, OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20.

Topography and OHV trails similar to those in B-17 also occur in the DVTA or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).

Regarding PILT, a detailed Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) analysis is included in the Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report, available at <http://frtcmmodernization.com> and discussed in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). There would be no change in PILT for Churchill, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing

counties, and very little change in PILT for Lyon County. Therefore, there would be no significant impact from lost revenue from reduced PILT under any of the action alternatives.

Regarding contaminated site management, if sites are acquired by the Navy, the Navy would become liable for these sites.

Regarding comments on Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation), the Navy has developed and proposed specific mitigation for each alternative that can be implemented and would avoid or minimize impacts. As such, alternatives include actions specifically designed to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities. Suggested measures and the Navy's response to these measures and adoption status have been added to Chapter 5 via tables.

Regarding noise report comments, as stated in Section 3.7.3.5 (Proposed Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation), the Air Operations Office logs noise complaints at Naval Air Station Fallon. The office records information about the time, location, and nature of the complaint; and initiates investigation of what if any Navy airspace operations were being conducted by the Navy at the FRTC. If the caller requests, range personnel will follow up with a return phone call to explain the resolution of the complaint. The Navy may be contacted for noise complaints and operational suggestions at 775-426-2419.

Regarding groundwater, while impact areas have been identified, the Navy has not yet determined specific target placement. The placement of the targets within the impact areas would avoid washes. The Navy has revised sections in the Final EIS, specifically in Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives), and Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety) with this information.

Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.6.3.42 Zbinden, E. (Nevada Mineral Exploration Coalition Public Lands Committee)

First	Last	Comment	Response
Elizabeth	Zbinden	To all concerned: The Nevada Mineral Exploration Coalition appreciates the opportunity to comment about the Draft Environmental Impact Statement prepared for the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization. Our comments are in the attached file 'NMEC comments about FRTC DEIS'. Sincerely, Elizabeth Zbinden, Chair of NMEC Public Lands Committee	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.



Nevada Mineral Exploration Coalition

P.O. Box 13482
Reno, NV 89507
www.nvmec.org

Feb 14, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

And: [HTTPS://frtcmodernization.com/Public-Involvement/Submit-Your-Comment](https://frtcmodernization.com/Public-Involvement/Submit-Your-Comment)

Attn: Ms Sara Goodwin, EIS Project Manager
Re: Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Ms Goodwin:

The Nevada Mineral Exploration Coalition (NMEC, or the Coalition) respectfully submits the following comments about the Fallon Range Training Complex Draft Environmental Impact Statement. NMEC is a non-profit, nonpartisan coalition of small businesses and individuals who make their living directly or indirectly by exploring for mineral deposits in the State of Nevada.

We have been following the development of the FRTC Modernization plan with some concern. Our attendance at previous public meetings is on record, and we have submitted previous comments both as an organization and as individuals.

We respect the Navy's need to train personnel; we recognize and are grateful for the important role played by FRTC in national security and our own individual safety and security. At the same time we believe that exploration and mining in Nevada also play a role in national security through the domestic production of metals and other mineral materials. We believe it is important not to withdraw land, but instead to leave it open to mineral exploration.

The Coalition works with the Nevada Mining Association and shares many of its goals. The Coalition concurs with the letter submitted by the Nevada Mining Association and incorporates by reference those comments in this letter, especially their items #4, #6, #47, #52.

We wish to emphasize two themes in the comments made by the Nevada Mining Association. The first is that the DEIS greatly underestimates the negative impact the proposed withdrawals would have on mineral exploration. The second is that the writers of the DEIS suffer from a lack of imagination with regard to the possibilities for exploration



Nevada Mineral Exploration Coalition

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www.nvmec.org

and mining to share multiple-use land with the Navy, with the use of some accommodations and good will intent to work together. It should not be necessary to withdraw as much land as is proposed in even the least restrictive of the three Alternatives.

One point of negative impact that was completely overlooked in the DEIS has to do with the limitations on investment governed by the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS: see <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/international/the-committee-on-foreign-investment-in-the-united-states-cfius>). Mineral exploration depends heavily on venture capital investment; it has no income stream until a deposit is found, developed, and in production – in other words, until exploration becomes mining. Much of the venture capital for exploration in Nevada originates from outside the US. Without that foreign investment, exploration is stalled and mining loses its input stream. The Foreign Investment Risk Review Modernization Act of 2018 (FIRRMA) requires the CFIUS to review, among other things, “a purchase, lease, or concession by or to a foreign person of real estate located in proximity to sensitive government facilities”. The FRTC expansion greatly expands not only the withdrawn area, but also the proximity buffer. Although we tend to think of our investors as friendly trade partners, one of NMEC’s members has already lost business on account of this.

As for creative sharing of multiple-use land with FRTC and other users, I repeat some points made in NMEC’s comment letter of Dec 12, 2016 that were inspired by a conversation with a naval officer at a scoping session: The same accommodations that allow grazing or recreation on land used for training can also allow mineral exploration and development on the same land. For example, early-stage exploration involves no lights and no power lines: Surface samples are taken and claims are staked during daylight hours. Mid-stage exploration involves drilling that can, with appropriate planning, be confined to daylight hours. Should the exploration project result in the discovery of a mineral deposit, with proper planning the deposit could be developed into a mine without any cross-country power lines that would interfere with low-altitude flight. I have worked at mines where power is generated on-site using diesel generators. As alternative energy technology improves, other options besides diesel become more viable and the potential for on-site power generation also improves. This is particularly true in the FRTC area which has, as you acknowledge, excellent geothermal prospectivity.

The final point is an argument in favor of leaving land open to mineral exploration, even if it seems today that there are no mineral resources which would be compromised by a withdrawal. You never know what will be invented next, and what commodities will become important. The tale of lithium is an illustration. Before the invention of lithium-ion rechargeable batteries (not so long ago!) the world supply of lithium was adequate for its uses in ceramics, metal alloys, lubricants, pharmaceuticals, and so forth. The Nevada mine



Nevada Mineral Exploration Coalition

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producing lithium from groundwater brine was certainly interesting, but nobody was looking for more deposits of that geological type, and dry lakebeds were considered completely unworthy of attention by mineral explorers. Now, of course, lithium is the Next Big Thing, the price is up, and dry lakebeds are getting a lot of attention from explorers. Despite the caution on the part of DEIS writers (Table 3.3-6, page 3.3-25) 'isolated occurrences of lithium enrichment' could turn out to be the first clue to the discovery of a lithium resource.

To take another thought from my previous letter, we don't know what commodities will be vital to the next generation of Americans. It would be sadly ironic if some strategic element important in a new defense technology formed a deposit in the Stillwater Range but we never knew because we were not allowed to look for it.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Zbinden
Chair, Public Lands Committee
Nevada Mineral Exploration Coalition
E_Zbinden@geology.reno.nv.us

F.6.3.42.1 Response

Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the response to the Nevada Mining Association for responses to the comments that you have incorporated by reference.

Regarding the mining and mineral impact analysis, in the EIS, when a mineral resource potential is classified as either moderate or high, a lost exploration opportunity would represent a significant impact on that mineral resources. The resource potential classification considers occurrences, geologic relationship, and historic production for each mineral resource. As discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), Federal land withdrawn from mineral entry would no longer be open to new mining claims, and the lands would be prohibited from future mineral exploration and development. Implementation of any of the action alternatives would result in potential significant impacts on exploration and development of locatable, leasable, and salable mineral resources.

Regarding the second comment that there may be possibilities for share multiple-use land with the Navy on ranges, in accordance with Navy policy, mining, grazing, and unmanaged recreation is not compatible

within a surface danger zone of an operational range. The Navy would continue to follow existing operating procedures that prohibit the collection of materials from any mining area and prohibit entry to mine shafts and mines. Navy training activities would not impact mining activities outside of the proposed withdrawal boundaries. Therefore, there is the potential for a loss of access to salable and locatable minerals and mines in the land requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition. Closing the property may also affect mineral management by limiting the availability of mineral transport within certain areas. For example, new public roads, railroads, or other rights of way that would transport minerals could not be located within the proposed closed areas of the Bravo ranges, which would limit the availability to access and transport locatable and salable minerals. Closing the property would also limit the available means to transport mineral resources like oil/gas pipelines or geothermal energy transmission lines.

Regarding foreign investment in mining in the United States, this topic is outside of the scope of the EIS.


Regarding mining on the DVTA, the Navy does not have the authority to manage locatable mining activities under the Mining Law of 1872, as amended, and therefore, cannot allow the same required design features as it is offering for geothermal exploration and development in the DVTA.

F.7 Individuals

This section contains comments from individuals received during the public comment period and the Navy's response to those comments. Letters, written comments, and emails are presented as received by the Navy in picture form with responses immediately following in text after that presentation. Comments submitted on the website are shown in tables and organized alphabetically by commenters names, followed by their comment, with pictures of attachments if applicable, and the Navy's response in the final right-hand column of the table or after the attachment is presented. Enclosures to comments or other background information included along with the public's comments are not pictured in this appendix. Responses to these comments were prepared and reviewed for scientific and technical accuracy and completeness.

F.7.1 Letters, Written Comments, and Emails

F.7.1.1 Austin, R. L.



**Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

Comment Form

Date: 2/14/19

Thank you for your comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS.
Comments must be postmarked or received online by ^{2/14/19}~~Jan. 15, 2019~~ for consideration in the Final EIS.
Comments may be submitted in person at the public meetings, via the project website at www.FRTCMmodernization.com, or by U.S. Postal Service mail to the address below.

Please Print

I AM A PROPERTY OWNER IN THE FAIRVIEW AREA OF THE COMPLEX. I SUPPORT THE IDEA THAT THE COMPLEX NEEDS TO BE EXPANDED, BUT YOU HAVE TAKEN MY PROPERTY AND USED IT SINCE BEFORE THE LAST EXPANSION. AS IN THE LAST MEETING OVER A YEAR AGO THE PERSONNEL THAT YOU HAVE AT THESE MEETINGS ARE NOT AWARE THAT THERE ARE SEVERAL OF US PROPERTY OWNERS. I SPoke TO THE FALLON CO AND HE CONFIRMED THIS. I GAVE HIM A LIST OF THE CHARCHALL COUNTY TAX RECORDS OF PROPERTY OWNERS NEAR ME. YOU HAVE STOLEN MY PROPERTY AND IT IS VERY UPSETTING!

F.7.1.1.1 Response

Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. The Navy will work with impacted private land-owners on a case-by-case basis. Affected private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land and all compensable rights associated with that land acquired by the United States.

F.7.1.2 Berry, L.



**Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

Comment Form

Date: 12/12/18

Thank you for your comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS.

Comments must be postmarked or received online by **Jan. 15, 2019**, for consideration in the Final EIS.

Comments may be submitted in person at the public meetings, via the project website at **www.FRTCMmodernization.com**, or by U.S. Postal Service mail to the address below.

Please Print

To Whom it May Concern,


I live at the corner of Lone Tree & Solias in Fallon, NV, just
outside the B-16 range. we have enjoyed our time in Nevada as
home & land owners. we routinely use the area just outside of
B-16 for recreation (atv riding, horseback riding, etc.). I am concerned
that with the closure of these public lands, that my property
value will decrease. It is also concerning that traffic will increase
to the area. the SEAL teams already drive their big trucks through
the RESIDENTIAL area of Lone Tree on their way to Sand Canyon Rd.
Sometimes I am pushed off the road by these caravans, who
act like they are the only trucks on the road. The speed limit of 35
is too fast for these vehicles, especially with kids around.

F.7.1.2.1 Response

Thank you for your comment and contribution of data. Due to the Navy's usage of Lone Tree Road, the Navy is proposing, for public safety purposes, to reconstruct and maintain Lone Tree Road. The Navy would seek funding from Congress to pay for reconstruction of the road through the military construction program. The Navy will submit a Needs Report to the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command requesting authority to utilize funding through the Defense Access Roads program. If approved, the Navy would coordinate construction execution through the Federal Highway Administration. Funds received would be used by the Federal Highway Administration, in cooperation with the Nevada Department of Transportation, to plan, design, and construct the road segment. The Navy would coordinate with NDOT during each of these phases. Such proposed rerouting would be

subject to follow-on NEPA analysis. NEPA documentation would be completed by the Federal Highway Administration prior to any road construction. The Navy would support, fund, and participate in any such NEPA analysis.

F.7.1.3 Birk, T.



**Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

Comment Form

Date: 12.16.2018

Thank you for your comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS.
Comments must be postmarked or received online by **Jan. 15, 2019**, for consideration in the Final EIS.
Comments may be submitted in person at the public meetings, via the project website at
www.FRTCModernization.com, or by U.S. Postal Service mail to the address below.

Please Print

NO ACTION

F.7.1.3.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.1.4 Boester, B.



**Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

Comment Form

Date: 12 Dec 2018

Thank you for your comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS.

Comments must be postmarked or received online by **Jan. 15, 2019**, for consideration in the Final EIS.

Comments may be submitted in person at the public meetings, via the project website at **www.FRTCModernization.com**, or by U.S. Postal Service mail to the address below.

Please Print

IF THE EXPANSION IS APPROVED, HOW ABOUT A LAND COMPROMISE
WHERE THE DEPT OF DEFENSE (US ARMY) RETURNS THE UPPER REACHES
OF MOUNT GRANT (MINERAL COUNTY) AND COTTONWOOD CANYON ROAD ACCESS TO
THE PUBLIC. THANK YOU

F.7.1.4.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The purpose of the NEPA process is to ensure that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made and before actions are taken. The Navy analyzed the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives, and the analysis is documented in the EIS. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate.

F.7.1.5 Bolshazy, A.

January 30, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
San Diego, CA 92123

Attn: Sara Goodwin – EIS Project Manager

Re: Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization

Dear Ms. Goodwin:

Thank you for the opportunity of addressing the proposed expansion of the Fallon Training Range in Northern Nevada. First, as a Navy veteran I fully understand the need for training for our military, especially our first responders. Having room to train is a given. Now, here is where the potential conflict comes in; how much room do you need?

As suggested in the Environmental Impact Study, this part of Nevada is highly mineralized especially in area designated as B17. There are several mines in the area which demonstrates just how mineral rich this area is.

As a member of the Reno Gem and Mineral Society, California Federation Mineral Society as well as the American Federation of Mineral Societies (which have approximately 15,000 members), there is real concern about losing this area, especially in B17. (Slate Mountain Range) Hundreds of our groups and families frequent this area throughout the year. There are minerals there that cannot find anywhere else. Other than rock collecting, this area is a recreational area as well as a hunting area. Closing off this area would affect hundreds if not thousands of folks. Parents take their children to educate them in a fun way about nature and collecting rocks. To further demonstrate how important this area is (B17) it is listed in several books such as Nevada Trails, Rock Hounding in Nevada and Nevada Ghost Towns and Mining Camps.

As this is an enormous acquisition of land, land used by our countrymen, I suggest the following so you get your training area and folks can still use this area.

1. Do not use the area at the south end of the Slate Mountain range as a bombing range
GPS: N39° 5.80 - W118° 15.14
2. Do not permanently close this area with fencing
3. Allow folks to enter B17 when it is not being used for training exercises

Page 2

It is important to remember that this land is not only used by Nevadans' but by folks from neighboring states, Arizona, Utah, Oregon and California. You can see by closing off this site in B17, would affect so many people.

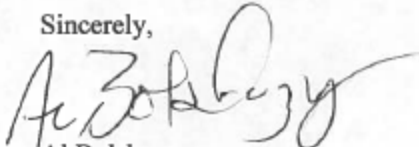
By closing off this area, we would lose minerals found nowhere else in the country/world. Furthermore, the military accusation of more land in Southern Nevada is also huge.

I respectfully suggest that the land in Nevada that is controlled by the Bureau of Land Management is for people to use and enjoy. Taking the land away from our citizens is a serious matter. Every effort must be made to not only provide the training space that our military needs but to provide access for our use especially in those areas well documented in various publications for collecting minerals and other recreational uses.

It was suggested that some hunting would be allowed in B17 so I would suggest the same for the collection of minerals. I have attached several photos of some of the minerals that are found in this area B17.

Thank you for your time and hopefully serious consideration to my request.

Sincerely,



Al Bolshazy

cc: Senator Catherine Masto
Senator Jackie Rosen
Congressmen Mark Amodei

F.7.1.5.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the Final EIS discusses various alternatives the Navy considered, including those suggested by the public. The Final EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for not carrying specific alternatives forward for further analysis.

For example, in accordance with Navy policy, mining is not compatible within a surface danger zone of an operational range. The Navy considered other access options besides simply allowing hunting during particular times of year but the full training schedule and the required ordnance clearance procedures that would be required to protect public safety is not a feasible course of action.

The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is similar to that of the bombing ranges, and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses in the Bravo ranges, as there are too many recreationalists and it is difficult to control the number or people that would be allowed on range. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationalists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationalists.

F.7.1.6 Cooney, J.



**Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

Comment Form

Date: 12/13/18

Thank you for your comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS.

Comments must be postmarked or received online by **Jan. 15, 2019**, for consideration in the Final EIS.

Comments may be submitted in person at the public meetings, via the project website at **www.FRTCModernization.com**, or by U.S. Postal Service mail to the address below.

Please Print
Access Road ^{at} Wild Horse pass - closing off pole line
road to the Iron mine
(NAVY) (consider)
If they takes it out, extending the road around the outside
of the fence line to the nearest paved or accessible
road.
Concerned with

F.7.1.6.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Pole Line Rd. is not a BLM-authorized County road. The only permitted authorized use of the road is as a Navy ROW. Therefore, the Navy is not proposing to relocate it, nor is a shift of the WDZ proposed.

F.7.1.7 Curran, J.

To whom It may concern:

I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex. I totally support the Navy's need to train and be the best in the world. I also understand the justification for some expansion of the existing ranges: however, several proposed expansions appear to be excessive to the Navy's real needs.

I am a Nevada native of 75 years and a retired biologist for the Nevada Department of Wildlife. I have resided in Fallon for 49 years and spend a considerable amount of time recreating in Churchill County. The following submission are my concerns and recommendations to minimize public impacts to the proposed modernization of the training complex. During the scoping meetings, very little detail was available, thus my comments are general in scope. I understand that the Preferred Alternative that the Navy has chosen will alter and lessen some of the impacts to sportsmen and the general public as it pertains to the expansion of B-17. I totally agree to this adjustment from the original draft. My primary concern and opposition to the proposed expansion of Navy withdrawals is Brovo-16.

Bravo – 16 Range Expansion Proposal

The expansion and closer to the public of B -16 is totally not justified from the reasons given in the Preferred Alternative as there is a much better alternative. Because of the close proximity to Fallon and all its residential areas

around Fallon, the Dead Camel Mountain Range is the most heavily used area by the public 12 months a year by a wide array of recreationists. This area is the closest mountains and sand dune habitat to the valley where ATV riders can recreate without disturbing critical wildlife habitat. The Carson District of the Bureau of Land Management in their recent Land Use Planning Document identified the Dead Camel Range as an ATV Use Area because of its high usage and no other conflicts.

The proposed expansion area is also used by local horseback riders, rock and fossil hunters as well as hikers and joggers because of the close proximity to residential areas. During the fall, winter and spring sportsmen trap and hunt both in the valley and throughout the Dead Camel Range for small game and predatory animals.

The Sand Pass Road that is proposed to be closed has been a public road since the late 1800's. This road serves as the main access into the area and is used as a trailhead for many users. The road is also used by fishermen and other recreationist to access the upper end of Lahontan Reservoir for fishing and camping and should not be closed. Under the Preferred Alternative, the need to enlarge the area so that discharge of weapons could be done in all directions safely. This expansion does not eliminate the fact that residential areas exist both east and west of the range.

Alternative to Expanding Bravo – 16 into the Dead Camel Range

It appears from the Scoping Sessions, the primary justification for expanding into the Dead Camel Range is to provide a larger area for tactical ground mobility, and live-fire training for both the Navy and the Marines.

I would propose that an evaluation be conducted into expanding Bravo – 19 east and northeasterly into the south side of the Cocoon Mountains for this ground training which would eliminate the majority of the conflicts with the general public's usage of the Dead Camel Range. It appears there are many advantages to both the Navy and the general public to this alternative.

- 1) The topography of this alternative is very similar to the proposed expansion into the Dead Camel Range. Large areas of playas, sand

- dunes, mountains with large canyons all exist in this proposed alternative area.
- 2) Very little wildlife habitat since this area is void of surface water. No artificial water catchments are found in this area.
 - 3) Very little public use because of the distance from Fallon and limited access.
 - 4) Livestock grazing and mining would not be a conflict with Navy training.
 - 5) No residential areas exist within 15 miles of Bravo -19 which provides a much greater safety zone than does Bravo -16 which borders on the east within 1 mile of houses and families.
 - 6) Bravo – 16 could still be expanded as proposed along the southern boundary with very little public conflicts as long as the Dead Camel Range is not included in the propose expansion.

Summary, Recommendations and Mitigation

The proposed expansion of Bravo – 16 would eliminate completely the recreational potential for the residents of Fallon and Navy personnel into the Dead Camel Range and valley area between the residential zone and the mountain range. I feel the Navy must evaluate other ground training sites such as expanding Bravo – 19 where very public conflicts exist instead of expanding the Bravo -16 to the west and closing more public land.

There isn't any mitigation that the Navy could offer to offset the proposed large closure and loss of public usage that is in close proximity to Fallon. To mitigate the small southern expansion, the existing northeastern 1990s withdrawal, north of Sand Pass Road should revert back to public land.

It appears to me that the new proposed boundary lines for both Bravo -17 and the Dixie Valley Training Area were not based on real need but were established by connecting lines on a map. For the past number of years since the last expansion of land by the Navy, the Dixie Valley Training Area has been used for Navy training while still under the control of the Bureau of Land Management and under multiple land use. Since this area has been and proposed to remain as a non-ordnance training area there appears to be no justification for this withdrawal.

Summary

There is no justification to the proposed withdrawal of new lands within the Dixie Valley Training Area. In regards to the huge expansion of Bravo – 17, the proposed boundary lines need to be reduced to what is really needed for a safety zone for the new training need technology. Once the modified boundary expansion is justified, a signed agreement with the Nevada Department of Wildlife to allow existing wildlife management activities to continue such as water development maintenance and construction, as well as controlled access to sportsmen during all regulated bighorn sheep and antelope hunts.

Overall Summary

Before the final EIS is developed by the Navy, I would strongly recommend that my alternative to the proposed expansion of B – 16 be evaluated. I know the Navy wants to be a good neighbor to the citizens of Churchill County; however, withdrawing and closing B-16 more than it currently is, results in taking away recreation opportunities from our community.

I don't believe there would be any negative affect to the Navy and its training ability to move the ground training to B – 19. Please respond to me with any justification why B – 19 would not be more suitable than B-16.

Regards,



Jim Curran

F.7.1.7.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding the configuration of the B-16 range, the Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described in Chapter 2 as the action alternatives Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the Final EIS discusses various alternatives the Navy considered, including those suggested by your comment. The Final EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for not carrying specific alternatives forward for further analysis.

The Navy acknowledged the significance of the potential impacts and instead revised its proposal to only include the minimum 180-degree JDAM requirement for realistic training events; and reduced the size of the overall area requested and proposed for withdrawal, to the extent consistent with mission requirements. The Navy added a figure in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS that illustrates the proposed

withdrawal and requested acquisition lands included in the Draft EIS and highlights additional reductions that have been made to the proposed withdrawal and requested acquisition lands between the Draft and Final EIS under Alternative 3.

Churchill County recommended that the Navy consider an alternative that would avoid closing Sand Canyon Road and Simpson Road. This alternative would include either moving the proposed expansion of B-16 2 miles south of Bombing Range Road and adjusting the proposed northern boundary of B-16 to Sand Canyon Road, or adjusting the southern boundary of B-16 to avoid Simpson Road and adjusting the northern boundary to avoid Sand Canyon Road.

While all action alternatives accommodate public access of Simpson Road, adjusting the boundary to avoid Sand Canyon Road would require the reconfiguration of this alternative such that a smaller area would be withdrawn for B-16. Reducing the proposed range size would lead to a corresponding loss of SDZ size. If SDZ reductions occurred, B-16 would not meet the realistic training environment criterion, as the capacity for a 360° field of fire at multiple firing positions for small arms would be lost. These reductions would also compromise the area available for multiple training areas with multiple complex threat and targets to accommodate Immediate Action Drill training. Additionally, removing proposed withdrawn lands would minimize the use of a variety of terrains available for training, which reduces the Navy's ability to train in a realistic environment.

The Navy considered this alternative but is not carrying it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS, as it would not meet the realistic training environment screening factor.

Regarding Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV and other recreation loss, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.

OHV use would continue to be allowed within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and potentially within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after any removal of Wilderness Study Area designation by Congress. Due to safety reasons, OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20.

Topography and OHV trails similar to those in B-17 also occur in the DVTA or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).

Under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative), the Navy removed Simpson Road from the withdrawal area, and would relinquish the land south of Simpson Road to the BLM for public use.

F.7.1.8 Danner, D. B.



**Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

Comment Form

Date: 01/28/2019

Thank you for your comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS.

Comments must be postmarked or received online by **Jan. 15, 2019**, for consideration in the Final EIS.

Comments may be submitted in person at the public meetings, via the project website at **www.FRTCMmodernization.com**, or by U.S. Postal Service mail to the address below.

Please Print

Please see ATTACHED letter

Jan 28, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest

Concerning the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization EIS

Dear sirs,

Your proposal to remove more federal lands from the public domain is a disaster waiting to happen. Just the removal of access to the valuable minerals in these areas is a potential for great financial difficulties for the U.S. in the near future!

Just the confiscation of the Nevada Scheelite Mine is detrimental. The price of scheelite per MTU has gone from US\$60.00 to US\$ 472.50 in 2016. The estimated reserve is a potential of 300,000 tons (Hansen's Memorandum March 24. 1977). Almost all scheelite comes from Asia so they control the market. We must have our domestic commodities kept available for our future use. The gold mines of Sunny Side, the Hog Mine, and Eagleville mine (to name a few) are still viable prospects in today's mineral markets. The Kaiser fluorspar mine and ALL of the silver properties also still have an economic impact for our future !

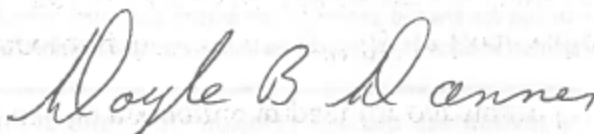
My friends at Gabbs are reporting that you are still flying Lodi Valley and over Broken Hills. Also close to the Gabbs airport. My sisters still have nightmares from the jets flying so close to our homes and vehicles! Have you asked the children of the Gabbs area how frightened they are?

The conclusions for alternative #3(your preferred alternative) WOULD have significant impact on all resource areas. You are removing them from the public domain! The cumulative impacts on socioeconomics WOULD have a very real and LONG lasting loss of revenue to the counties! The conjunction of OTHER projects WOULD result in very detrimental impacts on the land use, mineral, mining grazing transportation , WATER, noise and recreation!

PLEASE STOP YOUR EXPANSION PLANS!

Sincerely

Doyle B. Danner



F.7.1.8.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

In the EIS, when a mineral resource potential is classified as either moderate or high, a lost exploration opportunity would represent a significant impact on that mineral resource. The resource potential classification considers occurrences, geologic relationship, and historic production for each mineral resource. As discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), federal land withdrawn from mineral entry would no longer be open to new mining claims, and future mineral exploration and development on the lands would be prohibited. Implementation of any of the action alternatives would result in potential significant impacts on exploration and development of locatable, leasable, and salable mineral resources.

The Navy has an established process for noise complaints. As stated in Section 3.7.3.5 (Proposed Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation), the Air Operations Office logs noise complaints at NAS Fallon. The office records information about the time, location, and nature of the complaint and initiates investigation of what, if any, Navy airspace operations were occurring at the FRTC. If the caller requests, range personnel will follow up with a return phone call to explain the resolution of the complaint.

F.7.1.9 Delaney, A.

Subject: Comments on the Fallon Naval Air Station Expansion

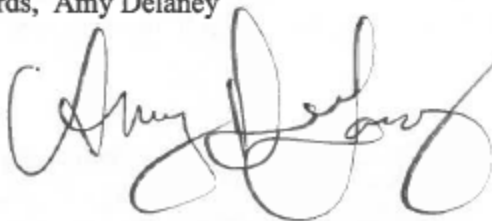
Please enter my comments and concerns into public record.

I support Alternative 3, with some revisions. I believe your current plan is nothing more than an unnecessary land-grab. This land grab will negatively impact the rural economies of Northern Nevada, which rely heavily on recreation dollars and it will negatively affect my family and I. This area holds a highly historic value to many, and it is an asset of great enjoyment to my family. I have camped in the areas affected by this expansion for more than 15 years. Nevada's rural economy relies greatly on recreation and we have been losing assets at an unacceptable rate.

The major concern of the OHV community is the loss of recreational opportunities connected to the expansion of Bravo 16 and 17. Bravo 16's expansion will eliminate about 60 miles of trails in that area. Special events should have the ability to access this area a few times a year. The Bravo 17 Shift alternative is a welcome option. It would allow continued use of the area around Middlegate Station, a very popular OHV destination. I would suggest the Bravo 17 southern boundaries use existing roads and barriers to mark it clearer. The area around Highway 361 to the east should remain open for OHV access, thus minimizing highway travel. The Bravo 17 Shift alternative would allow for continued access around the Fairview Peak/Earthquake Fault road, at Bell Flat Well approximately one-half mile north of the Churchill County Line. It would be a logical boundary line.

I would like to insist that extra effort be made to insure Middle Gate Station and Gabbs are supported by including routes and trails officially connecting these locations with Sand Mountain recreation area. I feel the historic Gas Station on 722 should be a staging area.

Regards, Amy Delaney

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Amy Delaney', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

F.7.1.9.1 Response

Thank you for your comment. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV) use would continue to be allowed

within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and potentially within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after any removal of Wilderness Study Area designation by Congress. Due to safety reasons, OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20.

Topography and OHV trails similar to those in B-17 also occur in the DVTA or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).

F.7.1.10 Devereux, P. J.

Jan. 17, 2019

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to protest the planned expansion of the Fallon Naval Range Training Station to approximately 606,685 acres of public lands managed by the BLM, closing 359,928 of those acres to the public. The B-20 proposal includes the elimination of 74,400 acres of Wilderness Study Areas in parts of the Clan Alpine Mountain, Job Peak and Stillwater Range WSAs.

I am a 16-year Northern Nevada resident who is an avid user of our state's open spaces and BLM lands. Public lands managed by federal agencies, including the military, are under increasing risk of access denial and privatization. The B-20 proposal overreach is yet another example of this.

The Navy's preferred alternative would eliminate portions of three wilderness study areas and portions of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, plus threaten important cultural, historic and scenic values. Instead of eliminating 74,400 acres of Wilderness Study Areas as part of its Dixie Valley Training Area, the military should support Wilderness designation for the lands within the proposed project. Wilderness designation will provide a bigger and more complete buffer for the military actions, allow for continued public access and be protected in perpetuity.

At a minimum, the military needs to adjust its boundary proposals in B-20 to exclude the 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The 17,848-acre refuge was established by a Congressional Act in 1931 to "...provide a sanctuary and breeding ground for birds and other wildlife." The refuge is an Important Bird Area, as designated by the Audubon Society. Bombing runs will significantly undermine bird species' survival!

The military needs to find a way to allow for more public access in B-20 at least on a seasonal or part-time basis. The military has made some minor allowances for OHV races and bighorn sheep hunting, but access for the activities that I enjoy--hiking, photography, rock hounding, camping—are ignored. While I understand the Navy's need to modernize its training facility, the preferred plan is a tremendous overreach and must be scaled back. I urge you to reject the military's current plan. The military needs to come back with a measured proposal that protects national defense, while preserving the resources we so highly value in Nevada.

Thank you for your efforts on behalf on preserving access to Nevada's wild areas.

Sincerely,



Patricia J. Devereux

F.7.1.10.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, maneuvering by special operations forces, and other non-hazardous training activities, such as night

vision goggle training and low-altitude flights. This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. It is important to note that this de-designation would not prohibit the use of these areas by recreationists. Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as Wilderness Study Areas is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process.

The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses in the B-17 range, as it is Navy policy that these ranges are generally closed to the public. Allowing hunting and special events would work only as managed access through strict Naval control to ensure public health and safety and scheduling of training events. Hunters would be issued tags and permits through the NDOW that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationists.

Alternative 3 would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge. The remaining 14,648 acres of the refuge would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS.

The following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs.

F.7.1.11 Downs, J. T.

7 December 2019

Reference: Public Comment / FRTC Modernization

Naval Facilities Engineering
Command Southwest, Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, California 92132

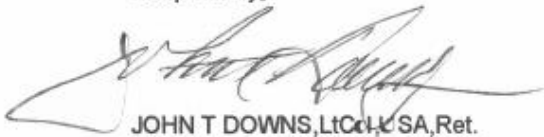
Dear Sir,

This is my comment on the Fallon Range Training Complex and the proposed action to modernize the Fallon Ranges. I totally support the US Navy's action to renew the current public land withdrawal and expand the land range through additional acquisition of non-federal land. I support the expansion and modification of airspace for the ranges, and the upgrade to range infrastructure.

I suppose it is necessary to provide public comment in this regard. However, it seems odd that an environmental impact statement must be prepared and considered for such an undertaking. Our country is at war! Why must our military bend to the whims and desires of socialist leaning environmentalists whose only objective is to delay and stall any action to improve our military's readiness to defend our country? I believe the real issue here is not some impact on a desert tortoise, but whether or not we, as citizens must accommodate these communist miscreants disguised as naturalists and conservationists.

The US Navy is a good steward to the land they use. I do not advocate tying their hands with a bunch of bureaucratic nonsense intended only to slow, confound, and delay military readiness. I can think of no fitting argument which rises to the level of impeding in any way, the development of range facilities for NAS Fallon. I will add in closing that I feel a strong sense of pride when I see evidence of our military strength demonstrated in aircraft flying to and from NAS Fallon. I only wish the aircraft would fly lower in order for the general public to absorb that same full measure of pride.

Respectfully,



JOHN T DOWNS, LtCol, USA, Ret.

F.7.1.11.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

Public comments received during scoping and review of the Draft EIS are an important part of the NEPA process. The purpose of the public comment process is to provide members of the public an opportunity to submit their comments and concerns regarding the Proposed Action, alternatives, and the analysis of potential environmental impacts. The Navy reviewed all comments submitted during the scoping periods (Aug. 26, 2016, through Dec. 12, 2016) and during review of the Draft EIS (Nov. 16, 2018, through Feb. 14, 2019). All comments received are included as part of the administrative record for the project.

F.7.1.12 Etchegaray, J.

Page 1

First of all I would like to express that I Believe in our military. They are Here to protect our nation and Keep us Safe.

That Being Said I Have Some Concerns about this Navy expansion First and Foremost is this is a government Take over of Land that people make a living on. ~~and~~ if this expansion is going to Take place, there needs to be compassion to the Ranchers. The Navy needs to pay for the Aums that Ranchers Rely on for winter grazing of Cattle. These are the Same people that Help Feed Americans

Second if this expansion occurs there need to Be a good Fence Built around the Expansion So that no cattle can get in where they will Die of Thirst

Thrid I see no ^{Reason} ~~Reason~~ to cut off a Existing Highway (839) and add extra expense to the Tax payer of Nevada when this is a Road that also Leads to Rawhide and the Geo thermal Power Plant a Perfectly Fine Road I might add. Having Said this there is a private well Next to the 839 Highway that is Being

Page 2

pumped for the use that water cattle on this winter Range, which there have been improvements made on these cattle allotments that also need compensation if taken! again this Range that helps feed the very Navy that wants to expand. I asked that the Navy take these considerations into account when going to congress for approval. I understand your need for expansion to continue to keep this country safe but be fair to the Rancher that help feed this country. There needs to be compensation and common sense about the boundaries. It only make sense to fence along an ~~the~~ existing 839 Highway so that the fence can be easily maintained. ~~I ask that you take these topics into consideration when making your decisions~~

Sincerely John Echegaray
your original plan to fence the top of Sand Mountain makes no sense. the fence could never be maintained properly the snow would ruin the fence on a yearly basis and cattle would enter your expansion.

there are also cattle corrals
that would need compensation
people have put in hard work
and money to make these cattle
allotments useable. again, these
corrals should also be taken into
~~consi~~ your consideration.

I ask that you take these topics
into consideration when making
your decisions

Sincerely John Etchegaray

P.S. LeBew allotment cattle
~~manag~~ management



also read to
Stenographer

F.7.1.12.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. With regards to compensation to ranchers, the Navy acknowledges that it has the authority under 43 United States Code section 315q of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended, to make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered by the permit holders as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes. This authority has been incorporated into the Proposed Action. The Final EIS (Chapter 2) discusses the process that the Navy is proposing to use to determine payment amounts to each specific grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits.

When speaking about the proposed fences, the Navy has updated the Final EIS to present the following specific grazing mitigations that would be implemented under all action alternatives. Policies and procedures in the NAS Fallon INRMP would continue to be implemented to avoid conflicts with livestock grazing. This includes routine monitoring of fence lines surrounding potentially hazardous areas to ensure that the fence is secure and cannot be crossed by people or animals; the monitoring area would be increased to include new perimeter fences on lands proposed for withdrawal. The Navy is proposing to provide funds for BLM to hire two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers who would assist with management of the additional area. The Standard Operating Procedures for handling cattle on the FRTC training ranges would be revised and implemented. Livestock friendly erosion controls would be used when performing construction activities on or adjacent to grazing land that is actively being used.

Additionally, the Navy would continue to allow the use of the well immediately adjacent to Highway 839 that is used by a number of ranchers who use this location to pump and then haul water to other sites around the region.

Fences would be properly maintained in accordance with standard operating procedures. Safety of the people, wildlife, and livestock are of the utmost importance.

F.7.1.13 Fougner, C. Comment 1



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Please Print

Request - Volume I

Draft Environmental
Impact Statement

(Hard Copy)

F.7.1.13.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.1.14 Fougner, C. Comment 2

January 23, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

Re: Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization - Area B-17

To Whom It May Concern:

As members of the Reno Gem and Mineral Society (in affiliation with the California Federation Mineral Society and the American Federation Mineral Society), whose mission is to create and develop and encourage interest in the earth's sciences and to locate and identify various material through field trips, we would like to state the following in regard to Area B-17.

Our Society has conducted many field trips in Area B-17 (Slate Mountain and the surrounding areas). If the Navy does close off and restrict access to this exceptional land, it will have a definite impact on not only our Society but other individuals that frequent it for recreational activities.

One thought we would like to have considered is when Area B-17 is not being utilized for training purposes, would it be possible for civilians to have certain time periods of access to study and collect the many various minerals known to exist in B-17, as well as other recreational activities?

These sites are well known through the following rock and mineral books/publications: *Gem Trails of Nevada* by James R. Mitchell--Page 122, Site 47 lists Bell Canyon Agate; Page 124, Site 48 lists Middlegate Minerals; Page 128, Site 50 lists Quartz Mountain Minerals and Wood; Page 130, Site 51 lists Monte Cristo Jasper; Page 132, Site 52 lists Gabbs Opalized Wood; *Rock Hounding Nevada* by William A. Kappeler--Page 164, Site 68 shows Kaiser Mine Road-Jasper/Agate; Page 166, Site 69 shows Kaiser Mine Fluorite; *Nevada Ghost Towns and Mining Camps* by Stanley W. Paher--Page 456, lists Eagleville as a gold mining camp dating to the 1880's. This area also contains various minerals of interest.

Attached are copies of various pages taken from the above referenced books/publications citing the minerals that can be found. In addition, also attached are pictures of various rock slabs and polished rocks from Area B-17.

We thank you for extending the public comment period and also thank you in advance for taking into consideration the concerns that we have raised with regard to Area B-17.

Sincerely,



Craig Fougner and Rita Lencioni

F.7.1.14.1 Response


Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. In accordance with Navy policy, mining is not compatible within a surface danger zone of an operational range. The Navy considered other access options besides allowing hunting during specific times of year, but the full training schedule and the required ordnance clearance procedures required to protect public safety would not be a feasible course of action. The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses in the Bravo ranges, as there are too

many recreationalists and it is difficult to control the number or people that would be allowed on range. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationalists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationalists.

F.7.1.15 Gibbs, D. A.

I am a American Tax paying Citizen...who is OutRaged ,that Fallon Naval Base is using the federal Government...too "STEAL" public Land...from the American Citizens of this Great Nation!!

It is the American People's Tax-Money that gives FNB,the government,BLM and You!! A job..too work at!! It's OUR Land...the military has been doing this for along time...and needs too STOP!!!

This is going way over the proverbial: in the name of National -security! Slogan...  I Vote (NO) on Fallon naval station...getting the American Citizens Landususususus

BLM needs to stand up for American citizens????▶▶▶

US

Thank You for your Time!!

God Bless the USA!!

F.7.1.15.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with potentially impacted parties on a case-by-case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.1.16 Griffith, M.

Jan. 14, 2019

Dear Navy officers,

I'm writing to express my strong opposition to the Navy's preferred Alternative 3 proposed expansion of the Fallon Range Training Complex. I support the "no action" alternative.

The closure of 427,000 acres of public land in Nevada for military use is upsetting enough. But I find Alternative 3 particularly egregious because it would eliminate portions of the Job Peak, Stillwater Range and Clan Alpine Mountain Wilderness Study Areas and the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge.

I fell in love with Nevada's basins and ranges after moving to the state in 1979 from California's Central Valley, which is the world's most changed open space because of agriculture. I have hiked and climbed mountains in the three WSAs and strongly believe they deserve the highest wilderness protection possible because of their incredible beauty and wildness.

Alternative 3 borrows a page from the military's outdated view of Nevada as a wasteland. As Nevada's population grows and becomes increasingly urban, more and more people are discovering the grandeur and peace of Nevada's wild places. Nevadans and out-of-staters alike are placing more importance on recreation, and these areas will only become more popular in the future.

Sharing my passion for land affected by Alternative 3 is a great American: John Muir. Regarded as the "father of our national parks," Muir visited the Stillwater and Clan Alpine ranges in the late 1870s while scouting out mountain-top sites for triangulation surveying stations with a U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey party. He climbed Job Peak and Table Mountain in the Stillwaters and Augusta Peak in the Clan Alpines, among others.

Muir, in an Aug. 5, 1878 letter, described the charms of the Stillwaters: "After crossing the (Carson) Sink, we ascended the mountain range that bounds it on the East, eight thousand to ten thousand feet high. How treeless and barren it seemed. Yet how full of small charming gardens, with mints, primroses, brier-roses, penstemons, spiraeas, etc., watered by trickling streams too small to sing audibly. How glorious a view of the Sink from the mountain-top. The colors are ineffably lovely, as if here Nature were doing her very best painting."

Muir, in his July 1878 journal entries, particularly raved about the morning and evening light play and colors on the Stillwaters and Carson Sink. "Heaven's last color bloom covers it, fills it all. The mtns. that shut it in, the sky arch so wide, all

are painted in the sweetest, tenderest love dyes." Here's more from Muir's diary entries about the Stillwaters that year _ "Beautiful landscape for painting." _ "Delightful to find so much brave, defiant life in so hopeless a wild." _ "Nowhere is God seen revealed so like an artist."

As a Nevadaphile and retired journalist who's in the process of writing a book about Muir's travels in the Great Basin, I know he would share my view that the three WSAs are too special to become part of a bombing range. While I realize your need to modernize your training facility, the preferred plan must be scaled back dramatically to exclude the WSAs.

In closing, I just want to say I'm a patriotic American who supports the military. My late father Lin H. Griffith was a World War II veteran and American Legion commander who for decades staged my hometown's (Turlock) annual Memorial Day observance. Since childhood, there has been a special place in my heart for the courageous men who put their lives on the line in battle so we can enjoy our precious freedom.

I pray for the Navy's mission and safety, but that you have the wisdom to do what you ought in this particular case.

Very truly yours,



Martin Griffith

F.7.1.16.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]) but it would not prohibit the use of the area by recreationists.

F.7.1.17 Herman, D.



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Comment Form

Date: 12-13-2018

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Please Print

NAVY Fallon (NAS) and its expansion is a
National asset. Range expansion along with
increased airspace expansion is necessary for current
and future Tactics. Modern weapons are
released from much higher altitudes than 1990-2000 era.
Recreation access is also very important.

F.7.1.17.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.

F.7.1.18 Hess, R.

To: Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest, Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway, Building 1, 5th Floor, San Diego, CA 92132

RE: Withdrawal of Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The current Draft EIS is inadequate to allow for an informed and accurate determination of the most appropriate alternative. Furthermore, the Draft EIS lacks a “continuation of the status quo” alternative where the existing operational foot print is renewed and the cost and resources of moving certain long range munition exercises to other ranges in the region would be documented in detail. This alternative would most certainly look at the details and costs involved with cooperative training programs and shared resources with the Air Force. The Air Force, you may recall, is that other Service that has fast planes and large training ranges.

The three currently listed alternatives (1 through 3) all remove the mineral resources from somewhere between 10 and 15 mining districts, depending on the alternative. Many of these mining districts have potential resources including but not limited to gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, tungsten, fluorite, and barite. Much of the overall area proposed for withdrawal has good potential for geothermal, wind, and solar energy production. Realizing that a strong national defense not only relies on a strong military but also requires a strong and vibrant economy to fund that military and in today's world a strong and vibrant economy requires access to abundant and secure mineral and energy resources. With this in mind, I believe it is imperative that the Draft EIS provide a detailed long term impact analysis of the loss of mineral and energy resources that these potential withdrawals will have on the National economy. This should also include a detailed analysis of the potential loss of property, employment, and revenue tax to the State of Nevada, Churchill County, and the surrounding communities.

Generation of carbon and other green house gases are not documented for any of the alternatives. Part of this documentation must also include the loss of potential geothermal, wind, and solar power production which will require production from other fuels, some of which would be carbon based. The loss of these potential resources will also impact the State of Nevada in its efforts to increase its green energy portfolio.

Alternatives 1 through 3 would procure in excess of 65,000 acres of currently private land for the Navy. I was not able to locate in the Draft EIS what the long term parcel tax losses to the County would be with this change in ownership. This needs to be documented. The payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) program will not significantly increase to cover the lost property tax dollars for the above acreage since its formula is population capped. The PILT program and dollars from it are not guaranteed to be permanent since the program is funded and voted on by Congress through the annual Federal budget process.

The Draft EIS identifies various grazing allotments that will be reduced or eliminated. It discusses various formulas that address the potential cost associated with the loss of AUMs. But it fails to identify in a meaningful way how much of the loss will be made up by payments to effected ranches and businesses, the length of time that these payments will be maintained, and the long term estimate of cost that will have to be carried by the Federal Government.

The “no action alternative” in the Draft EIS is extremely incomplete. At one meeting, this alternative was characterized by Navy personnel by the statement “the Navy would take its mission and go elsewhere”. As such, there is no significant analysis in the Draft EIS that documents the potential local impacts, either negative or positive, in regards to this alternative. Negative impacts would be loss of base and navy personnel expenditures in the local community and associated effects on tax revenue. Positive impacts could include re-purposing the air base for use as a west coast air freight hub, Nevada Air Guard use, development of an industrial complex, etc. Water rights could be re-assigned to agriculture or other uses. The range land that would be freed up could be used to develop additional energy and mineral resources and add additional areas for a variety of recreational activities. None of this information is presented in the current Draft EIS.

Due to the extreme shortcomings, missing alternative, and lack of appropriate detailed information in the Draft EIS I request that it be withdrawn. It fails to fairly discuss all appropriate alternatives and lacks a variety of necessary details for the alternatives listed. A new Draft EIS should be developed with the above listed issues properly and fully addressed. Release of this new draft document should be scheduled with an adequate public review period. After this process, you will then be prepared to move on to the preparation of a fully documented, fairly presented, and credible final EIS.



F.7.1.18.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative, also known as the “status quo” alternative, would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS because it would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. The Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training require nearly all of the complex’s available training time. Without terminating the Air Force’s existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.

The BLM classifies minerals and energy (e.g., oil, geothermal, etc.) for development into three categories: locatable, leasable, and salable. Locatable minerals are those which, when found in valuable deposits, can be acquired under the General Mining Law of 1872, as amended. In the Final EIS, when a mineral resource potential is classified as either moderate or high, a lost exploration opportunity would represent a significant impact on that mineral resource. The resource potential classification considers occurrence, geologic relationship, and historic production for each mineral resource. As discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), the lands proposed for withdrawal would no longer be open to new mining claims and the lands would be barred from future mineral exploration and development. Implementation of any of the action alternatives would result in potential significant impacts on exploration and development of locatable, leasable, and salable mineral resources.

Potential losses associated with currently unknown mining and geothermal opportunities as defined under Alternative 1 would be less under Alternative 3 because geothermal opportunities would be allowed in DVTA. However, significant impacts could still occur under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative) due to such potential lost mining and geothermal opportunities in the expanded B-16, B-17, and B-20. Therefore, while reasonably foreseeable economic impacts associated with lost mining and geothermal opportunities cannot be accurately determined at this time, there is the potential that significant economic impacts could occur due to the potential loss of mining and geothermal opportunities all alternatives. The Navy has made allowances for potential energy development in the DVTA that is compatible with the Navy mission. Additionally, under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative),

the Navy reduced the amount of withdrawn land in the DVTA by creating the Special Land Management Overlay areas to allow future energy development pending BLM approval.

There are no proposed increases in the types or tempo of training activities under any alternative in the Final EIS and, as such, there would be no increase in greenhouse gas emissions. See Section 3.8 (Air Quality), specifically Sections 3.8.3.2.9 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions), 3.8.3.3.9 (Greenhouse Gases), and 3.8.3.4.9 (Greenhouse Gases) of the Final EIS for more information.

A detailed analysis of PILT as well as other lost tax losses is located in the Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at <http://frtcmodernization.com>) and discussed in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). There would be no change in PILT for Churchill, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing counties, and very little change in PILT for Lyon County; therefore, there would be no significant impacts from lost revenues from reduced PILT under any of the action alternatives. However, there could be a modest reduction in revenues at the state level insofar as lost hunting opportunities could result in a reduction of funding sources for NDOW.

The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS (Chapter 2 and Section 3.4 [Grazing]) describes the process proposed by the Navy to determine payment amounts to each specific grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives. Detailed information has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.

Under this proposal, taking “no action” would mean that Congress would not extend the current land withdrawal, which expires in November 2021. Therefore, the land withdrawal would expire and FRTC lands would be reverted back as described under the No Action Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, current and proposed training at FRTC would need to be accommodated elsewhere. This would result in the potential loss of the integrated nature of training, as well as the fragmentation and total loss of essential training functions. At this time, identifying where and how those training needs could be accommodated—and what the ultimate consequences of such a scenario would be—would involve a complex planning, budgeting, and acquisition program that is speculative and beyond the scope of this EIS.

F.7.1.19 Higbee, C.



**Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

Comment Form

Date: 1/12/19

Thank you for your comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS.

Comments must be postmarked or received online by **Jan. 15, 2019**, for consideration in the Final EIS.

Comments may be submitted in person at the public meetings, via the project website at **www.FRTCModerization.com**, or by U.S. Postal Service mail to the address below.

Please Print

Thank you for being the best Military
in the world.

F.7.1.19.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.1.20 Hunewill, J. B.

Subject: Increasing Navy Bombing Range in Nevada.

1. I am voting against increasing the Naval Bombing Range area in the state of Nevada.
 - a. The Navy already approximately 2,000 acres to practice bombing on.
 - b. Those 2,000 acres can no longer be used for any other purpose due the range of the undetonated explosives.
 - c. Every wild animal, insect, bird, reptile is occasionally within the bombing range perimeter. This of course, includes any human who might inadvertently stray into that area.
 - d. The rest of Nevada needs to remain open for multiple uses including other kinds of scientific research.
2. Note: I am an individual was raised as the daughter of a 30-year Naval veteran and my brother was also a 30-year naval supply officer. I just point this out so that you realize that I am very positive about the Navy, but not positive about increasing the Navy's bombing area.

Sincerely,

Janet Bliss Hunewill

F.7.1.20.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.

Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in *Ninety Days to Combat*. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.

The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.

F.7.1.21 Jones, S. K.

November 20, 2018

Naval Facilities Engineering
Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

RE: Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization EIS

Dear Sir:

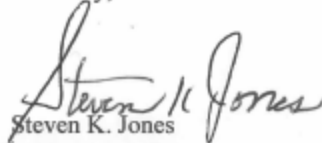
I am 59 year resident of Nevada having lived in Ely, Elko, and now Reno and am writing to oppose your plan to enlarge the Fallon Range Training Complex. I am a consulting geologist with 40+ years of experience of working throughout Nevada in minerals exploration and largely looking for gold. I am also a veteran having spent five years in the US Army as a commissioned officer during the Viet Nam war.

I disagree with your EIS opinion that the Navy needs to expand its presence in the Fallon area. Due to ongoing issues with command and control problems between the US Army, Navy, and Air Force when operating in combat areas, it would better serve the military to work jointly within the Nellis-Atomic Test Range area for all future flight, ground, and weapons training exercises. This is the largest military-controlled area within the continental US and occupies an extremely large area within Nevada. With this being said, Nevada has already contributed its fair share of resources in support of the US military.

The land you are proposing to withdraw within your Complex Modernization EIS in the Fallon, NV area is much better used for its mining and ranching potential. The entire existing area and proposed expansion is within the well known and established Walker Lane Mineral Belt which has a historic mineral endowment of well over 45 million ounces of gold, 500 million ounces of silver, and 200 million pounds of copper that have been produced in the past 160 years. As well the region hosts the only long-term resource of producing lithium within the US.

Your proposed EIS severely restricts the future minerals development within the central portion of the Walker Lane Mineral Belt. For this reason and the military command and control issues previously stated, I propose that the US Navy relocates its entire Fallon training complex to the southern Nevada Nellis area and return the present training area to public use.

Sincerely,



Steven K. Jones

F.7.1.21.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. The Nevada Test and Training

Range is, however, primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training require nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.

In the EIS, when a mineral resource potential is classified as either moderate or high, a lost exploration opportunity would represent a significant impact on that mineral resources. The resource potential classification considers occurrences, geologic relationship, and historic production for each mineral resource. As discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), federal land withdrawn from mineral entry would no longer be open to new mining claims, and future mineral exploration and development on the lands would be prohibited. Implementation of any of the action alternatives would result in potential significant impacts on exploration and development of locatable, leasable, and salable mineral resources. However, under Alternative 3, a Special Land Management Overlay would be designated on the west and east sides of B-17, which would allow for geologic exploration with coordination with the Navy.

F.7.1.22 Kajaks, Doug and Stephanie



**Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

Comment Form

Date: 12/13/18

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Comments must be postmarked or received online by **Jan. 15, 2019**, for consideration in the Final EIS.

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www.FRTCModernization.com, or by U.S. Postal Service mail to the address below.

Please Print

I oppose any new Restrictions on Public
Land use. The military should share the
Public lands. Don't Lock Us Out.

F.7.1.22.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. While public recreation would not be compatible with military training on the bombing ranges, the Navy would continue to allow public recreation within the DVTA and the proposed Special Land Management Overlay.

F.7.1.23 Kvam, R. L.

January 1, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG, 1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

Re: draft EIS for the Fallon Range Training Complex, (FRTC)

I am a native Nevadan, voter, property owner, and concerned US citizen who opposes the excessive expansion of the Fallon Range Training Complex. I oppose each Alternative 1, 2, and 3 as unacceptable testing areas especially when existing dirt roads and trails are closed to the public.

In my opinion, the reasoning for the expanded ground areas (aircraft flying higher and using live bombs) does not warrant the restriction of access along existing dirt roads and trails just because the Navy wants to train pilots. I would hope that there are no existing live bombs within the open area that Nevadans frequently use while traveling along existing dirt roads and trails. It would appear these same existing dirt roads and trails are currently safe for citizens to use right now without any expanded Weapon Danger Zones (WDZ) under each Alternative 1, 2, and 3; I demand to kept it that way.

The main point:

Do not destroy any more Nevada public land; rather keep access open for through-passage on existing dirt roads and trails to all citizens.

Access to open lands for recreation, especially with motorized vehicles on existing dirt roads and trails, has been fundamental to US citizens as well as Nevadans. I consider the Navy plan to ban access along and through-passage on existing dirt roads and trails unworthy of acceptance because myself and probably most Nevadan citizens want to enjoy their freedom of movement. I am a Life Member of the American Motorcyclist Association and will be contacting this organization to support public access for all riders on public, dirt roads and trails. Let this continue because citizens pay sales and fuel taxes and definitely deserve the privilege to recreate. Motorcycling is a substantial industry where dirt roads and trails are used by Americans. I demand that the Navy not place excessive closures and restrictions on our public land just to train pilots for bombing.

I assert that it is untenable to place such an expanded area e.g. with Alternative 3 closed to the public, labeling these as restricted, blocking existing dirt roads and trails, then building fenced areas with locked gates (unattended or attended with staff), and additionally consideration to place a permitting assignment to another layer of management (e.g. BLM, US Forest Service, or any other similar entity). Further I think the concept of possibly allowing some access for 'special events' does not consider an individual citizen as worthy to traverse existing roads and trails that previously were open and usable year-round without any 'special event' permitting.

B-20, an example of destroying public land, Alternative 3

A good model. The East County Road is shown as open and unrestricted and should be the model for keeping most other roads open too.

A bad model. The sketch for B-20 expansion shows gated and closed-to-public, existing dirt roads and trails on three sides, namely from the north along Wildhorse Pass, from the west near Lovelock Cave, and from the east near Shoemaker Mine. These dirt roads allow through-passage without the expansion of B-20, yet no mitigation has been proposed to the citizens wanting through-passage. I and probably other citizens as well, do not see any accommodation to the through-passage for any private citizen(s) to enjoy the freedom of recreation on these public Nevadan lands. The through-passage dirt road that I am discussing here lies along

the southern edge of the West Humboldt Range and north of the existing sized B-20 Weapon Danger Zone (WDZ). It would cost much less to reduce the size of the B-20 expansion along the northern portion in Churchill and Pershing Counties. Please make this through-passage road open to become a good model too.

Constructive ideas to assist citizens, B-20

Alternatively, keep the existing dirt road in its current location a) without locked gates but provide fencing along each side of the road or b) create a perimeter dirt road within the West Humboldt Range and around the expanded B-20 area. Each of these ideas are worthwhile to keep public land access available for enjoyment by recreational users especially using motorized vehicles such as dirt and adventure motorcycles, 4 wheel drive trucks, UTV, quads, etc. capable of dirt roads, trails. This idea for modifying Alternative 3 at least would show some accommodation if the Alternative 3 is advanced.

While attending the public hearing in Reno on December 13, 2018, a poster board display of the B-20 under Alternative 3 showed little regard to Nevadans wanting through-passage along existing dirt roads and trails, thus it clearly showed me that mitigation or a realistic concern for users had not been considered, therefore this is a flawed diagram; it presents that the Navy did not provide for the recreational needs of the public. I saw this as an objectionable land grab by the Navy with their first priority for live bombing missions while using multiple aircraft when training pilots. I do not think it is valid or warranted (the Preferred Alternative 3, or Alternative 1 or 2) especially when my privileges or rights are trampled upon.

Again my main point:

Do not destroy any more Nevada public land; rather keep access open for through-passage on existing dirt roads and trails to all citizens.

All of my comments above will likely apply to the other Navy areas, e.g. B-17, B-18, and B-19 although I have not had enough time to read through this 1,000 page draft EIS. It is located online here:
<https://frtcmmodernization.com>

I will be writing to each of my representatives in Congress. Additionally, I think other Congressional representatives will need to be informed because the Fallon Range Training Complex adversely effects citizens throughout the nation who recreate on existing dirt roads and trails in Nevada and contribute to our economy.

Sincerely,
Robert L. Kvam

CC:

American Motorcyclist Association, Director of Government Relations
Blue Ribbon Coalition, Chief of Staff
Pine Nut Mountains Trials Association

F.7.1.23.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The WDZs would change as a result of using different weapons systems under the Proposed Action. The lands, as they currently stand, are not within WDZs. Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheep hunting, and events that are coordinated in advance with the Navy.

The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational

activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.

While OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20, OHV use would be allowed to continue within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after WSA designation removal by Congress. Topography and OHV trails similar to those that occur in the B-17 range area also occur in the Dixie Valley area or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These other public areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).

The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives to meet the purpose of and need for the project. During the scoping period, the Navy also requested suggestions from the public and agencies for potential viable alternatives for consideration in the analysis. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors.

F.7.1.24 Lambert, G.

Subject: Comments on the Fallon Naval Air Station Expansion

Candidly; accept these comments as a former member of several group impacted including the Nevada Off Highway Vehicle Commission, The National Off Highway Conservation Council State Partner. The Dust Devils Motor Cycle Club, and others. And a Current Member of the Reno Area Dirt Rides over 1300 members, Founder of the Save the Public Trails Banquets, historically Held at American Motorcycle Ass. National Event Ride Reno 200, and currently working on the Gathering at Middle Gate station and Save The Public Trail BBQ. This March 23 thru 31st. Please consider this an invitation to attend also.

I could support Alternative 3, with some additional previsions. I have received calls and request from over one hundred people and organization including Blue ribbon Coalition, AMA , Sierra Trail Dogs, members of the Dust Devils M/C, Pine Nuts Trail Riders Ass to Name a few regarding what is currently view as a Land Grab by many. As this is an area of very High Historic use and highly value asset to me and others, I have ridden in areas affected by this option for thirty years. Nevada's rural economy is by well served by these users and we have been losing assets at an unacceptable rate. The Last creatable Impact report was at 1.59 billion dollars of economic impact for only resident of Nevada in 2006 and Over 20% OHV ownership, A large Group indeed.

The major concern of the OHV community is the loss of recreational opportunities connected to the expansion of Bravo 16 and 17. Bravo 16's expansion will eliminate about 60 miles of trails in that area. Special events should have the ability to access this area a few times a year. The Bravo 17 Shift alternative is a welcome option. It would allow continued use of the area around Middlegate Station, a very popular OHV destination. I would suggest the Bravo 17 southern boundaries use existing roads and barriers to mark it clearer. It would be nice to keep the area around Highway 361 to the east continually open for OHV access minimizing highway travel. The Bravo 17 Shift alternative would allow for continued access around the Fairview Peak/Earthquake Fault road, at Bell Flat Well approximately one-half mile north of the Churchill County Line. It would be a logical boundary line.

As part of Alternative 3, the Navy must work with the BLM and Forest Service to incorporate the expansion of OHV recreation to mitigate their expansion plans that are outside the project area. New Federal designation of areas (such as a National Recreation Area) that have OHV use as the prescribed activity outside the project expansion area should get approved by Statute by Congress Please note the SRMA of the BLM known as the Nightingales 420,00 acres must be protected by designation as a Nation OHV area also. This should include all area east of Highway 361 and should include all the Desakota Mountain Range. In addition the Wilderness Study Area in the Desatoya Mountains should be

eliminated, but OHV use should be expanded by encouraging development of new and upkeep of existing roads and trails. Funding should include road maintenance, mapping and Trail development both multi use and motorized some RV and camping sites.

Extra effort must be made to insure Middle Gate Station and Gabbs are supported including routes and trails officially connecting these locations with Sand Mountain recreation area, the historic Gas Station on 722 should be a staging area and have bathroom built at this time also

I could support the Navy's need for better training opportunities with these issues fully addressed. I am hopeful That this will not be the cause of the destruction of the ONLY pony express station that has the the feel of Middlegate station.

Please note losing recreation opportunities tastes like lemons, everyone must work to make lemonade now!

Concerned,

Gary Lambert

F.7.1.24.1 Response

Thank you for your comment. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV) use would continue to be allowed within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and potentially within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after any removal of Wilderness Study Area designation by Congress. Due to safety reasons, OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20.

Topography and OHV trails similar to those in B-17 also occur in the DVTA or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).

F.7.1.25 Langstaff, G.

Comment on
FALLON RANGE TRAINING COMPLEX DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT,
November 2018

The November 2018 Fallon Range Training Complex Draft Environmental Impact Statement (hereafter DEIS) does not analyze a reasonable range of alternatives for the following reasons:

1. Effects of Alternatives 1, 2, 3 are nearly the same for resources which will experience the most severe adverse impacts.
2. None of Alternatives 1, 2, or 3 would reach full compliance with the Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP) set forth in "Ninety Days to Combat" (June 2015) in order to allow training in realistic 360° combat scenarios (DEIS, p. 2-50).

To assist the Navy in developing a more appropriate range of more meaningful alternatives, this comment outlines three alternatives which minimize some or all of the adverse impacts to private lands, infrastructure, mining, and geothermal energy while better, or equally, meeting the TTP than Alternatives 1, 2, or 3. One alternative moves the Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) to an existing military reservation and two alternatives move two or more of ranges B-17, B-20, and the Dixie Valley Training Area (DVTA) to other federal lands in Nevada.

Submitted by:
George Langstaff

F.7.1.25.1 Response

Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Regarding comment 1 and 2, Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis. The Navy considered an Alternative to fully meet the TTP as set forth in Ninety Days to Combat (see Section 1.5, Training Needs and the Capabilities Evaluation Process). Under this alternative, the Navy would reach full TTP compliance and would allow air and ground forces to train in a realistic 360-degree combat scenario for all training scenarios. As Navy policy does not allow public use of any kind to occur within active WDZs or SDZs (OPNAVINST 3550.1A) for safety reasons, implementing this alternative would require almost double the land as that required for the Proposed Action (approximately 1.3 million acres), as well as extensive revisions to special use and civilian airspace. The Navy considered the withdrawal and acquisition of over 1.3 million acres but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, as the Navy considered this proposal not feasible because of severe and largely disruptive impacts to the local area, which would include the re-route of several major U.S. Highways (U.S. Route 50 and U.S. Interstate 80), and in light of the greatly increased amount of public lands that would need to be closed to the public for weapons safety considerations.

The Navy received multiple alternatives created by the public for consideration in the Final EIS. The Navy has added a section Chapter 2.5 to the Final EIS that discusses the alternatives that were brought up in public comments, but were not considered further in the Final EIS for implementation.

F.7.1.26 Lemaire, K.



**Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

Comment Form

Date: 1-18-19

Thank you for your comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS.

Comments must be postmarked or received online by Feb 15, 2019, for consideration in the Final EIS.

Comments may be submitted in person at the public meetings, via the project website at www.FRTCMmodernization.com, or by U.S. Postal Service mail to the address below.

Please Print

I'm hoping that there can be a win-win with this project. I think there needs to be a new alternative to this project. As you know NV has a lot of open space, which is used for recreation, grazing, hunting, ranching, mining, rock exploring, photography, mountain climbing, etc. You name it NV has it and we want to preserve it. We know the Air Force is also looking at expanding space in southern NV. We need to keep as much of the public lands in Nevada public.

I propose as close to a win-win as possible. The current "Wilderness Study Area" lands, need to become official "Wilderness Areas". Having these lands as designated "Wilderness Areas" would protect the Navy from having 'neighbors' and create a 'development buffer', which is what the Navy said was a big concern for them.

Having these lands designed as "Wilderness Areas" allows them to remain open public space for the public the continue enjoying and the Navy will not need to spend more tax dollars patrolling the lands.

I'm hoping we, the Navy and the public, can continue to be good, respectful neighbors in the great State of Nevada.

F.7.1.26.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The proposed de-designation of the Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, maneuvering by special operations forces, and other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTa, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. his type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTa, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. The Navy is therefore not requesting for Congressional action to designate lands as Wilderness Areas, as this would not be compatible with training requirements in the DVTa, and outside of the DVTa, the Navy does not have the authority to ask for changes to land designations.

It is likely that a revised INRMP would be developed to consider new management objectives that would need to be established based on any ultimate Congressional decision, in cooperation with partner agencies (USFWS, BLM).

F.7.1.27 Manha, J.

Subject-Bravo 16 expansion

Jan 17, 2019

FRTC MODERNIZATION—

*Please do not expand Bravo 16 range!!
I live just adjacent to this range and
Whenever there's a squadron in all I
hear is machine guns, etc.*

*Please don't expand this area any
bigger.!!*

Thank you

Sincerely a concerned neighbor

F.7.1.27.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and has updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy has added tables discussing management practices, monitoring, and mitigation measures to the Final EIS in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation) to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts if applicable. The increase in size of the B-16 range, should move targets and range activities further from the boundaries for the range, and therefore further from your home. The Air Operations Office logs noise complaints at NAS Fallon. The office records information about the time, location, and nature of the complaint; and initiates investigation of what airspace operations were occurring. If the caller requests, range personnel will follow up with a return phone call to explain the resolution of the complaint. No additional management practices are warranted for noise based on the analysis presented in Section 3.7.3 (Environmental Consequences).

F.7.1.28 Marchant, C.

February 4, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest

1220 Pacific Highway

San Diego, CA 92123

Attn: Sara Goodwin – EIS Project Manager

Re: Fallon Range Training Complex Moderation

Dear Ms. Goodwin:

I am writing to you today to ask for some leeway in regards to a small section, located at the southern end of the Slate Mountain Range, of the 600,000 acre expansion that the Navy will soon be using for training. I have enjoyed many excursions to this area for rock hounding as many rocks and minerals are only found in this location. The person who first took me to this area is a retired Navy pilot and he is an avid rock hounder as well. It is my understanding that this area is about 7 miles from the bombing area. I am not clear as to whether this will be a year round training area or a seasonal one. If it is seasonal could this area be opened up to hounders when it could be deemed safe?

I want you to know I support our military and all that it takes for them to be their best and be safe but if there is any wiggle room to keep this small area open I, and many others, would be so grateful!

Sincerely,

Cindy Marchant

F.7.1.28.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. While hunting would be permitted over a two-week period in the B-17 range, the Navy would have strict control over the process. Free and open rockhounding that is not controlled by a permit process such as hunting would not be safe. In addition, the Navy is not able to restrict the training schedule any further.

F.7.1.29 Maus, N.



Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Comment Form

Date: 12-13-2018

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Comments must be postmarked or received online by **Jan. 15, 2019**, for consideration in the Final EIS.

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Please Print

WSAs are special and should remain pristine.
Flare and bombing wetlands is a travesty.
Cutting the Stillwater range is half out of the question.
Could the Navy please quantify what is considered "significant" in regard to the effects of all of these plans? Page 18: NOISE vs sage grouse
On page 19 of the land use, how ~~and~~ the use of explosives and pesticides and munitions have no impact on air quality?
Page 20: How many ~~and~~ public land water resources are impacted and how many endemic species will be put in danger?
Page 21: How can there be no impact on biological resources on a bombing range considering migratory birds and sage grouse & related habitat?
Page 23: NO restriction of public lands participation relating WSA should be considered.

F.7.1.29.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Approach to Analysis can be found at the beginning of each resource section in Chapter 3. The approach to analysis varies by resource but is developed based on standard practices implemented in conjunction with any applicable requirements for each resource area. Context, intensity, and relevant thresholds were considered in forming impact conclusions. Where appropriate, significance determinations have been updated in the Final EIS due to public comment, consultation, coordination, and research availability.

Currently, all state management plans concentrate on habitat availability, wildfire, and land-based chronic noise sources. Greater sage grouse lek location data indicates that usage areas are east of the land areas proposed for withdrawal or acquisition. Sage grouse in these areas would be exposed to

noise from aircraft overflights. Available science indicates that short-term noise intrusion does not play a significant role in lek success.

The Navy will work closely with BLM and NDOW to manage the sage grouse and other species on lands under the Navy's management. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision. All available lek location data notes that usage areas by greater sage grouse is east of the lands proposed for withdrawal or acquisition. The Navy has updated and bolstered the analysis in the Final EIS with new research and updated the significance determinations for impacts to individual sage grouse and species populations where appropriate. The Navy will work closely with BLM to manage the sage grouse and other species on lands under the Navy's control.

There would not be any change to training exercises, meaning that there would be no change in the amount of explosives used between the baseline and the Proposed Action. All additional emissions under the Proposed Action would be from construction emissions, which are minor in scale. Therefore, the Proposed Action would not have a significant impact on air quality.

F.7.1.30 McKay, G.

Subject: Comments on the Fallon Naval Air Station Expansion

Please accept these comments as a member of the November 16, 2016 recreation group that received your initial presentation and also in response to your June 19, 2018 public meeting in Fallon, Nevada.

I support Alternative 3.

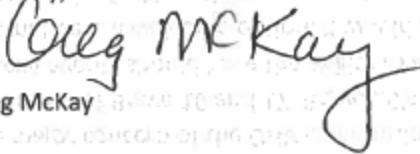
I am a member of the Carson Valley ATV Group and the Nevada Commission on Off-Highway Vehicles. I am not the spokesperson for either. I bring this to your attention as I have received hundreds of comments by the general public about your plans.

The major concern of the OHV community is the loss of recreational opportunities connected to the expansion of Bravo 16 and 17. Bravo 16's expansion will eliminate about 60 miles of trails in that area. Special events should have the ability to access this area a few times a year. The Bravo 17 Shift alternative is a welcome option. It would allow continued use of the area around Middlegate Station, a very popular OHV destination. I would suggest the Bravo 17 southern boundaries use existing roads and barriers to mark it clearer. It would be nice to keep the area around Highway 361 to the east continually open for OHV access minimizing highway travel. The Bravo 17 Shift alternative would allow for continued access around the Fairview Peak/Earthquake Fault road, at Bell Flat Well approximately one-half mile north of the Churchill County Line. It would be a logical boundary line.

As part of Alternative 3, the Navy should work with the BLM to incorporate the expansion of OHV recreation to mitigate their expansion plans that are outside the project area. New Federal designation of areas (such as a National Recreation Area) that have OHV use as the prescribed activity outside the project expansion area should get approved by Statute by Congress. This should include all area east of Highway 361 and should include all the Desatoya Mountain Range. In addition the Wilderness Study Area in the Desatoya Mountains should be eliminated, but OHV use should be limited to existing roads. Funding should include some road maintenance, mapping and some RV and camping sites.

I fully support the Navy's need for better training opportunities and wish you the best of luck.

Sincerely,



Greg McKay

F.7.1.30.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. While OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20, OHV use would be allowed to continue within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after WSA designation removal by Congress. Topography and OHV trails similar to those that occur in the B-17 range area also occur in the Dixie Valley area or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These other public areas would not be impacted by the proposed

withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).

F.7.1.31 Moe, R.



**Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

Comment Form

Date: 12/13/2018

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Comments must be postmarked or received online by **Jan. 15, 2019**, for consideration in the Final EIS.

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Please Print

Please make KML files for the proposed
withdrawal available at the "Project" website

F.7.1.31.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Large versions of maps were provided on the website and geographic information system (GIS) analysis utilizing available data was used to determine features within the area, which are addressed throughout the EIS, appendices, and supplemental studies (available at www.frtcmodernization.com).

F.7.1.32 Morrison, B. A.



Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Comment Form

Date: 12 Dec 2018

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Please Print

THERE IS A 230 KV POWER LINE THAT RUNS FROM NV ENERGY'S
FORT CHURCHILL POWER STATION 10 MILES NORTH OF YERINGTON, NV
AND RUNS EAST TO A CONNECTION NEAR ELY, NV WITH LINES COMING
FROM UTAH AND COMING UP FROM LAS VEGAS.

THIS LINE MAY CROSS THE PROPOSED ADDITIONAL AREA SOUTH OF
THE B-17 RANGE

CONTACT KIM WILLIAMS, NV ENERGY ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS
DEPT 702-402-3184. IF SHE CAN'T HELP YOU, SHE'LL KNOW WHO
CAN

F.7.1.32.1 Response

Thank you for your comment and contribution of data.

F.7.1.33 R., P.

WHEREAS ALOT OF PEOPLE MAY BE INTERESTED IN ANIMALS LOSING RANGE AREA, GOD MADE THEM TO ADAPT. IF THEY DON'T, ANOTHER SPECIES TAKES THEIR PLACE. GOD PUT THEM ON EARTH TO HELP MAN, NOT VISA VERSA, & WE NEED TO EXPAND OUR NAVAL RANGE AREAS TO BECOME MORE MODERN, MORE EQUIPPED, MORE ABLE TO "CATCH & DESTROY," THOSE THAT WOULD LAUGH AT & LOOK TO HARM US, OUR SOON-TO-BE ANTIQUATED WAYS, THINKING AMERICANS ARE SUCH "SIMPLE MINDED," BEINGS, THAT WE WOULD BE FREE SANCTUARY FOR EVERY TOM, DICK, OR HARRY, THAT SHOWS UP ON OUR FRONT DOORSTOP, AND HAVE THE EQUIPMENT FOR THE FREE TAKING, ONCE THEY GOT TO THIS AREA, AND OUR HANDS WOULD BE TIED BY THE HIGHER ESCHALANCE NOT TO USE THE "WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER," WAY OF MODERN WARFARE. WE HAVE TO PROVE THEM WRONG!

OTHER COUNTRIES THINK WE ARE ALL CALIFORNIACATED TO BE LIKE THE CRAZY 2% OF THE ENTIRE COUNTRY. NOTHING COULD BE FARTHER FROM THE TRUTH. THEY MAY BE THE SQUEEKY WHEEL, BUT JUST BECAUSE YOU TALK LOUDER, AND HAVE THE BULLY FACTOR, DOESNT MAKE YOU THE MAJORITY WHEN YOU JUMP THE FENCE TO NEVADA. IF YOU HAVE AMBIGUOUS INTENTIONS, NOT FOR THE BETTERMENT OF NEVADA, JUMP THE BROOM, AND HEAD BACK.

WE ARE AMERICAN COWBOYS. STRONG FIERCE AMERICAN WARRIORS OF THE PAST, STURDY STOCK THAT HAS SEEN FOREFATHERS & FOREMOTHERS DO THEIR PART TO PROTECT OUR FREEDOM - OUR PEOPLE. EVEN DIE FOR IT. THAT HAS NOT CHANGED. I'M TALKING FROM BUFFALO SOLDIERS, TO THE WHITE MEN AND WOMEN, & ALL IN-BETWEEN: FIERCE ALL AMERICAN BELIEVERS IN OUR SPECIAL WAY OF LIFE. IT IS A PRIVILEGE TO BE BORN OR NATURALIZED HERE, AND TO " FIGHT TO THE DEATH" IN THE FUTURE, TO PROTECT IT!

I PAY TAXES ON BLM. THAT LAND BELONGS TO ME! USE IT POSITIVELY! EXPAND THE NAVAL AIR STATION RANGE. MAKE US THE "A-TEAM" AT WHAT WE DO BEST - PROTECTING OUR PEOPLE, & OUR WAY OF LIFE! GO FALLON NAS!

PATRICIA R.

F.7.1.33.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.1.34 Strickland, R. Comment 1



**Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

Comment Form

Date: 12/13/18

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www.FRTCModernization.com, or by U.S. Postal Service mail to the address below.

Please Print

Please send me a hard copy of the draft EIS to:

F.7.1.34.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.1.35 Strickland, R. Comment 2

February 8, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering
Command Southwest, Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

electronic: www.FRTCModernization.com

Re: Comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement (draft EIS)

Dear Navy officials,

We are submitting comments on the draft EIS on the proposed expansion of the Naval Air Station Fallon (NASF). We have attended Navy public meetings on its expansion proposal and read the draft EIS. While we appreciate the Navy's efforts to explain the purpose of the proposed expansion, we have concerns about the enormous impacts to people, wildlife, land uses and public access to public lands. Our review revealed that the Navy does not comply with NEPA requirements, especially in its failure to consider alternatives, to properly analyze significant negative environmental impacts of the proposal, and to provide mitigation for unavoidable impacts. We are especially concerned about the enormous loss of public access to public lands, the lack of any measurable Navy commitment to the management of biological resources in the 600,000 plus acres in the proposed expansion area (including also impacts from expanded air operations), and the almost total lack of mitigation or compensation for eliminating public access and water rights in the expansion area.

We have lived near and recreated in the Navy's proposed land and air expansion areas for most of our lives. We've camped and hiked there with generations of our family and friends, traveling the backroads, and climbing the high peaks in the Stillwater, Clan Alpine, Toiyabe, Toquima and Monitor Ranges. Duck hunting trips with Dennis's father and uncles to Lahontan Valley wetlands are fond memories. Wildlife and wildflower expeditions, photography, petroglyph trips, rides in small aircraft, service trips to restore public lands damaged by wildfires or to improve wildlife habitat, visits to State Parks and wildlife management areas on the wide-open public lands are some of the major reasons why we and many others make Nevada our home. Over the years, we've also read many EISs on proposed actions and developments and management plans for these public lands, but we've rarely encounter an EIS without a No Action alternative and without a full range of alternatives, so that the public can compare the impacts of each of the alternatives, instead of the dEIS's small tweaks to the Navy expansion proposal.

Alternatives: The No Action Alternative is not "no action" or continuing the status quo and providing the baseline for comparing other alternatives, as required by NEPA. The current dEIS No Action Alternative of Congress not re-authorizing the Fallon Air Naval Station after investing billions of dollars over the years in its establishment and annual operations and considering its importance to the

Page 1

training of nearly every pilot in the United States and overseas (according to the commander) is not credible. Of course, it is possible and should have been one of the reasonable range of alternatives considered in the draft EIS.

Unfortunately, there is also no reasonable range of alternatives in the draft EIS either. NEPA requires alternatives which vary from very little proposed "development" to maximum development, reflecting very little environmental impacts to huge impacts. Alternative Navy proposals with little variation and also no alternatives which propose to minimize adverse environmental impacts in the draft EIS fail to meet this requirement.

Impacts analysis: We were stunned to read in the dEIS that the Navy finds almost zero negative impacts of cutting off public access to over 600,000 acres of public lands in central Nevada. This area has been used for millennia by native Americans and hundreds of years by farmers, ranchers, recreationalists, miners, hunters, and even anglers which have depended on its rich ecosystem of plants and animals, fish and waters. In fact, the Navy analysis found few significant impacts to any public use or resource in the expansion area. When we tried to locate information in the draft EIS how the Navy would manage an additional 600,000 acres of public lands, we found references to an Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan. Unfortunately, it appears to be significantly out of date. There was a reference that the Navy "may consider" extending the Plan to the expansion areas, but no commitment. There is zero information on what resources the Navy has committed to implementing the existing plan, much less expanding it to include the additional acres, including: what is the annual budget for implementing the INRMP? Will this increase due to the additional acreage in the NASF? What is the current staffing level for administering and implementing the INRMP? How many additional staff will be needed for the expansion acreage? What are the roles of the current land and resource managers, the Bureau of Land Management, the Nevada Department of Wildlife and others? How will the existing federal and state land and resource management plans continue to be enforced on the expanded NASF?

Wildfires and Cheatgrass: This is a critical omission, since our Great Basin Desert ecosystems are being ravaged by wildfires and invasive species, leading to extensive losses of habitat for wildlife including the Greater Sage Grouse. The draft EIS states that the Navy will "develop" a Fire Management Plan sometime in the future. It does disclose that current Navy operations result in multiple fires on the NASF, but does not discuss how these impacts will increase in the expansion area nor how the Navy or whoever will fight fires and conduct fire rehabilitation. Perhaps the navy is not concerned about leaving fire-scarred landscapes in bombing areas and in new areas subject to flares, but we do not accept this bleak result of the proposed NASF expansion.


Military Operations Area expansion Impacts: The draft EIS fails to consider the noise impacts of sonic booms to sensitive wildlife habitat, including Big Horn Sheep lambing areas and sage-grouse leks, apparently using some kind of military noise calculation instead of the standard noise system used by federal and state agencies. In addition, the tiny corridor for small plane flights from Fallon to Austin along the Hwy. 50 corridor unreasonably restricts small plane aviation through north central Nevada. The entire center of our south central State is non-navigable due to airspace restrictions by the USAF.

Mitigation: The draft EIS also fails to meet NEPA requirements to mitigate environmental and other damages from the proposed expansion. Grazing permits are eliminated. Mining exploration and development is prohibited. Except for a token annual Big Horn Sheep hunt and an annual off-road

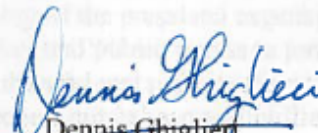
vehicle race, public access is prohibited (except for some undefined access in Dixie Valley). Several thousand acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge and adjacent conservation easements will be taken. Biological resource management will either cease due to lack of Navy staff and financial resources and other federal and state resource management agencies will not be able to carry out their responsibilities and implement resource plans due to access closures or restrictions. Native American tribes will lose free access to sacred sites, including on Job Peak, unless the Navy "approves" access. While the draft EIS states that some access will be allowed for cultural and resource management purposes, past agency experiences with access limitations and the lack of any specifics in the draft EIS on access contradicts any assurances that future access on the NASF will actually occur. A Navy promise of a future fire management plan in the draft EIS is unacceptable. This plan is crucial for the health of Great Basin ecosystems and should be a part of the EIS process, subject to public scrutiny and comments.

In conclusion, we must oppose the NASF expansion proposal because the Navy has failed to properly develop alternatives, including alternatives with fewer acres closed to public access, evaluate environmental impacts, and mitigate unavoidable impacts to hundreds of thousands of acres of land and military operations areas in its proposed expansion. We urge the Navy to correct these deficiencies before finalizing this flawed EIS.

Sincerely,



Rose Strickland



Dennis Ghiglietti

F.7.1.35.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis. Those alternatives and associated actions were carried forward for analysis and if necessary, based on the level of impacts, additional management practices, mitigation, or other impact avoidance/minimization measures were included to further avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts. The approach to analysis, including significance criteria for potential impacts, are presented in the Final EIS for each resource section. The approach to analysis and significance criteria varies but was developed based on applicable laws, regulations, and policies for each resource area. In addition, context, intensity, and relevant thresholds were considered when determining significance.

The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative, also known as the “status quo” alternative, would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS because it would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

Under the No Action Alternative, current and proposed training at FRTC would need to be accommodated elsewhere. This would result in the potential loss of the integrated nature of training, as well as the fragmentation and total loss of essential training functions. At this time, identifying where and how those training needs could be accommodated—and what the ultimate consequences of such a scenario would be—would involve a complex planning, budgeting, and acquisition program that is speculative and beyond the scope of this EIS.

Any current land management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. The Navy has and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan and, where possible, proposed plan elements and goals are included in the Final EIS. For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management). The Navy coordinated and worked with Cooperating Agencies and other parties in the development of the Wildland Fire Management Plan.

As discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), the response to sonic booms or other sudden disturbance is similar among many wildlife species. Sudden and unfamiliar sounds usually act as an alarm and trigger a “flight” response; however, reaction to a given noise can vary widely depending on factors such as time of day, physical condition of the animal, physical environment, or whether other

physical stressors are present. Although the startle effect of a sonic boom can be stressful to an animal, it is difficult to generalize animal responses to noise disturbances across species. Recent literature suggests a startle is a common response across a variety of species and ultimately leads to habituation. It has been reported that the intensities and durations of the startle response decrease as the number and frequency of exposures increase, suggesting no long-term adverse effects. It is recognized that short term impacts on individual animals may occur from sonic booms, however, overall no long-term adverse effects to populations are expected.

Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would allow limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowed in the DVTA. Grazing would continue to be allowed in the DVTA. Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access. However, the Navy would allow certain activities, such as wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheep hunting, and events that are coordinated with the Navy in advance. Mitigation for loss of access generally was determined to be either not possible because of mission requirements or not warranted because many of the affected activities (grazing, mining, recreation, etc.) could be conducted in adjacent or nearby areas (see Section 3.4 [Livestock Grazing], Section 3.3 [Mining and Mineral Resources], and Section 3.12 [Recreation]).

F.7.1.36 Tanttela, P.



Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Comment Form

Date: 2/10/19

Thank you for your comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS.

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Please Print

I am strongly opposed to the extension of the bombing range in this area. We spend much of our retirement at our house in Lovelock NV, where we enjoyed hiking & camping in the desert. The impact of those jets flying overhead extends far beyond the boundaries of the range, as they are so loud & terrifying when they approach seemingly out of nowhere. They are going so fast. We have been hiking well outside the range with children who have fallen down, screaming fear as the planes go over. Extending the range would only widen the impact, decreasing the use that the public would make of it.

1. Name Patricia Tanttela Thank you

2. Organization/Affiliation (if applicable)

F.7.1.36.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable. As stated in Section 3.7.3.5 (Proposed Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation), the Air Operations Office logs noise complaints at Naval Air Station Fallon. The office records information about the time, location, and nature of the complaint; and initiates investigation of what if any Navy airspace operations were being conducted by the Navy at the FRTC. If the caller requests, range personnel will follow up with a return phone call to explain the resolution of the complaint. The Navy may be contacted for noise complaints and operational suggestions at 775-426-2419.

F.7.1.37 Whitman, F.

12-15-18

Comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS.....

There is no science on the effect of sonic booms on sage grouse. Particular during lekking season. There are three Sage Grouse noise studies, but irregular and substantive sonic booms have not been studied. I live in Austin NV and regularly get hit by sonic booms. They have broken windows in my house. (my house is very old 1864) If they effect me, it must effect the bird. The Marines at there Sweetwater Air Station along the CA/NnN boarder do not fly during leking season.

If the bird population decreases because of Navy activities, it will mean ranching/ grazing will be curtailed. This will have a impact on S.Lander County. Ranching has been the bread and butter of the rural areas since before the Navy flew.

Lander Co. has invested substantial money in upgrading the Austin Airport. We now have a large two room pilots longe, rebuilt our well, added a new fire main, put in Av-Gas and Jet-A fuel tanks. Now medi-vac flights can reach S. Lander Co. with out refueling on the way here and return flights. Our pilots lounge and upgraded water/fire system is getting used by the F.S./BLM as a fwd base for fire fighting air tanker operations. When I ask those people what we can do to improve our airport they all say the same thing....get GPS/instrument landing.

If you know our location you could understand the Austin airport will never attract much business. It future is as a strategically located full service air strip in central Nevada. Recently Reach Air/Summit air ambulance has talked to us about locating a permanent medi-vac helio at the Austin Airport. We ask the Navy's support in our efforts to get a GPS landing system at our airport.

Thank you

Frank Whitman




F.7.1.37.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Currently, all state management plans concentrate on habitat availability, wildfire, and land-based chronic noise sources. Greater sage grouse lek location data indicates that usage areas are east of the land areas proposed for withdrawal or acquisition. Sage grouse in these areas would be exposed to noise from aircraft overflights. Available science indicates that short-term noise intrusion does not play a significant role in lek success. The Navy will work closely with BLM and NDOW to manage the sage grouse and other species on lands under the Navy's control. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any

commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.

Alternative 3 does not include the Austin Airport or changes to it. Please see Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) of the EIS for a definition of the scope of the project.

F.7.1.38 Yansura, D.



**Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization
Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)**

Comment Form

Date: 1-25-19

Thank you for your comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS.

Comments must be postmarked or received online by **Jan. 15, 2019**, for consideration in the Final EIS.

Comments may be submitted in person at the public meetings, via the project website at **www.FRTCMmodernization.com**, or by U.S. Postal Service mail to the address below.

Please Print

Although I am not a Nevada resident, I own a house in Lovelock NV and spend a lot of my time there. I also, as a matter of fact, often hike in this area. Extending the bombing range would remove this beautiful land from public use. I am therefore completely opposed to the extension of the bombing range.

F.7.1.38.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.2 Oral Comments

F.7.2.1 Alvey, D.

**Public Meeting - Reno - 12/13/2018
Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization**

1 MR. ALVEY: Hello, I'm Dan Alvey. The
2 last name is spelled A-l-v-e-y.

3 So I'm here tonight on behalf of the 170
4 people that could not be here tonight that are in
5 favor of these wild areas being protected,
6 particularly the Wilderness Study Areas. So I'm
7 going to read you this postcard.

8 Dear Naval Air Station Fallon, we oppose
9 the proposal to eliminate portions of Job Peak,
10 Stillwater Range and Clan Alpine Mountains Wilderness
11 Study Areas and excessive closures of access to our
12 public lands.

13 So there's a lot people that are really
14 interested in these areas staying open and having
15 access to them and also that they are protected and
16 maintain their wilderness character. So we think
17 that these areas should be protected as wilderness
18 and, yeah, I'm just here to deliver all these
19 postcards.

20 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Alvey.

21 Louis, and again my apologies.

22 MR. BUBALA: You're not the first one to
23 butcher it.

24 MS. TURNER: Badly, I think.

25 MR. BUBALA: I roll with the punches on

F.7.2.1.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The proposed de-designation of the Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, maneuvering by special operations forces, and other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. De-designation would not prohibit the use of the area by recreationists.

F.7.2.2 Arthur, H.

Public Meeting - Fallon - 12/12/2018
Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization

1 our, our lands the way that, that we should.

2 We really need to be addressing water
3 protection concerns, drought protection, we need to
4 think about air quality, and we also need to think about
5 our land resources, to work together to see how we can
6 develop the, the interest of the people to keep people
7 safe with, with peace strategies.

8 So I thank you very much. I hope you will,
9 you know, flip back to your history books and look for
10 the right books to help educate. Thank you.

11 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Ms. Harry.

12 All right. I will ask one more time, is
13 there anyone else that would like three minutes?

14 Please, come up. Sir? Come up. And again,
15 just if you could state your name and spell your last
16 name. Thank you.

17 MS. ARTHUR: Hello. My name Hannah Arthur.
18 That's A-r-t-h-u-r. I would like to thank you for
19 allowing me to speak.

20 As I -- I have to admit, the U.S. military
21 will do as they please. They have been pushing my
22 people away and wherever they want from its origin of
23 this country.

24 So my question that I want to relay to you
25 guys is how are we going to keep them accountable for

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1 the impact they have on the environment.

2 What you said resonates with me. My mother
3 grew up in Arizona, and they have tons of testing out
4 there, and she grew up with having to deal with lots of
5 shrapnel and all of the types of waste that's left and
6 how much it hurts the people around there. And of
7 course they're, they're just some Navajos out there.
8 They're not going to address it. They don't. It goes
9 un-dealt with.

10 So then that's going to happen here. It
11 sounds like it's happening way too much here in Fallon.
12 You can only just imagine how many other small groups of
13 people are not being listened to. The damages that can
14 be done to this area.

15 You know, I come from a big tribe. I'm
16 Navajo. I'm also Arapahoe and Sioux. Those are big
17 tribes that get voices. But I don't hear voices from
18 the Paiutes, for the Shoshones, for the Washoe. I
19 didn't even know they were here until I came to this
20 small area. They're not going to be given the
21 protection they need. And the people that dwell with
22 them, this small community, they're not going to get the
23 protection they need. They're going to fall right into
24 that.

25 Who are we going to go to to make sure that

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1 the Navy takes care of this? They're not even -- it
2 does not seem that they're taking responsibility in
3 keeping up these areas. Now they're asking for more?
4 How are we going to keep them in check? How are we
5 going to make sure that they come and clean up their
6 mess? I don't know, but I would like to be told how
7 they're going to do that.

8 I barely found out about this. Why I'm just
9 now hearing this? It's not that my ears aren't open. I
10 would like to know. I would like all of us to be safe
11 in this small community.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Ms. Arthur.

14 MR. BRUCE: Do you mind if I just speak from
15 here? I --

16 MS. TURNER: I do need to make sure that
17 Susan can hear you and the Navy team can hear you well
18 enough.

19 MR. BRUCE: Absolutely.

20 MS. TURNER: Susan, you'll let me know?

21 Okay.

22 MR. BRUCE: My name is Pat Bruce, B-r-u-c-e.

23 It's just a quick point of order, about ten
24 seconds. We talk about federal land. It's not federal
25 land, it's not BLM land, it's not Fish and Wildlife

F.7.2.2.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. In accordance with Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments; DoD policies; the National Historic Preservation Act; and Navy instructions, the Navy engaged in Tribal consultations during scoping, during the public comment period for the Draft EIS, and following release of the Draft EIS. The Navy invited culturally affiliated Tribes to take part in the NEPA process as Tribal Participants for this EIS (see Appendix C, Tribal Correspondence). The Navy invited these Tribes to (1) participate in project meetings, (2) provide additional information related to cultural resources, and (3) provide internal document review (e.g., of the Class III Cultural Resources Inventory Report) during the development of this Draft EIS.

The Navy invited and engaged in Government-to-Government consultations with the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada and the following federally recognized Tribes: the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribes, Lovelock Paiute Tribe, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Summit Lake Paiute Tribe, Te-Moak Tribe of Western Shoshone Indians of Nevada (consisting of the Battle Mountain Band, Elko Band, South Fork Band, and Wells Band), Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, Walker River Paiute Tribe, Winnemucca Paiute Tribe, Yerington Paiute Tribe, and Yomba Shoshone Tribe. Appendix C (Tribal Correspondence) of the Final EIS was updated to include a summary of all outreach efforts performed by the Navy and copies of official correspondence.

The Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJSCREEN) was used to initially screen for areas with minority and low-income populations, potential environmental quality issues, and environmental and demographic indicators. Data was also pulled from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2010 Census and 2012-2016 American Community Survey for the analysis to define low-income populations and characterize minority and Hispanic or Latino populations. Populations associated with Indian Tribes are included in county populations. The Fallon Paiute Shoshone Tribe identified themselves as a minority community. Based on the analysis, there are minority and low-income populations within the affected area under all action alternatives. However, implementation of any of the action alternatives would not cause disproportionately high or adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations. The approach to analysis is further discussed in Section 3.15 (Environmental Justice), specifically Section 3.15.1.3 (Approach to Analysis) of the Final EIS.

The Navy implemented operational changes in November 1989 seeking to eliminate off-range munitions, including reorienting strafing/bomb run-in lines and increasing surveillance of all drops. These operational changes have been effective in reducing off-range ordnance occurrences.

The Navy continues to refine and improve its health and safety operating procedures. Resolution of the legacy off-range munitions issue will continue to be addressed with the Walker River Paiute Tribe as a separate issue from the FRTC Modernization EIS. Since the Navy's requirements do not call for an expansion of B-19, legacy off-range ordnance is beyond the scope of this EIS and therefore is not addressed in the EIS.

F.7.2.3 Bastien, R. Comment 1

**Public Meeting - Gabbs - 12/10/2018
Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization**

1 creatures, whatever else kind of birds out there,
2 whatever we do when we ride our horses, they get scared.

3 So thank you. And there's more to -- more
4 on that. More to say. We're not going to stop. Thank
5 you.

6 MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment.

7 Mr. Bastien.

8 MR. BASTIEN: My name is Rob Bastien,
9 B-a-s-t-i-e-n. I'm a Carson City resident. And I'm
10 just going to read this through.

11 First of all, I want to thank our military
12 personnel for their service and protecting our country
13 and our democracy. And that also goes for any vets out
14 there.

15 The only alternative that I, that I support
16 is the no action alternative. All other options are not
17 acceptable.

18 Expanding naval training areas in Nevada
19 seems quite redundant, considering how much is currently
20 allocated to the military for training in the state of
21 Nevada. Withdrawing public land from the owners, the
22 public, and no longer allowing the public to access said
23 land, particularly that land outside the existing B-16,
24 B-17, and B-19 areas, is not necessary and it is
25 ridiculously greedy of the Navy.

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1 Why do I oppose any expansion? I'm
2 basically out in these lands for recreation. I'm a rock
3 hound. I go up in the Monte Cristo Range to pick up
4 rocks and to observe nature, and check out the wildlife.
5 In the past decade I've spent more than 80 days out in
6 the Monte Cristo Range, and also the Slate Mountain
7 areas, and more than 25 nights in, in that area. And
8 that's the area you want to withdraw, and that is real
9 personal to me.

10 Others in the area recreate, and they ride
11 their motorcycles around there, quads, Jeeps, and
12 there's a lot of camping, and I do the camping as well.
13 Others hunt in the areas. You've kind of addressed that
14 a little bit, but I imagine that that will still be an
15 impact.

16 I would think that wildlife would be
17 affected for sure, when you have more bombing and
18 farther reaches.

19 Ranchers who run their cattle in the area
20 obviously are going to be impacted, and the wildlife
21 will be threatened in some instances and destroyed in
22 others, and no longer observable because they probably
23 have been hurt or run off. And then obviously I'm not
24 able to look at them because I'm no longer allowed.

25 Dixie Valley also has geothermal resources,

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1 and are you sure that the areas you're taking would --
2 that they don't have geothermal?

3 There are currently thousands of square
4 miles of former -- formerly public lands withdrawn for
5 use and by -- and under the control of the military. In
6 addition to the existing training areas already
7 withdrawn for Fallon Naval Air Station there are the
8 Nevada Test Site, 1,300 square miles of land that is not
9 prime real estate.

10 Nellis Air Force Base managed airspace is
11 12,700 square miles. Nellis Air Force range is
12 comprised of 3.1 million acres. That's 4,800 square
13 miles of land in addition to the test site. It's close.
14 I imagine your jets can get down there in five to
15 ten minutes if you really need to, and prop and rotor
16 aircraft might take a little bit less.

17 I definitely am for to the alternative -- no
18 action alternative. Thank you.

19 MS. TURNER: Thank you, sir. Next is
20 Mr. Todd Connelly, followed by Ms. -- it looks like
21 Lorinda Wichman.

22 MR. CONNELLY: My name is Todd Connelly,
23 C-o-n-n-e-l-l-y, from Gardnerville, Nevada.

24 I'm primarily commenting on the Bravo-17
25 area. I've been to that area for the past 20 years, and

F.7.2.3.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.

The Navy would provide access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency that would set any quotas and distribute any permits, as well as maintenance of wildlife habitat. The Navy is working with NDOW on a MOA for bighorn sheep hunting on the B-17 range, a draft of which is included in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans). To the maximum extent possible, the Final EIS has been updated with details of this management plan. Details can be found in Chapter 2 and in Section 3.12 (Recreation), and a draft version of the proposed hunting program Memorandum of Agreement can be found in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans) of the Final EIS. The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.

The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC. The Navy currently has an Access Management Memorandum of Understanding with NDOW that would be updated (with a new MOA) after any ultimate Congressional Decision on an action.

The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, and their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.

Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts on individuals of a species.

The Final EIS further describes the process by which interested parties could pursue compatible geothermal development in a portion of the DVTA. The Navy's proposed required design features are necessary to meet necessary training requirements. Development of the required design features affords an opportunity for geothermal development that would otherwise be lost. The Navy acknowledges that complying with required design features could add cost to a potential geothermal development; however, the Navy is committed to working with the developer on a case-by-case basis. This is addressed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. The Nevada Test and Training Range is, however, primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training require nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.

F.7.2.4 Bastien, R. Comment 2

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Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization**

1 natural resources should not and must not be so
2 conducted as to destroy the very resources it is
3 aimed to preserving.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. TURNER: Rob Bastien is next followed
6 by Eric Fendelander and then Darrell Pursel.

7 MR. BASTIEN: My name is Rob Bastien. I
8 live in Carson City, B-a-s-t-i-e-n.

9 First I want to thank all the members and
10 veterans of the Armed Forces for your service in
11 protecting this country and our democracy.

12 That said the only alternative that I
13 support is the no action alternative. All the other
14 options are not acceptable. Expanding naval training
15 areas in Nevada seems quite redundant considering how
16 much is currently allocated to the military for
17 training. Withdrawing public land from the owners,
18 the public, and no longer allowing the owners, the
19 public, to access said land is not necessary.

20 The Navy and the Air Force should
21 coordinate and share existing training areas just
22 like it would be in real military action. In
23 addition to the existing training areas already
24 withdrawn for the Fallon Naval Air Station there are
25 the Nevada Test Site and Nellis Air Force Range.

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1 The Nevada Test Site is 1,300 square
2 miles of land, roughly a square of land 36 miles long
3 by 36 miles wide. The Bravo 17 weapons danger zone
4 reflecting full training capabilities, figure 3, page
5 5 in this document is a circle with a radius of
6 16 miles. This entire area would easily fit within
7 the Nevada Test Site.

8 The Nellis Air Force Range is 3.1 million
9 acres of land or 4,800 square miles. This is in
10 addition to the Nevada Test Site, which it borders on
11 three sides. The Nellis Air Force Base manages
12 12,700 square miles of airspace. Efficient
13 utilization of these existing massive training areas
14 is logical, feasible, reasonable, cheaper, and less
15 impactful.

16 Why do I oppose the proposed withdrawal?
17 I'm a rock hound. I hunt the Monte Cristo Mountains
18 and Slate Mountain areas several times a year. In
19 the last decade I have spent more than 80 days and
20 more than 25 nights in these areas, the areas that
21 you want to withdraw. I enjoy the solitude and the
22 beauty of these areas. I enjoy exploring and hiking
23 in these areas. I enjoy my encounters with wildlife
24 in these areas. Wildlife will be threatened and
25 destroyed in some instances.

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1 Off-roading is also popular in these
2 areas. Others hunt in these areas. Ranchers graze
3 their cattle in these areas. Access to potential
4 geothermal resources should not be restricted.

5 In closing, once again I support only the
6 no action alternative. The Armed Forces need to more
7 efficiently utilize the lands that they currently
8 have withdrawn. Please, use and share the Nellis Air
9 Force Range and the Nevada Test Site and leave the
10 rest of Nevada to Nevadans.

11 Thank you.

12 MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment.

13 Mr. Eric Fendelander.

14 MR. FENDELANDER: My name is Eric
15 Fendelander. It's spelled F-e-n-d-e-l-a-n-d-e-r, and
16 I've been known as everything from Finlanderson in
17 Iceland to Fenderbender.

18 I've been around on the United States Air
19 Force retired, been in aviation 20 years plus. I
20 agree with the Captain that there is one thing that I
21 will agree with him on is that hands-on, butt in the
22 seat training is required. Simulators don't cut it.
23 Kids can go home and play video games. It's not the
24 same as flying along, like I was back when I was way
25 younger and all of the sudden I realized why they

F.7.2.4.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. Modernization will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities to counter emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command. Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in *Ninety Days to Combat*. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced into the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced into the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.

The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. The Nevada Test and Training Range is, however, primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training require nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.

The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.

The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in

Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.

Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts on individuals of a species.

F.7.2.5 Berry, L.

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1 time in its inception, has been decreasing in
2 population. So I want you to think about, about those
3 things.

4 So we are invested in the Navy that sits
5 here. So I know we, we all know that -- and we talk
6 about freedom, we talk about war, we talk about -- and
7 nobody's being a warmonger here, but this, this is, we
8 need to support them. And they did a lot of studies on
9 these things, these poster boards are here for a reason,
10 they looked up alternatives. And I know that, sir, I
11 commend you, and I thank you for these things. I
12 support what you're doing here.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Ms. Bullock.

15 Next is Ms. Laura Berry.

16 MS. BERRY: Hello everyone. My name is
17 Laura Berry, spelled L-a-u-r-a, B-e-r-r-y. Thank you,
18 Captain, and Mr. Alex Stone, for being here and
19 explaining everything for us.

20 I am a resident of Fallon and a homeowner.
21 I live on the corner of Lone Tree and Solias. For those
22 of you who aren't familiar with that area, that is the
23 entrance to the B-16 bombing range, which I can see from
24 my kitchen window.

25 My concern is, my current concern, is the

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1 18-, 19-, and 20-year-olds who have just come out of
2 BUD/S, that have training, but not enough, driving the
3 14 to 18 tons of weight MRAPs down this road. They
4 drive 35 miles an hour, which is the posted speed limit,
5 but I myself, and along with others, have been pushed
6 off of this road many times, and it is very scary.
7 Specifically around the corner where CARS is. I don't
8 know if you know where that is. It's in between Solias
9 and Curry. And it's the 20-mile-an-hour turn that they
10 take at 30 to 35 miles an hour. I wish I had saved a
11 video of it, but the next time I find some, I will be
12 sending it to you.

13 My concern is that realistic training should
14 not be taking place in a residential area. Yes, it is
15 the country. Yes, I know that the bombing range was
16 there when I bought my home. But I would like to run to
17 my mailbox with my two-year-old son without fear of
18 getting hit by one of these 18- to 24-ton vehicles who
19 do not slow down or stop for me.

20 I also took a look at your environmental
21 impact study, and there is little to no information
22 about Lone Tree and Solias, so I would encourage you to
23 go ahead and look into that further.

24 These vehicles cause potholes on a road,
25 which they are constantly fixing.

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1 I have yet to see a Navy personnel vehicle
2 out on that land cleaning, which is a mess. I don't
3 know if you guys have been out there lately.

4 Also, you said that we could go ahead and
5 use the Simpson Road route to access our recreational
6 land, which is right outside my door. This route would
7 be very difficult to do, obviously.

8 But I would like you to consider not using
9 the Lone Tree and Solias route for your current and
10 further training out there. All right?

11 Thank you.

12 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Ms. Berry.

13 So at this time everyone who has signed up
14 to speak has had a chance to speak. Oh, please come up.
15 I'm sorry. Please come right up.

16 Is it there anyone else who now would like
17 to provide a comment, an oral comment?

18 Ms. Beverly Harry; correct?

19 MS. HARRY: Good evening. My name is
20 Beverly Harry. I thank you for the opportunity to speak
21 tonight and to address the indigenous community's
22 concerns.

23 I think -- we have to go back a little bit
24 to realize exactly what the impacts to indigenous
25 territories has been, and I know that a lot of

F.7.2.5.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy is reviewing their access into B-16, which includes following posted speed limits and awareness of local citizens on public portions of the road. The Navy is also investigating ways to assist in management of road conditions.

F.7.2.6 Boeger, K.

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1 representatives and voicing their opinion on this
2 matter.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Carroon.

5 Karen, thank you, and then again next
6 would be David VonSeggern.

7 MS. BOEGER: It's Boeger, and I'm Karen
8 Boeger, B-o-e-g-e-r. I'm an employed member of
9 Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, the Nevada chapter,
10 but I'm not speaking for them tonight because
11 honestly I have not really looked at this proposal
12 and so I wouldn't have anything very helpful to tell
13 you, other than we really will be scrutinizing,
14 particularly Bravo 17, related to the WSA relating to
15 hunting opportunities or loss thereof and especially
16 how you will interact with our Department of Wildlife
17 for the welfare of our wildlife, but I did have a
18 look at the maps, some of the maps, and I was
19 dismayed to see the three WSAs in particular that are
20 kind of amputated in part to have control go to the
21 military and the rest, the remaining portions of
22 those three WSAs to be released from WSA status, and
23 the reason why that was a matter of concern to me is
24 that our organization, our members really love to
25 hunt and fish and be intact areas of habitat, and we

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1 think that's the healthiest type of habitat both for
2 wildlife and for hunters and fishers.

3 So WSAs really fit that category and to
4 release those as a mitigation for loss of recreation
5 opportunity is totally puzzling to us because we see
6 that as a loss of our opportunity, of our chosen
7 tradition of how we hunt.

8 Also because, you know, in the WSA every
9 kind of recreation can occur, save for going off
10 designated routes in a vehicle or a bicycle, but of
11 course on foot we can go wherever.

12 So you will surely hear from us on that
13 part, and lastly I just want to say that it totally
14 usurps what we tend to call our Nevada way of dealing
15 with the WSA problem or issue and that is to gather a
16 stakeholder group and go through sometimes years of
17 meetings and field trips and map work and discussing
18 our issues and trying to come to agreement on what we
19 propose for the WSAs or any other areas proposed for
20 wilderness and this would completely disregard that
21 process, and that is an open, transparent process
22 that our organization has participated in for the
23 last three decades and we would really like to
24 continue to do so.

25 Thank you.

F.7.2.6.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs.

The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, maneuvering by special operations forces, and other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights. This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. It is important to note that this de-designation would not prohibit the use of these areas by recreationists.

F.7.2.7 Brooks, D. Comment 1

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1 available, and then the standards meet that.

2 The reason I say that, and looking at
3 environmental impacts -- like I say, I've been here
4 since the 1960s, I've enjoyed the area, and in the last
5 20 years I've spent a lot of time in the Bravo-17 area,
6 the Slate Mountain area, Monte Cristo mountains. I've
7 been out there 12 times this year, mostly camping.

8 When I go through the environmental
9 document, it looks like the areas are wasteland. It's
10 very vague, it's very incomplete, and it's anything but
11 wasteland. I visit it frequently, I see a lot of people
12 out there, and people from out of state. I don't think
13 justice is really being done as far as describing that,
14 to say, "Well, there's going to be impacts," and not
15 really classifying them. I really hate to see a lot of
16 these areas become wasteland without being properly
17 represented in the report.

18 I think it goes to great length to describe
19 what the military is trying to accomplish, and this
20 gentleman, and you two gentlemen, probably gave a lot
21 more information than what was actually in the document,
22 as far as my level to digest. I'll stop.

23 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Connelly.

24 Next is Ms. Brooks. Doris Brooks.

25 MS. BROOKS: Yes. My name is Doris Brooks,

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1 B-r-o-o-k-s, and I am just concerned, just having looked
2 at -- just from now, just having these questions
3 regarding the property that we have.

4 We own property across from the airport in
5 Gabbs, and I'm concerned, regarding the claims, what's
6 going to happen to the claims, mining claims, that are
7 within the area, for one thing. Are they going to be
8 recognized? And we also have a patented claim, and what
9 would happen with that.

10 Also, I'm concerned about the relocation of
11 Highway 361, because our property comes to that. And I
12 was also wondering, they're putting in an awful lot of
13 money right now on, on Highway 361. They just have put
14 asphalt in there and a lot of tunnels and things,
15 culverts and so forth. So I'm wondering why they
16 haven't coordinated with that if they're going to
17 relocate that. It's -- a lot of money has been spent.

18 Also, like I say, my patented claim, I
19 wonder what happens there.

20 Also, the potential aspect of what's
21 happening to the water from wells. We have a geothermal
22 well, and I'm wondering how that is going to affect the
23 water there.

24 And also, what happens with the residue from
25 the bombing? What's going to happen to the land? Are

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1 they going to clean it up, or is this going to be
2 something that is going to just ruin the land?

3 Also, like I say, the water quality, I'm
4 concerned about that from our well.

5 So these are questions that I have as a land
6 owner, and homeowner, in Gabbs. Thank you.

7 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Ms. Brooks. Next is
8 Mr. Tom McNeill.

9 MR. McNEILL: Tom McNeill, and that's
10 spelled M-c-N-e-i-l-l. Local resident.

11 When I came, I had a negative concept, but
12 after seeing what was presented, I'm all for number
13 three, most preferable. Why? Some of this stuff I saw
14 at the end of sonic booms, and that the, the
15 environmental person didn't always say how it might
16 affect outside the -- number three's area, if it does or
17 doesn't.

18 The other thing is in the beginning on
19 certain parts that have as to the closure of
20 scheduling -- scheduling closure of certain areas. In
21 other words, it seemed like there was access but not at
22 particular times, and how that would affect the public.

23 And the, the other thing was that the -- I
24 thought the lady that just spoke was very good on the
25 bombing residue, where it will go, how it will go, and

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1 wasteland. I'm really concerned about the land use
2 issues, the recreational issues, and the biological
3 impacts in that particular area, because it is a nice,
4 beautiful tourist area.

5 And I'm concerned about water resources in
6 general, but I really haven't got too much information
7 to really ask what that involves.

8 Thank you for your patience.

9 MS. TURNER: Thank you.

10 Mr. McNeill, did you want some more time?

11 MR. McNEILL: Tom McNeill once again.

12 Please excuse me. I made a grave error I
13 want to correct. I said to the west extension. I meant
14 to the east. So not to the west, but to the east, and
15 maybe to the south, on number three. I think that would
16 be a really good idea. But number three as it is is
17 just fine. But forgive me. I meant a greater extension
18 to the east sounds like a possible very good idea. So
19 excuse me. Thank you very much.

20 MS. TURNER: Thank you.

21 Ms. Brooks, would you like more time?

22 MS. BROOKS: It just came to me, I had one
23 more thought. I notice on the number three, at the
24 bottom it said that -- something about two or three, the
25 area two or three miles around the airport, and that

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1 does include our property. So I just wanted to know
2 what that -- I'm concerned what you're going to be doing
3 with that.

4 And I too thank you, the veterans, for what
5 you're doing. We certainly do appreciate everything
6 that you do for our country, putting your lives on the
7 line and preparing them for the safety of our country.
8 Thank you.

9 MS. TURNER: Anyone else at this time?

10 Okay. Well, this concludes the oral
11 comments session of this public meeting. I would like
12 to, on behalf of the Navy, thank you all for your
13 participation today.

14 Again, the poster stations will be opening
15 back up. We'll be here until 11:00 today, and then
16 we're going to be moving to Gabbs this evening, if you'd
17 like to join us there, at 5:00.

18 The team members are here, so if you did
19 have any questions, Ms. Brooks, that you wanted
20 answered, please feel free to engage our team members.
21 They may answer some questions for you.

22 I want to thank you all again, and we now
23 are now concluded.

24 (Additional public comment.)

25 MR. NIEDZWIECKI: It would be prudent to

F.7.2.7.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude the claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value.

For existing patented mining claims, the federal government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.

Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process to determine whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.

As discussed in Section 3.5 (Transportation), under Alternative 3, the WDZ would extend over a portion of SR 361, and that segment would need to be closed and rerouted outside of the WDZ due to mission and public safety requirements. The potential closure and rerouting of SR 361 associated with the expansion of B-17 would only occur if Congress chose Alternative 3, which is the Navy's Preferred Alternative. However, the affected segment of SR 361 would not be closed unless and until a suitable replacement route is established. Relocation of SR 361 would not cut off access to Gabbs or Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park. The notional relocation corridor for the potential rerouting of SR 361 can be found in Section 3.5.3 (Environmental Consequences). Any proposed rerouting is still conceptual in nature and would be evaluated prior to closure of the route. Follow-on NEPA efforts would need to be conducted for the potential relocation of SR 361 if Alternative 3 were to be selected. See Chapter 2, specifically Section 2.3.4.2.4 (Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 3) for further details. If Alternative 3 were chosen, the Navy would transfer any funds appropriated for relocating the road to the Federal Highway Administration, who in turn would make these funds available to NDOT for planning, design, NEPA-documentation, permitting and construction of the replacement road to state standards.

To minimize any aviation impacts under each of the proposed alternatives, the Navy is requesting the FAA create Airspace Exclusion Zones (3-nautical-mile radius, surface to 1,500 feet AGL) for the Gabbs and Eureka airports to ensure those airports could continue operation regardless of the alternative chosen. Current range procedures identify the town of Crescent Valley and the Gabbs Airfield as noise sensitive areas that shall be avoided by 3,000 feet AGL or 5 nautical miles. The Navy would

avoid airspace exclusion zones, unless the airport is specifically being used for take-offs and landings associated with military training activities. See Section 3.6.2.2.4 (Local and Regional Airports) for further details.

F.7.2.8 Brooks, D. Comment 2

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1 the other day, as a cooperating agency, and if anybody
2 hasn't seen the pile over here, the two volumes are this
3 thick. I'm good, but I'm not that good. I cannot go
4 through that in that length of time. I would truly
5 appreciate more time, as a couple people have asked for
6 more time to review those documents before the public
7 comment period is closed.

8 Did I get in any trouble in any way? No.
9 Okay. Good. Thank you very much.

10 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Ms. Wichman.
11 Ms. Brooks, and then followed by Mr. Laura Cunningham.

12 MS. BROOKS: Yeah, Doris Brooks,
13 B-r-o-o-k-s. And I spoke this morning over in
14 Hawthorne, and I just was asked to speak again to just
15 kind of reiterate to make different ones aware of some
16 of the issues that I have and some of the concerns that
17 I have.

18 Once again, I want to thank the military for
19 their service and for putting their lives on the line
20 and for keeping our country safe. We truly appreciate
21 you so much.

22 And so like I say, I'm reiterating some of
23 the things that they have heard already. I've spoke
24 with Mr. Alex Stone already, and so he's aware of some
25 of the things that I was talking about.

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1 So one of the issues that I was concerned
2 about was the relocation of the Highway 361, because
3 this may not only affect the town of Gabbs, but we have,
4 my husband and I have a home and property which is eight
5 miles out of Gabbs and two and a half miles back from
6 the road, on one road, and then two miles from the other
7 road, which is kind of a triangle thing. And also -- so
8 I'm just kind of concerned about getting in and out of
9 our property.

10 And also I was kind of concerned and
11 wondering why they haven't really conversed with maybe
12 the Department of Transportation, because, as all of you
13 know right now, there's a lot of money spent on the road
14 out here. They're putting in some humongous culverts
15 and spending a whole lot of money on the road. And even
16 in this wintertime, which seems kind of ridiculous,
17 putting some asphalt and stuff in this cold times.

18 Also, I was just wondering -- I don't think
19 I mentioned this earlier -- but if you are taking any of
20 the private properties, vacant lands and residences.
21 And if you are, what happens there.

22 And my husband and I also have some 40
23 mining claims, and so I'm wondering if -- what's going
24 to happen with those, if we're going be reimbursed for
25 those. And one of the mining claims that we have, we

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1 have recently found some ancient bones and fossils
2 there, and the Nevada of -- University of Nevada is kind
3 of interested in what's happening there.

4 Also, I was just wondering how that might
5 affect the coordination of the I-11 project.

6 And also I have property over on Reese
7 River, I have a ranch over there, and I was wondering
8 about the noise element, sonic booms and so on and so
9 forth like that.

10 Also, the airport. We are also within a
11 radius of the -- of three miles from the airport, and
12 I'm wondering what's happening there.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. TURNER: Ms. Cunningham?

15 MS. CUNNINGHAM: My name is Laura
16 Cunningham, C-u-n-n-i-n-g-h-a-m, and I live in Beatty,
17 Nevada in southern Nye County.

18 And I just have a really quick comment. I'm
19 going to be putting in a lot of written comments. But I
20 didn't see on the cumulative poster that Nye County is
21 already getting a huge impact from the Nevada Test and
22 Training Range expansion, which I live, like, probably
23 three or four miles from. They're going to expand over,
24 maybe, 19,000 acres, right next to where I have a ranch.
25 And so then up here we're going to have another large

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1 county expansion. And I think that maybe both the Air
2 Force and the naval expansion proposals should be
3 analyzed as a cumulative impact to residents of Nye
4 County.

5 Thank you.

6 MS. TURNER: Okay. At this time anybody --
7 everyone that has signed up to speak has had opportunity
8 to do so. Is there anyone that has not had a chance to
9 speak who would like to?

10 Please, sir, come right up. And again, if
11 you could state your name and spell your last name for
12 us, we would appreciate that.

13 MR. DAHL: Sure. My name is Tim Dahl,
14 D-a-h-l. I'm also a public servant of Nye County.

15 And along with a couple of the mentioned
16 impacts, we have an airport out here that we are very
17 concerned about the continued accessibility of that
18 airport and want to see it continue to be open and
19 accessible.

20 We have a sewer and water system out here
21 that we want to make sure that doesn't get impacted by
22 any training that may go on, or access that may be
23 limited.

24 And I guess, ultimately, the EIS, obviously,
25 took a significant amount of time to, to prepare, and I

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1 would ask that it be allowed for us to have an adequate
2 amount of time to review that since it is such a
3 significant amount of information to digest.

4 So that's basically my comments. Thank you.

5 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Dahl.

6 Is there anyone else who would like to
7 speak?

8 Is there anyone who's provided a comment
9 that would like to expand, have a little more time?
10 Ms. Brooks?

11 MS. BROOKS: I lost my regular glasses, so
12 I'm a little tipsy with these spare ones, here.

13 Yes, I wasn't quite through with the
14 airport, the impact, what's going to happen. I think it
15 was mentioned on one of the film things that were on
16 here, something having to do with a two-mile radius
17 around the airport. And we're very close to that, so I
18 was wondering what was happening there.

19 And then also I was wondering also about the
20 residue from the bombing debris and the clean-up, which
21 I also talked to Alex Stone about, and he seems like
22 there is not going to be too much there. He said they
23 do -- they will follow up with some kind of a clean-up.

24 And also, I was thinking of the smoke and
25 maybe some scientific chemicals or something like that

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1 on the land, which might affect, in the future, maybe
2 animals or grazing, and he seems to think that there
3 won't be.

4 But anyway, also the geothermal. We have a
5 geothermal well, and so I'm wondering -- because it was
6 mentioned in the paper something about the possibility
7 of maybe contaminating the aquifer, and so I was just
8 kind of wondering about that as well.

9 And also the Illinois mine is right behind
10 the millsite where my husband and I live, where we have
11 some property there, and so I'm just wondering, you
12 know, what's going to happen there.

13 I think that -- I just scribbled a bunch of
14 notes here, so I think that -- oh. Also, I have a
15 patented claim, and I just wondered -- a mining claim,
16 and I'm just wondering what might happen there, whether
17 we will be reimbursed for the claims that we have, and
18 maybe whether we're -- what's going to happen there.

19 I think that is all I had, and I thank you
20 very much.

21 MS. TURNER: Anyone else?

22 MR. TRAUB: I want to say something.

23 MS. TURNER: Please come up, sir. And if
24 you could provide your name and spell your last name for
25 us. Thank you.

F.7.2.8.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The purpose of the NEPA process is to ensure that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before decisions are made and before actions are taken. The Navy analyzed the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives, and the analysis is documented in the EIS. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate.

F.7.2.9 Bruce, P.

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1 the Navy takes care of this? They're not even -- it
2 does not seem that they're taking responsibility in
3 keeping up these areas. Now they're asking for more?
4 How are we going to keep them in check? How are we
5 going to make sure that they come and clean up their
6 mess? I don't know, but I would like to be told how
7 they're going to do that.

8 I barely found out about this. Why I'm just
9 now hearing this? It's not that my ears aren't open. I
10 would like to know. I would like all of us to be safe
11 in this small community.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Ms. Arthur.

14 MR. BRUCE: Do you mind if I just speak from
15 here? I --

16 MS. TURNER: I do need to make sure that
17 Susan can hear you and the Navy team can hear you well
18 enough.

19 MR. BRUCE: Absolutely.

20 MS. TURNER: Susan, you'll let me know?

21 Okay.

22 MR. BRUCE: My name is Pat Bruce, B-r-u-c-e.

23 It's just a quick point of order, about ten
24 seconds. We talk about federal land. It's not federal
25 land, it's not BLM land, it's not Fish and Wildlife

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1 Service land, there's tribal lands involved and it's
2 public lands. It's owned by the American people,
3 banished in trust by the BLM, by the Fish and Wildlife
4 Service, and by, by the BLM.

5 But it's public land, and public land is
6 being taken away at this point. It's not a federal
7 transfer. There's a lot of people out here that own
8 that land that take it seriously. It's one of the few
9 things that America has as a national treasure.

10 Thank you.

11 MS. TURNER: And may we get your name,
12 please.

13 MR. BRUCE: Pat Bruce, B-r-u-c-e.

14 MS. TURNER: Thank you.

15 MR. BRUCE: Thank you.

16 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Bruce. Anybody
17 else that hasn't had a chance to speak?

18 Okay. Well, this concludes the oral comment
19 portion of this public meeting. Again, the Navy team
20 will be here until 8:00 tonight. We'll go ahead and
21 re-open the poster sessions. If you have any questions
22 about what you heard tonight, please, we ask that you go
23 to the subject matter experts and ask questions.

24 Susan, again, will stay here if you would
25 like to make an oral comment. And on behalf of the

F.7.2.9.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy recognizes that modernization would withdraw additional land from public use. The term “federal transfer” is used to indicate the transfer of administration and management responsibilities. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.2.10 Bubala III, L.

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1 MR. ALVEY: Hello, I'm Dan Alvey. The
2 last name is spelled A-l-v-e-y.

3 So I'm here tonight on behalf of the 170
4 people that could not be here tonight that are in
5 favor of these wild areas being protected,
6 particularly the Wilderness Study Areas. So I'm
7 going to read you this postcard.

8 Dear Naval Air Station Fallon, we oppose
9 the proposal to eliminate portions of Job Peak,
10 Stillwater Range and Clan Alpine Mountains Wilderness
11 Study Areas and excessive closures of access to our
12 public lands.

13 So there's a lot people that are really
14 interested in these areas staying open and having
15 access to them and also that they are protected and
16 maintain their wilderness character. So we think
17 that these areas should be protected as wilderness
18 and, yeah, I'm just here to deliver all these
19 postcards.

20 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Alvey.
21 Louis, and again my apologies.

22 MR. BUBALA: You're not the first one to
23 butcher it.

24 MS. TURNER: Badly, I think.

25 MR. BUBALA: I roll with the punches on

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1 these things.

2 So I know some of you here. I go by Lou
3 Bubala. I live out in Washoe Valley. Let me first
4 by saying I come -- probably like a lot of people, we
5 come from military backgrounds. My father was in the
6 Army National Guard and helped do programming,
7 computer programming in the '60s and '70s. My
8 father-in-law's career in the International Guard
9 Helicopter Pilot retired as a colonel. My son
10 growing up attended Culver Military Academy and my
11 daughter will be there this summer also. Our adopted
12 son, my son's best friend, is currently stationed in
13 Yuma. So we were fortunate to see him over
14 Thanksgiving.

15 So I start by saying thank you for the
16 work that you've done to protect our country and make
17 our lives better, but I also come here as someone who
18 moved to Nevada 15 years ago really by happenstance,
19 and born in Missouri when my dad was in the National
20 Guard and lived in Indiana, lived in Oregon, moved
21 here 15 years ago for a job as a lawyer. I do
22 corporate work downtown sitting behind a desk a lot
23 of the time, but I got here and I decided well, I'm
24 going to go out and explore.

25 So I took my son out at age five out to

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1 the Black Rock Desert and it's just an amazing,
2 incredible place, and so we did it again the next
3 year and the next year and the next year and we just
4 keep exploring different and different places, and
5 I've got two other daughters and go with -- they come
6 out with me, too. They love to go out and explore
7 and see these incredible wild places we have here in
8 Nevada.

9 We've been out to Dixie Valley. We've
10 been out to the Desatoya. We've been out to Indian
11 Valley. We've been to Cattle Canyon, but Nevada is
12 sort -- it's hard to explore all these areas, and not
13 only that I take my kids' friends. I've taken school
14 groups out camping, because I want everybody to know
15 about these places, and at the end of the day I come
16 down and I say no action. I mean, we've got a lot of
17 incredible places out around the Fallon Naval
18 Station. I'm glad you decided to relocate there or
19 establish your home there after your retirement next
20 year. We welcome you to a permanent Nevada family.
21 I'm glad I'm here. You know, we all live here for a
22 reason, and the reason I live here really is to get
23 out and explore and I think there are better
24 alternatives than the expansion that has been
25 proposed.

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1 Thank you.

2 MS. TURNER: Next we have Carol Lynn, I'm
3 going to spell it, Gaudio, I believe. Then Kris
4 Lemaire, followed by Auguste Lemaire.

5 MS. GAUDIO: Hi, my name is Carol Lynn
6 Gaudio, G-a-u-d-i-o.

7 This is the third meeting I've had to go
8 to this week on agendas which are being pushed at the
9 end of the year because people are too busy with the
10 holidays to show up. I should be spending my
11 evenings fixing up used bicycles for kids for
12 Christmas, but instead I'm here.

13 How many of you have read War and Peace?
14 Good. I mean that was a long book to read. It
15 wasn't an easy read, but War and Peace is only 12 --
16 1,225 pages. This proposal is 1500, which we're
17 expected to digest and comment on over the holidays
18 with everything else going on. The public needs more
19 time to digest your proposal, and I do request the
20 30-day extension.

21 After viewing you're really well done
22 visual aids I am disturbed over the prime wilderness
23 of architectural resources which you want to remove
24 from people who live in Nevada. As military
25 personnel you have no vested interest because you're

F.7.2.10.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.

The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives to meet the purpose of and need for the project. During the scoping period, the Navy also requested suggestions from the public and agencies for potential viable alternatives for consideration in the analysis. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors.

F.7.2.11 Bullock, J.

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1 talk about environmental things, and cultural, and
2 aspects of our airspace and, and the water that we
3 always pray with and connect with.

4 But there's more to it than -- we should be,
5 you know, looking at in our traditional ways. This, our
6 Mother Earth, is one. One water, one fire, one air.
7 One of everything. We have to do our prayers with it.
8 Our church is out there. Our belief is out there. Our
9 sacred things is out there. We don't want it destroyed.
10 We keep -- keeping a way where we always going to be
11 there to pray for it. Thank you.

12 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Bobb.

13 Next is Jami J. Bullock.

14 MS. BULLOCK: Hi. My name is Jami Bullock,
15 B-u-l-l-o-c-k. I want to thank you for being here.
16 Thank you for your time.

17 So the EIS you offered had a lot of
18 information on it, and I want to thank you for that.
19 However, I do want to state that the environment that
20 we're affecting isn't everything, and -- first of all,
21 this isn't private property that we're talking about
22 here. And you did work with numerous agencies, and I
23 want to commend you for that.

24 And I did want to shed some light on some
25 quick statistics on this subject just to give some

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1 perspective on some of these things.

2 So when the base came out here, it was 1942,
3 as you touched on, when World War II started. So the
4 population of Churchill County back then was 5,000
5 people. So these are some other statistics that the EIS
6 didn't touch on. So the population now is 24,000. So
7 since then we've had between 24 and 38 percent increase
8 in population since. Steadily. And so that's since
9 1960.

10 So 1960, as I'm sure you know, sir, would be
11 around the Korean War, or five years after, Vietnam. So
12 if you're noticing here, we have a lot of wars we're
13 talking about. So World War II would be the
14 establishment of Fallon. And then we're steadily
15 increasing in population around Vietnam and Korea.

16 So it would be no coincidence that around
17 withdrawal of military troops of Iraq -- another war --
18 between December of 2007 and the end of December 2007,
19 Fallon's population began steadily decreasing, since
20 2010.

21 So for those of you who want to talk about
22 your small businesses, who want to talk about maybe your
23 farms, for those of you who are invested in this town --
24 I too am a resident. I live here. I am also a Navy
25 veteran, medically retired. So this town, for the first

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1 time in its inception, has been decreasing in
2 population. So I want you to think about, about those
3 things.

4 So we are invested in the Navy that sits
5 here. So I know we, we all know that -- and we talk
6 about freedom, we talk about war, we talk about -- and
7 nobody's being a warmonger here, but this, this is, we
8 need to support them. And they did a lot of studies on
9 these things, these poster boards are here for a reason,
10 they looked up alternatives. And I know that, sir, I
11 commend you, and I thank you for these things. I
12 support what you're doing here.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Ms. Bullock.

15 Next is Ms. Laura Berry.

16 MS. BERRY: Hello everyone. My name is
17 Laura Berry, spelled L-a-u-r-a, B-e-r-r-y. Thank you,
18 Captain, and Mr. Alex Stone, for being here and
19 explaining everything for us.

20 I am a resident of Fallon and a homeowner.
21 I live on the corner of Lone Tree and Solias. For those
22 of you who aren't familiar with that area, that is the
23 entrance to the B-16 bombing range, which I can see from
24 my kitchen window.

25 My concern is, my current concern, is the

F.7.2.11.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.2.12 Carroon, C.

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1 SLMO. Reconfiguration would be a win-win situation
2 for our mine and for the Navy.

3 There is a section within your own EIS
4 that supports this proposal that we've made, and that
5 is section 2-3, proposed action. The last two
6 sentences, however, once an -- this is your writing.
7 However, once an alternative is chosen for
8 implementation the Navy will strive to minimize the
9 action withdrawal acquisition acreage with a goal to
10 track the actual boundary of the weapons danger zone
11 and on live fire training area. So we think that
12 this language allows us to pull that withdrawal area
13 down to the weapons danger zone and we've provided
14 the metes and bounds description for you.

15 That's our mitigation that we propose.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Fortner.

18 Next is Mr. Ian Bigley, and again then
19 followed by Mr. Chip Carroon and then Ms. Karen
20 Boeger, I believe. Close enough? I apologize.

21 I should just apologize right now, thank
22 you everyone for your understanding. Mr. Bigley?
23 Mr. Bigley? Okay, I will call again.

24 Mr. Carroon.

25 MR. CARROON: My name is Chip Carroon.

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1 I'm a photographer and geologist and I oppose the
2 Navy's plans to appropriate this very large extra
3 amount of public land in Northern Nevada.

4 First of all, I think the public will
5 question the move since there has been no significant
6 increase in the number of active duty personnel in
7 the Navy in the last few years. We're not in any
8 major war right now, and the Navy has been doing a
9 good job of fulfilling their mission in recent years
10 with the resources that they have.

11 Secondly, I think the public is being
12 asked to, for example, be efficient and conservative
13 in their use of water due to decrease in water
14 supplies. They've been asked to be efficient to use
15 petroleum efficiently, conservatively and I think the
16 public is going to ask the Navy and other military
17 branches to be efficient at using the lands that have
18 already been taken, and in that regard the military
19 in general in the State of Nevada has already
20 appropriated about six -- three -- 6,300 square
21 miles, that's 4 million acres, okay, and most of this
22 land is not being efficiently used.

23 Now I know in the EIS you have listed
24 little reasons why certain areas are inconvenient for
25 you, but convenient or inconvenient I think the

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1 public is going to ask that you efficiently use the
2 lands that you have already taken before we give you
3 any more.

4 The population of Nevada is increasing
5 rapidly and significantly. We're going to want and
6 need these lands for various recreational and
7 business purposes and the proposal is going to very
8 significantly impact hunters, ATV enthusiasts,
9 general road transfer from point A to point B,
10 explorers, hikers, rock hounders, greatly decrease
11 the access of scientists, such as myself, geologists,
12 biologists, archaeologists, and I think in general
13 the public is -- just does not see strong reasons why
14 you need to take so much more of their land.

15 I think there's a good argument for
16 transfer of some of the lands to the military to aid
17 them, but I think a majority of the people are going
18 to look at this proposal as it is, as a vast military
19 overreach. It's going to adversely affect this very
20 rapidly increasing population in the State of Nevada.
21 It's going to very negatively impact wildlife in the
22 wild areas that have been set aside by this country
23 for preservation for future generations, and I think
24 the Navy should be realizing that a lot of people are
25 going to be contacting their congressional

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1 representatives and voicing their opinion on this
2 matter.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Carroon.

5 Karen, thank you, and then again next
6 would be David VonSeggern.

7 MS. BOEGER: It's Boeger, and I'm Karen
8 Boeger, B-o-e-g-e-r. I'm an employed member of
9 Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, the Nevada chapter,
10 but I'm not speaking for them tonight because
11 honestly I have not really looked at this proposal
12 and so I wouldn't have anything very helpful to tell
13 you, other than we really will be scrutinizing,
14 particularly Bravo 17, related to the WSA relating to
15 hunting opportunities or loss thereof and especially
16 how you will interact with our Department of Wildlife
17 for the welfare of our wildlife, but I did have a
18 look at the maps, some of the maps, and I was
19 dismayed to see the three WSAs in particular that are
20 kind of amputated in part to have control go to the
21 military and the rest, the remaining portions of
22 those three WSAs to be released from WSA status, and
23 the reason why that was a matter of concern to me is
24 that our organization, our members really love to
25 hunt and fish and be intact areas of habitat, and we

F.7.2.12.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in *Ninety Days to Combat*. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.

The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.

The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.

Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.

F.7.2.13 Connelly, T. Comment 1

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1 Points of interest would be gas lines coming
2 through the property, either now, potential, and future
3 development. It's very important that we grow our
4 county. By taking some land from our county does not
5 help our growth, it stunts our growth. So we're looking
6 at the mining and potential mining that your proposal
7 encroaches on Alternative 1. Looks like Alternative 3
8 mitigates some of that, but possibly not all of it. We
9 would like more input on that.

10 I'd also like to understand the idea of the
11 airspace. We have some potential for growth for
12 industry utilizing airspace in this area, and how it
13 impacts the Hawthorne Army Depot, and has the Navy
14 talked to the Army in those regards.

15 So my real focus here is potential growth
16 for our county and how it impacts us with the expansion
17 that is proposed.

18 And I want to thank you for allowing me to
19 come and speak today. Thank you very much. I
20 appreciate it. Captain, Alex, Alice, thank you very
21 much.

22 MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment.

23 Next is Mr. Todd Connelly.

24 MR. CONNELLY: My apologies. I didn't have
25 anything prepared. I really appreciate the information,

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1 and I've learned quite a bit from attending this.

2 I'm Todd Connelly, C-o-n-n-e-l-l-y. I'm
3 from Gardnerville, Nevada. I do have a attachments to
4 Hawthorne. I've been in the Hawthorne area since early
5 1960s. My grandparents lived here. And I really
6 appreciate the gentleman explaining to me what realistic
7 training is, and he did a much better job of explaining
8 it in seven minutes than the way it was explained in the
9 documentation.

10 As a member of the public, I was really not
11 aware that this is going on. I became aware of this in
12 late November, and it's a lot of material to try to
13 consume and digest. Going through the information,
14 realistic training is something I really support. I am
15 a veteran. I can understand what the mission is and so
16 on and so forth. From what the gentleman explained, it
17 certainly makes sense.

18 But I can't understand why the realistic
19 training is really constricted to more achievable land
20 airspace to develop criteria. I believe the 90-day
21 study looked a full implementation and real, full
22 combat. The planes are restricted to only come in from
23 a hundred -- restricted to only 180-degree attack.
24 There's something missing there. It looks like the
25 whole thing is kind of pigeonholed as to what land is

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1 available, and then the standards meet that.

2 The reason I say that, and looking at
3 environmental impacts -- like I say, I've been here
4 since the 1960s, I've enjoyed the area, and in the last
5 20 years I've spent a lot of time in the Bravo-17 area,
6 the Slate Mountain area, Monte Cristo mountains. I've
7 been out there 12 times this year, mostly camping.

8 When I go through the environmental
9 document, it looks like the areas are wasteland. It's
10 very vague, it's very incomplete, and it's anything but
11 wasteland. I visit it frequently, I see a lot of people
12 out there, and people from out of state. I don't think
13 justice is really being done as far as describing that,
14 to say, "Well, there's going to be impacts," and not
15 really classifying them. I really hate to see a lot of
16 these areas become wasteland without being properly
17 represented in the report.

18 I think it goes to great length to describe
19 what the military is trying to accomplish, and this
20 gentleman, and you two gentlemen, probably gave a lot
21 more information than what was actually in the document,
22 as far as my level to digest. I'll stop.

23 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Connelly.

24 Next is Ms. Brooks. Doris Brooks.

25 MS. BROOKS: Yes. My name is Doris Brooks,

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1 then any water quality issues.

2 But -- oh, and my other comment was that I
3 thought that number three is preferable, but it would be
4 even nicer -- nice to maybe extend it out to the west
5 and maybe a little bit to the south of the western
6 border of number three.

7 That's all I have to say. Great idea.
8 Thank you.

9 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. McNeill.

10 Is there anyone else at that time who would
11 like to make a comment that hasn't had a chance to speak
12 yet?

13 Is there anyone that would like a little
14 more time that has spoken? Mr. Connelly?

15 MR. CONNELLY: Mr. Connelly again. Sorry
16 I'm taking this off the top of my head.

17 I am concerned, though, I enjoy this area,
18 I've enjoyed the Monte Cristo area, I love to camp
19 there, it's good R&R when I was working. Now that I'm
20 retired, I'm getting senile, and I have my senior
21 moments and such, but I still enjoy heading out there.
22 I meet a lot of people, a lot of people from out of
23 state.

24 And I'm a little bit offended that the
25 public has not participated in the preparation of the

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1 EIS. And why I say that is just you've had contributing
2 agencies and you've had all kinds of people involved,
3 but where is the public in coming together formally
4 as -- after the draft? I think as a public member, I'd
5 like to see more public involved, or more public
6 identified.

7 This strictly has nothing to say about the
8 number of people, where they're going, what they do in
9 that area, the frequency, and so on and so forth. And
10 again, I'd just really like to emphasize, Nevada and
11 those particular areas are not wasteland. The document
12 expresses it like that, and just vaguely says, yes,
13 there's a bunch of recreation going on.

14 And for a person that's been out there for
15 the last 20 years, I've never seen a notice. I received
16 information from a friend of mine from an email saying:
17 Hey, they're going to be closing that area down.
18 Nothing posted. I don't listen to the news, I hadn't
19 heard about it or, or, you know, anything that really
20 came across of it. Just as a member of the public that
21 tries to use it, and other people from out of state, or
22 myself from Gardnerville and such, I just really don't
23 feel informed. And I don't see anything in the document
24 that really represents public interest in the Bravo-17.

25 Oops. But thank you. It is not a

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1 wasteland. I'm really concerned about the land use
2 issues, the recreational issues, and the biological
3 impacts in that particular area, because it is a nice,
4 beautiful tourist area.

5 And I'm concerned about water resources in
6 general, but I really haven't got too much information
7 to really ask what that involves.

8 Thank you for your patience.

9 MS. TURNER: Thank you.

10 Mr. McNeill, did you want some more time?

11 MR. McNEILL: Tom McNeill once again.

12 Please excuse me. I made a grave error I
13 want to correct. I said to the west extension. I meant
14 to the east. So not to the west, but to the east, and
15 maybe to the south, on number three. I think that would
16 be a really good idea. But number three as it is is
17 just fine. But forgive me. I meant a greater extension
18 to the east sounds like a possible very good idea. So
19 excuse me. Thank you very much.

20 MS. TURNER: Thank you.

21 Ms. Brooks, would you like more time?

22 MS. BROOKS: It just came to me, I had one
23 more thought. I notice on the number three, at the
24 bottom it said that -- something about two or three, the
25 area two or three miles around the airport, and that

F.7.2.13.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding the comment on realistic training and constraints of the current range, as discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, range, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operations ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.

Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in *Ninety Days to Combat*. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.

Regarding the description of the Monte Cristo area as a “wasteland,” the EIS analyzes biological resources in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources) the Navy acknowledges that the area is not a wasteland but is used for many recreation activities and used by many biological resources, and has edited the text of the Final EIS to be sensitive to this comment.

Regarding loss of recreation, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTa and surrounding areas.

F.7.2.14 Connelly, T. Comment 2

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1 and are you sure that the areas you're taking would --
2 that they don't have geothermal?

3 There are currently thousands of square
4 miles of former -- formerly public lands withdrawn for
5 use and by -- and under the control of the military. In
6 addition to the existing training areas already
7 withdrawn for Fallon Naval Air Station there are the
8 Nevada Test Site, 1,300 square miles of land that is not
9 prime real estate.

10 Nellis Air Force Base managed airspace is
11 12,700 square miles. Nellis Air Force range is
12 comprised of 3.1 million acres. That's 4,800 square
13 miles of land in addition to the test site. It's close.
14 I imagine your jets can get down there in five to
15 ten minutes if you really need to, and prop and rotor
16 aircraft might take a little bit less.

17 I definitely am for to the alternative -- no
18 action alternative. Thank you.

19 MS. TURNER: Thank you, sir. Next is
20 Mr. Todd Connelly, followed by Ms. -- it looks like
21 Lorinda Wichman.

22 MR. CONNELLY: My name is Todd Connelly,
23 C-o-n-n-e-l-l-y, from Gardnerville, Nevada.

24 I'm primarily commenting on the Bravo-17
25 area. I've been to that area for the past 20 years, and

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1 I really -- and I really enjoy it. So I'm very
2 concerned with the Bravo-20 area. However, I'm looking
3 at the EIS information, what is available, and it's a
4 huge amount of information to consume and digest in a
5 very, very short period of time.

6 I want to be fair. I'm a vet, too. And I'm
7 just trying to weigh the merits to this. And the people
8 have been very, very helpful today and spent a lot of
9 time and addressed every question and go into
10 discussion.

11 By I fully support realistic training. Our
12 service members actually deserve it.

13 The proposed action will have a large number
14 of negative impacts on the resources, and you can see
15 that in the reclamation. However, many impacts are not
16 even specifically addressed for Bravo-17. There's no
17 specificity like there is with the proposed action.

18 Unfortunately, when I look at that and I
19 step back, it looks like it's depicted as a wasteland
20 and it's going to become a wasteland. It is not. And I
21 think it needs to be characterized accurately and
22 fairly, as far as the general public that use it and
23 enjoy it. As well as the other resources that are
24 involved.

25 In weighing this, the proposed action

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1 results in certain weapon classes that cannot meet
2 realistic conditions. Essentially, for some weapon
3 classes and most restrictive, the -- realistic training
4 is, really, cut in half. And much the same as the
5 captain depicted for the SEALs operations, you should be
6 able to operate forward, right, left, and back. You can
7 only do one side with this proposal. It's cut in half.

8 I've looked at the other proposal that was
9 approved, the proposed action that was approved in 2015.
10 That was approved. That is somewhat realistic. This
11 isn't somewhat realistic. But in all cases, they're
12 somewhat realistic. That is not realistic.

13 I think it needs to go back, you need to
14 evaluate that. Our service members deserve to have
15 something that's realistic and full trainable for the
16 future, and not just -- I'm sorry -- half-assed.

17 MS. TURNER: Thank you.

18 Next is Ms. Lorinda Wichman, followed by
19 Ms. Doris Brooks.

20 MS. WICHMAN: That's Wichman.

21 MS. TURNER: Thank you. Sorry about that.

22 MS. WICHMAN: Not a problem. It happens all
23 the time.

24 I did have some prepared comments; however,
25 I'm also under the obligation of the non-disclosure

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1 afford to lose any more of it. You can't afford to lose
2 any more native peoples, which I still call Indians.
3 You can't afford to lose any more of our American
4 culture to the cities. I'm not against cities. I
5 wouldn't live in one. A lot of people do.

6 But you -- our children are not growing up
7 with the land anymore. They're not. It's tough, man.
8 Those boys that were out there at my ranch, we know.
9 I'm telling you right now, they learned a lot by being
10 on the land. You can't push them off anymore.

11 Thank you.

12 MS. TURNER: Yes, I think we can have one
13 more. Come right up, Mr. Connelly.

14 MR. CONNELLY: Todd Connelly,
15 C-o-n-n-e-l-l-y.

16 I really appreciate the comments. I'm an
17 outsider -- I'm from Gardnerville, Nevada -- but I
18 really love this country. I appreciate it. I enjoy it.
19 I've camped here at least 12 times this year alone. And
20 many of the descriptions are there.

21 As I had discussions, and good discussions,
22 with many of the team representatives, I feel this
23 process is not oriented to good public participation. I
24 mean, you've one shot, really, to speak yourself, three
25 minutes, and that's it for a meeting. Or you have to

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1 travel great distances or whatnot.

2 What is it, 60 days and that's done, for
3 public participation? Is that correct? Oh, okay.
4 Yeah, that's right. You can't answer that. That's not
5 enough. I mean, if people can sit and actually discuss
6 this and, and put their heads together and be able to
7 rationally go over their opinions, I think quite a bit
8 can be done.

9 I've said it a number of times, this is
10 about as anti-public as can be. And, and even though
11 I'm from Gardnerville, Nevada, I'm an outsider. They
12 say: Well, all the information is publicly available.
13 It's in libraries. No, it isn't in the library in
14 Douglas County. I mean, people are not informed.

15 People don't have the ability to sit and
16 discuss that with very knowledgeable representatives so
17 they can understand it, as well as discuss it with
18 themselves. And I really think that a lot more has to
19 be done to get the public involved and get the various
20 opinions, like I've heard tonight, really consolidated
21 and incorporated into this stuff.

22 Thank you.

23 MS. TURNER: Thank you so much.

24 We very much appreciate all of the feedback
25 that you've provided tonight. And I do want to remind

F.7.2.14.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy complies with all applicable environmental laws, including its requirements for public participation under NEPA when developing this EIS. NEPA requires federal agencies to provide opportunities for meaningful public involvement. Comments received during the scoping period were considered in the development of the Draft EIS. Comments received on the Draft EIS have been considered in the development of this Final EIS.

F.7.2.15 Cunningham, L.

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1 have recently found some ancient bones and fossils
2 there, and the Nevada of -- University of Nevada is kind
3 of interested in what's happening there.

4 Also, I was just wondering how that might
5 affect the coordination of the I-11 project.

6 And also I have property over on Reese
7 River, I have a ranch over there, and I was wondering
8 about the noise element, sonic booms and so on and so
9 forth like that.

10 Also, the airport. We are also within a
11 radius of the -- of three miles from the airport, and
12 I'm wondering what's happening there.

13 Thank you.

14 MS. TURNER: Ms. Cunningham?

15 MS. CUNNINGHAM: My name is Laura
16 Cunningham, C-u-n-n-i-n-g-h-a-m, and I live in Beatty,
17 Nevada in southern Nye County.

18 And I just have a really quick comment. I'm
19 going to be putting in a lot of written comments. But I
20 didn't see on the cumulative poster that Nye County is
21 already getting a huge impact from the Nevada Test and
22 Training Range expansion, which I live, like, probably
23 three or four miles from. They're going to expand over,
24 maybe, 19,000 acres, right next to where I have a ranch.
25 And so then up here we're going to have another large

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1 county expansion. And I think that maybe both the Air
2 Force and the naval expansion proposals should be
3 analyzed as a cumulative impact to residents of Nye
4 County.

5 Thank you.

6 MS. TURNER: Okay. At this time anybody --
7 everyone that has signed up to speak has had opportunity
8 to do so. Is there anyone that has not had a chance to
9 speak who would like to?

10 Please, sir, come right up. And again, if
11 you could state your name and spell your last name for
12 us, we would appreciate that.

13 MR. DAHL: Sure. My name is Tim Dahl,
14 D-a-h-l. I'm also a public servant of Nye County.

15 And along with a couple of the mentioned
16 impacts, we have an airport out here that we are very
17 concerned about the continued accessibility of that
18 airport and want to see it continue to be open and
19 accessible.

20 We have a sewer and water system out here
21 that we want to make sure that doesn't get impacted by
22 any training that may go on, or access that may be
23 limited.

24 And I guess, ultimately, the EIS, obviously,
25 took a significant amount of time to, to prepare, and I

F.7.2.15.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR) Military Land Withdrawal at Nellis Air Force Base and the FRTC Modernization EIS are distinct and separate actions based on their mission, type of training activities, and training schedules.

The Proposed Action for NTTR was evaluated in Chapter 4 (Cumulative Impacts) in the Final EIS. There would be no overlap between the residents or resources affected by aircraft noise in the FRTC range areas and those affected by aircraft noise in the areas surrounding the NTTR (see Figure 4-1, 4-2, and 4-3). However, it was determined based on the analysis in the Final EIS that Nye County would experience a significant impact to their recreation and economic resources due to the cumulative nature of the NTTR Proposed Action and the Navy's Proposed Action at the FRTC. Therefore, the Navy is working and will continue to work with Nye County and other impacted Counties to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts when feasible and consistent with the Navy's authority.

F.7.2.16 Dahl, P.

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1 county expansion. And I think that maybe both the Air
2 Force and the naval expansion proposals should be
3 analyzed as a cumulative impact to residents of Nye
4 County.

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8 to do so. Is there anyone that has not had a chance to
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16 impacts, we have an airport out here that we are very
17 concerned about the continued accessibility of that
18 airport and want to see it continue to be open and
19 accessible.

20 We have a sewer and water system out here
21 that we want to make sure that doesn't get impacted by
22 any training that may go on, or access that may be
23 limited.

24 And I guess, ultimately, the EIS, obviously,
25 took a significant amount of time to, to prepare, and I

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1 would ask that it be allowed for us to have an adequate
2 amount of time to review that since it is such a
3 significant amount of information to digest.

4 So that's basically my comments. Thank you.

5 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Dahl.

6 Is there anyone else who would like to
7 speak?

8 Is there anyone who's provided a comment
9 that would like to expand, have a little more time?
10 Ms. Brooks?

11 MS. BROOKS: I lost my regular glasses, so
12 I'm a little tipsy with these spare ones, here.

13 Yes, I wasn't quite through with the
14 airport, the impact, what's going to happen. I think it
15 was mentioned on one of the film things that were on
16 here, something having to do with a two-mile radius
17 around the airport. And we're very close to that, so I
18 was wondering what was happening there.

19 And then also I was wondering also about the
20 residue from the bombing debris and the clean-up, which
21 I also talked to Alex Stone about, and he seems like
22 there is not going to be too much there. He said they
23 do -- they will follow up with some kind of a clean-up.

24 And also, I was thinking of the smoke and
25 maybe some scientific chemicals or something like that

F.7.2.16.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy is planning on implementing a 3-nautical-mile radius and a surface to 1,500 feet AGL airspace exclusion zone surrounding the Gabbs airport. This will allow for safe arrivals and departures at the airport as discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace).

The proposed withdrawal would not have any impacts on water or sewer systems.

The Draft EIS was released for public review Nov. 16, 2018, for a 60-day public comment period, 15 days more than the required 45-day public review period under NEPA. The Navy extended the public comment period additional 30 days, to close Feb. 14, 2019, for a total of 90 days for public review of the Draft EIS. Public notices of the comment period extension were published in local newspapers and the *Federal Register*, and the Navy distributed postcards to the project mailing list (including attendees of the Draft EIS public meetings), letters to Indian Tribes, news releases to media, and emails to subscribers on the project website.

F.7.2.17 Dupre, P.

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1 compatible with the Navy's needs.

2 So I urge you, first of all, to reach out
3 to Friends of Nevada Wilderness and their mapping
4 experts do a better job of actually showing these
5 areas that are under consideration, and I must say
6 that I personally favor the no action alternative,
7 but that's just a personal feeling.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Dwyer.

10 Next we have Ms. Pam Dupre, then Deborah
11 Stevenson, followed by Dan Alvey.

12 MS. DUPRE: Thank you very much. My name
13 is Pam Dupre, D-u-p-r-e. I appreciate the
14 opportunity to provide some public input.

15 I would like to comment not on the
16 expansion plan itself, although I do have many
17 concerns about the scope of the expansion proposal,
18 but rather I would like to comment primarily on the
19 length of the public comment period. I'm sure the
20 military is genuinely interested in hearing from the
21 public. You're probably a little road weary after
22 seven meetings in four days, but this public comment
23 period is entirely too short.

24 This document is 1,000 -- about 1,500
25 pages. The analyses are complex and you can't just

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1 read this document. If you really want to understand
2 it you have to study it, you have to read it, you
3 have to reread it in order to really understand the
4 impacts of the expansion as well as the proposed
5 mitigations.

6 We are just a small fraction of the
7 number of people who own this land and so we should
8 have the time and the ability to be able to absorb
9 this vast amount of information, and quite frankly
10 your timing could not be any worse. This document
11 was released just one week before Thanksgiving. So
12 the comment period falls over the Thanksgiving,
13 Hanukah, Christmas, New Year's holidays. People are
14 traveling. They are trying to donate time to
15 charitable causes. They are trying to catch up with
16 time with family. They are distracted during the
17 holidays.

18 So the only appropriate thing to do, my
19 comment, is to extend the public comment period by at
20 least 30 days and preferably 60 days so that the
21 public has a reasonable amount of time to review this
22 massive, highly complex document. You want
23 thoughtful relevant comments and so we need the time
24 to be able to provide thoughtful relevant comments,
25 and if you will bear with me I would just like to see

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1 how many folks in the room agree tonight that we need
2 some more time to review and comment on this
3 document.

4 Thank you very much.

5 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Ms. Dupre.

6 Ms. Stevenson, and then again followed by
7 Mr. Alvey and then Louis Bubula, III. I'm sorry.

8 MS. STEVENSON: My name is Deborah
9 Stevenson. Stevenson is spelled S-t-e-v-e-n-s-o-n.

10 I know you can't see, but I'm wearing
11 earrings that have a rock art image of some bighorn
12 sheep on them and inside the bighorn sheep is a baby
13 bighorn sheep, bighorn sheep in utero, so to speak,
14 and the reason I wore these earrings is because it
15 relates to a story, and I know from my years as a
16 museum educator that for any story to be meaningful
17 it must be personal, and this one is.

18 You see, I've lived in Nevada for many,
19 many years and I have never seen a bighorn sheep in
20 the wild, never seen one outside of the zoo until Ron
21 Mo took me up Chalk Mountain. Chalk Mountain is
22 located east of Fallon just at the south end of the
23 Clan Alpine Range and it's in the area of the
24 proposed Naval expansion. As we were hiking up this
25 rugged terrain I looked up and then oh, my God, there

F.7.2.17.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Draft EIS was released for public review Nov. 16, 2018, for a 60-day public comment period, 15 days more than the required 45-day public review period under NEPA. The Navy extended the public comment period additional 30 days, to close Feb. 14, 2019, for a total of 90 days for public review of the Draft EIS. Public notices of the comment period extension were published in local newspapers and the Federal Register, and the Navy distributed postcards to the project mailing list (including attendees of the Draft EIS public meetings), letters to Indian Tribes, news releases to media, and emails to subscribers on the project website.

F.7.2.18 Dwyer, L.

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1 Protecting the whole range as wilderness
2 would provide long-term protection for the military
3 as well as providing a great development buffer for
4 their operations. We understand the Navy's need to
5 modernize their facilities, but feel rather than
6 trying to eliminate Wilderness Study Areas,
7 wilderness designations could better serve the Navy's
8 needs by preventing encroachment, incompatible
9 development and also light pollution.

10 I thank you for this opportunity to
11 speak.

12 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Kuznicki.
13 Mr. Dwyer.

14 MR. DWYER: Hello, my name is Larry
15 Dwyer, D-w-y-e-r, and although I'm affiliated with
16 both the Sierra Club and the Friends of Nevada
17 Wilderness I'm not speaking for either of them. I'm
18 speaking as an individual taxpayer.

19 First of all, I want to make note that it
20 appears that some of your maps are inaccurate in the
21 -- how they show the Wilderness Study Areas. In
22 particular, the Job Peak WSA, the Stillwater WSA,
23 there are large portions of their Wilderness Study
24 Areas that do not show on your maps. That obviously
25 needs to be corrected.

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1 Captain Halloran has made some passionate
2 and persuasive arguments for the need for expanding
3 the areas, the training areas, and this is based on
4 -- I mean, I think that we really need to question
5 some of the underlying precepts and why we need these
6 weapons and these -- and the extensive training that
7 goes with these weapons, but I'm not going to take a
8 lot of your time on that tonight. That's probably
9 for another time and is that really the best use of
10 our taxpayer dollars.

11 On the assumption that these are needed,
12 and we will go on that assumption for now, how can we
13 cooperatively come up with appropriate land
14 management plans? First of all, I think you need to
15 get or at least display accurate boundaries for the
16 WSAs and LWCs, as the previous speaker noted, and
17 secondly, leave the management of those in the hands
18 of the BLM. The BLM can do a very good job of
19 reducing or minimizing incompatible development,
20 which is being done already, and also another thing
21 that the Navy might like would be the dark skies,
22 which you have if you have wilderness areas
23 surrounding your training areas. You have dark
24 skies, and you should also increase the size of the
25 WSAs and LWCs because management, as I mentioned, is

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1 compatible with the Navy's needs.

2 So I urge you, first of all, to reach out
3 to Friends of Nevada Wilderness and their mapping
4 experts do a better job of actually showing these
5 areas that are under consideration, and I must say
6 that I personally favor the no action alternative,
7 but that's just a personal feeling.

8 Thank you.

9 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Dwyer.

10 Next we have Ms. Pam Dupre, then Deborah
11 Stevenson, followed by Dan Alvey.

12 MS. DUPRE: Thank you very much. My name
13 is Pam Dupre, D-u-p-r-e. I appreciate the
14 opportunity to provide some public input.

15 I would like to comment not on the
16 expansion plan itself, although I do have many
17 concerns about the scope of the expansion proposal,
18 but rather I would like to comment primarily on the
19 length of the public comment period. I'm sure the
20 military is genuinely interested in hearing from the
21 public. You're probably a little road weary after
22 seven meetings in four days, but this public comment
23 period is entirely too short.

24 This document is 1,000 -- about 1,500
25 pages. The analyses are complex and you can't just

F.7.2.18.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy has reviewed the Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) referenced in the comment and has checked all figures for quality assurance purposes between the Draft and Final EIS. Regarding the need to de-designate the portions of the WSAs, the proposed de-designation of portions of WSAs is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

F.7.2.19 Emmerich, K.

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1 everyone else.

2 The change, I understand, came from the rest
3 of the state and the bordering towns over here. They
4 said: Push it to the south and east because it doesn't
5 bother us anymore that way. It bothers us a lot more
6 that way.

7 So I'm going to conclude with saying that I
8 believe that -- I'm not an activist, but this is going
9 to be the first time I'm going to write to my
10 congressman, and I'm going to write to the senators,
11 anybody I can that has any input to any of this sort of
12 stuff, and tell them to reconsider where the boundary is
13 in our immediate area.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. And
16 we appreciate you speaking nice and loud. I know it's
17 hard to hear with the heater on as well. So thank you.
18 And you have to hold the microphone close. Thank you.

19 Next is Mr. Kevin Emmerich, followed by
20 Mr. Johnnie L. Bobb.

21 MR. EMMERICH: Thank you. My name is Kevin
22 Emmerich, spelled E-m-m-e-r-i-c-h.

23 I won't make such a long comment. I don't
24 live up here -- can you hear me better now? I don't
25 live in this area, but I do live just north of Beatty,

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1 Nevada, and in that area the Air Force wants to expand
2 and take several thousand acres of, actually, public
3 land around there. That's caused a really big issue
4 with the people around there.

5 We are worried about public access, about
6 the fences, things like livestock, that sort of thing.
7 And it's going to be a major impact to the community.
8 I'm losing -- I'm getting lost here on the thing.

9 Now, I'm going to review the EIS for Fallon
10 and you've only given us 45 days, and I think you should
11 give us at least another 60 days onto that comment
12 period, because this is about a thousand square miles of
13 land that's going to be turned over to the military, and
14 it's a really big area.

15 And in this case for the military expansion
16 for the Nellis range down there where we live, they've
17 given an alternative that is the status quo, and that
18 allows that base to stay the way it is.

19 You've given us a good explanation as to why
20 you can't keep it the way it is, but you haven't given
21 that alternative to us for Fallon. You've given us no
22 action. If you do that, it gets the existing bases
23 turned over to BLM, and that, that might be better for
24 them. And you've given us three other alternatives that
25 only allow us to choose from an expanded alternative.

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1 So I think you should add a status quo alternative to
2 this.

3 I've been to certain areas around here, it's
4 more of a recreational thing to me. The Monte Cristo
5 Range, the Clan Alpine range, and I don't think this
6 should expand. I actually think this should remain
7 public. I think the military has a lot of land, and I'd
8 like to see the access remain open here.

9 So thank you.

10 MS. TURNER: Thank you so much.

11 Next is Mr. Johnnie L. Bobb, followed by
12 Mr. Robert Bastien.

13 MR. BOBB: My name is Johnnie L. Bobb.
14 Remember the traditional and the cultural. Traditional
15 way, we always pray for the land and everything else
16 that's sacred on this Mother Earth.

17 I support the Navy, I support our people
18 that's doing the longest walk across America, I support
19 the people that having ceremonies here today and
20 tonight, and whenever it comes to that situation where
21 things feel hurt inside of them.

22 These buttons I'm wearing, you know, we all
23 together as a native people to do whatever we can to do
24 our prayers for our ceremonies. Fire, everything else.

25 My country here on our treaty land. I

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1 MR. TRAUB: My name is Ed Traub, T-r-a-u-b,
2 and I just have a comment.

3 I was at the meeting in June up in Fallon
4 where the commander spoke on all of this on the base,
5 and the out -- or the gist of what was said up there was
6 you guys have got a wonderful bomb that you love to drop
7 from about 30,000 feet, but it's only about 75 percent
8 accuracy -- accurate. And the reason for this expansion
9 is to cover your tail on a bomb that fits into the
10 25 percent category and goes somewhere else.

11 So my other comment or question regarding
12 all this is: Why would you be sure that -- you're going
13 to bring this fence line right up here to Gabbs.
14 That -- how do you know your numbers are accurate on
15 that? What if it just drops right in here on the high
16 school? How are you going to handle that one?

17 And that's my comment. I appreciate it.

18 MS. TURNER: Okay. Anyone else? Please.

19 MR. EMMERICH: I'd like to make a follow-up
20 comment relating to that, and that relates to where we
21 live in the Beatty area, very close to the airport
22 testing range.

23 In 2005, 2006, it was really raining, and
24 you don't expect the desert to burn, and there were a
25 couple of lightning strikes that caused two really big

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1 wildfires, both east and west of us.

2 I'm bringing that up because in that
3 expansion we were promised there would be really good
4 accuracy, there would be a .1 million chance that the
5 bombs would be off target.

6 I'm bringing that up because in 2004 I
7 watched one of their military flares come down in the
8 meadow about a half-mile from our place. And so
9 wildfires, I think, should really be of concern to a lot
10 of people when we're talking about expanding areas and
11 bombing areas.

12 Thank you.

13 MS. TURNER: Thank you very much.

14 Any last comments? Yes, please. And then
15 we'll have you speak, sir. Thank you.

16 MR. BOBB: Again, my name is Johnnie Bobb.
17 B-o-b-b, my last name.

18 That place over there going towards Fallon,
19 East Gate, I think it was, but there was a family over
20 there, McKay family. Remember the McKay family that was
21 forced off of their property and their land, and their
22 cattle was taken by the BLM, and everything was plowed
23 over after awhile when they were forced off the land.
24 The McKay family, I don't even know what happened to
25 them after that.

F.7.2.19.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Draft EIS was released for public review Nov. 16, 2018, for a 60-day public comment period, 15 days more than the required 45-day public review period under NEPA. The Navy extended the public comment period additional 30 days, to close Feb. 14, 2019, for a total of 90 days for public review of the Draft EIS. Public notices of the comment period extension were published in local newspapers and the Federal Register, and the Navy distributed postcards to the project mailing list (including attendees of the Draft EIS public meetings), letters to Indian Tribes, news releases to media, and emails to subscribers on the project website.

The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative, also known as the “status quo” alternative, would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS because it would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

The Navy has implemented and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce the occurrence of wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan, and where possible, proposed elements and goals of this plan were added to the Final EIS. For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).

F.7.2.20 Etchegaray, J.

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1 -oOo-

2 FALLON, NEVADA; WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 12, 2018

3 -oOo-

4

5 (Public comment prior to meeting.)

6 MR. ETCHEGARAY: First of all, I'd like to
7 express that I believe in our military. They are here
8 to protect our nation and keep us safe.

9 That being said, I have some concerns about
10 this Navy expansion. First and foremost is this is a
11 government takings of the land that people make a living
12 on. If this expansion is going to take place, there
13 needs to be a compensation to the ranchers. The Navy
14 needs to pay for the AUMs that ranchers rely on for
15 winter grazing of cattle. These are the same people
16 that help feed Americans.

17 Second, if this expansion occurs, there
18 needs to be a good fence built around the expansion so
19 that no cattle can get in, where they will certainly die
20 of thirst.

21 Third, I see no reason to cut off an
22 existing highway, Highway 839, and add extra expense to
23 the taxpayers in Nevada, when this is a road that also
24 leads to Rawhide gold mine and the geothermal plant. A
25 perfectly fine road, I might add.

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1 Having said this, there is a private well
2 next to the Highway 839 that is being pumped for the
3 use -- for cattle watering on the winter range. There
4 have been improvements made on these cattle allotments
5 that also need compensation, if taken. Again, this
6 range that helps feed the very Navy that wants to
7 expand.

8 I ask that the Navy take these
9 considerations into account in going to Congress for
10 approval. I understand your need for expansion to
11 continue to keep this country safe, but be fair to the
12 ranchers that help feed this country. There needs to be
13 compensation and common sense about the boundaries.

14 It only makes sense to fence along existing
15 Highway 839 so that the fence can easily be maintained.
16 Your original plan to fence the top of Sand Mountain
17 makes no sense. Fence could never be maintained
18 properly. The snow would ruin the fence on a yearly
19 basis, and cattle would enter your expansion.

20 There are also cattle corrals that would
21 need compensation. People have put hard work and money
22 to make these cattle allotments usable. Again, these
23 corrals should also be taken into your consideration.

24 I ask that you take these topics I've stated
25 here into your consideration when making your decision.

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1 John -- sincerely, John Etchegaray.

2

3 (Presentation begins.)

4 MS. TURNER: Good evening, everyone. Thank
5 you so much for coming tonight. We appreciate your
6 attendance.

7 My name is Allison Turner. I'll be the
8 moderator for tonight's meeting on the draft
9 Environmental Impact Statement -- or EIS -- for the
10 Fallon Range Modernization.

11 If you would like to join us in the Pledge
12 of Allegiance, at this time we would ask that you please
13 stand.

14 (The Pledge of Allegiance was recited at this time.)

15 MS. TURNER: Thank you.

16 And on behalf of the Navy, again I'd like to
17 welcome you and thank you for coming.

18 I hope you've had a chance to visit the
19 poster stations tonight to talk to the different Navy
20 team members here that can, hopefully, answer any
21 questions you might have. I know many of you were
22 sitting down as the video was playing. If you didn't
23 get a chance to see all of it, we do have a station set
24 up to my right in the middle of the room there where you
25 can watch it in its entirety.

F.7.2.20.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy would implement the following specific grazing mitigations under all action alternatives. Policies and procedures in the NAS Fallon INRMP would continue to be implemented to avoid conflicts with livestock grazing. This includes routine monitoring of fence lines surrounding potentially hazardous areas to ensure the fence is secure and cannot be crossed by people or animals; the monitoring area would be increased to include new perimeter fences on lands proposed for withdrawal. The Navy is proposing to provide funds for BLM to hire two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers who would assist with management of the additional area. The Standard Operating Procedures for handling cattle on the FRTC training ranges would be revised and implemented. Livestock-friendly erosion controls would be used when performing construction activities on or adjacent to grazing land that is actively being used.

The Navy acknowledges that it has the authority under 43 United States Code section 315q of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended, to make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes. This authority has been incorporated into Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative).

The Final EIS (Chapter 2 and Section 3.4 [Grazing]) describes the process proposed by the Navy to determine payment amounts to each grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits.

Fences would be properly maintained in accordance with standard operating procedures. Safety of the people, wildlife, and livestock are is of the utmost importance.

F.7.2.21 Fendelander, E.

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1 Off-roading is also popular in these
2 areas. Others hunt in these areas. Ranchers graze
3 their cattle in these areas. Access to potential
4 geothermal resources should not be restricted.

5 In closing, once again I support only the
6 no action alternative. The Armed Forces need to more
7 efficiently utilize the lands that they currently
8 have withdrawn. Please, use and share the Nellis Air
9 Force Range and the Nevada Test Site and leave the
10 rest of Nevada to Nevadans.

11 Thank you.

12 MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment.

13 Mr. Eric Fendelander.

14 MR. FENDELANDER: My name is Eric
15 Fendelander. It's spelled F-e-n-d-e-l-a-n-d-e-r, and
16 I've been known as everything from Finlanderson in
17 Iceland to Fenderbender.

18 I've been around on the United States Air
19 Force retired, been in aviation 20 years plus. I
20 agree with the Captain that there is one thing that I
21 will agree with him on is that hands-on, butt in the
22 seat training is required. Simulators don't cut it.
23 Kids can go home and play video games. It's not the
24 same as flying along, like I was back when I was way
25 younger and all of the sudden I realized why they

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1 told us to put our shields down, because a duck came
2 through the windshield and I was splattered in blood
3 and had to look out through the hole in the
4 windshield to get it to brush everything away so I
5 could see to get home. So I understand that, that
6 you can't get that on a video game.

7 Back when I was flying for a living we
8 had dumb bombs so I was like the pilot was the only
9 smart part of it. So the new munitions of being
10 further away and dropping them in a two-foot circle,
11 I would have loved that, but I was going slow and
12 sometimes trying to be fast, but it didn't work out
13 as good as it should.

14 The one thing that I disagree with the
15 Navy about is I support using inert bombs. We threw
16 what they call blue bombs, inert bombs. It has the
17 missile that's fully functional and a fake warhead
18 that doesn't have anything in it that will blowup.
19 The only thing it has in there is a little almost
20 like a flashcube so that the power goes to it so you
21 know when you recover that missile that it actually
22 did give power to the explosives, and the best part
23 about that is in the Air Force that I found was when
24 one screwed up you could go out and get it, find out
25 what happened, train people better, do whatever it

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1 takes to fix the problem. A lot of times it was the
2 parts, you know, bad parts from the manufacturers.
3 You never know, but if you blow them up nobody will
4 ever find out what happened.

5 In the future I would like to see both
6 the Navy and the Air Force for every acre they take
7 they need to give one back. I'm a Nevadan. I
8 actually started out as an Alaskan, but I'm a Nevadan
9 now. I've been that way for a long time. I would
10 like to see the test range or the bombing range open
11 Monday through Thursday for the Navy with inert bombs
12 so there's no explosives being dealt with, and then
13 on Friday, Saturday and Sunday be open to the public.
14 That's the only way that we can ever be good
15 neighbors. Other than that this thing will drag out
16 for years. I'll be part of it. So that's the one
17 way that we can make it work.

18 Thank you very much.

19 MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment.

20 Next Mr. Darrell Pursel, followed by
21 Beverly Harry, then Larry Johnson.

22 MR. PURSEL: Hello, Darrell Pursel. I'm
23 vice-president of Nevada Farm Bureau, and it's
24 P-u-r-s-e-l.

25 And Nevada Farm Bureau has a major

F.7.2.21.1 Response

Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. The reason that using high-explosive munitions is crucial for military readiness is because the Fallon Range Training Complex is the only place in the United States that integrates entire flight operations into a single operation. This does not just include pilot training, but also ground crew training who need to practice loading live munitions onto the wings and all the other steps in between. By using inert munitions, the Navy would be neglecting an entire aspect of training which would not fulfill the purpose and need of military readiness.

F.7.2.22 Gentry, C.

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1 -oOo-

2 LOVELOCK, NEVADA; THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2018

3 -oOo-

4

5 MR. CLYDE GENTRY: On Monday evening at
6 the meeting in Gabbs I spoke with the Air Boss, I
7 think his name is Patrick, and the Base Commander and
8 we discussed about why they can't control what level
9 the pilots on flying over at the Yomba Indian
10 Reservation, and it was suggested they come out and
11 see if there was a place they could put a radar so
12 they could see what pilots were down below certain
13 levels and have a better chance of knowing who it was
14 that did the sonic boom on our reservation that
15 caused damage to some of our buildings and stuff, and
16 I would like it if one of them could come out, when
17 this gets slowed down a little so they have time, and
18 we can discuss where it might be possible to put a
19 radar or something so they can have better control
20 over who's flying low and that over the reservation,
21 and that's all I have to say.

22 Thank you.

23 MS. TURNER: Good morning, everyone.

24 Welcome. Thank you for coming today.

25 My name is Allison Turner and I would

F.7.2.22.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Regarding impacts to reservations, the Navy is consulting with Indian Tribes on the identification of any additional known cultural resources and associated potential direct and indirect impacts from the Proposed Action. Discussions of impacts that have not yet been assessed may occur during these government-to-government meetings. As stated in Section 3.7.3.5 (Proposed Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation), the Air Operations Office logs noise complaints at Naval Air Station Fallon. The office records information about the time, location, and nature of the complaint; and initiates investigation of what if any Navy airspace operations were being conducted by the Navy at the FRTC. If the caller requests, range personnel will follow up with a return phone call to explain the resolution of the complaint. The Navy may be contacted for noise complaints and operational suggestions at 775-426-2419.

F.7.2.23 Harding, W.

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1 Again back to the sage-grouse, how is that possible,
2 how is there no significant impact, and excuse me,
3 I'm an engineer. I would like qualification of the
4 word significant. How do you quantify significant?

5 And then on page 23 the access to public
6 lands. The importance of the WSAs. I would urge a
7 fifth option, if possible, to keep the WSAs. If not,
8 encourage Congress to push them into full wilderness
9 status, which would give huge buffers and access to
10 sportsmen to your proposed area.

11 Thank you.

12 MS. TURNER: Mr. Warren Harding.

13 MR. HARDING: Thank you.

14 Ladies and gentlemen, great to see you
15 here. I wish you all a Merry Christmas, enjoy the
16 holiday seasons.

17 I did not come here to speak. I just now
18 made a decision that I shall. I am a second -- I
19 gave my name, didn't I, Warren Harding. Thank you.

20 I'm a second generation born in Nevada.
21 I have gone through the scouting program. I
22 understand our wilderness. I understand our BLM.
23 I've hunted. My family has hunted. Every speaker
24 here represents the thoughts in my heart and my love
25 for our western state. The heart of the west is

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1 definitely for me Nevada.

2 The reason I'm speaking is there are too
3 many names on our walls and our memorials for our men
4 and women in service. If our military needs and
5 feels and supports if they have to take part of what
6 I know and love, there is a greater love in my heart.
7 I'm not a blind patriot. I'm not even sure I'm a
8 strong patriot, but our men and women in service have
9 failed to return and are listed on a wall or a
10 memorial. If they could get what training these
11 people may offer, that is a greater loyalty to me.

12 With that I appreciate your time and
13 that's the thought of one person, Warren Harding.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment.

16 Our last speaker will be Melissa
17 Petterson.

18 MS. PETTERSON: Hi, my name is Melissa
19 Petterson, last name is P-e-t-t-e-r-s-o-n.

20 I'm on the board at the Reno Gem and
21 Mineral Society. I'm not representing them here
22 tonight, but I'm here as a rock hound, hiker, and
23 general lover of the outdoors. I moved here from
24 California about ten years ago and it was sad to see
25 areas where I had gone fishing and exploring the

F.7.2.23.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with potentially impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.2.24 Harry, N.

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1 Everyone recognizes, however, that those 35 year old
2 recommendations are extremely outdated. They've been
3 given little, if any weight by Congress in looking at
4 wilderness designations. It would be like the Navy
5 doing today's expansion proposal based on an EIS
6 analysis you completed in the mid '80s.

7 The value of Wilderness Study Areas for
8 outdoor recreation, wildlife habitat only increases
9 as the years go by. More and more freeways, roads,
10 pipelines, power lines, project plans continue to be
11 built and fragment our public lands across the state.

12 The bottom line is we think wilderness is
13 a win-win with what the military is trying to do, and
14 we look forward to try to work with you to try to
15 find some additional solutions.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. TURNER: Mr. Heath, followed by
18 Norman Harry, Kirk Peterson and Rob Bastien.

19 MR. HARRY: I guess I'm next.

20 MS. TURNER: Roger Heath?

21 MR. HARRY: No, I'm Norman Harry.

22 MS. TURNER: Okay, is Mr. Heath here?

23 Okay, yes, you are next then.

24 MR. HARRY: My name is Norman Harry,
25 H-a-r-r-y.

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1 I'm here tonight working as the Washoe
2 Tribe Environmental Director, but I'm here tonight
3 representing myself as a former tribal chairman for
4 the Pyramid Paiute Tribe.

5 We have dealt with NAGPRA since its
6 inception in 1990 and going through the summary and
7 looking at cultural resources has to be my primary
8 emphasis right now and how it can be reinforced. We
9 heard from the commander tonight that, you know,
10 knowing that there is a change in leadership every
11 couple of years, well that same change in leadership
12 happens with tribal governments as well, too.

13 So if this -- and I heard someone on the
14 news this morning, I think it might have been one of
15 the representatives from the Navy stating, you know,
16 this is a once in a lifetime opportunity for
17 expansion. Well, if that's true then we should be
18 able to take the time to be able to look at working
19 with the Navy and also looking at how we can
20 re-enforce the federal laws that are applicable for
21 cultural resources, namely NAGPRA, and more
22 importantly identifying protocols for inadvertent
23 discoveries.

24 I know you've worked with some of the
25 tribes and met with some of the tribes, but I've

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1 never seen the comments and I've had to deal with
2 repatriation for a couple of decades now and it could
3 get very, very complex. So what I'm really pointing
4 to is taking the time to develop protocols with the
5 Navy and working with the tribes and making sure that
6 the compliance and protocols are in conformance with
7 the federal law, especially NAGPRA.

8 I know there are concerns I had also with
9 one of maps identifying Pyramid Lake, which is my
10 reservation, where I'm from, but almost half, the
11 upper half of the reservation was in an impacted area
12 and I've yet to find out, and hopefully tonight, how
13 my reservation is going to be impacted. I don't know
14 if it's a flyover or what's happening across our
15 tribal lands, but the last point I want to bring to
16 your attention is it's pretty well known is the fact
17 that when these protocols are developed, and I'm
18 talking about two of the most ancient ones that we
19 call our relatives were found about 50 miles apart.
20 It was Beach End and also Steer Cave over 9,000 years
21 old.

22 So we don't want to have the
23 anthropologists or so on and so forth come in and get
24 involved with that aspect because it's not in
25 compliance with NAGPRA. The law simply reads that

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1 the tribes can make that final determination. Burial
2 procedures and repatriation is not a scientific
3 project, but a human rights issue.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Harry.

6 Next is Kirk Peterson.

7 MR. PETERSON: Hello, my name is Kirk
8 Peterson. Last name is spelled P-e-t-e-r-s-o-n.

9 I've been working in Nevada to defend
10 wilderness conservation protections for nearly
11 40 years. Unfortunately it's not very lucrative so I
12 never get to retire.

13 From the DEIS and the discussions with
14 your representatives it is clear that your training
15 area is currently located in Dixie Valley because
16 this area meets non-development and darkness
17 standards you need for night and day and flight and
18 ground training. The goal of the current EIS is to
19 transfer the public lands of Dixie Valley, including
20 portions of three WSAs, to the Navy to ensure that
21 these lands will not be developed, but it's important
22 to remember and to mention that the Dixie Valley
23 Training Area is only suitable today for Navy
24 training purposes because of all the work done since
25 the 1970s by people, including several people in this

F.7.2.24.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. In accordance with Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments; DoD policies; the National Historic Preservation Act; and Navy instructions, the Navy engaged in Tribal consultations during scoping, during the public comment period for the Draft EIS, and following release of the Draft EIS. The Navy invited culturally affiliated Tribes to take part in the NEPA process as Tribal Participants for this EIS (see Appendix C, Tribal Correspondence). The Navy invited these Tribes to (1) participate in project meetings, (2) provide additional information related to cultural resources, and (3) provide internal document review (e.g., of the Class III Cultural Resources Inventory Report) during the development of this Draft EIS.

The Navy invited and engaged in Government-to-Government consultations with the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada and the following federally recognized Tribes: the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribes, Lovelock Paiute Tribe, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Summit Lake Paiute Tribe, Te-Moak Tribe of Western Shoshone Indians of Nevada (consisting of the Battle Mountain Band, Elko Band, South Fork Band, and Wells Band), Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, Walker River Paiute Tribe, Winnemucca Paiute Tribe, Yerington Paiute Tribe, and Yomba Shoshone Tribe. Appendix C (Tribal Correspondence) of the Final EIS was updated to include a summary of all outreach efforts performed by the Navy and copies of official correspondence.

F.7.2.25 Holmgren, D.

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1 about the school closing, and that's kind of a threat
2 now as it is. But with this kind of thing happening, it
3 looks a little obvious. Thank you.

4 MS. TURNER: Thank you, sir.

5 Any last comments? Okay. Okay. Come right
6 up, sir.

7 MR. HOLMGREN: I wasn't going to speak, but
8 my name is David Hoomgren, H-o-l-m-g-r-e-n. And I'm
9 basically in Mineral County. But after Mr. Lyman just
10 spoke, I couldn't sit there and not tell you.

11 I brought two boys to the ranch who couldn't
12 succeed in town. They couldn't make it. One boy way
13 worse than the other. But you can't sacrifice these
14 rural communities anymore. You can't do it. You can't
15 afford it. America can't afford it.

16 What would have happened in some of the
17 wars, like the Civil War, World War I, World War II, if
18 they didn't have the code talkers? What would have
19 happened if they didn't have sharp shooters that grew up
20 in the country, shooting the eye out of a squirrel?
21 What would have happened for the military at that time?
22 Can you lose those kind of people anymore? You can't
23 afford it.

24 You can't afford to lose anymore livestock.
25 You've got your wildlife people that love it. You can't

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1 afford to lose any more of it. You can't afford to lose
2 any more native peoples, which I still call Indians.
3 You can't afford to lose any more of our American
4 culture to the cities. I'm not against cities. I
5 wouldn't live in one. A lot of people do.

6 But you -- our children are not growing up
7 with the land anymore. They're not. It's tough, man.
8 Those boys that were out there at my ranch, we know.
9 I'm telling you right now, they learned a lot by being
10 on the land. You can't push them off anymore.

11 Thank you.

12 MS. TURNER: Yes, I think we can have one
13 more. Come right up, Mr. Connelly.

14 MR. CONNELLY: Todd Connelly,
15 C-o-n-n-e-l-l-y.

16 I really appreciate the comments. I'm an
17 outsider -- I'm from Gardnerville, Nevada -- but I
18 really love this country. I appreciate it. I enjoy it.
19 I've camped here at least 12 times this year alone. And
20 many of the descriptions are there.

21 As I had discussions, and good discussions,
22 with many of the team representatives, I feel this
23 process is not oriented to good public participation. I
24 mean, you've one shot, really, to speak yourself, three
25 minutes, and that's it for a meeting. Or you have to

F.7.2.25.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate.

F.7.2.26 Jacobson, J.

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1 remaining time to someone else. I'll just move on to
2 the next speaker.

3 Please respect any requests I make for you
4 to stop speaking when the three-minute time limit is
5 reached. Breanna here is going to help us try to keep
6 time. She's got some helpful cards here that lets you
7 know when you have one minute remaining, which is the
8 green, yellow for 30 seconds, and then the red card, if
9 you could comfortably conclude your remarks. And then
10 that way we can give enough time to everybody who wants
11 to speak.

12 Again, if you have a prepared written
13 statement, you're more than welcome to read it. It just
14 needs to be read within the three minutes. Or you can
15 turn it in at the comment station.

16 So I think we're ready to begin now. Our
17 first speaker is Mr. Jim Jacobson, followed by Mr. Kevin
18 Emmerich. Mr. Jacobson, if you'd like to come up.

19 MR. JACOBSON: Thank you. As you all know,
20 I'm probably not the longest living person here. Moved
21 in about six years ago. And I like this area because
22 it's in the middle of no place.

23 And that's one of the problems I see with
24 what's happening with Alternative 3, in that what I'm
25 seeing with -- is that better? So what I'm seeing with

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1 Alternative 3 is that instead of, like, Alternative 1
2 and 2, where it really didn't visually impact our town
3 any, the fence will be up here right past the golf
4 course, is where the markers are at. And every day that
5 I get up, I'm going to look out there and there's going
6 to be a fence there that says no, you can't go out here.
7 That's a little different than looking out to the
8 expanded horizon, saying you can go anyplace, you can do
9 anything.

10 That's probably my biggest concern, is, is
11 that we are the smallest group of people that will be
12 impacted on this, from anyplace. We have the smallest
13 voice, but we will be impacted the most of anyone
14 involved anywhere. So I was in 98 percent agreement
15 with this support until about ten days ago when I got
16 the map for Alternative 3 and they said that the fence
17 was going to be three miles from our town. To me,
18 that's unacceptable because it doesn't fulfill why we're
19 here.

20 I believe we all understand that things have
21 to change. We need to have upgrades so these guys can
22 do their jobs. That's not an argument at all on my
23 part. I'm just saying that to mitigate the changes to
24 the people that are here to the smallest degree that we
25 can, and make it as easy for us to stomach as it is for

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1 everyone else.

2 The change, I understand, came from the rest
3 of the state and the bordering towns over here. They
4 said: Push it to the south and east because it doesn't
5 bother us anymore that way. It bothers us a lot more
6 that way.

7 So I'm going to conclude with saying that I
8 believe that -- I'm not an activist, but this is going
9 to be the first time I'm going to write to my
10 congressman, and I'm going to write to the senators,
11 anybody I can that has any input to any of this sort of
12 stuff, and tell them to reconsider where the boundary is
13 in our immediate area.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Jacobson. And
16 we appreciate you speaking nice and loud. I know it's
17 hard to hear with the heater on as well. So thank you.
18 And you have to hold the microphone close. Thank you.

19 Next is Mr. Kevin Emmerich, followed by
20 Mr. Johnnie L. Bobb.

21 MR. EMMERICH: Thank you. My name is Kevin
22 Emmerich, spelled E-m-m-e-r-i-c-h.

23 I won't make such a long comment. I don't
24 live up here -- can you hear me better now? I don't
25 live in this area, but I do live just north of Beatty,

F.7.2.26.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The fence would be built similar to all other BLM approved fences which currently exist in the area, and would not appreciably change the visual landscape of the region.

F.7.2.27 Kuznicki, K.

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1 to her directly, one-on-one. So she'll be here for you,
2 too.

3 With that, I think we're ready to get
4 started. The first speaker is Mr. Kurt Kuznicki.

5 MR. KUZNICKI: Thank you.

6 To the captain and the men and women and
7 families of the NAS Fallon, I want to thank you for the
8 service to our country and for keeping us safe. And I
9 mean this from the bottom of my heart, the loss of one
10 American life is unacceptable.

11 To the Department of the Navy and Department
12 of Defense, this comment period seems like a sneak
13 attack. It's out of the same playbook that the United
14 States Air Force used on the proposed expansion of the
15 desert refuge in Southern Nevada.

16 Having the comment period in December is
17 unfair. None of you folks are busy in December; right?
18 The EIS is over 1,500 pages long. And I, and I get
19 that. It contains a lot of technical info, which is
20 really hard to digest, especially for a rancher who
21 probably puts in 14 hours a day, or a miner that does
22 the same, or for a single mom, or for someone that
23 actually works another job.

24 You know, all of this, to me, seems like
25 it's just a box to check for the Navy, that they're very

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1 kind, they're good folks, but let's check this box,
2 let's move on, and let's go on with the mission.

3 What I'm advocating for tonight is that we
4 increase this comment period to give folks the fair
5 opportunity, and take it out of December.

6 So thank you for allowing me to make these
7 comments. And to all the Navy folks here, once again,
8 thank you for your service.

9 And my name is Kurt Kuznicki,
10 K-u-z-n-i-c-k-i. Thank you.

11 MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment,
12 sir.

13 Next is Mr. Tom Myers.

14 MR. MYERS: I guess arriving early gets us
15 up here first, huh? My name is Tom Myers. I am from
16 Reno. I came out here because I'm not available to come
17 tomorrow evening.

18 I wanted to bring up two issues, and --
19 well, first, I'll follow with -- you know, I agree with
20 what Kurt said in thanking the Navy for your service
21 and, and that. But I, I have two issues I want to bring
22 up, one of which I'm a little concerned about the
23 Wilderness Study Area proposals in the, in the proposal.

24 I have been to all three of the areas that
25 are, that are considered, and I will say that I think

F.7.2.27.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Draft EIS was released for public review Nov. 16, 2018, for a 60-day public comment period, 15 days more than the required 45-day public review period under NEPA. The Navy extended the public comment period additional 30 days, to close Feb. 14, 2019, for a total of 90 days for public review of the Draft EIS. Public notices of the comment period extension were published in local newspapers and the Federal Register, and the Navy distributed postcards to the project mailing list (including attendees of the Draft EIS public meetings), letters to Indian Tribes, news releases to media, and emails to subscribers on the project website.

F.7.2.28 Lemaire, A.

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1 that you will choose the wilderness, choose the
2 people, choose the openness that we have.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. TURNER: We have Mr. Lemaire next and
5 then followed by Patrick Donnelly, Shaaron Netherton
6 and Roger Heath.

7 MR. LEMAIRE: My name is Auguste Lemaire,
8 L-e-m-a-i-r-e, and first off I would like to thank
9 Captain Halloran and Mr. Stone for your thoughtful
10 presentation and for the work that you've done and
11 for being willing to let us speak to you in person
12 and share our concerns.

13 I want to thank all servicemen and women
14 past and present for your service. I really get how
15 important a national defense is and good training,
16 live training can't be replaced. I understand that.
17 I think that there may be better ways to mitigate the
18 problems with space and still be able to allow people
19 access to that space.

20 One of the concerns has been the
21 possibility of an air bomb and that kind of thing,
22 and although I've done a little bit of work in Naval
23 weapons contracting in the past, I'm certainly not an
24 expert on those bombs, but I would just about bet
25 that there is a way to destroy a bomb before it gets

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1 to the ground if it goes errant. If it doesn't then
2 maybe that might be something that you would
3 consider.

4 These lands are incredibly precious. As
5 a fifth generation Nevadan I love this state in ways
6 that it's in my blood. I also want to share, my
7 brother and I took a little backpacking trip a couple
8 of months ago up into the Sand Springs Range and we
9 spent three days. We packed a lot of water and it
10 was not an easy trip, but we went up there and we
11 spent three days among the sheep and it was an
12 absolutely life changing experience. Those animals
13 were so incredible. They were hunted nearly to
14 extinction, but they've been brought back and they've
15 been relocated into several areas around the State of
16 Nevada where there were old established sheep habitat
17 and some of those habitats are right there in the
18 area that we're discussing tonight and it's not just
19 about hunting. It's about being able to access and
20 spend time with these animals in those areas. It's
21 life changing and it's important.

22 So anything that you can do to mitigate
23 personal access to those areas would be very, very
24 greatly appreciated.

25 Thank you.

F.7.2.28.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.

Pursuant to 43 United States Code section 315q of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended, the Navy would make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes. The Final EIS (Chapter 2 and Section 3.4 [Grazing]) describes the process proposed by the Navy to determine payment amounts to each specific grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits.

Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowable in the DVTA. Grazing would also continue to be allowed in the DVTA.

Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheep hunting, and events that are pre-coordinated with the Navy.

Mitigation was determined to be either not possible because of mission requirements or not warranted because many of the affected activities (grazing, mining, recreation, etc.) could be conducted in adjacent or nearby areas (see Section 3.4 [Livestock Grazing], Section 3.3 [Mining and Mineral Resources], and Section 3.12 [Recreation]).

F.7.2.29 Lemaire, K.

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1 Only here for months or a few years and then you're
2 moved on to other places. I feel you need to revisit
3 your proposal to preserve the Stillwaters, the Fallon
4 National Wildlife Refuge and other areas.

5 My other concern is the people who will
6 be displaced by this land grab. Most are rural poor,
7 which will never be able to achieve their current
8 quality of life somewhere else. This was proven when
9 you bought out the people in Dixie Valley.

10 In closing, I repeat my request for
11 extending your comment period for 30 more days.

12 Thank you and Merry Christmas.

13 MS. TURNER: Kris Lemaire.

14 MS. LEMAIRE: It's spelled Kris, K-r-i-s,
15 Lemaire, L-e-m-a-i-r-e, and I've got random notes
16 here so they probably may not all make sense, but I'm
17 hoping that we can come to a win-win, and what I
18 didn't see up there is an Alternative 5, and I've
19 heard a lot of comments here tonight that there
20 probably is another alternate.

21 We do need to save our wilderness as
22 Nevada is known for its openness, its recreation, its
23 wilderness, its wildlife, gaming and ranch, mining,
24 the geology, the archaeology, our great Monte Cristo
25 Range, our Jobs Peak. So we do need to save our

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1 wilderness and you had said that you wanted
2 incompatible development next to you. If you have
3 wilderness next to you that is a wilderness area.
4 These are, you know, areas. They need to be on your
5 maps. All your maps I didn't see any of the
6 wilderness areas. That needs to be taken into
7 consideration.

8 You say that you'll allow bighorn sheep
9 hunting in there. Not all of us hunt with guns. We
10 hunt, as she said with her story, with cameras. We
11 just want to go out and experience it. So that needs
12 to be saved for us in Nevada. My cousin hiked all
13 the 15 -- the 14 -- in Colorado. She's a mountain
14 climber, crazy mountain climber. She had to get
15 permission from the Army to climb the mountain
16 outside of Herlong.

17 Jobs Peak is a mountain that a lot of
18 people like to climb. That needs to be open to us
19 for all of us, not just closed off to the military.

20 The maps that I looked at, you know, it
21 may be just a map, just a place on a map and that is
22 where you can circle. We need 3D maps, we need
23 Google maps to really see what that place is. I know
24 you guys took a tour of Nevada. You know, Nevada is
25 very special and I hope you will leave it open and

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1 that you will choose the wilderness, choose the
2 people, choose the openness that we have.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. TURNER: We have Mr. Lemaire next and
5 then followed by Patrick Donnelly, Shaaron Netherton
6 and Roger Heath.

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12 and share our concerns.

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14 past and present for your service. I really get how
15 important a national defense is and good training,
16 live training can't be replaced. I understand that.
17 I think that there may be better ways to mitigate the
18 problems with space and still be able to allow people
19 access to that space.

20 One of the concerns has been the
21 possibility of an air bomb and that kind of thing,
22 and although I've done a little bit of work in Naval
23 weapons contracting in the past, I'm certainly not an
24 expert on those bombs, but I would just about bet
25 that there is a way to destroy a bomb before it gets

F.7.2.29.1 Response

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F.7.2.30 Lyman, T.

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1 But just making sure Naval Air Station, what
2 they might do to some of us that has property around
3 where they want to do their maneuvering or taking over
4 the bombing range for themselves to continuing on
5 experimenting.

6 Anyway, we have big, big site over down
7 towards -- Nevada Test Site. And I thought this place
8 over here in Fallon was going to be just a training
9 area. Just a place where they going to park and rest
10 their equipment and fly over to Nevada Test Site and do
11 their bombing and, and do experimenting on things over
12 there.

13 But that's the way it went with the McKay
14 family. Sorry that they lost their land, they lost
15 their kids over it, and they lost themselves over it,
16 because it hurted their people, too. It hurted
17 themselves right here.

18 Thank you for everything. Bye. Good night.

19 MS. TURNER: Yes, please.

20 MR. LYMAN: Good evening, everyone. Tom
21 Lyman, L-y-m-a-n. I work here in town at the high
22 school. I'm a math teacher.

23 You know, I'm a, I'm a retired Air Force
24 guy. I was in the Twelfth Air Force. I'm very familiar
25 with what we're talking about here. I get it. Don't

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1 like it, but I get it.

2 My biggest concern for Gabbs is, is our
3 viability as a community is pretty much threatened by
4 this. When you look at what we have to live with -- or
5 how we live here, I look out my back door and I see that
6 ridgeline between here and where the actual bombing
7 range is out there towards Rawhide, and I'm thinking to
8 myself: There's going to be full flashes and whatnot,
9 and they're going to have to have a moving target, right
10 on the other side of that ridgeline.

11 And I'm thinking that just -- I mean,
12 people, when they think about moving to a place like
13 Gabbs, it's all the wide open spaces and the, and the,
14 and the mountains. And, I mean, we've got 7,000-footers
15 and 8,000-footers over here, and we've got four- and
16 5,000-footers over there. Altogether different sets of,
17 of environments to enjoy.

18 And my biggest concern with this is what's
19 going to happen to the high school if people aren't
20 moving here because you can't go places anymore. What's
21 going to happen to the town when our quality of life is
22 impacted, our recreational quality of life is impacted.
23 And who's going to want to move here when you can't go
24 out the back door of the town.

25 That's kind of what I want to know. I worry

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1 about the school closing, and that's kind of a threat
2 now as it is. But with this kind of thing happening, it
3 looks a little obvious. Thank you.

4 MS. TURNER: Thank you, sir.

5 Any last comments? Okay. Okay. Come right
6 up, sir.

7 MR. HOLMGREN: I wasn't going to speak, but
8 my name is David Hoomgren, H-o-l-m-g-r-e-n. And I'm
9 basically in Mineral County. But after Mr. Lyman just
10 spoke, I couldn't sit there and not tell you.

11 I brought two boys to the ranch who couldn't
12 succeed in town. They couldn't make it. One boy way
13 worse than the other. But you can't sacrifice these
14 rural communities anymore. You can't do it. You can't
15 afford it. America can't afford it.

16 What would have happened in some of the
17 wars, like the Civil War, World War I, World War II, if
18 they didn't have the code talkers? What would have
19 happened if they didn't have sharp shooters that grew up
20 in the country, shooting the eye out of a squirrel?
21 What would have happened for the military at that time?
22 Can you lose those kind of people anymore? You can't
23 afford it.

24 You can't afford to lose anymore livestock.
25 You've got your wildlife people that love it. You can't

F.7.2.30.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.

F.7.2.31 Mahaffa, K.

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1 poster stations and have your questions answered.
2 The team members are ready and waiting for you.
3 We will be in Reno at 5:00 o'clock
4 tonight, if you have any -- help us spread the word
5 if anybody would like to attend that meeting as well.

6 I would like to thank you on behalf of
7 the Navy again for your participation and we look
8 forward to further discussion.

9 MS. MAHAFFA: I just took some notes, and
10 first of all, I don't think it's necessary or even
11 matters like what the training is. You know, like
12 they were explaining, you know, in detail like what
13 the Navy SEALs will be training to do and stuff like
14 that, and I don't even think that's relevant at all,
15 but it did occur to me while the speaker was
16 introducing the ideas that it would -- by allowing
17 this to happen that the base would be well prepared
18 and equipped in the event of an attack, like they
19 could slide into war mode quickly because they are
20 going to be training there for the same kinds of
21 things that, you know, could happen somewhere else,
22 but the safety of the people surrounding these areas
23 is more important than the people who -- the small
24 amount of people who are enjoying this base now.

25 Makes sense; right? I mean, I'm from

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1 Bainbridge Island. That is a naval community. I'm
2 surprised that he didn't know, he didn't know,
3 because Kitsap County is like a huge Navy
4 installation outside of Seattle.

5 That is all I have to say.

6 (Meeting concludes)

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F.7.2.31.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Range users are required to communicate planned activities with the range scheduler before conducting any activities. Range control procedures at the FRTC limit unanticipated interactions with the public. The Navy reviewed available literature and worked with land management agencies to identify existing public health and safety actions and concerns. See Section 3.14.2.1.1 (Current Requirements and Practices) for the variety of range safety procedures in place to ensure public health and safety within NAS Fallon. Current plans and procedures for emergency services, wildfire management, aircraft and ground operations, range clearance procedures, electromagnetic energy, use of lasers, abandoned mine lands, hazardous waste management, and the protection of the children would continue to be implemented on expanded range areas. Construction and improvement activities would follow standard safety measures to include construction fencing, signs, and security to minimize safety risks and unauthorized access. Under the Proposed Action, there would be no significant impact on public health and safety, and there would be no disproportionate environmental health or safety risks to children.

F.7.2.32 Martin, D.

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1 guys are going to be here, you know. Us Native
2 Americans, we've been here since the beginning.
3 We'll be here long after everyone has left. If we
4 keep treating the land bad, bad, bad, bad, everyone
5 is going to have to go somewhere, you know.

6 I don't know. That's all I feel. I just
7 wanted to share that with you guys. You know -- I
8 don't know. I don't even know how to word it to
9 everyone so you guys can understand, you know, but so
10 I just wanted to share that with you guys today.

11 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Brady. I
12 appreciate your comments.

13 Is there anyone else who would like to
14 speak at this time? Please, sir, come right up, and
15 if you could again state your name and spell your
16 last name, please.

17 MR. MARTIN: My name is Douglas Martin,
18 last name is M-a-r-t-i-n.

19 I'm a new tenant of about five miles
20 north of Lovelock, just bought some property there
21 essentially to get away from the Navy because I moved
22 up from Fallon, but that is beside the point.

23 The point here I'm trying to make is that
24 the FAA was remiss in their airspace usage. They
25 have decided to, what they call, MOA, Military

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1 Operations Area, which we have been dealing with for
2 many, many years just south of our municipal airport.
3 They are now going to stop that being a MOA and make
4 it a restricted area. If somebody was to come of
5 practice or in actual use to shoot or make an
6 instrument landing at the Lovelock Municipal Airport
7 and they had to go around, because they went to
8 minimums and they couldn't land, they are going to
9 break that restricted area. It's an unsafe
10 condition. It should be left as a MOA or possibly
11 moved to another area.

12 There is one other area that is a
13 restricted area at this time, very small, like three
14 to five miles. It's south and west of the City of
15 Fallon. That area is now going to be expanded to go
16 clear to the hills to the west. I'm speaking of this
17 from an aviator standpoint. Personally I have about
18 10,000 hours and I've been flying since I was ten
19 years old.

20 The point I'm trying to make here is
21 general aviation, not airline, non-military should
22 have at least the same rights as the other people do.
23 That restricted area that they are going to move
24 over -- correction, that they are going to be set up
25 south and west of Fallon there is going to put that

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1 flying area over the hills and high turbulence, and
2 most general aviation aircraft in the desert have a
3 hard time flying turbulence the way it is now,
4 particularly in the afternoons.

5 We not -- all general aviation aircraft
6 does not have radio communications. It's just like
7 you in your car, jumping in and going to the store.
8 The airplane, the guy gets in his airplane and goes
9 to Yerington to buy a car, buy groceries and come
10 home. He does not have to talk to anybody. They're
11 making it now where we have to go around their areas
12 to be safe.

13 That is the end of my comment. Thank
14 you.

15 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Martin.

16 Is there anyone else at this time who
17 would like to make a comment who hasn't yet?

18 Mr. McDougal or Mr. Brady or Mr. Martin,
19 would you like some more time?

20 MR. MARTIN: No, thank you, ma'am.

21 MS. TURNER: Then at this time we are
22 ready to conclude this portion of the public meeting,
23 the oral comment session.

24 Again we're here until 1:00 o'clock
25 today. We encourage you to again go back to the

F.7.2.32.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in 3.6.2.2.3 (Civilian Air Traffic) and 3.14.2.1.1 (Emergency Services), all emergency flights, both helicopter and fixed-wing, are given priority transit through the FRTC at all times. Fallon Air Traffic Control (Desert Control), the range coordinator for airspace, ensures that real-time adjustments to airspace occur to expedite emergency aircraft and deconflict all Navy training events along the required routes or in the vicinity of fire suppression activities. Emergency aircraft are permitted to pass through restricted airspace when necessary.

F.7.2.33 Maus, N.

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1 talking to the Air Force to consolidate your bombing
2 ranges onto areas that are already withdrawn, areas
3 that are larger than many eastern states already.
4 That's what the State of Nevada has already given
5 you.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Johnson.

8 Next is Elizabeth, I believe it's
9 Blanden.

10 MS. BLANDEN: That's me, and I'm
11 withdrawing. I had a question instead of a comment.

12 MS. TURNER: Thank you very much.

13 So I will make one last call for Mr. Ian
14 Bigley. Did Mr. Bigley return or Mr. Roger Heath?

15 Is there anyone who has not had a chance
16 to speak yet that has now decided to? Sir, please
17 come up. Anyone else?

18 Just a reminder to please state your name
19 and spell your last name. Thank you.

20 MR. MAUS: My name is Nicholas Maus,
21 M-a-u-s. I'm a native Nevadan. My great
22 grandparents were born here. My parents were born
23 here.

24 As you can see, public landowner. I am a
25 member of VHA, but I do not speak for them.

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1 I would like to remind everyone that the
2 WSAs are incredibly special. They were designated
3 WSAs for a reason. They are in fact the reason why
4 that land is open now. Flying, bombing, shooting
5 anywhere near wetlands is a travesty. Anyone who
6 hunts here knows you can't even shoot lead shot over
7 wetlands any more. Why would we practice military
8 exercises anywhere near them.

9 Cutting Stillwater Range in half is
10 really, really rough for sportsmen. You look at the
11 map. It cuts almost all the way across that mountain
12 range.

13 In regard to the effects of planes and
14 explosives and other ordnance, page 18, the noise
15 table does not mention sage-grouse at all. You're
16 not even allowed to drive a car on a road near a lek
17 during lekking season. On page 20, how is water
18 resources not impacted by explosives and the
19 chemicals involved in explosives. There's no mention
20 of how many seeps, springs, or as Mr. Johnson pointed
21 out, developed water resources in these areas.
22 There's no mention of how many of those there are.

23 On page -- excuse me, on page 21, as he
24 mentioned, how are there no -- it literally says
25 there are no significant impacts on the biology.

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1 Again back to the sage-grouse, how is that possible,
2 how is there no significant impact, and excuse me,
3 I'm an engineer. I would like qualification of the
4 word significant. How do you quantify significant?

5 And then on page 23 the access to public
6 lands. The importance of the WSAs. I would urge a
7 fifth option, if possible, to keep the WSAs. If not,
8 encourage Congress to push them into full wilderness
9 status, which would give huge buffers and access to
10 sportsmen to your proposed area.

11 Thank you.

12 MS. TURNER: Mr. Warren Harding.

13 MR. HARDING: Thank you.

14 Ladies and gentlemen, great to see you
15 here. I wish you all a Merry Christmas, enjoy the
16 holiday seasons.

17 I did not come here to speak. I just now
18 made a decision that I shall. I am a second -- I
19 gave my name, didn't I, Warren Harding. Thank you.

20 I'm a second generation born in Nevada.
21 I have gone through the scouting program. I
22 understand our wilderness. I understand our BLM.
23 I've hunted. My family has hunted. Every speaker
24 here represents the thoughts in my heart and my love
25 for our western state. The heart of the west is

F.7.2.33.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, maneuvering by special operations forces, and other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights. This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTAs, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTAs, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

Munitions constituents are not considered recalcitrant to biodegradation like some other organic chemicals commonly known as groundwater and soil contaminants at hazardous waste sites. The Navy conducts Range Conditions Assessments as part of the Navy's Range Sustainment Environmental Program Assessment every five years. The most recent Range Conditions Assessment for FRTC was completed in 2015 (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015b). A team of environmental and operational range experts evaluated the history of range use within FRTC ranges, the types and quantities of munitions or military expended materials used and their chemical constituents, range location, spatial distribution of activities, available environmental data, environmental regulatory requirements, and compliance efforts. The Range Conditions Assessment information and data were derived from site visits, personnel interviews, archive search reports, and document reviews conducted in 2013 and 2014. The review team's findings, based on these data, concluded that the range and training operations are in compliance with environmental laws and policies, and there are no munitions constituents migrating off of the ranges.

As discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), the response to sonic booms or other sudden disturbance is similar among many wildlife species – sudden and unfamiliar sounds usually act as an alarm and trigger a “flight” response; however, reaction to a given noise can vary widely depending on factors such as time of day, physical condition of the animal, physical environment, whether or not other physical stressors are present, and others. Although the startling effect of a sonic boom can be stressful to an animal, it is hard to generalize animal responses to noise disturbances across species. Recent literature suggests a fright is a common response across a variety of species, and that this ultimately leads to habituation. It has been reported that the intensities and durations of the startle response decrease as the number and frequency of exposures increase, suggesting no long-term adverse effects.

Given the historical use of the airspace, and the persistence of aircraft operations and wildlife populations, wildlife within the MOA are likely habituated to aircraft overflights and associated noise (e.g., sonic booms).

Many of the above-listed behavioral and physiological responses to noise are within the range of normal adaptive responses to external stimuli, such as predation, that wild animals face on a regular basis. In many cases, individuals would return to homeostasis or a stable equilibrium almost immediately after

exposure to a brief stimulus such as an aircraft overflight or sonic boom. The Final EIS has been updated to incorporate the latest information regarding noise and startle effects on wildlife.

In the EIS, an Approach to Analysis, including significance criteria, is presented for each resource section as a sub-heading. The approach to analysis and significance criteria varies but was developed based on applicable laws, regulations, and policies for each resource area. In addition, context, intensity, and relevant thresholds were considered when determining significance.

F.7.2.34 McNeill, T.

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1 they going to clean it up, or is this going to be
2 something that is going to just ruin the land?

3 Also, like I say, the water quality, I'm
4 concerned about that from our well.

5 So these are questions that I have as a land
6 owner, and homeowner, in Gabbs. Thank you.

7 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Ms. Brooks. Next is
8 Mr. Tom McNeill.

9 MR. McNEILL: Tom McNeill, and that's
10 spelled M-c-N-e-i-l-l. Local resident.

11 When I came, I had a negative concept, but
12 after seeing what was presented, I'm all for number
13 three, most preferable. Why? Some of this stuff I saw
14 at the end of sonic booms, and that the, the
15 environmental person didn't always say how it might
16 affect outside the -- number three's area, if it does or
17 doesn't.

18 The other thing is in the beginning on
19 certain parts that have as to the closure of
20 scheduling -- scheduling closure of certain areas. In
21 other words, it seemed like there was access but not at
22 particular times, and how that would affect the public.

23 And the, the other thing was that the -- I
24 thought the lady that just spoke was very good on the
25 bombing residue, where it will go, how it will go, and

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1 then any water quality issues.

2 But -- oh, and my other comment was that I
3 thought that number three is preferable, but it would be
4 even nicer -- nice to maybe extend it out to the west
5 and maybe a little bit to the south of the western
6 border of number three.

7 That's all I have to say. Great idea.
8 Thank you.

9 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. McNeill.

10 Is there anyone else at that time who would
11 like to make a comment that hasn't had a chance to speak
12 yet?

13 Is there anyone that would like a little
14 more time that has spoken? Mr. Connelly?

15 MR. CONNELLY: Mr. Connelly again. Sorry
16 I'm taking this off the top of my head.

17 I am concerned, though, I enjoy this area,
18 I've enjoyed the Monte Cristo area, I love to camp
19 there, it's good R&R when I was working. Now that I'm
20 retired, I'm getting senile, and I have my senior
21 moments and such, but I still enjoy heading out there.
22 I meet a lot of people, a lot of people from out of
23 state.

24 And I'm a little bit offended that the
25 public has not participated in the preparation of the

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1 wasteland. I'm really concerned about the land use
2 issues, the recreational issues, and the biological
3 impacts in that particular area, because it is a nice,
4 beautiful tourist area.

5 And I'm concerned about water resources in
6 general, but I really haven't got too much information
7 to really ask what that involves.

8 Thank you for your patience.

9 MS. TURNER: Thank you.

10 Mr. McNeill, did you want some more time?

11 MR. McNEILL: Tom McNeill once again.

12 Please excuse me. I made a grave error I
13 want to correct. I said to the west extension. I meant
14 to the east. So not to the west, but to the east, and
15 maybe to the south, on number three. I think that would
16 be a really good idea. But number three as it is is
17 just fine. But forgive me. I meant a greater extension
18 to the east sounds like a possible very good idea. So
19 excuse me. Thank you very much.

20 MS. TURNER: Thank you.

21 Ms. Brooks, would you like more time?

22 MS. BROOKS: It just came to me, I had one
23 more thought. I notice on the number three, at the
24 bottom it said that -- something about two or three, the
25 area two or three miles around the airport, and that

F.7.2.34.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.2.35 Myers, T.

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1 kind, they're good folks, but let's check this box,
2 let's move on, and let's go on with the mission.

3 What I'm advocating for tonight is that we
4 increase this comment period to give folks the fair
5 opportunity, and take it out of December.

6 So thank you for allowing me to make these
7 comments. And to all the Navy folks here, once again,
8 thank you for your service.

9 And my name is Kurt Kuznicki,
10 K-u-z-n-i-c-k-i. Thank you.

11 MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment,
12 sir.

13 Next is Mr. Tom Myers.

14 MR. MYERS: I guess arriving early gets us
15 up here first, huh? My name is Tom Myers. I am from
16 Reno. I came out here because I'm not available to come
17 tomorrow evening.

18 I wanted to bring up two issues, and --
19 well, first, I'll follow with -- you know, I agree with
20 what Kurt said in thanking the Navy for your service
21 and, and that. But I, I have two issues I want to bring
22 up, one of which I'm a little concerned about the
23 Wilderness Study Area proposals in the, in the proposal.

24 I have been to all three of the areas that
25 are, that are considered, and I will say that I think

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1 some of them are amongst the most pristine wilderness
2 quality land left in the east central part of Nevada.
3 They all qualify as wilderness, contrary to some
4 statements I heard earlier. They would not be a WSA if
5 they did not qualify as wilderness. The BLM may not
6 have recommended them ultimately for other reasons, but
7 it's not because they don't qualify.

8 I also notice that releasing some Wilderness
9 Study Areas is considered mitigation for -- under the --
10 for recreation, so that's suggesting that it's not
11 necessarily needed for military operations, or at least
12 for safety concerns during military operations.

13 It would seem like that with the large
14 amount of land withdrawn, that the pieces of the
15 Wilderness Study Areas cannot be critical, and I ask
16 that you reconsider that if -- if the Navy's choosing
17 to, for example, develop some FRDI BDRs, or something
18 like, in some of the Wilderness Study Areas, that they
19 really consider taking them out. These are, as I said,
20 some of the most pristine lands, as part of the Great
21 Basin, and they really should be protected.

22 I guess the last thought about wilderness is
23 in most NEPA documents I read "wilderness" is its own
24 category, and here it's simply considered as recreation,
25 whereas pristine land has values other than simply

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1 recreation. For example, it's habitat for wildlife and
2 for hunters. I mean, hunting is recreation, but it also
3 provides the critical -- the habitat is necessary, that
4 wilderness provides, is necessary for hunting.

5 Now, another thing I wanted to just mention,
6 it's sort of a very technical thing, and it seems like
7 the amount of land that was chosen was based upon a
8 99.99 percent certainty of containment. I think I heard
9 that earlier. I'm wondering if -- I mean, this is very,
10 very sparsely developed, sparsely occupied country. Is
11 it necessary to go to 99.99 percent?

12 Could -- I mean, what are the chance -- I
13 mean, even if, even if something does end up out of
14 containment, what are the chances of someone actually
15 being affected by that? I mean, there are occasional --
16 you know, I hate to say it, but there are occasional
17 crashes that occur -- and I just ran out. I was going
18 to say, 99 percent, correct? Do a comparison and see
19 what the difference would be. Thank you.

20 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Myers.

21 Mr. Bobb, Mr. Johnnie Bobb.

22 MR. BOBB: My name is Johnnie Bobb, B-o-b-b.
23 I'm from Austin, way up Reese River. Born and raised
24 on, on that valley.

25 And living on down by the Indian reservation

F.7.2.35.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, maneuvering by special operations forces, and other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights. This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as a Wilderness Study Area is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process.

Range users are required to communicate planned activities with the range scheduler before conducting any activities. Range control procedures at the FRTC limit unanticipated interactions with the public. The Navy reviewed available literature and worked with land management agencies to identify existing public health and safety actions and concerns. See Section 3.14.2.1.1 (Current Requirements and Practices) for the variety of range safety procedures in place to ensure public health and safety within NAS Fallon. Current plans and procedures for emergency services, wildfire management, aircraft and ground operations, range clearance procedures, electromagnetic energy, use of lasers, abandoned mine lands, hazardous waste management, and the protection of the children would continue to be implemented on expanded range areas. Construction and improvement activities would follow standard safety measures to include construction fencing, signs, and security to minimize safety risks and unauthorized access. Under the Proposed Action, there would be no significant impact on public health and safety, and there would be no disproportionate environmental health or safety risks to children.

F.7.2.36 Netherton, S.

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1 Ms. Netherton.

2 MS. NETHERTON: Thank you so much for the
3 opportunity to give comment tonight and for all of
4 the meetings that you have been doing. We deeply
5 appreciate that.

6 My last name is Netherton,
7 N-e-t-h-e-r-t-o-n.

8 I've been the executive director for
9 Friends of Nevada Wilderness for nearly 19 years.
10 Prior to that I worked with the BLM for 22 years,
11 10 years of that was in the wilderness program here
12 in Nevada. I was a team leader on a wilderness
13 legislative EIS for the BLM in eastern Nevada in the
14 '80s and have extensive experience in all aspects of
15 the wilderness program, and I bring this up only in
16 the fact that the EIS has a lot of misinformation
17 relating to Wilderness Study Areas. We would like to
18 work with you to correct that.

19 Friends of Nevada Wilderness has worked
20 in a cooperative and pragmatic manner with numerous
21 counties, stakeholders, the Nevada congressional
22 delegation over the past decade on securing
23 wilderness protection for many of Nevada's most
24 precious areas.

25 One of the common misunderstandings of

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1 Wilderness Study Areas, and this is reflected in your
2 EIS, is the BLM's recommendations. Wilderness Study
3 Areas were created by congressional direction to the
4 BLM to identify lands with wilderness values. The
5 inventory was done in the late 1970s and finalized in
6 early 1980. Only the crown jewels of BLM lands in
7 Nevada were identified as Wilderness Study Areas.
8 All Wilderness Study Areas have wilderness values and
9 are highly qualified for wilderness designation, all
10 Wilderness Study Areas.

11 In the mid 1980s the BLM prepared
12 legislative EISs much like the Navy is doing right
13 now, since Congress is the final decision maker both
14 for the military and for wilderness. So during that
15 EIS process in the 1980s the BLM weighed the
16 wilderness values, the high wilderness value of WSAs
17 with potential development, and so what happened is
18 in the 1980s at a point in time the BLM made a
19 recommendation on which areas they were proposing to
20 Congress should be designated as wilderness and which
21 ones should be released for use other than
22 wilderness. It was strictly a point in time and 35
23 years have gone by.

24 So those recommendations were formally
25 sent on to Congress and cannot be changed by the BLM.

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1 Everyone recognizes, however, that those 35 year old
2 recommendations are extremely outdated. They've been
3 given little, if any weight by Congress in looking at
4 wilderness designations. It would be like the Navy
5 doing today's expansion proposal based on an EIS
6 analysis you completed in the mid '80s.

7 The value of Wilderness Study Areas for
8 outdoor recreation, wildlife habitat only increases
9 as the years go by. More and more freeways, roads,
10 pipelines, power lines, project plans continue to be
11 built and fragment our public lands across the state.

12 The bottom line is we think wilderness is
13 a win-win with what the military is trying to do, and
14 we look forward to try to work with you to try to
15 find some additional solutions.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. TURNER: Mr. Heath, followed by
18 Norman Harry, Kirk Peterson and Rob Bastien.

19 MR. HARRY: I guess I'm next.

20 MS. TURNER: Roger Heath?

21 MR. HARRY: No, I'm Norman Harry.

22 MS. TURNER: Okay, is Mr. Heath here?

23 Okay, yes, you are next then.

24 MR. HARRY: My name is Norman Harry,
25 H-a-r-r-y.

F.7.2.36.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, maneuvering by special operations forces, and other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights. This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation), this type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. It is important to note that this de-designation would not prohibit the use of these areas by recreationists.

F.7.2.37 Perterson, K.

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1 the tribes can make that final determination. Burial
2 procedures and repatriation is not a scientific
3 project, but a human rights issue.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Harry.

6 Next is Kirk Peterson.

7 MR. PETERSON: Hello, my name is Kirk
8 Peterson. Last name is spelled P-e-t-e-r-s-o-n.

9 I've been working in Nevada to defend
10 wilderness conservation protections for nearly
11 40 years. Unfortunately it's not very lucrative so I
12 never get to retire.

13 From the DEIS and the discussions with
14 your representatives it is clear that your training
15 area is currently located in Dixie Valley because
16 this area meets non-development and darkness
17 standards you need for night and day and flight and
18 ground training. The goal of the current EIS is to
19 transfer the public lands of Dixie Valley, including
20 portions of three WSAs, to the Navy to ensure that
21 these lands will not be developed, but it's important
22 to remember and to mention that the Dixie Valley
23 Training Area is only suitable today for Navy
24 training purposes because of all the work done since
25 the 1970s by people, including several people in this

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1 room, to protect the wilderness conservation values
2 of Job Peak, Stillwater Range, Clan Alpine Mountain
3 WSAs in and surrounding the Dixie Valley.

4 Without these wilderness conservation
5 protections associated with the WSAs there would have
6 been a lot more development in and around Dixie
7 Valley. From the BLM wilderness EIS from the 1980s
8 they predicted that the following changes would have
9 happened within the WSAs surrounding the portions
10 there and the surrounding portions thereof that are
11 currently requested by the Navy for the operation of
12 the Dixie Valley Training Area. The changes would be
13 the entire Stillwater Range, Job Peak WSA and 128,000
14 acres of the Clan Alpine Mountains would be open to
15 mineral exploration, drilling and development, which
16 three precious metals mines anticipated for the
17 immediate development, this was 1987, and two
18 geothermal power plants within the WSAs outside of
19 the current Ormat properties were in the works at
20 that time, too. In the Clan Alpine Mountains,
21 94 percent of the Clan Alpine Mountain woodlands
22 would be available for wood production harvest.

23 It is clear that these three WSAs have at
24 least -- if these three WSAs had not endured and been
25 managed to protect wilderness conservation values

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1 the Dixie Valley Training Area would not be as viable
2 for Navy training operations as it is used today.

3 It is irrational that the Navy is
4 requesting de-designating the portions of these three
5 WSAs to protect them from development when it is, in
6 fact, that they are already managed for no
7 development. It is what makes them suitable for Navy
8 training operation today.

9 The Navy requests for a 25 year
10 withdrawal requiring at the time a new proposal and
11 request. Wilderness designations and the WSAs would
12 ensure that the no development protections would
13 continue in perpetuity and would save the Navy time
14 and money in the future.

15 I would like to ask that in your Final
16 EIS you incorporate wilderness designations as a
17 buffer around the DVTA to assure the area is
18 permanently managed for non-development to support
19 your training missions and your needs, and I would
20 like to leave you with a statement in 1956 when we
21 were opposing the Fallon Naval Station taking the
22 entire Black Rock Desert, over 2.6 million acres, and
23 the committee on ancillary affairs in the House of
24 Representatives finished their presentation with the
25 program for the defense of our nation's human and

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1 natural resources should not and must not be so
2 conducted as to destroy the very resources it is
3 aimed to preserving.

4 Thank you.

5 MS. TURNER: Rob Bastien is next followed
6 by Eric Fendelander and then Darrell Pursel.

7 MR. BASTIEN: My name is Rob Bastien. I
8 live in Carson City, B-a-s-t-i-e-n.

9 First I want to thank all the members and
10 veterans of the Armed Forces for your service in
11 protecting this country and our democracy.

12 That said the only alternative that I
13 support is the no action alternative. All the other
14 options are not acceptable. Expanding naval training
15 areas in Nevada seems quite redundant considering how
16 much is currently allocated to the military for
17 training. Withdrawing public land from the owners,
18 the public, and no longer allowing the owners, the
19 public, to access said land is not necessary.

20 The Navy and the Air Force should
21 coordinate and share existing training areas just
22 like it would be in real military action. In
23 addition to the existing training areas already
24 withdrawn for the Fallon Naval Air Station there are
25 the Nevada Test Site and Nellis Air Force Range.

F.7.2.37.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, maneuvering by special operations forces, and other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights. This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. It is important to note that this de-designation would not prohibit the use of these areas by recreationists. This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as a Wilderness Study Area is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process.

F.7.2.38 Petterson, M.

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1 definitely for me Nevada.

2 The reason I'm speaking is there are too
3 many names on our walls and our memorials for our men
4 and women in service. If our military needs and
5 feels and supports if they have to take part of what
6 I know and love, there is a greater love in my heart.
7 I'm not a blind patriot. I'm not even sure I'm a
8 strong patriot, but our men and women in service have
9 failed to return and are listed on a wall or a
10 memorial. If they could get what training these
11 people may offer, that is a greater loyalty to me.

12 With that I appreciate your time and
13 that's the thought of one person, Warren Harding.

14 Thank you.

15 MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment.

16 Our last speaker will be Melissa
17 Petterson.

18 MS. PETTERSON: Hi, my name is Melissa
19 Petterson, last name is P-e-t-t-e-r-s-o-n.

20 I'm on the board at the Reno Gem and
21 Mineral Society. I'm not representing them here
22 tonight, but I'm here as a rock hound, hiker, and
23 general lover of the outdoors. I moved here from
24 California about ten years ago and it was sad to see
25 areas where I had gone fishing and exploring the

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1 outdoors slowly taken away, and I was amazed when I
2 moved here at the amount of open space that was
3 available to us to go shooting, to go dirt biking, to
4 go rock hounding, to just explore, mess around in the
5 desert. It's beautiful.

6 Every year our society takes a trip out
7 to the Gabbs area. There are petrified Sequoia
8 trees. They are 15 million years old. There's a
9 wash where a glacier passed through in the last Ice
10 Age.

11 Rock hounding is, I'd say, probably not
12 the most popular craft, but it's something that I
13 would like to see passed down to next generations,
14 and in this day and age when we complain about our
15 youth and our younger generations sitting in front of
16 the TV and in front of their computer and on the
17 phones and here's an opportunity to have them explore
18 public lands and get out and adventure and their
19 opportunities to explore are slowly being taken away.

20 I recognize that the military needs to
21 practice to protect our freedom and they do so
22 abroad, but what about protecting our freedoms here
23 at home in a country, in a state where you, sir, are
24 going to call home, our freedom to explore, our
25 freedom to appreciate our natural resources, our

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1 freedom to enjoy this world, this earth, this land.

2 Please don't take away our freedoms.

3 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Ms. Petterson.

4 I would like to thank you all on behalf
5 of the Navy for your participation in this meeting
6 and in your review of the Draft Environmental Impact
7 Statement.

8 This now concludes the oral comment
9 portion of the public meeting. The Navy team members
10 are here should you have any follow-up questions, and
11 again thank you very, very much and have a good
12 evening.

13 (Meeting concludes)

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F.7.2.38.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.

The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses in the Bravo ranges, as there are too many recreationalists and it is difficult to control the number of people that would be allowed on range. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationalists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationalists.

Pursuant to 43 United States Code section 315q of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended, the Navy would make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes. The Final EIS includes a discussion of the valuation process proposed by the Navy to determine payment amounts to each affected grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits.

Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowable in the DVTA. Grazing would also continue to be allowed in the DVTA.

Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheep hunting, and events that are pre-coordinated with the Navy.

Mitigation was determined to be either not possible because of mission requirements or not warranted because many of the affected activities (grazing, mining, recreation, etc.) could be conducted in adjacent or nearby areas (see Section 3.4 [Livestock Grazing], Section 3.3 [Mining and Mineral Resources], and Section 3.12 [Recreation]).

F.7.2.39 Potashin, R.

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1 with our cultural and our traditional ways of our
2 ceremonies.

3 Thank you.

4 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Mr. Bobb.

5 Mr. Potashin. And again, nice and loud if
6 you can. I think it's a little bit louder now, but I
7 appreciate that.

8 MR. POTASHIN: I want to thank you for the
9 opportunity to speak to you today. My name is Richard
10 Potashin. I'm a resident of Kingston, Nevada. We get
11 some overflights from you guys a little bit, and I'm
12 kind of wondering about that, but I'll get to my
13 comments here.

14 I do not support the expansion of the Fallon
15 training complex and its preferred alternative that's
16 proposed. This is an all-out attack on our public lands
17 in the name of national security, not to mention another
18 huge land grab by the federal government, affecting
19 rural counties, which already reel from enough of
20 Washington in their lives.

21 I ask you, hasn't the State of Nevada made
22 enough sacrifices to national security? The expansion,
23 Navy officials say, would help pilots and other
24 personnel conduct missions and better simulate realistic
25 conditions.

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1 My question to you: Considering the
2 technology will continue to advance in respect to the
3 weapons' needs and war-making abilities, this won't be
4 the last time you ask for an expansion. Where will this
5 end, when the military has withdrawn the whole state of
6 Nevada?

7 I am not convinced of the need for this
8 expansion. The Navy has refused to seriously consider
9 in their EIS the alternatives of using existing ranges
10 at China Lake or the Nevada Test Site, or dovetail its
11 mission with the proposed military expansion in southern
12 Nevada that Nellis Air Force base is proposing that
13 threatens to gobble up half of the Desert Wildlife
14 Refuge.

15 The Navy states in its EIS an expansion to
16 other existing ranges is technologically feasible but
17 economically infeasible, citing the exorbitant expense
18 of \$1.5 billion. This is laughable considering the huge
19 chunk of the federal budget -- I think it currently is
20 \$880 billion -- that goes to national defense.

21 You've been able to manage quite well up
22 until this time with the range as it's configured
23 presently. Have our combat operations in Afghanistan
24 and Syria been seriously compromised by the current size
25 of the complex?

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1 I'm also very concerned about the economic
2 impacts to mining and ranching -- which are the
3 backbones of Nevada's rural economy -- this preferred
4 alternative poses. Twelve grazing allotments would be
5 retired, as well as mining claims. And the presentation
6 I just heard said the economic impacts to the counties
7 would not be significant. I can't believe this. And
8 how are these ranches and miners going to be adequately
9 compensated?

10 I'm also concerned that the expansion would
11 affect wilderness study areas in the Clan Alpine
12 Mountain, the Jobs Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness
13 Study Areas, as well as eliminating recreational access
14 on 359,000 acres of public land.

15 My wife and I have an interesting avocation.
16 We document carvings left by Basque sheepherders on
17 Aspen trees. Under this proposal, we would be locked
18 out of documenting carvings in the Clan Alpine and
19 Stillwater ranges.

20 Increased bombing would impact sensitive
21 wildlife resource, weapons, and archeological sites.
22 Habitat for sage-grouse would be damaged, and animals
23 may be directly killed. Toxic residue from bombs would
24 contaminate water resources as well.

25 I believe this expansion is just too large,

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1 and I would support possibly increasing the buffer zone
2 around some of these bombing ranges. In other words,
3 reconfigure the existing ranges. Otherwise, I support
4 the no action alternative, with the possibility -- I
5 still would like to see that withdrawals for the
6 existing Fallon range to be reduced.

7 In closing, we enjoy recreating on some of
8 the lands in question, specifically the Stillwater
9 Wildlife Refuge and Chalk Mountain. We want to
10 continue, as well as have the entire public have the
11 opportunity to continue visiting these areas and other
12 gems in the areas to be withdrawn.

13 I appreciate the need for our armed forces
14 to be well trained and maintain a strong sense of
15 readiness, but I believe this proposed expansion does
16 not balance that need with the many benefits our public
17 lands provide for our rural Nevada counties and the
18 residents.

19 Thank you very much.

20 MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment.

21 Is there anyone else who has -- would like
22 to make a comment who has not yet spoken?

23 Mr. Bobb, would you like some more time? Or
24 we'll talk to you tomorrow. Okay. Thank you.

25 Okay. So --

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1 MR. POTASHIN: Can I just take a minute?

2 MS. TURNER: Yes.

3 MR. POTASHIN: I just got a question.

4 Alex, when you were going over your
5 alternatives, Alternative 3, you mentioned a special
6 land management overlay. Can you explain what that is?

7 MS. TURNER: We're not taking questions. At
8 this time, it's just comments. So he'll answer your
9 question --

10 MR. POTASHIN: Oh, over there? Okay.

11 MS. TURNER: There's a station for that. So
12 thank you very much.

13 Okay. Well, thank you, everyone. We very
14 much appreciate your comments today and your
15 participation in this process. We are now concluding
16 the oral comment portion of this meeting.

17 And again, the Navy team members will be
18 available to answer any additional questions you might
19 have. We will be here until 1:00 today. So we
20 encourage you to stay and continue the conversations.

21 Thank you very much.

22 (Additional public comment.)

23 MS. WAITS: We certainly understand the need
24 for expansion, and we are behind the military a hundred
25 percent; however, our concerns are some of the property

F.7.2.39.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives to meet the purpose of and need for the project. During the scoping period, the Navy also requested suggestions from the public and agencies for potential viable alternatives for consideration in the analysis. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors.

The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value.

For existing patented mining claims, the federal government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.

Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.

The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) gives the Navy authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing

permits that would be affected. This process evaluates the cost of providing replacement forage and/or the losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may suffer losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives.

The following information has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.

Payment for Losses

The Navy would first consider costs associated with obtaining replacement forage and otherwise restoring/maintaining a permittee's existing operational capacity. Working with BLM and the permittee, the Navy would determine the costs necessary to replace the area/capacity removed from a grazing permit. These costs could include, but would not be limited to, preparing new allotment applications; complying with BLM environmental requirements and water rights studies; procuring private market replacement forage; shipping or transporting forage, cattle and/or ranch personnel and their horses and equipment; one-time relocation expenses associated with any full or partial transferring of operations to any new location(s); any reasonably anticipated lost profits arising as a result of operational downtime while restoring and/or relocating operations; and any other costs identified, which would be properly payable under 43 U.S.C. section 315q.

Should a permit holder decide not to seek replacement forage in conjunction with restoring operational capacity, or when restoring such capacity is not practicable, the Navy would make a good faith estimate of the financial impact the loss of that individual's permit would be expected to have on his or her ranching operation. The Navy would ask each permit holder to provide recent business operating expenses associated with the permit, their total operating expenses, an estimate of that portion of income believed to be directly related to utilization of the permit, and total income and taxes. This information would be used to determine a payment amount to compensate for losses resulting from permit cancellation, including reasonably anticipated lost profits for what would otherwise have been the duration of the permit. If a permit holder does not wish to share their financial information, or if the information shared is incomplete, the Navy would estimate the value of the losses based on existing information from other sources.

It is possible that a payment amount would be based both on replacement forage along with other operational restoration-related costs, and on the financial impact the loss of a permit would be expected to have on a ranching operation (i.e., part of the payment would be based on obtaining replacement forage to the extent practicable and the rest based on payment for losses to the extent obtaining replacement forage is not practicable). In those instances, the costs to restore operational capacity would first be determined, and the remaining payment amount would then be determined in accordance with the paragraph above discussing permits holders who may elect not to seek replacement forage capacity.

Payment for Allotment Improvements

Improvements such as corrals, fencing, wells, and other appurtenances that cannot be relocated are considered real property, similar to a building. The Navy would appraise the value of all real property owned by a permit holder and would offer fair market value for the purchase of any such real property. Equipment, such as relocatable water tanks, is not considered real property, and the permit holder would be afforded an opportunity to remove their equipment prior to cancellation of a permit.

Timing of Permit Cancellation

The Navy anticipates issuing its Record of Decision for the FRTC modernization in January 2020. However, any Congressional withdrawal of the area currently supporting grazing permits would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Similarly, any Congressional appropriation for implementing the FRTC Modernization action, which would include funds for making payments to grazing permit holders, would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Accordingly, the earliest the Navy would request that BLM cancel any permit would be October 1, 2020.

If the Congressional withdrawal is enacted, and if Congress appropriates funds to implement the FRTC Modernization effort, the Navy would ask BLM to contact each affected permit holder. BLM would coordinate with the Navy on any action to initiate cancellation of a permit. Under 43 CFR Part 4100 Subpart 4110.4-2 (Decrease in Land Acreages), BLM would be required to provide two years advance notice of any permit cancellation. Once a given notification is made, the Navy, with assistance from BLM, would begin discussions with affected permit holders to determine payment amounts in accordance with the processes described herein.

The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.2.40 Stevenson, D.

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1 how many folks in the room agree tonight that we need
2 some more time to review and comment on this
3 document.

4 Thank you very much.

5 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Ms. Dupre.

6 Ms. Stevenson, and then again followed by
7 Mr. Alvey and then Louis Bubula, III. I'm sorry.

8 MS. STEVENSON: My name is Deborah
9 Stevenson. Stevenson is spelled S-t-e-v-e-n-s-o-n.

10 I know you can't see, but I'm wearing
11 earrings that have a rock art image of some bighorn
12 sheep on them and inside the bighorn sheep is a baby
13 bighorn sheep, bighorn sheep in utero, so to speak,
14 and the reason I wore these earrings is because it
15 relates to a story, and I know from my years as a
16 museum educator that for any story to be meaningful
17 it must be personal, and this one is.

18 You see, I've lived in Nevada for many,
19 many years and I have never seen a bighorn sheep in
20 the wild, never seen one outside of the zoo until Ron
21 Mo took me up Chalk Mountain. Chalk Mountain is
22 located east of Fallon just at the south end of the
23 Clan Alpine Range and it's in the area of the
24 proposed Naval expansion. As we were hiking up this
25 rugged terrain I looked up and then oh, my God, there

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1 he was. It was this huge ram and it was standing
2 there silhouetted up on the rock and it turned its
3 head from one side to the other and slowly again one
4 side to the other as if it was surveying the whole
5 surrounding landscape, and we just stood there
6 quietly scarcely breathing, and that would have made
7 my day, if that was all there was, but there was
8 more.

9 A little baby sheep came scrambling
10 across the rock, rocks crumbling on the steep slope
11 and it jumped onto the next ridge right behind its
12 daddy, and I was just wow, it looked so young. I
13 don't know how it could navigate that terrain, and
14 then another sheep came and this time it was a ewe,
15 presumably the mom, and the same thing. She just
16 leaped right out on that slippery slope and rocks
17 were falling down into the canyon, but she didn't
18 fall, she sure-footedly jumped onto the next ridge
19 where she was safe and I thought wow, a whole family
20 unit. I don't believe how fortunate we were. All
21 these years I've looked and looked with binoculars,
22 you name it, I've never seen a sheep and here they
23 were.

24 So the reason that I bring this up is
25 that some of you may not have ever heard of Chalk

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1 Mountain. As I said, Chalk Mountain is located on
2 just at the south end of the Clan Alpine Range. It's
3 out there just barely north of Highway 50 and it's
4 not that big of a mountain so you probably have
5 driven by it a million times very fast and you've
6 never even noticed it before, but it's a beautiful
7 mountain and it's especially beautiful to me because
8 that's where the bighorn sheep live, and now when I
9 drive down Highway 50 I can't help but look, and even
10 though from the vantage of this painting that I made
11 you can't see the bighorn sheep because they would be
12 too small, I know that they are up there, and if you
13 notice I painted this picture with lenticular clouds
14 that are caused by the winds we have here in Nevada,
15 and one of those clouds looks like a bird flying
16 across the sky, but perhaps it's also reminiscent of
17 the Navy presence, and right now that cloud is wispy,
18 but who knows, our decisions and the future will my
19 grandchildren see these sheep, will your
20 grandchildren, Captain, see these sheep? Well, it
21 depends on what decisions we've made.

22 So choose life, choose wilderness and
23 thank you for your kind attention.

24 MS. TURNER: Thank you, Ms. Stevenson.

25 Mr. Alvey.

F.7.2.40.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The proposed B-16 and B-20 expansion areas are outside of the current mapped range of bighorn sheep and mule deer, and only the eastern portion of the proposed B-20 expansion area overlaps with year-round pronghorn range (Nevada Department of Wildlife (2017a)). However, mule deer were observed within the proposed B-20 expansion area during camera trap surveys conducted in support of this EIS (see Supporting Study: Final Wildlife Remote Camera Trapping Survey Report, available at <http://www.frtcmodernization.com>). In addition, the estimated 60-65 DNL dBA aircraft noise contours within the proposed B-17 expansion area overlies a portion of currently mapped bighorn sheep winter-lambing range (i.e., the flats at the southern end of the Fairview Range) and year-round range within the central Monte Cristo Mountains and southern Sand Springs Range. The estimated 70-75 DNL dBA contours would not appreciably change from existing conditions (see Figures 3.7-9 and 3.7-22). Given the estimated number of bighorn sheep within the vicinity of the existing B-17 and DVTA range areas are at an all-time high (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a), existing training operations are not having an effect on regional bighorn sheep populations. Therefore, it is expected that proposed training operations conducted within the proposed restricted areas (R-4805A and R4816S Low) and associated expansion areas at the same level as current training operations would not have a significant impact on bighorn sheep populations.

Within the FRTC region of influence, there are over one million acres of mapped bighorn sheep year-round range, over 51,000 acres of mapped bighorn sheep winter/lambing range, 5.6 million acres of mapped year-round pronghorn range, and 52,000 acres of mapped pronghorn crucial summer range. Navy operational doctrine dictates that during transiting, pilots avoid lambing areas. Therefore, impacts on these ungulate ranges would not have a significant or measurable impact on bighorn sheep populations.

F.7.2.41 Traub, E.

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1 on the land, which might affect, in the future, maybe
2 animals or grazing, and he seems to think that there
3 won't be.

4 But anyway, also the geothermal. We have a
5 geothermal well, and so I'm wondering -- because it was
6 mentioned in the paper something about the possibility
7 of maybe contaminating the aquifer, and so I was just
8 kind of wondering about that as well.

9 And also the Illinois mine is right behind
10 the millsite where my husband and I live, where we have
11 some property there, and so I'm just wondering, you
12 know, what's going to happen there.

13 I think that -- I just scribbled a bunch of
14 notes here, so I think that -- oh. Also, I have a
15 patented claim, and I just wondered -- a mining claim,
16 and I'm just wondering what might happen there, whether
17 we will be reimbursed for the claims that we have, and
18 maybe whether we're -- what's going to happen there.

19 I think that is all I had, and I thank you
20 very much.

21 MS. TURNER: Anyone else?

22 MR. TRAUB: I want to say something.

23 MS. TURNER: Please come up, sir. And if
24 you could provide your name and spell your last name for
25 us. Thank you.

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1 MR. TRAUB: My name is Ed Traub, T-r-a-u-b,
2 and I just have a comment.

3 I was at the meeting in June up in Fallon
4 where the commander spoke on all of this on the base,
5 and the out -- or the gist of what was said up there was
6 you guys have got a wonderful bomb that you love to drop
7 from about 30,000 feet, but it's only about 75 percent
8 accuracy -- accurate. And the reason for this expansion
9 is to cover your tail on a bomb that fits into the
10 25 percent category and goes somewhere else.

11 So my other comment or question regarding
12 all this is: Why would you be sure that -- you're going
13 to bring this fence line right up here to Gabbs.
14 That -- how do you know your numbers are accurate on
15 that? What if it just drops right in here on the high
16 school? How are you going to handle that one?

17 And that's my comment. I appreciate it.

18 MS. TURNER: Okay. Anyone else? Please.

19 MR. EMMERICH: I'd like to make a follow-up
20 comment relating to that, and that relates to where we
21 live in the Beatty area, very close to the airport
22 testing range.

23 In 2005, 2006, it was really raining, and
24 you don't expect the desert to burn, and there were a
25 couple of lightning strikes that caused two really big

F.7.2.41.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Very infrequently, munitions are dropped and by accidental miss or skip/bounce can land beyond the range boundary.

Per Navy policy (OPNAVINST 3710.7 [Series]), the release of any air-to-surface ordnance should be accomplished within Restricted Airspace and all such releases should impact on Navy land. As required by the Department of Defense Military Munitions Rule Implementation Procedures (April 2017), ordnance that inadvertently lands outside Navy property would be retrieved as soon as possible once the Navy learns that it has landed off range. While there is always a risk that ordnance may land off-range, the potential for such incidents is actually very low, as low as 1 in 10,000 occurrences. Any off-range ordnance would be collected by military personnel in accordance with best management practices and standard operating procedures. Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel periodically survey and remove any unexploded ordnance from these ranges. Ranges B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20 all potentially contain unexploded ordnance, but all such ordnance is expected to be within the range, where restricted access prevents civilians from coming into contact with ordnance.

F.7.2.42 VonSeggern, D.

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1 MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment.
2 Mr. VonSeggern is on his way up, followed
3 by Mr. Kurt Kuznicki and then Mr. Larry Dwyer.
4 MR. VonSEGGERN: Hello, David VonSeggern
5 from Reno, Nevada, and that is V-o-n-S-e-g-g-e-r-n,
6 and you got it right. Thank you.
7 I'm very glad to live in a country where
8 our military is so well trained and equipped and
9 ready to do their job, but I'm very, very alarmed by
10 the amount of land that is going to be taken in this
11 modernization of the Fallon Test Range.
12 I've been out on many places of land that
13 will no longer be usable by us or the rest of the
14 public in any sort of manner and I really regret
15 that, I think, if we do lose that.
16 I'm sort of a computer person and I know
17 in one scoping letter we asked that one of the
18 alternatives to be considered is the role of
19 simulations or simulators in combat training. I
20 searched the EIS for the word simulation. It occurs
21 one time. I searched it for simulator, it occurs one
22 time both in contexts that were not really relevant.
23 So I wonder what's happened to that, and we're
24 talking about modernization. I wonder, Captain
25 Halloran, what modernization is going on at Fallon

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1 with simulators, simulations. I know there is some
2 there. I found this out by going through the
3 website, but we're in the 21st century with amazing
4 computer technology. I can fly over anyplace in the
5 world on Google Earth. There are PC programs that
6 have amazing realism to them for combat games, so I'm
7 wondering where this boundary is between simulators
8 and real life training and I'm wondering if we're
9 pushing -- trying to push some of that simulator over
10 into live training and eliminate some of the need for
11 this large amount of land that we're needing.

12 I would think it could help in
13 eliminating the need for this 360-degree thing. I
14 think it could eliminate a lot of need for various
15 terrain that the EIS claims that the Navy needs to do
16 live training. We could simulate any kind of
17 training. There would be more permutations and
18 variations you could do in simulators than you
19 could ever do in live training, and so I think it
20 occurred to me the country of Israel is one-tenth the
21 size of Nevada. The country of Israel has a crack
22 Air Force that probably is equal to anything in the
23 world. I imagine with their limited territory they
24 are doing a lot on simulators to train, and so I
25 think it's a serious omission in the DEIS not to talk

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1 about what role simulation would have and maybe
2 why -- I'm perplexed why it was dismissed entirely.

3 MS. TURNER: Thank you for your comment.

4 Next again is Mr. Kurt Kuznicki and then
5 Mr. Larry Dwyer, followed by Pam Dupre.

6 MR. KUZNICKI: First I would like to
7 recognize any First Nation people here tonight. My
8 name is Kurt Kuznicki, K-u-z-n-i-c-k-i.

9 I want to talk about the importance of
10 the entire Stillwater Range for the protection of
11 cultural resources, wildlife habitat and recreation.
12 The Stillwater Range is very significant culturally
13 because it formed the eastern shore of ancient Lake
14 Lahontan. Native people have used this extensively
15 for well over 10,000 years as evidenced by the
16 well-known Grimes Point Archaeological Area, Hidden
17 Cave, Spirit Cave, which is the burial location of
18 the oldest mummy in North America.

19 Additionally, most of the Stillwater
20 Range was recommended as the Fox Peak area of
21 environmental concern to protect the significant
22 cultural resources found there. This was a formal
23 proposal to the Carson BLM as part of their ongoing
24 planning efforts.

25 Additionally, there is a proposal asking

F.7.2.42.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Although virtual training and simulators are an important aspect of training activities and are already utilized, there are numerous reasons they do not sufficiently re-create fully integrated real-life situations that may be encountered by military personnel in a combat environment. For example, as discussed in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS, virtual training and simulators cannot recreate the physical stresses (e.g., increased heart rate and adrenalin levels) that a live-fire exercise provides.

The FRTC is the only location where an entire carrier air wing can train as a single unit, conducting the full arc of the mission, including pre-flight planning, ordnance handling, in-air activities, weapons deployment, and post-flight briefing. This cannot be accomplished via full mission simulations.

F.7.2.43 Waits, P.

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1 MR. POTASHIN: Can I just take a minute?

2 MS. TURNER: Yes.

3 MR. POTASHIN: I just got a question.

4 Alex, when you were going over your
5 alternatives, Alternative 3, you mentioned a special
6 land management overlay. Can you explain what that is?

7 MS. TURNER: We're not taking questions. At
8 this time, it's just comments. So he'll answer your
9 question --

10 MR. POTASHIN: Oh, over there? Okay.

11 MS. TURNER: There's a station for that. So
12 thank you very much.

13 Okay. Well, thank you, everyone. We very
14 much appreciate your comments today and your
15 participation in this process. We are now concluding
16 the oral comment portion of this meeting.

17 And again, the Navy team members will be
18 available to answer any additional questions you might
19 have. We will be here until 1:00 today. So we
20 encourage you to stay and continue the conversations.

21 Thank you very much.

22 (Additional public comment.)

23 MS. WAITS: We certainly understand the need
24 for expansion, and we are behind the military a hundred
25 percent; however, our concerns are some of the property

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1 that is public lands that the counties actually get PILT
2 from, which is a loss, and perhaps the government can
3 work out where even if you've taken the land for your
4 purposes, the counties affected can still get the PILT
5 tax dollars. Many of the counties depend totally on
6 PILT, and it's a big impact.

7 The other concern we have is for our fighter
8 pilots and the corridors, and of course working with
9 those. So if you keep those cleared for us, because
10 economic development in the rural areas is extremely
11 important and we've put in hundreds of thousands of
12 dollars into our small, rural airports.

13 (Meeting concludes.)

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F.7.2.43.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. A detailed analysis of PILT is located in the Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at <http://frtcmodernization.com>) and discussed in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). There would be no change in PILT for Churchill, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing counties, and very little change in PILT for Lyon County; therefore, there would be no significant impacts from lost revenues from reduced PILT under any of the action alternatives. However, there could be a modest reduction in revenue at the state level from lost hunting opportunities, which could result in a reduction of funding sources for NDOW.

F.7.3 Website Comments

Please see the Navy's responses to comments provided by individuals on the project website during the public commenting period on the Draft EIS in the following tables and sub-sections.

F.7.3.1 Alastuey, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Steph en	Alastuey	<p>The best plan would accommodate public access and recreation throughout the year, preserve wildlife habitat, and have as few negative impacts on the land and air as possible. Public recreation includes hiking, camping, and 4WD where it would not disturb the scenic landscape or adversely impact endangered and indigenous flora and fauna. Seasonal big game hunting may be included, if done safely and responsibly. Open areas are needed by all of us, not just hunters.</p> <p>There is mutual benefit with Wilderness and public lands, and military use. The Environmental Impact Statement has a lot of misinformation about Wilderness Study Areas (WSA). Wilderness protection is a win-win with Navy aviation training. Ground training may need to be adapted to minimize adverse impacts on wildlife habitat. Land designated for Wilderness would restrict development in conformity with the Navy's need for undeveloped areas for maneuvers. BLM would do a good job of managing Wilderness Study Areas and Wilderness Stewardship Challenge (WSC) Areas.</p> <p>Some of the Navy's maps are inadequate. Large portions of Job Peak and Stillwater are misrepresented in size. The statement has no mention of how many springs are there. Stillwater has cultural resources and Greater Sage Grouse habitat. Does the plan affect Greater Sage Grouse habitat?</p> <p>The statement says there are no significant biological impacts. Considering the need for accurate maps and</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy has worked with the public, cooperating agencies, and Indian Tribes to design the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3) so that it minimizes impacts to all resources, including the ones mentioned in your comment; public access, recreation, wildlife habitat, land use, and air quality. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.</p> <p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The proposed de-designation of the Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, maneuvering by special operations forces, and other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. De-designation would not prohibit the use of the area by recreationists.</p> <p>Currently, all state management plans concentrate on habitat availability, wildfire, and land-based chronic noise sources. Greater sage grouse lek location data indicates that usage areas are east of the land areas</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>wildlife habitat considerations, the EIS could be revised.</p> <p>Access to geothermal resources should not be restricted.</p> <p>Sacred and ceremonial Native American sites should be respected. Particular historical sites should be undisturbed. There are many incredible places around the Fallon Naval Station.</p> <p>Most residents in the area are rural poor who will never be able to achieve their current quality of life somewhere else.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to express my opinion.</p>	<p>proposed for withdrawal or acquisition. Sage grouse in these areas would be exposed to noise from aircraft overflights. Available science indicates that short-term noise intrusion does not play a significant role in lek success.</p> <p>The Navy will work closely with BLM and NDOW to manage the sage grouse and other species on lands under the Navy's control. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.</p> <p>For Federally non-listed species, the NEPA conclusions are made at the population level. Although the Navy is not required to follow mitigation plans of the state under the Proposed Action, they will implement mitigation plans as they are able following the lead of the BLM.</p> <p>The Navy has made allowances for potential energy development in the DVTA that is compatible with the Navy mission. Additionally, under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative), the Navy reduced the amount of withdrawn land in the DVTA by creating the Special Land Management Overlay areas to allow future energy development pending BLM approval.</p> <p>The Navy abides by stipulations found within the current 2011 Programmatic Agreement (PA) between Nevada SHPO, BLM, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation with respect to withdrawn lands.</p> <p>Currently, existing withdrawn lands are managed under the prescriptions of the 2011 PA. The Navy is required to consult with the signatories of the 2011 PA (ACHP, SHPO & BLM) for approval of an amendment which adds the newly withdrawn lands. As part of this action, the Navy drafted an amendment to the 2011 PA for consultation and completion by 2021 (when the 2011 PA expires). This amended PA would stipulate requirements for Navy cultural resources management of all Navy managed lands (withdrawn and purchased). Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources) of the Final EIS was updated regarding the PA process.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>The Navy will continue to engage with all interested Tribes. This engagement will continue past the ROD, as the modernization would be implemented over the coming years. The Navy will avoid and/or minimize impacts on cultural resources wherever possible and follow Section 106 requirements. The Navy is committed to providing access to Tribes to the closed ranges and pushing for funding to conduct surveys in range “buffer” areas. The Navy will work with the tribes to prioritize survey areas. The Navy is working with the Nevada SHPO and ACHP to amend the current 2011 PA they are under for withdrawn lands. The Navy would complete Section 106 consultation on impacts due to loss of access for Tribes prior to the fencing of the newly withdrawn and acquired lands after any ultimate Congressional decision.</p> <p>The Navy has added a discussion of customs, culture and economy to the socioeconomics Section of the EIS to address impacts to the social resources in the Study Area. Section 3.15 (Environmental Justice) addresses impacts to rural poor people in the Study Area. Section 3.13 (Socioeconomic Resources) discusses social impacts in the Region of Influence generally, but not with respect to each action alternative individually. A discussion of social impacts is not carried forward throughout each alternative discussion because potential social impacts would not be significantly different among the various alternatives, and because discussion of such impacts is captured in the analysis of impacts to other resource areas such as land use in Section 3.2 (Land Use), mining in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), ranching in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), and recreation in Section 3.12 (Recreation).</p>

F.7.3.2 Alderson, George and Frances

First	Last	Comment	Response
George and Frances	Alderson	<p>We are opposed to any deletions from the BLM wilderness study areas. They are under statutory protection pursuant to section 603(c) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, which states: "(c) During the period of review of such areas and until Congress has determined otherwise, the Secretary shall continue to manage such lands according to his authority under this Act and other applicable law in a manner so as not to impair the suitability of such areas for preservation as wilderness, subject, however, to the continuation of existing mining and grazing uses and mineral leasing in the manner and degree in which the same was being conducted on October 21, 1976. . ."</p> <p>The BLM wilderness review process was established as a mandate from Congress, to provide the benefits of wilderness areas to the public. We urge the Navy to give up any attempt to take land out of these wilderness study areas. They should continue to be protected for possible wilderness designation, "until Congress has determined otherwise."</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The proposed de-designation of the Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, maneuvering by special operations forces, and other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. De-designation would not prohibit the use of the area by recreationists.</p>

F.7.3.3 Aldrich, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Renee	Aldrich	<p>I am an avid public land user. Among many other uses, I am a rancher, hiker, camper, atv'er and rock hound. I am against the Fallon Range Training Complex proposed expansion. Nevada has a unique and special gift in it's rugged terrain and it's public lands. Please do not encroach onto any more of our precious public lands.</p> <p>Thank you very much,</p> <p>Renee Aldrich</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p>

F.7.3.4 Allison, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Linda	Allison	<p>Don't close designated OHV areas! With more people getting involved in OHV sports, access should onot be further restricted.</p> <p>Thank you</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. While OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20, OHV use would be allowed to continue within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after WSA designation removal by Congress.</p> <p>Topography and OHV trails similar to those that occur in the B-17 range area also occur in the Dixie Valley area or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These other public areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).</p>

F.7.3.5 Ames, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
John	Ames	<p>Please dont expand the base and take over land that is used and enjoyed by people from all over the country in many ways.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and has updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy has added tables discussing management practices, monitoring, and mitigation measures to the Final EIS in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation) to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts if applicable.</p>

F.7.3.6 Atkinson, E.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Ellen	Atkinson	<p>NO. We value our public lands and our wilderness study areas. Permanent wilderness designation will protect the wildlife, plant life, and backcountry recreational qualities in these areas.</p> <p>The public comment period must be extended by at least 30 days. It is unacceptable for the Navy to release a 1500-page document just before the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's holidays and allow only 60 days for comment. The public must be given a reasonable amount of time for review and comment.</p> <p>Instead of trying to eliminate 74,700 acres of high-quality wilderness study areas (WSAs) the military should recommend that all of the Wilderness Study Areas surrounding their proposed expansions be fully designated as Wilderness. These Wilderness areas would serve as excellent development buffers for the military while still allowing for protecting wildlife habitat and recreation.</p> <p>The entire Stillwater Range, from Highway 50 to the Pershing County line, including the WSAs and lands with wilderness characteristics, has been identified as having extremely important cultural resources, wildlife habitat and recreational value and needs to be protected. The Range has been proposed as an ACEC because of the cultural, historic, religious and scenic values important to Native Americans, dating back 10,000 years. The Stillwater Range is a popular year-round hiking area and provides for scenic backcountry touring.</p> <p>The military's plan could threaten the geologic and archeologic resources from the ancient days of Lake Lahontan dating back to the Pleistocene period. Pluvial formations can still be found as well as fossil evidence of the wildlife and plant life unique to the Great Basin from that period. The interconnectivity of the marshlands and mountain ranges is a natural resource rich in habitat, cultural and scenic values.</p> <p>The military should not expand into the Fallon National Wildlife</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Draft EIS was released for public review Nov. 16, 2018, for a 60-day public comment period, 15 days more than the required 45-day public review period under NEPA. The Navy extended the public comment period additional 30 days, to close Feb. 14, 2019, for a total of 90 days for public review of the Draft EIS. Public notices of the comment period extension were published in local newspapers and the Federal Register, and the Navy distributed postcards to the project mailing list (including attendees of the Draft EIS public meetings), letters to Indian Tribes, news releases to media, and emails to subscribers on the project website.</p> <p>Your comment has been included in the official project record. Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>Please note that designating any areas proposed for</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>Refuge. They are proposing to eliminate 3,200 acres of the refuge and close it to the public. This is not acceptable.</p> <p>The military is proposing to move Highway 361 to Gabbs to the east of its current location, taking a safe, relatively flat highway through the valley and pushing it up into the mountains creating a very expensive and potentially more dangerous highway for truck and passenger travel. That seems unnecessary and a big expense to the taxpayers. Highway construction would negatively impact wildlife habitat.</p> <p>Given how easily wildfires have started with warming climate and drought we are very concerned with military operations starting fires that could sweep through our homes, ranches and public lands.</p> <p>We support keeping the Fairview Peak area open to the public for a wide variety of recreation.</p> <p>We have concerns with the massive expansion of B-20 and proposed public closures and how that would impact recreation and wildlife habitat in wet years in the Carson Sink.</p> <p>Rural communities are not being given adequate time to thoroughly and accurately analyze the economic impacts of the preferred alternative. Rural economies could suffer from the loss of grazing allotments and greatly reduced public access to lands with high recreational value.</p> <p>Thanks for your time and attention.</p>	<p>wilderness as Wilderness is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process.</p> <p>This expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDW, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge. The remaining 14,648 acres of the refuge would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS.</p> <p>As discussed in Section 3.5 (Transportation), under Alternative 3, the WDW would extend over a portion of SR 361, and that segment would need to be closed and re-routed outside of the WDW due to mission and public safety requirements. The potential closure and rerouting of SR 361 associated with the expansion of B-17 would only occur if Congress chose Alternative 3. However, the affected segment of SR 361 would not be closed unless and until a suitable replacement route is established. Relocation of SR 361 would not cut off access to Gabbs or Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park. The notional relocation corridor for the potential re-routing of SR 361 can be found in Section 3.5.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p> <p>Any proposed rerouting is still conceptual in nature and would be evaluated prior to closure of the route. Follow-on NEPA efforts would need to be conducted for the potential relocation of SR 361 if Alternative 3 were to be selected. See Chapter 2, specifically Section 2.3.4.2.4 (Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 3) for further details. If Alternative 3 were chosen, the Navy would transfer any funds appropriated for relocating the road to the</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>Federal Highway Administration, who in turn would make these funds available to NDOT for planning, design and construction of the replacement road to State standards.</p> <p>The Navy has implemented and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce the occurrence of wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan, and where possible, proposed elements and goals of this plan were added to the Final EIS. For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).</p> <p>Demographic and economic data low-income populations and communities of comparison as a whole are presented in Table 3.15-1. Based on the methodology presented in Section 3.15.1.3.1 (Identifying Minority or Low-income Populations), low-income populations are located in Lyon County (Block Group 1, Census Tract 9602.02), Mineral County (Block Group 1, Census Tract 9708), and Pershing County (Block Group 1, Census Tract 9601). These census tracts qualify as low-income populations because they have a low-income population equal to or greater than that of their respective communities of comparison (Table 3.15-1). Although there are minority and low-income populations within the affected area and significant impacts outlined within this EIS, implementation of the Preferred Alternative would not cause disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on any minority or low-income populations. For any acquisition of privately-owned property, private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land acquired by the United States due to the proposed expansion, which includes water rights and present and future mining claims. Just compensation would be determined by calculating the fair market value of parcels in accordance with federal appraisal rules codified in the Uniform Appraisal Standards for</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>Federal Land Acquisitions.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges that it has the authority under 43 United States Code section 315q of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended, to make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered by the permit holders as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes. This authority has been incorporated into the Proposed Action. The Final EIS discusses the process that the Navy is proposing to use to determine payment amounts to each specific grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits.</p>

F.7.3.7 Atwood, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
April	Atwood	<p>This bombing range expansion is a terrible idea and would be tremendously destructive to wildlife and public lands. This plan would transform entire valleys and mountain ranges into bombing targets rather than protecting them as wildlife refuges and public areas to be enjoyed by all Americans.</p> <p>The land under threat includes rich habitat for mule deer, important desert springs and nesting sites for raptors like golden eagles. It is wrong to steal so much land from the public and destroy it for military use only. Please reject this bad idea!</p>	<p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.</p> <p>Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p> <p>The following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes.</p> <p>The Navy would like to clarify that the protections for the wildlife refuges would continue to be in place, the only change would be that a portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge would not be accessible to the public. The Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge.</p> <p>Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowable in the DVTA. Grazing would also continue to be allowed in the DVTA.</p>

F.7.3.8 Bachelder, E.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Edward	Bachelder	<p>The wide-open spaces of central Nevada's basin-and-range country are part of what makes that state so spectacular. These hundreds of thousands of acres of public land should not be seized for dropping bombs on our cherished wildlife and wild places.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate.</p> <p>As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p>

F.7.3.9 Barnett, V.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Virginia	Barnett	How long will we put war before the citizens of this country and it's environment? This is a disgusting abuse of power and an unnecessary one. Why don't we flex our muscles of diplomacy and peace making, or is there not enough money in that for us? I for one am tired of the unlimited spending on wars and destruction, giving it a facade of protection is absolutely asinine. The only people who believe that are those who find it easier to believe what they're told than to think critically and realize what's really happening. We profit from war, and money is all this government cares about. Let's make a change and leave our wildlife spaces to the flies and fauna, let's actually protect our country for once. Shame on all who support this.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable. Please see Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) of the EIS for a definition of the scope of the project.

F.7.3.10 Barrenchea, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Connie	Barrenchea	Taking of this land impacts so many persons lives it will wipe out my family's ranching business it is so unfair and so unneeded. Please don't ruin so many people's lives .	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS (Chapter 2 and Section 3.4 [Grazing]) describes the process proposed by the Navy to determine payment amounts to each specific grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives.

F.7.3.11 Barrett, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Luke	Barrett	<p>This draft EIS will lead to significant impacts to existing public lands and recreation opportunities in central Nevada that are unacceptable; I would like to voice my strong opposition to the proposed action and alternatives 1, 2, and 3.</p> <p>Beyond the unacceptable impacts to public lands, the Draft EIS has several critical oversights and omissions:</p> <p>1) The draft EIS does not adequately disclose impacts to guzzlers and other water infrastructure that has been developed in the area. NDOW estimates this project may impact around 64 guzzlers. The sporting community needs to be aware of this impact and the Navy needs to propose specific mitigation for the loss of these features that were created specifically for wildlife, hunting, and recreation.</p> <p>2) The proposed removal of the wilderness study areas in the Clan Alpine and Stillwater range is not mitigation for loss of public lands as stated in the Draft EIS. The removal of the WSA's will open these areas up for mineral and geothermal development that could result in further loss of public lands and wildlife habitat. If the Navy is interested in "mitigating" for loss of public lands (Which there is really no mitigation for) they should strengthen existing Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas, to ensure these areas stay accessible to the public.</p> <p>3) The proposed configuration for the B-20 bombing range should be revised to avoid impacts to the Fallon NWR. This land was specifically set aside for wildlife habitat and public recreation. The management of this land is paid for by hunter's duck stamp money and should remain accessible for hunters to use and enjoy. As a side note, only approved nontoxic ammunition is allowed on national wildlife refuges. If the Navy plans on using a special use overlay in this area, and not</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy, as part of the Proposed Action, would acquire water rights within the proposed withdrawal areas if the water right can be maintained for beneficial use. If a condition of the water right can be modified (e.g., the point of use moved outside of the withdrawal areas), then the water right would not be acquired by the Navy. If wells are associated with the water right, then the Navy will evaluate on a case-by-case basis the disposition of the well (e.g., continued beneficial use or capping of the well). The Navy acknowledges that there may be impacts that have yet to be defined and will continue to develop and incorporate mitigation measures as necessary. The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC.</p> <p>Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. However, this de-designation would not prohibit the use of these areas by recreationists. Additionally, if the public is recreating in the area, the Navy would seek an alternate location to train until the area used by the public is available, as is currently done in the existing DVTA.</p> <p>This expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>transferring the lands to DOD, the Navy will need to conform to the Fish and Wildlife Services' nontoxic ammunition requirement.</p> <p>4) The "blanket statements" pertaining to Greater Sage Grouse impacts in the Draft EIS are unacceptable and actual avoidance and mitigations need to be outlined, especially during the lekking season. The Navy needs to incorporate the avoidance and mitigation measures outlined in NDOW's publication, Acoustic Impacts and Greater Sage-grouse: A Review of Current Science, Sound Measurement Protocols, and Management Recommendations. The Navy is capable of modeling acoustic impacts pertaining to jets and needs to assure that impacts over ten decibels do not occur during sage grouse lekking.</p> <p>5) The Navy needs to conduct annual surveys for raptors and golden eagles and identify nests within the proposed action area. Navy operations need to be crafted to avoid impacts to nesting raptors and golden eagles as outlines in the United States Fish and Wildlife Services document, Interim Golden Eagle Inventory and Monitoring Protocols; and Other Recommendations.</p> <p>6) The Navy needs to prepare a comprehensive fire management plan to address range fires that occur on the lands the Navy is proposing to withdraw. The Draft EIS does not address this issue. There are already cases where Navy training flares or other devices are suspected of starting range fires. The Navy needs to be able to respond to range fires to prevent further loss of wildlife habitat.</p> <p>7) Under some alternative's sheep hunting is proposed to continue in the Fairview area. While this is a step in the right direction, the Navy needs to consider other outdoor recreation beyond sheep. This range is home to pronghorn and numerous small and upland game species. All hunters deserve an opportunity to recreate in the Fairview range.</p>	<p>Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>Currently, all state management plans concentrate on habitat availability, wildfire, and land-based chronic noise sources. Greater sage grouse lek location data indicates that usage areas are east of the land areas proposed for withdrawal or acquisition. Sage grouse in these areas would be exposed to noise from aircraft overflights. Available science indicates that short-term noise intrusion does not play a significant role in lek success. The Navy will work closely with BLM and NDOW to manage the sage grouse and other species on lands under the Navy's control. The Navy is proposing to fund a study that would be conducted by NDOW (in cooperation with the Navy) to monitor behavior of sage grouse on leks during aircraft overflights. Any commitment by the Navy to undertake a study (or studies) will be addressed in the EIS Record of Decision.</p> <p>Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species. Therefore, annual monitoring or surveys for mitigation are not proposed as the implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in significant impacts.</p> <p>The Navy has implemented and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce the occurrence of wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan, and where possible, proposed elements and goals of this plan were added to the Final EIS (a draft outline of which can be found in Appendix D, Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans, in the Final EIS). For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		I would like to express my support for the no action alternative because Nevada's public lands belong to the citizens of the United States and should remain public.	<p>Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).</p> <p>The Navy would provide access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency that would set any quotas and distribute any permits, as well as maintenance of wildlife habitat. The Navy has developed a draft MOA in conjunction with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for this hunting program (further details are provided in Section 3.12, Recreation, and Appendix D, Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans, of the Final EIS). The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission. The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC. The Navy currently has an Access Management Memorandum of Understanding with NDOW that would be updated (with a new MOA) after any ultimate Congressional Decision on an action. The Navy cannot accommodate other forms of hunting on the range as the tag numbers, hunting seasons, and areas of hunt are not compatible with the training and WDZ on the B-17 range.</p>

F.7.3.12 BASTIEN, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
ROBERT	BASTIEN	According to the Navy's 2018 Environmental Impact Study (EIS), the Navy's ideal training zone, known as the "Weapons Danger Zone Reflecting Full Training Capabilities" is a circle of land with an approximate diameter of 32 miles. Since this "Full Training Capabilities" site will never "fit" in the area east of Fallon, why pursue an "acceptable" expansion rather than searching for an ideal scenario? As a result of this Full Training Capabilities impossibility, the Navy proposes settling for a north-south "slice" of the circle of the Full Training Capabilities site. The proposal would increase the current training site size by withdrawing minimally an additional 680,000 ACRES or 1,069 SQUARE MILES! However, this	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The 90-Days to Combat identifies the required warfighting capabilities for naval aviation and Naval Special Warfare and describes the current capability of NAWDC and the FRTC to support those requirements. It compares the current range capabilities against what would be needed to be able to fully train to Navy Doctrine Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP). These TTP are informed by current policies, available resources, current strategy and campaign concepts, threats, lessons learned, fielded or emerging technologies, and threat tactics and procedures. Finally, it identifies FRTC land and airspace capability gaps that inhibit the ability to train aircrew and Special Forces to a tactically acceptable level of combat capability prior to deployment.</p> <p>The Draft EIS document indicated that regional roadways, commercial airspace, and population centers were some examples of constraints that the</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>expansion would still be inadequate based upon the Navy's own definition of the ideal training zone! This expansion is termed as "acceptable" but for how long? A more logical and better solution would be to locate land in Nevada that is currently withdrawn and of the size necessary to accommodate the Navy's ideal training zone. That area within Nevada currently exists!</p> <p>Develop the Nevada Test Site (NTS)! The Nevada Test Site is roughly a square of land 36 miles by 36 miles. The approximate 1,300 SQUARE MILES of the NTS would accommodate the entire ideal "Weapons Danger Zone Reflecting Full Training Capabilities" that the Navy has determined to be the ideal size training area. Why not utilize this area rather than withdrawing a less than ideal training area, an area that the Navy will surely "outgrow", given time. Why keep withdrawing and sacrificing pristine PUBLIC lands when there already is a withdrawn area that would accommodate the "perfect" training area? I vehemently object to all 3 of the proposed "Action" alternatives of the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization due to but not limited to the expansion of the B-17 bombing area and the several Wilderness Study Areas.</p> <p>There is a huge area of land in Nevada currently withdrawn for military use, the Nellis Air Force Range (NAFR)! And the Nellis Air Force Range is adjacent to the Nevada Test Site!</p> <p>The NAFR, 3,100,000 ACRES or 4,800 SQUARE MILES of land already withdrawn, which borders the Nevada Test Site on 3 sides, should be shared jointly by the Navy and the Air Force. If these two military branches cannot efficiently and jointly utilize this massive withdrawn land area, our country is at risk! How many real military "actions" were engaged without a coordinated effort by all our military branches? This</p>	<p>Navy used to initially (before proposing ANY withdrawal) screen the potential for a full modernization of the FRTC range. Because of the size that would be required to fully meet the requirements, the Navy determined that requesting over 1.6 million acres of land would be far more impactful and complicated than modifying the TTP to be able to achieve realistic, but somewhat limited, training. The 90-Days to Combat document fully details the limitations of the existing FRTC as well as the requirements that would be required in order to fully meet the Navy's mission. This document has been made available on the FRTC Modernization website at: https://frtcmodernization.com/Public-Involvement/Public-Information/Public-Informational-Materials.</p> <p>Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis.</p> <p>While it would hypothetically be possible to develop training systems at Nellis Air Force Base, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training currently uses nearly all of the complex's available training capacity (time and space). Nellis Air Force Base, as currently configured or as proposed, would not be able to support the intensity of both Navy and Air Force training, and therefore was not carried forward for further analysis.</p> <p>The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training.</p> <p>While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would</p>

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		<p>IS the ideal “zone” for sure, Reflecting Full Training Capabilities, EXACTLY what the Navy wants! The NAFR and the NTS encompass an area of almost 4,000,000 acres or 6,000 SQUARE MILES of Nevada land! Why should the military continue withdrawing pristine PUBLIC areas? Isn’t 4 MILLION acres or 6,000 SQUARE MILES of Nevada enough? The Navy and the Air Force should jointly and efficiently utilize the NAFR and the NTS and work on coordination, just as they would in a real conflict or war. This is not only logical but also practical and reasonable.</p> <p>I attended 2 of the public meetings held; one in Gabbs, Nevada and the other in Reno. At both meetings, I stated my objection to all 3 Action Alternatives. By far, the vast majority of those Nevadans who spoke were against any expansion as proposed.</p> <p>The impacts of the expansion would be denial of the use of OR the elimination of the potential of all the following...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What undiscovered archaeological sites would be overlooked? • There still are numerous mining claims filed and active in this area. • Geothermal resources are obvious in the Dixie Valley just north of this area. Research indicates that further geothermal resources are likely in the Gabbs valley area. • Potential solar and wind renewable resources would be prohibited. • Ranchers graze their livestock in these areas. • Wildlife is rampant in these areas. Many hunter associations object to this land grab! As do many conservation and wildlife protection groups! 	<p>be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts.</p> <p>The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p> <p>The Navy’s evaluation includes archaeological and architectural resources, cemeteries, and traditional cultural properties-- particularly those that are historic properties (i.e., those listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places). Archaeological surveys were conducted within the lands requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition (see Supporting Study: Class I Cultural Resources Investigation and Class III, available at http://www.frtcmodernization.com).</p> <p>The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).</p> <p>For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value.</p> <p>For existing patented mining claims, the federal government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.</p> <p>Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity</p>

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several Wilderness Study Areas will also be decimated. People recreate in these areas in so many ways; hiking, exploring, “off roading”, hunting, camping and enjoying the solitude. <p>The focus of my objection is the expansion of the B-17 area. For well over a decade, I have been driving from my home in Carson City, Nevada to the Monte Cristo Mountains and the Slate Mountain areas, the areas considered for withdrawal. I have been making these journeys to explore, rock hunt, hike, camp and enjoy the solitude. I have spent over 80 days and more than 24 nights in these areas, enjoying the wilderness and the solitude.</p> <p>Don’t pursue this expansion. Please, leave Nevada lands to the Nevadans!</p>	<p>of a claim based on this validity examination. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam demonstrating a valuable mineral deposit a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.</p> <p>The Final EIS further describes the process by which interested parties could pursue compatible geothermal development in a portion of the Dixie Valley Training Area. The proposed required design features are necessary for the Navy to meet training requirements. Development of the required design features affords an opportunity for geothermal development that would otherwise be lost. The Navy acknowledges that complying with required design features could add cost to a potential geothermal development; however, the Navy is committed to working with the developer on a case-by-case basis. This is addressed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).</p> <p>The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives.</p> <p>The process for valuation of losses as a result of the Proposed Action has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.</p>

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			<p>The Navy would allow access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency and would set quotas and distribute permits, and maintain wildlife habitat. The Navy is developing a Memorandum of Agreement with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for the hunting program. Further details are provided in Section 3.12 (Recreation) and Appendix D, (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans) of the Final EIS.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.</p> <p>The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and manage wildlife.</p> <p>The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.</p>

First, I must tell you that I support our military and its mission. I support our troops, honor our veterans and am quite proud of our armed forces. So this letter is not an objection directed towards the military. I also understand the need to have a properly trained military, however...

According to the Navy's 2018 Environmental Impact Study (EIS), the Navy's ideal training zone, known as the **"Weapons Danger Zone Reflecting Full Training Capabilities"** is a circle of land with an approximate diameter of 32 miles. Since this **"Full Training Capabilities"** site will never "fit" in the area east of Fallon, why pursue an "acceptable" expansion rather than searching for an ideal scenario? Of course to implement the **"Weapons Danger Zone Reflecting Full Training Capabilities"** closure of US Highway 50, Nevada State Highways 121, 830 and 361, closure of the Sand Mountain State Park and relocation of the natural gas Paiute Pipeline could be an option. **Get real!** As a result of this **Full Training Capabilities impossibility** east of Fallon, the Navy proposes settling for a north-south "slice" of the circle of this **Full Training Capabilities** site. The proposal would increase the current training site size by withdrawing minimally an **additional 680,000 ACRES or 1,069 SQUARE MILES!** **However, this expansion would still be inadequate based upon the Navy's own definition of the ideal training zone!** This expansion is termed as "acceptable" but for how long? A more logical and better solution would be to locate land in Nevada that is currently withdrawn and of the size to accommodate the Navy's **ideal** training zone. **That area within Nevada currently exists!**

Why doesn't the Navy utilize the area that no one really can access currently? Develop the **Nevada Test Site!** The Nevada Test Site is approximately a square of land 36 miles long by 36 miles wide. The approximate **1,300 SQUARE MILES** of the Nevada Test site would accommodate the **entire ideal "Weapons Danger Zone Reflecting Full Training Capabilities"** that the Navy has determined to be the **absolute ideal size** training area. Why not utilize this area rather than withdrawing a less than ideal training area, an area that the Navy will surely "outgrow", given time. **Why should the Navy keep withdrawing and sacrificing pristine PUBLIC lands when there already is a withdrawn area that would accommodate the "perfect" training area?**

In the Navy's 2018 Environmental Impact Study, they are proposing 3 **Action** alternatives, all of which constitute withdrawing substantial public and some private land for expansion, not to mention moving a highway, in their preferred alternative. Additionally to comply with some proposal etiquette, a **No Action** proposal is also included. I'm surprised that a "status quo" alternative was not "presented" since the **No Action** alternative reclaims for the public the current bombing areas that were taken from the public. I suspect it is a ploy, showing that the only real alternative, in the Navy's minds, involves withdrawing more land. **However, I certainly would NOT object to "un-withdrawing" (returning) the current Naval training and bombing areas to the public!**

I vehemently object to all 3 of the proposed "Action" alternatives of the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization particularly due to but not limited to the expansion of the Bravo-17 bombing area! This land grab by the Navy would also encompass several Wilderness Study Areas in Nevada! All of these areas must be left as they are, open to the public!

In addition to the previously mentioned Nevada Test Site, there is a **huge** area of land in Nevada currently withdrawn for military use, the Nellis Air Force Range (**NAFR**)! And the Nellis Air Force Range is adjacent to the Nevada Test Site!

In fact, the Nellis Air Force Range in effect surrounds the Nevada Test Site! The **NAFR**, all **3.1 MILLION ACRES or 4,800 SQUARE MILES** of land already withdrawn, which borders the Nevada Test Site on 3 sides, should be shared jointly by the Navy and the Air Force. If these two military branches cannot efficiently and jointly utilize this massive withdrawn land area, our country is at risk! How many real military conflicts/wars were engaged without a coordinated effort by all our military branches? Think of the **training opportunities** that this sharing and efficient utilization will present! This really would be the ideal "zone" for sure, **Reflecting Full Training Capabilities, EXACTLY** what the Navy should want!

The **NAFR** and the Nevada Test Site encompass an area of almost **4 MILLION acres or 6,000 SQUARE MILES** of Nevada land! Why should the military keep acquiring and sacrificing pristine **PUBLIC** areas? Isn't **4 MILLION acres or 6,000 SQUARE MILES** of Nevada enough? The Navy and the Air Force should **jointly and efficiently** utilize the **NAFR** and the Nevada Test Site and work on **coordination**, just as they would in a real conflict or war. This is not only logical but also practical and reasonable.

I am not alone in objecting to this land grab. I was able to attend 2 of the public meetings held late last year; one in Gabbs, Nevada in the evening on December 10 and the other in Reno in the evening on December 13. At both meetings, I stated my objection to all 3 Action Alternatives, accepting only the "No Action" alternative. By far, the vast majority of those Nevadans who spoke, representing numerous perspectives and organizations, were against any expansion of the "training and bombing" areas proposed. Of the approximate 15 people who spoke in Gabbs, only one reluctantly accepted the possible need for expansion. All those who spoke in Reno objected.

The impacts of the Navy withdrawing additional land for training purposes are very far reaching. Briefly, while acknowledging some impacts in the EIS, the outcome would be denial of the use of OR the elimination of the potential of all the following...

- Native American tribes indigenous to the area have inhabited these areas long before "civilized" man set foot in the area. Who knows what undiscovered archaeological sites would be overlooked?
- There have been and still are numerous mineralogical claims filed and active in this area.
- Geothermal resources are obvious in the Dixie Valley just north of this area. Research indicates that further geothermal resources are likely in the Gabbs valley area.
- Potential solar and wind renewable resources would be prohibited from utilizing these areas. The infrastructure to transport these renewable energy resources is relatively nearby since there is an existing geothermal facility in Dixie Valley, north of US Highway 50.
- Ranchers graze their livestock in this area.
- Wildlife is rampant in these areas. Death, destruction of habitat and constant harassment of this wildlife benefits no one! Many hunter associations object to this land grab! As do many conservation and wildlife protection groups.

- Several Wilderness Study Areas will also be decimated. Some areas of Nevada should just be left alone to develop as they would if we didn't exist!
- Then there is the group in which I "fall". People recreate in these areas in so many ways! Some enjoy the hiking and exploration. Some enjoy using and exploring with off road vehicles. Some enjoy the hunting of wildlife in these areas. Some enjoy the camping and solitude in these areas. I am just such a person.

As mentioned previously, the focus of my objection is the expansion of the Bravo-17 (B-17) area. For well over a decade, I have been driving from my home in Carson City, Nevada to the Monte Cristo Mountains and the Slate Mountain areas, the areas north by northwest of Gabbs, Nevada. The areas considered for withdrawal. These areas are about 130 miles one way from my home in Carson City. I have been making these journeys to explore, rock hunt, hike, camp and enjoy the solitude. Based upon my pictorial records, I have spent more than 80 days and more than 24 nights in these areas, enjoying the wilderness and the solitude.

I'm a rock hound and a student of geology and I have traveled quite extensively in the Western United States, hunting for rocks. This is just a hobby. It is something I do entirely for enjoyment and the thrill of finding rocks that are interesting or beautiful. From a rock hunting perspective, I have found few areas in the West that can compare to the variety, quality, and beauty of the "material" (rocks) that can be found in the area proposed for withdrawal and therefore closed to the public. I make day trips and multi-day trips to the area. I enjoy the beauty, wildlife, geology and the solitude of the relatively unscathed Nevada wilderness, north by northwest of Gabbs, Nevada. "Gabbs" as I refer to that area in general, is MY "go to" place.

From a geological perspective, the Fairview Peak Earthquake Faults are something to behold. The Fairview Peak Earthquake Faults are identified as a point of interest in Nevada. There is a highway sign marking the turn-off to the fault area and educational signage as well.

Related earthquake faults run up Dixie Valley as well. As a student of geology, I have visited these faults numerous times. It is inspiring to investigate and "touch" the areas that are indicative of the tectonic and geologic forces that have created not only this area but the entire world! Talk about something to behold! Don't deny us the experience of exploring these areas that are so geologically "active".

The area north by northwest of Gabbs, Nevada; the Monte Cristo Range and the Slate Mountain areas are special to me. Please leave them accessible to the public.

Do the right thing, do not pursue this expansion. Leave these public lands open to the public. Leave Nevada lands to the Nevadans!

Thank you.

F.7.3.12.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The 90-Days to Combat identifies the required warfighting capabilities for naval aviation and Naval Special Warfare and describes the current capability of NAWDC and the FRTC to support those requirements. It compares the current range capabilities against what would be needed to be able to fully train to Navy Doctrine Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP). These TTP are informed by current policies, available resources, current strategy and campaign concepts, threats, lessons learned, fielded or emerging technologies, and threat tactics and

procedures. Finally, it identifies FRTC land and airspace capability gaps that inhibit the ability to train aircrew and Special Forces to a tactically acceptable level of combat capability prior to deployment.

The Draft EIS document indicated that regional roadways, commercial airspace, and population centers were some examples of constraints that the Navy used to initially (before proposing ANY withdrawal) screen the potential for a full modernization of the FRTC range. Because of the size that would be required to fully meet the requirements, the Navy determined that requesting over 1.6 million acres of land would be far more impactful and complicated than modifying the TTP to be able to achieve realistic, but somewhat limited, training. The 90-Days to Combat document fully details the limitations of the existing FRTC as well as the requirements that would be required in order to fully meet the Navy's mission. This document has been made available on the FRTC Modernization website at:

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Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis.

While it would hypothetically be possible to develop training systems at Nellis Air Force Base, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training currently uses nearly all of the complex's available training capacity (time and space). Nellis Air Force Base, as currently configured or as proposed, would not be able to support the intensity of both Navy and Air Force training, and therefore was not carried forward for further analysis.

The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWA China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training.

While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts.

The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.

The Navy's evaluation includes archaeological and architectural resources, cemeteries, and traditional cultural properties-- particularly those that are historic properties (i.e., those listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places). Archaeological surveys were conducted within the lands requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition (see Supporting Study: Class I Cultural Resources Investigation and Class III, available at <http://www.frtcmodernization.com>).

The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Valid and existing mining

rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value.

For existing patented mining claims, the federal government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.

Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam demonstrating a valuable mineral deposit a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.

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The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives.

The process for valuation of losses as a result of the Proposed Action has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.

The Navy would allow access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing

agency and would set quotas and distribute permits, and maintain wildlife habitat. The Navy is developing a Memorandum of Agreement with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for the hunting program. Further details are provided in Section 3.12 (Recreation) and Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans) of the Final EIS.

The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.

The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and manage wildlife.

The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.

F.7.3.13 Batchelor, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Shanon	Batchelor	<p>We have enough bombs but not enough clean water, native habitat, or intact ecosystems. You want to blow everything up? Ridiculous! You want to kill all the native life forever with your depleted uranium, toxic petrol, toxic chemicals? CLEAN UP THE MESSES YOU HAVE ALREADY MADE FIRST.</p> <p>The military is the biggest polluter in the world and now you want even more land to destroy? FORGET IT.</p> <p>CLEAN UP ALL THE TOXIC CHEMICALS YOU HAVE SPREAD ALL OVER THIS NATION AND THE WORLD FIRST BEFORE ASKING FOR MORE LAND TO DESTROY.</p> <p>WHAT A BUNCH OF GREEDY GOOD FOR NOTHING ORGANIZATION OF DESTRUCTIVE HUMANS YOU ARE. BE HAPPY WITH WHAT YOU HAVE ALREADY RUINED AND CLEAN IT UP BEFORE ASKING FOR MORE. DISGUSTING.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities. The Navy continuously monitors its operations to find ways to minimize the use of hazardous materials and to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes. Any spills would be managed and cleaned up in accordance with applicable state and federal regulatory requirements. If any such spill were to exceed reportable quantities as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for regulated material, the event would be immediately reported to the NAS Fallon Environmental Division for appropriate action per the Integrated Contingency Plan (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2009).</p> <p>Regarding depleted uranium, the Navy is not proposing to use nuclear weaponry under this Proposed Action. They have been used in the past for training, however, they are not used currently.</p> <p>Regarding other issues brought up in this comment, the Proposed Action does not include the topic of your comment. Please see Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) of the EIS for a definition of the scope of the project.</p> <p>Additionally, the DoD created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure DoD compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>Lastly, Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3571.4, Operational Range Clearance Policy for Navy Ranges, establishes the policy and requirements for performing operational range clearance on Navy ranges.</p>

F.7.3.14 Baxter, L.

First	Last	Comment		Response
Lawrence	Baxter	I cannot see why the Navy Has to Close the Access to More Land that Nevada Citizens use for Recreational & Hunting Purposes. We have Coexisted for Many Years with Little or No Problems.	The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.	

F.7.3.15 Bedell, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Lisa	Bedell	<p>Hello, as a native Nevadan, I am against any more land being withdrawn from public access. Our state is already 80% under government control.</p> <p>This land grab by the Navy would drive some long time Nevadans out of business. Middlegate Station relies on ranchers and recreational enthusiasts to support their business. Withdrawing this land would basically drive away their business. As a beloved Nevada landmark, this would be a terrible loss.</p> <p>I have ridden on these lands for decades, helping ranchers with their cows, and trail riding to enjoy the Nevada scenery. This land grab would drive away long time Nevada grazing lease holders, with little chance of them being able to graze their cattle within reasonable distance to their home ranches.</p> <p>Nevada relies on tourism dollars to support our communities. Many folks travel here from out of state to enjoy the desert the Navy wants to close access to.</p> <p>More Nevadans put into hardship due to loss of tourist business income.</p> <p>In Fallon, we put up with the jets flying over our properties, as the Navy base is a huge part of our community. But enough is enough. No more taking of our lands.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. However, Middlegate Station and the immediate environs are not part of any lands requested for acquisition or withdrawal.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.</p> <p>The Navy worked with a local Nevada scientist to develop the Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at http://frtcmodernization.com). The report found that hunting-related (touristic) economic losses would be similar in scale for Mineral, Pershing, and Nye counties based on the percentage of lost revenue compared to total economic activity (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at http://frtcmodernization.com], Table B-1).</p>

F.7.3.16 Bell, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Robert	Bell	Please don't restrict airspace that will impact the civilian airspace in and around the Reno, Carson City, Minden area. there is already too much traffic in the form of Gliders, Commercial, and Private flying and not everyone can install the necessary positive control instrumentation. Thank you.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).

F.7.3.17 Bellis, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Lori	Bellis	Comments are contained in the attached file	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization DEIS Comments
Lori Bellis – January 2019

PROPOSAL OF AN ALTERNATIVE 4

Consolidate military training operations in Nevada to maximize efficiencies and minimize land disturbance and closures. The Nevada Test and Training Range is 2.9 million acres and already closed to the public. It has also proposed expanding military land acquisition into 301,507 acres of the Desert National Wildlife Refuge. Use what's already available. No roads or pipelines need to be moved. No fences need to be built. The Army and Navy coordinate actions in actual combat and non-combat missions, why not do it for training?

The greatest environmental impacts are in the B-17 expansion. Is it possible to expand B-16 and B-20, and move B-17 operations to NTTR?

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Land disturbance – Direct Impact = 5,882 acres

Land disturbance is predominantly in playa (B-20), greasewood (B-17) vegetation.

It doesn't appear that any of the biological surveys were done in the areas with direct impact, so there's no way to know if impacts are significant or not. The determination of no significant impacts based on the premise that 5,882 acres is 'small, relative to the amount of surrounding areas', is not a valid way to determine effects. 5,882 acres is not a small area of disturbance – it's a large one. It's equivalent to 9 square miles – an area roughly the size of the town of Winnemucca and twice the size of the town of Fallon.

In order to determine significance, analysis of the affected environment needs to include:

- Biological surveys for special status species (plants & animals) within the areas where land disturbance will take place.
- Appropriately scaled maps that show:
 - special status species within the disturbance areas
 - special status species within the Weapons Danger Zones
 - special status wildlife species within the highest decibel noise contour maps
- Assessment of impact based on population levels within their range for each species affected. For example, how many desert bighorn sheep occur near the B-17 disturbance area? Four hundred acres of year-round bighorn sheep range is impacted. A winter and lambing range is adjacent to a proposed land disturbance area and within the Hellfire, Laser guided, and Joint Direct Attack Munition zones. That would indicate a potential for a significant impact on at least one desert bighorn sheep herd from the cumulative effects of direct land disturbance (construction and bombing) and harassment from noise. Although this may not significantly impact the species as a whole, the possibility of losing an entire herd of bighorn sheep should require mitigation measures to benefit the species elsewhere in the project area.
- Three thousand acres of year-round range for pronghorn will be impacted in B-17. How large is the pronghorn herd in this area and what percentage of their total range does the 3,000 acres comprise?

Since biological surveys were not done for the proposed areas of disturbance, they should be required to be completed prior to land disturbance. Consequently, minimization and mitigation measures need to be included in the EIS for any special status species associated with the vegetation community of the disturbance area. For example, 3,576 acres of Baileys Greasewood Shrubland will be impacted in B-17. Burrowing owls (USFWS Bird of Conservation Concern) occur in B-16 and B-17 in greasewood vegetation. Will burrowing owl surveys be completed prior to land clearing activities? If owls are found, what measures will be taken to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts?

The EIS states “noise from aircraft and weapons firing, launch, and impact (Section 3.7, Noise; and Section 3.10.3.1.1, Noise) as well as energy stressors like electromagnetic radiation and lasers (Section 3.10.3.1.2, Energy Stressors within the Proposed Expansion Area) may elicit short-term physiological and behavioral responses to wildlife species, including special-status species. Exposed individuals would be expected to quickly recover from these responses, and exposure would be intermittent and infrequent. *The short-term behavioral and physiological responses are not expected to affect the fitness of individuals. Therefore, population-level effects to wildlife species would not occur. The intensity of effects of disturbance and strike stressors on wildlife species may be considered minor.*”

What is this determination based on? What scientific studies and/or research support these claims?

LAND USE

The expanded B-20 boundary includes 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge and 1,920 acres of adjoining Churchill County conservation easements. These lands should remain as is and not be included in the expansion based on incompatible use. A wildlife refuge does not belong within a bombing range.

The DVTA overlaps BLM special land designations which require specific management practices to protect natural resources. The appropriate way to protect these resources is to designate the Fox Peak ACEC in the legislation and remove the ACEC from the DVTA. Designate the Clan Alpine, Stillwater and Jobs Peak WSA's as Wilderness Areas and remove them from the DVTA. This would resolve special land use conflicts and meet the Navy's needs.

Alternatively, consider making the entire DVTA a “Special Land Management Overlay” to resolve land use designation conflicts with BLM ACECs and WSAs as well as Greater Sage Grouse Habitat conservation concerns. These lands should remain under BLM with Navy requirement stipulations.

NOISE

The only ‘noise sensitive areas’ in the EIS are communities and the Stillwater NWR. Wilderness and wilderness study areas should also be designated noise sensitive areas. They are intended for quiet and solitude and a place where wildlife can be free of harassment, which includes noise.

CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

The Unexploded Ordnance region of influence includes: Nevada Test and Training Range Military Land Withdrawal; USMC Walker MOA; NAS Fallon: Joint Land Use Study; Central Nevada Test Range; and Tonopah Test Range. What is the total acreage for these areas?

Address the cumulative effects of ALL military operations in Nevada, including the 301,507 acre expansion of the 2,949,603 acre Nevada Test and Training Range. The Navy's proposed military acquisition of another 683,880 acres (included 424,466 acres with restricted public access) is cumulative for Nevada residents and visitors, as well as biological resources at the landscape level.

F.7.3.17.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding the proposal for an alternative 4, please see Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the Final EIS discusses various alternatives the Navy considered, including those suggested by the public. The Final EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for not carrying specific alternatives forward for further analysis. While it would hypothetically be possible to develop training systems at Nellis Air Force Base, the United States (U.S.) Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training currently uses nearly all of the complex's available training capacity (time and space). Shared use of Nellis Air Force Base, as currently configured or as proposed, would not be able to support the intensity of both Navy and Air Force training, and therefore was not carried forward for further analysis. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.

Regarding the assertion that it does not appear that biological surveys were completed, to evaluate the presence of and potential impacts on species and their habitats, biological resource surveys have been conducted on proposed FRTC expansion areas in support of this EIS within the proposed action area (as described in Section 2.3, Alternatives Carried Forward for Analysis). The following surveys have been completed:

- vegetation mapping (2017, 2019)
- wetlands (2018, 2019)
- special-status plants (2017, 2019)
- wildlife camera trapping (2017, 2019)
- bats (2017, 2019)
- birds, including diurnal and nocturnal raptors (2017, 2018, 2019), greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*) (2017, 2019), and MBTA-listed species (2017, 2018, 2019)
- small mammals (2018, 2019)
- reptiles and amphibians (2018, 2019)
- general invertebrates (2018, 2019)
- fish (2018, 2019)

Surveys were conducted within representative habitats within the proposed FRTC expansion lands, and findings from these locations are assumed to be representative of other areas not surveyed that possess similar habitat attributes. The survey reports are presented in as Supporting Studies and the ones that

are complete, are available at <http://www.frtcmodernization.com>. Each report provides figures depicting the individual study areas for each group or species surveyed.

In addition to surveys conducted in support of this EIS, previous survey reports and Geographic Information System (GIS) data from the U.S. Department of the Navy (Navy), USFWS, NDOW, BLM, and others were also used to assess the status and presence of biological resources within the region of influence. The sources used are listed below.

- Natural resource inventories and survey reports supporting the 2015 Military Readiness Activities at Fallon Range Training Complex, Nevada Final Environmental Impact Statement (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015).
- Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP) for Naval Air Station (NAS) Fallon (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2014).
- NDOW wildlife surveys and associated GIS data.
- Rare plant GIS data from SEINet Arizona - New Mexico Chapter (SEINet is an online data portal that serves as a gateway to natural resources data such as herbarium specimens).
- Occurrence data from the NNHP for special-status species (plants and wildlife) within and in the vicinity of the proposed expansion areas.

Regarding impacts to the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, this expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).

Regarding the proposed de-designation of portions of the WSAs in the DVTA, it is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. Under Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative), the Sand Springs Range would be in the Special Land Management Overlay, which would be open to public uses such as recreation and grazing. Fairview Peak range and adjacent rugged foothills to the east of the existing B-17 would also be in the Special Land Management Overlay, which would be open to public uses such as recreation and grazing under Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative).

Regarding comments on noise, Section 3.7 (Noise), modeled the existing and proposed noise levels associated with military training activities. As discussed in Section 3.2 (Land Use), specifically Section 3.2.3.2.5 (Fallon Range Training Complex Special Use Airspace), visual inspections of aerial maps of the areas where the DNL is above 65 dBA revealed no sensitive receptors (e.g., residences, lodging, or medical facilities). However, potential noise impacts to Indian Tribes were analyzed as it relates to

environmental justice. As discussed in Section 3.15 (Environmental Justice), implementation of any of the action alternatives would not cause disproportionately high or adverse human health or environmental effects (i.e., noise impacts) on minority and low-income populations, including Indian Tribes.

Regarding comments on cumulative effects, the Navy cannot calculate the unexploded ordnance region of influence throughout all of these ranges, as it would take a survey of the ground areas in order to determine these exact numbers. However, the Navy did look at the military operations in Nevada that were in the region of influence for the Proposed Action, including the Nevada Test and Training Range as well as the USMC Walker MOA. The Navy describes these cumulative impacts in Chapter 4 (Cumulative Impacts) of the Final EIS.

F.7.3.18 Bennet, E.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Earl	Bennett	I enthusiastically support the Navy and Air force proposals to expand training areas in Nevada.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.19 Bidigare, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
James	Bidigare	<p>This is incredibly wasteful for land owned by the citizens of this nation. Turning it into a bombing range will pollute it and make it useless for a very long time.</p> <p>The military is also spending way beyond what our country can afford. This is only adding to it.</p> <p>Use the millions of acres that are already controlled by the military.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>Regarding comments to combine training by the military on one base, Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the Final EIS discusses various alternatives the Navy considered, including those suggested by the public. The Final EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for not carrying specific alternatives forward for further analysis.</p> <p>While it would hypothetically be possible to develop training systems at Nellis Air Force Base, the United States (U.S.) Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training currently uses nearly all of the complex's available training capacity (time and space). Shared use of Nellis Air Force Base, as currently configured or as proposed, would not be able to support the intensity of both Navy and Air Force training, and therefore was not carried forward for further analysis.</p> <p>As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.20 BISHOP, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
MALCOLM	BISHOP	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. We need to stop bombing and killing for the sake of corporate profit. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

F.7.3.21 Bollier, N.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Nicholas	Bollier	<p>To Whom it may concern,</p> <p>I have read through and considered wholly the proposed expansion of Fallon NAS. I also support and understand the US NAVY's desire to be able to provide adequate training, testing, and development of weapons system.</p> <p>As a user of public lands I cannot support the proposed expansion for several reasons. I believe the US Military as a whole already has substantial usable land in the State of Nevada and that the US population is expanding along with interest in the outdoors and recreation lands are at a minimum.</p> <p>First, the US Military/Government already has multiple large areas of land such as the Nellis Bombing Range, Groom Lake, current Fallon</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding the assertion that the U.S. Military already has substantial usable land, the Navy constantly evaluates its warfighting tactics, techniques, and procedures for their effectiveness against changing threats worldwide. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet and tactics updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, a number of new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions); and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities. However, the FRTC bombing ranges (Bravo [B]-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) and the Dixie Valley Training Area (DVTA) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s.</p> <p>The elements of the Proposed Action are based on the results of a comprehensive assessment of air warfare by the Naval Air Warfare Development Center (NAWDC), which is the Naval Aviation Warfighting Center of Excellence for the Department of the Navy, to address current, emergent, and future FRTC training capabilities titled Ninety Days to Combat (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015a) (discussed in full in Section 1.4, Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action). With the</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>Boundaries, the Nevada Test Site, etc. the US Government also has similar sized and purposed lands in neighboring states such as California, Arizona, New Mexico, etc.</p> <p>Additionally, outdoor recreation is currently seeing an all time high combined with an increase in the US population. There are very few areas where Americans can experience the outdoors, hunt rockhound, etc. Land use is now at a premium and careful consideration must be given to expansion.</p> <p>Another facet of expansion is that the land in question has been unexposed to the type of activity the Navy has proposed. I find it unreasonable that the Navy wish to subject unmolested lands to such activity when sites such as the Nellis Bombing Range, Nevada Test Site, etc already exist within Nevada.</p> <p>For these reasons herein, I urge the United States government, particularly the the US Navy to halt the process of expansion of Fallon NAS. I believe the US Government has considerable usable land at present and that the citizens of the United States cannot afford further loss of recreation lands in Nevada.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration, Nicholas Bollier</p>	<p>implementation of the proposed modernization, the FRTC would be capable of supporting the aviation and ground training and readiness requirements for the training missions assigned to the FRTC, into the foreseeable future.</p> <p>The Navy considered numerous alternatives to move training activities in whole or in part to other areas within the Continental United States. As proposed by Eureka County and other stakeholders, these alternatives would involve either sharing existing military land or airspace with other services or moving the FRTC training activities to a new location.</p> <p>Moving activities to other ranges could potentially meet the training requirements articulated in the purpose and need for the Proposed Action. However, no other existing training range (land or sea) or combination of ranges would be able to accommodate the Navy's mission and tempo at FRTC, particularly for advanced integrated strike warfare training. Given their own missions and full schedules, other existing training ranges would not be able to provide the adequate level of support staff, available land, available airspace, schedule compatibility (i.e., tempo), and infrastructure. Modernizing these ranges to meet tactically acceptable parameters would not be technically feasible at this time, for the reasons set forth below.</p> <p>The following sections discuss the evaluation of other locations the Navy considered when identifying reasonable alternatives to meet the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.</p>

F.7.3.22 Boone, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
John	Boone	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. In particular, expanding operations into or next to places like the Stillwater Refuge, or into areas that are traditionally available for recreational use like the Fairweather Peak area, is a major problem. In a dry state like Nevada, protecting the integrity of our small number of critically important wetland areas is a much higher priority than expanding already large military operations areas, especially when other locations exist that have less wildlife value. Please adopt the "status quo" position of the final EIS.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

F.7.3.23 Borg, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Carolyn	Borg	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor

First	Last	Comment	Response
		would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station. Thanks for your consideration.	would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.24 Bowen, P.

First	Last	Comment	Response
P	Bowen	<p>Please reconsider the impact of this decision, and of destroying the natural resources to this untouched land, which has been here for millennia.</p> <p>I think that what you are planning on doing is detrimental and not conducive nor working towards the betterment in helping the environment, rather...wanting and having a barren wasteland for our children to view, nor assisting and promoting the native wildlife, and fauna that is present and living in this area. Rather,...you want to bomb and destroy this area!!</p> <p>Please don't let this be passed nor implemented!</p>	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.25 Bowlin, G.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Greg	Bowlin	I approve of the Navy's effort to expand the Fallon Range Training Complex in order to meet with our nation's needs to train in a consistent manner to combat the expected modern threat. The range and it's capabilities should be expanded to meet the needs of the Navy and their training objectives. This is a matter of national defense.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.26 Boydston, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Charlene	Boydston	<p>Instead of eliminating 74,400 acres of Wilderness Study Areas as part of their Dixie Valley Training Area, the military should support Wilderness designation for all of the WSAs within, or very close to, this area including; the Clan Alpine Mountain, Job Peak, Stillwater Range, and the Desatoya Mountains WSAs. Wilderness designation will provide a larger and more complete buffer for military actions, allow for continued public access, and be protected in perpetuity. This Wilderness buffer could also include lands with wilderness characteristics that Friends of Nevada Wilderness identified through our inventories (Stillwater additions and South Job Peak).</p> <p>The military needs to adjust their boundary proposals in B-20 to exclude the 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The 17,848-acre refuge was established by a Congressional Act in 1931 to "...provide a sanctuary and breeding ground for birds and other wildlife". It should not be part of a bombing area!</p> <p>The military must find a way to allow for more public access in B-17, at least on a seasonal or part-time basis. The military has made some minor allowances for OHV races and bighorn sheep hunting, but what about access for hiking, photography, rock hounding, and camping? Why should OHVs and the person who happens to draw a bighorn sheep tag get special privileges? Where is the social justice for all</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as Wilderness is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses beyond what is proposed under Alternative 2 and 3 for managed access of OHV races and the Bighorn Sheep hunting program in the B-17 range, as there are too many recreationists and it is difficult to control the number or people that would be allowed on range. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationists.</p> <p>Regarding the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, the Proposed Action would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>The following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes.
Charlene	Boydston	<p>Instead of eliminating 74,400 acres of Wilderness Study Areas as part of their Dixie Valley Training Area, the military should support Wilderness designation for all of the WSAs within, or very close to, this area including; the Clan Alpine Mountain, Job Peak, Stillwater Range, and the Desatoya Mountains WSAs. Wilderness designation will provide a larger and more complete buffer for military actions, allow for continued public access, and be protected in perpetuity. This Wilderness buffer could also include lands with wilderness characteristics that Friends of Nevada Wilderness identified through our inventories (Stillwater additions and South Job Peak).</p> <p>The military needs to adjust their boundary proposals in B-20 to exclude the 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The 17,848-acre refuge was established by a Congressional Act in 1931 to "...provide a sanctuary and breeding ground for birds and other wildlife". It should not be part of a bombing area!</p> <p>The military must find a way to allow for more public access in B-17, at least on a seasonal or part-time basis. The military has made some minor allowances for OHV</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as Wilderness is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses beyond what is proposed under Alternative 2 and 3 for managed access of OHV races and the Bighorn Sheep hunting program in the B-17 range, as there are too many recreationists and it is difficult to control the number or people that would be allowed on range. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationists.</p> <p>Regarding the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, the Proposed Action would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>races and bighorn sheep hunting, but what about access for hiking, photography, rock hounding, and camping? Why should OHVers and the person who happens to draw a bighorn sheep tag get special privileges? Where is the social justice for all?</p>	<p>National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>The following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes.</p>

F.7.3.27 Boyer, W.

First	Last	Comment	Response
William	Boyer	<p>I just want to start by thanking you for reading my comment. I have spent a lot of time within the lands included in your Fallon Range Expansion, both for work and personal enjoyment. These places mean a lot to me, and I am disappointed by the threats these lands currently face from our own Navy.</p> <p>I understand the need for modernization, and I support our military being advanced and well-trained. The military needs to exist in order to protect our lands, values, and freedoms. However, I find that this proposal does the opposite of that. It has the potential to destroy some amazing and intact natural landscapes, removes wilderness protections from delicate areas that belong to the public, and generally stifles the opportunities of normal citizens to visit and enjoy a magnificent slice of the American West. This expansion project is anathema to the freedoms and protections our country strives to provide its people and lands.</p> <p>Although I disagree with many parts of this expansion, I take the most offense to its call for elimination of Wilderness Study Area land. The three wilderness study areas that would be disturbed are quite magnificent, and have been protected for nearly 40 years. Over that time they've healed from past human misuse and scarring, and now exist as large tracts of beautiful desert landscape. They offer great places to escape from society and enjoy solitude, are full of interesting terrain to explore, and are home to many species of Great Basin wildlife. I</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>especially love the canyons which grace the eastern flank of Job Peak (within the eastern side of the WSA, and slated for removal of WSA protection), as they are very rugged slot canyons which are unique to this part of the desert. I have hiked through both Big and Little Box Canyons on several occasions, and have shown the canyons to several others who have also enjoyed them immensely. I am certain that I will return again one day.</p> <p>Personally, I would like to see these lands become permanently protected as Wilderness Areas, and I think the Navy should support that action. The Wilderness Study Area lands that it hopes to acquire exemplify the American West, its vast untouched beauty, and its many freedoms. The Navy should be actively working to support those things, not take them away.</p> <p>These Wilderness Study Areas have gone through nearly 40 years of protection, naturalization, and management as wilderness land. It would be a shame to destroy those efforts after so much time. Please do not disturb these lands, or remove their protections.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	<p>altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. However, this de-designation would not prohibit the use of these areas by recreationists. Additionally, if the public is recreating in the area, the Navy would seek an alternate location to train until the area used by the public is available, as is currently done in the existing DVTA.</p>

F.7.3.28 Brenner, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Ruth	Brenner	<p>I am commenting on the Navy's plan to expand the Fallon Naval Air Station and to eliminate portions of three Wilderness Study Areas, as the plan is currently proposed.</p> <p>I am concerned about threatening geological and archeological evidence in the area. These resources are an important piece of history that should not be destroyed.</p> <p>The public uses this area for recreational use and this will not be replaced. The public depends on this beautiful area for outdoor activities.</p> <p>i would suggest, as recommended by Friends of Nevada Wilderness, that all of the Wilderness Study Areas surrounding this proposed expansion be fully designated as Wilderness to protect wildlife habitat and recreation.</p> <p>Rural areas will be negatively affected by the proposed expansion. The concerns of these communities should be adequately addressed.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Proposed Action includes Congressional legislation to remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range WSAs, potentially opening these areas to new types of recreation activities. Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as Wilderness is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process. Please see Section 3.01 (Geologic Resources) and Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources) for more information on the findings of no significant impacts to traditional cultural properties, including archaeological artifacts, and geological resources, as well as associated mitigation measures.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.</p>

F.7.3.29 Brown, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Rachael	Brown	<p>As a Nevada resident I urge you to please reconsider this plan to bomb the wilderness. As a true conservative I believe in making do with what you already have. As it stands the federal government already has more acreage in Nevada than any other state. I understand that not all of that land is available for bomb testing but a substantial part is and should be utilized as is rather than encroach on land that should be left to the wilds. There are any number of things that make this country great but only one has been labeled "America's best idea". Please allow that idea to thrive by keeping wild lands wild. Be conservative and utilize what you have.</p> <p>Sincerely, Rachael Brown</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p> <p>The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) as the action alternatives, including training elsewhere. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).</p>

F.7.3.30 Brown-Silveira, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Janice	Brown-Silveira	<p>I oppose the proposed expansion of the Fallon NAS. The alternative proposals also fall very short of protecting this wilderness area. I have hiked this area for many years, from Job to Augusta, and can tell you there are hidden treasures of green meadows, old stone ranch homes, and mountains so lush and green in spring you would think you were in Switzerland to camp there. The no action plan may lead to a relocation of some training resources but ultimately saving Nevada's wildlands is more important. This is not an empty barren waste. Stop treating it like it is.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.</p> <p>The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.</p>



I oppose the proposed expansion of the Fallon NAS. The alternative proposals also fall very short of protecting this wilderness area. I have hiked this area for many years, from Job to Augusta, and can tell you there are hidden treasures of green meadows, old stone ranch homes, and mountains so lush and green in spring you would think you were in Switzerland to camp there. The no action plan may lead to a relocation of some training resources but ultimately saving Nevada's wildlands is more important. This is not an empty barren waste. Stop treating it like it is.

Mitchell Brown-Silveira

F.7.3.30.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.

The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

F.7.3.31 Brown-Silveira, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Mitchell	Brown-Silveira	<p>I oppose the proposed expansion of the Fallon NAS. The alternative proposals also fall very short of protecting this wilderness area. I have hiked this area for many years, from Job to Augusta, and can tell you there are hidden treasures of green meadows, old stone ranch homes, and mountains so lush and green in spring you would think you were in Switzerland to camp there. The no action plan may lead to a relocation of some training resources but ultimately saving Nevada's wildlands is more important. This is not an empty barren waste. Stop treating it like it is.</p> <p>Mitchell Brown-Silveira 3295 Greensburg Circle Reno NV 89509</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.</p> <p>Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.</p>



I oppose the proposed expansion of the Fallon NAS. The alternative proposals also fall very short of protecting this wilderness area. I have hiked this area for many years, from Job to Augusta, and can tell you there are hidden treasures of green meadows, old stone ranch homes, and mountains so lush and green in spring you would think you were in Switzerland to camp there. The no action plan may lead to a relocation of some training resources but ultimately saving Nevada's wildlands is more important. This is not an empty barren waste. Stop treating it like it is.

Mitchell Brown-Silveira

F.7.3.31.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.

F.7.3.32 Buckmaster, F.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Frederick	Buckmaster	Im NOT in favor of any additional withdraw of public lands for use as bombing/training ranges. I attended the meeting in Fallon, listened, evaluated, and have decided, I AM NOT IN FAVOR OF THIS ACTION. It will severely limit commerce, recreation, access, mining, hunting, and grazing on the planned withdrawl area. I think the military can reevaluate this to be a more user friendly solution with some creativity.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable. Regarding impacts to commerce, recreation, access, mining, hunting, and grazing, the Navy has analyzed these resources in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics), Section 3.12 (Recreation), Section 3.2 (Land Use), Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), and Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing). Impacts to these resources are discussed throughout the Final EIS, and the Navy has added in the process for which it would value payments for loss of grazing, for extinguishing mineral claims, and the Memorandum of Agreement for a Managed Bighorn Sheep Hunt on B-17 between the Navy and NDOW can be found in draft form in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans).

F.7.3.33 Bullock, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Clifton	Bullock	I am in favor of any realistic training the military can provide for its members. Nothing beats good training. To ensure that our military members return home safely, often time its the training that makes the difference. I am in favor of any training the military can provide its members, the more realistic the better. As long as there is no harmful effects to the people or wildlife in the area, I am in favor of it. The military has done a lot for the community and it has been very beneficial for the community.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.34 Burrows, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Cindi	Burrows	I object to all three of the "Action" alternatives of the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization, specifically due to the expansion of the B-17 area!	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>My preference is the No Action alternative if that leaves the current boundaries of the training complex in place as they are today.</p> <p>My husband is an avid rock hound who has been pursuing his hobby for more than a decade. He has visited sites throughout all the western states, as well as in numerous foreign countries. However, of all the places he has visited and “hunted,” he repeatedly returns to the Monte Cristo Mountains and the Slate Mountain areas. He “hunts” these areas several times a year. In fact, he recently compiled statistics, and he has visited the Monte Cristo Mountains and Slate Mountain areas in excess of 80 times since 2007; many of the trips were also overnight camping excursions. All of these repeated visits are in the areas that any of your three proposed alternatives will close to the public.</p> <p>The area north and northwest of Gabbs, the Monte Cristo Mountains, and the Slate Mountain areas are special to my husband. Please leave them accessible to the public.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	<p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Regarding the commenter’s preference for the No Action Alternative, in <i>Ninety Days to Combat</i> (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015b), NAWDC analyzed the land and airspace (see Section 1.5.2, Airspace Training Need versus Current Range Capability, for discussion of airspace requirement) needed to meet combat training requirements for modern aircraft and weapon systems. When comparing older aircraft and mission profiles with modern aircraft and weapons systems, NAWDC noted the following differences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Older aircraft flew at lower altitudes, approached targets at closer distances (4–5 miles) before dropping munitions, and because of this close-range release, required a smaller safety area surrounding the target area during training. • Modern aircraft fly at higher altitudes, release munitions at targets from 10–12 miles away, and require a larger safety area surrounding the target area during training. <p>Though munitions can reach targets at greater distances than ever before, current range boundaries (which do not accommodate modern weapons safety requirements) limit this type of training. Even if actual target areas were to remain the same, if release distances are increased, the safety area that is required during training in case of weapons failure also increases.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in <i>Ninety Days to Combat</i>. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.35 Burt, N.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Nathn	Burt	Closing additional OHV land use areas would affect not only our business, but many others within the industry. As citizens lose places to enjoy the outdoors, tax revenues will be significantly affected from business revenue, OHV licensing, travel, lodging and more.	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Regarding socioeconomic impacts and tourism, the Navy worked with a local Nevada scientist to develop the Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at http://frtcmodernization.com). The report found that hunting-related (touristic) economic losses would be similar in scale for Mineral, Pershing, and Nye counties based on the percentage of lost revenue compared to total economic activity (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at http://frtcmodernization.com], Table B-1). Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV) use would continue to be allowed within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and potentially within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after any removal of Wilderness Study Area designation by Congress. Due to safety reasons, OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20. Topography and OHV trails similar to those in B-17 also occur in the DVTA or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).

F.7.3.36 Bute, H.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Holly	Bute	Greetings I would like the record to show that I am against the Navy expansion in Churchill County. As a former Fallon resident with close ties to Fallon, I think that this action would deny many citizens the use of these lands that they have enjoyed since forever. This expansion would also hurt people who make their livelihood ranching. This would impact hunters, mining, hiking, off roading and other recreational activities currently enjoyed on these lands. Please do not approve this expansion!	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.37 Cain, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Andrew	Cain	Dont close my recreational land! I hunt and explore on 2 of these proposed areas! Protect our wild life!	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record

F.7.3.38 Campbell, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Martha	Campbell	<p>I am opposed to the US military's proposal to withdraw public lands from public access and use and reserve those lands for almost exclusive military use by the Navy's Fallon Range Training Complex.</p> <p>The military's plan would threaten important geologic, cultural and archaeologic resources and critical habitat, close options for rural communities for grazing and other economic pursuits, and greatly reduce recreational opportunities for the public.</p> <p>Instead of eliminating nearly 75,000 acres of high-quality wilderness study areas (WSAs), these lands should be designated as Wilderness and enable all Americans to continue to access these lands for recreation, protection of cultural resources and wildlife habitat, and scenic touring. Moreover, permanent wilderness designation for these areas will provide a buffer to development in that area and accordingly, protection of Fallon's existing training range.</p> <p>Nevada has been bestowed with beautiful open spaces and rich, diverse historical, cultural and archeological resources and wildlife. Access to public lands and their associated vistas is a major reason why many of us chose to live in Nevada and Americans from across the country choose to visit our state. Through years of thoughtful study and public engagement, these lands have been protected as WSAs and should be preserved as wilderness for current and future generations. This is our heritage – the military's proposal for expansion needs to be stopped. I voice support for the No Action proposal.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>Under NEPA, there is no required ratio relative to impacts and associated mitigation. Actions that support avoidance or minimization of impacts can be developed and implemented as part of each alternative. This was the approach taken for the action alternatives.</p> <p>As such, alternatives for the EIS incorporated actions specifically to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential impacts, to the extent practicable under existing authorities and consistent with military training activities.</p> <p>Those alternatives and associated actions were carried forward for analysis and if necessary, based on the level of impacts, additional management practices, mitigation, or other impact avoidance/minimization measures were included to further avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts.</p> <p>Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]) but would not prohibit the use of the areas for recreation, protection of cultural resources and wildlife habitat, and scenic touring.</p>

F.7.3.39 Canfield, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Skip	Canfield	#####	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.40 Cappelletti, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Carolyn	Cappelletti	We love our Wilderness Study Areas! The people in Gabbs live here for a reason. We do not want to become Dixie Valley II.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.41 CARMEL, E.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Elizabeth	CARMEL	<p>Instead of eliminating 74,400 acres of Wilderness Study Areas as part of their Dixie Valley Training Area, the military should support Wilderness designation for all of the WSAs within, or very close to, this area including; the Clan Alpine Mountain, Job Peak, Stillwater Range, and the Desatoya Mountains WSAs. Wilderness designation will provide a larger and more complete buffer for military actions, allow for continued public access, and be protected in perpetuity. This Wilderness buffer could also include lands with wilderness characteristics that Friends of Nevada Wilderness identified through our inventories (Stillwater additions and South Job Peak).</p> <p>The military needs to adjust their boundary proposals in B-20 to exclude the 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The 17,848-acre refuge was established by a Congressional Act in 1931 to "...provide a sanctuary and breeding ground for birds and other wildlife". It should not be part of a bombing area!</p> <p>The military must find a way to allow for more public access in B-17, at least on a seasonal or part-time</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as Wilderness is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses beyond what is proposed under Alternative 2 and 3 for managed access of OHV races and the Bighorn Sheep hunting program in the B-17 range, as there are too many recreationists and it is difficult to control the number or people that would be allowed on range. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		basis. The military has made some minor allowances for OHV races and bighorn sheep hunting, but what about access for hiking, photography, rock hounding, and camping? Why should OHVs and the person who happens to draw a bighorn sheep tag get special privileges? Where is the social justice for all?	<p>the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationists.</p> <p>Regarding the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, the Proposed Action would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>The following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes.</p>

F.7.3.42 Carrick, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Daniel	Carrick	I am against the expansion due to loss of wildlife habitat, public access and other environmental considerations.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.43 Carrick, E.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Elaine	Carrick	I am totally opposed to the Navy taking an additional 600,000+ acres of public land, on top of what they already have, for bombing practice. Some of this land is designated as Wilderness Study Areas and also some is	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. While the proposal includes over 600,000 acres of proposed withdrawn and acquired land, the entirety of the area is not proposed as actual targets. The vast majority of the lands being requested serve

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>part of a National Wildlife Refuge. This public land has been used & enjoyed by people all over our state as well as tourists from other states. The bombing would cause substantial environmental degradation, massive soil erosion, and kill off vegetation. The wildlife in this area would be extremely impacted in either killing them or destroying their habitat so they could not live on that land. Both reptiles and all kinds & sizes of mammals would be killed or severely impacted. Today, more and more animals are being affected by loss of habitat from human development which may be difficult to control. However, we do have control over this habitat by not bombing the land. I ask you to please reconsider this move and leave the land for the enjoyment of the public and all the wildlife that inhabit it. Thank you.</p>	<p>as a safety buffer (the weapons danger zone – [WDZ]) surrounding much smaller areas potentially designated as target areas. As described in Section 1.5.1 (Weapons Release Training and Need for Expanded Range Area), a WDZ represents the minimum safety requirements designed for aviation weapons training on Department of Defense ranges to protect public safety.</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.44 Carroll, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Mary A	Carroll	<p>I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station. I strongly urge you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with NO expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse, and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation, and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations in this area would drastically change the Great Basin landscape. Exploding bombs would kill birds and animals, and would destroy their habitat. Increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public's experience of the Great Basin desert would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo, and DON'T expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.45 Carroon, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Chip	Carroon	<p>I do not agree with the vast military overreach you are proposing.</p> <p>First, your taking of wildlife refuge land and wilderness study lands is a permanent appropriation of lands that the growing population of the state wants and needs for recreational purposes and land that was granted for wildlife preservation. Maintaining the wilderness characteristics of these lands enables public use yet would restrict any development close to your other lands.</p> <p>Second, the military in Nevada has already taken 4,000,000 acres of public land. The vast majority of that land is used very little. All of that land is easily available in a few minutes in a 700 mph airplane. I will argue to national legislators that the military should fully use all of that land first before they take even more. Bombing ranges, especially, should be on land that you have already taken and degraded. You should not be taking new land when previously expropriated land could be used.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) as the action alternatives, including training elsewhere. The Navy evaluated Alternate Training Locations in Section 2.5.3 (Alternate Training Locations) of the Draft EIS.</p>

F.7.3.46 Cencula, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
David	Cencula	<p>I'm a retired Navy veteran and airline pilot and feel the Status Quo should be an included option. Given today's realistic simulators more should be done in this area which would be much more cost effective as well as safer. The expansion the Navy proposes would negative impact the Stillwater Range ,Jobs Peak ,Clan Alpine Wilderness study areas and access to Berlin-Ichthyosaur State Park. The Air Force and the Navy have already blocked off a HUGE amount of airspace in Nevada requiring air traffic to fly extra miles to avoid their airspace. If addition airspace needs are so great it might be time to examine sharing the Air Force's airspace.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative, also known as the “status quo” alternative, would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.</p> <p>General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p> <p>The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex’s available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p>

F.7.3.47 Chi, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Animae	Chi	What you are planning on doing is detrimental and not conducive nor working towards the betterment in helping the environment, rather...wanting and having a barren wasteland for our children to view, nor assisting and promoting the native wildlife, and fauna that is present and living in this area. Please don't let this be passed nor implemented!	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.48 Childs, P.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Peter	Childs	This is madness. The United States is groaning under the "Congressional/Military/Industrial Complex" that President Eisenhower warned us so strongly against. Such an enormous amount of our resources (half of all our discretionary spending) is being given to feed what is already an astonishingly bloated military, which is already enormously larger than what is needed for our legitimate defense. This is unconscionable, especially at a time when we have so many desperate domestic needs that are being ignored. The good that could be done by even a modest reduction in our military expenses is enormous; accomplishing that good is what needs to be expanded, not our already immensely excessive military expenditures.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Please see Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) of the EIS for a definition of the scope of the project.

F.7.3.49 Ciglar, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
David	Ciglar	We think it is fantastic to see the Navy expand and modernize the facilities in Fallon. this will enhance the reputation of the area as being the new cutting edge technology HUB in the region.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.50 Citizen, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
American	Citizen	I like to get out into this part of the country, my ancestors go back to just after the civil war days in Nevada and I do not want to loose any more access to the land. Thank you.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.

F.7.3.51 Clark, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Alaina	Clark	From the looks of your map, your perimeter fence is going to be less than 4 miles from mine. And you are going to be dropping bombs from 10 miles away to land on moving convoy targets within 12 miles of our town??? That's what I was told at the meeting. I certainly and seriously object!! What is wrong with using your original B 17 bombing range? Why do you need to close off all this extra land? Why do you need to move clear out here?? This is wrong. You have taken so much of our beautiful Nevada already. Please don't take any more.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command. Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change.

F.7.3.52 Clark, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Marlene	Clark	We are in a dangerous time for wildlife as everything adjusts to the changes in our climate. To use valuable wild areas for more military training when it is not absolutely necessary is an affront to common decency . We have a huge problem that this would make even worse. Please don't make the problem any greater than it is. There are large areas that our military already has control of. Surely there could be better use of what has already been dedicated for training. I am personally appalled by our bloated military budget. This should not happen.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis.</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.53 Clemson, G. S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
G. Scott	Clemson	<p>Not just local, this case has world-wide implications. We Americans are the first ever with the foresight to preserve land for its own sake for ALL citizens. Yosemite and Red Rock would long ago have been chopped up and chopped down, but wise past leaders established a trend to preserve land, now copied around the globe. However, MANY self-interested parties are DROOLING to see these wild acres usurped for the precedent to then exploit ANY AND ALL Federal and State lands and waters. EACH acre of this amazing land is still as valuable as ever for preservation. Truly, THANK YOU of the military FOR YOUR SERVICE, BUT...if military "exercises" in these mountains are deemed "necessary" for our safety, I, for one, would rather be "unsafe" by such standards. THANK YOU for willingness to go into harm's way, but do not, please, be agents of harm to beautiful places in your own country! The US military ALREADY has massive practice acreage! Use it well, while VALUING and PRESERVING the rest of the country you are sworn to PROTECT, not sworn to DESTROY in the name of supposed protection! We humans are so adaptable, a strength and a weakness. We are good at "accepting" accumulated small losses and moving on. While driving with my Grandmom in the 1960's, she often spoke with dismay about new development, once a farm with a beautiful swimming pond, or once a lovely woodlot. Too easily, people say "Oh it's inevitable, that's the way humans are!" This is FALSE! We only have tendencies prolonged by such short-sighted attitudes. Consider phonograph records; recall listening to a perfect treasured record, but bit by bit, it developed many scratches...not quite sure where any of them came from, but eventually the record is unlistenable! Once its beauty is gone, it's not coming back. Los Angeles used to be surrounded by natural land, as Las Vegas still is. Vegas recently was more like Pahrump...and today's Pahrump was more like rural Beatty ! Oh, a bit "taken" here, a bit there, but before you know it Vegas will become another city like LA endlessly surrounded by sprawl and no natural spaces. So... we can again mutely acquiesce to the chipping away of treasured lands around us, or ...we can thoughtfully preserve our wild heritage. If we are smart enough, we can have all the benefits of modernity but without all the disadvantages. Therefore, I call on you to bethoughtful leaders, not just within your sphere of duty and short-term interests, but for all now and onward. We humans need to develop a healthier relationship with our necessary and beautiful planet. YOUR decisions here are NOT just local and can set the new trends based on intelligent foresight, instead of following old trends based on fear and greed. I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	

F.7.3.54 Coburn, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Lexi	Coburn	The entire Stillwater Range, from Highway 50 to the Pershing County line, including the WSAs and lands with wilderness characteristics, has been identified as having extremely important cultural resources, wildlife habitat and recreational value and needs to be protected. The Range has been proposed as an ACEC because of the cultural, historic, religious and scenic values important to Native Americans, dating back 10,000 years. The Stillwater Range is a popular year-round hiking area and provides for scenic backcountry touring. The military's plan could threaten the geologic and archeologic resources from the ancient days of Lake Lahontan dating back to the Pleistocene period. Pluvial formations can still be found as well as fossil evidence of the wildlife and plant life unique to the Great Basin from that period. The interconnectivity of the marshlands and mountain ranges is a natural resource rich in habitat, cultural and scenic values. The military should not expand into the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. They are proposing to eliminate 3,200 acres of the refuge and close it to the public. This is not acceptable.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The proposed de-designation would not prohibit the use of the area by recreationists.</p> <p>This expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p>

F.7.3.55 Cochran, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Joseph	Cochran	<p>This response is for the Fallon Expansion and also specifically addresses the B-17 expansion. I understand that technology and training changes with times, and I support training. If the new training demands a full 360 degree very large area for live bomb drops, then find another area that is already closed. The old B-17 area is too small and outdated. Understood. But trying to squeeze the new training requirements into this old area is short sighted when other areas already exist.</p> <p>The plan to close such a huge area of land, near residences and business, and lock out public use, is not a good idea. There are already huge areas that are closed to public access that could be used for these long range smart bomb release training exercises. I do not see where an alternative site has been reviewed. Pilots could still use Fallon as the base and fly over to these existing areas to release. Without showing alternate sites the EIS is not valid. Therefore the No Action Alternative is the only solution.</p> <p>Actual release of a smart bomb is not required to test the skill of the pilot. The simulated dog fight to stress the pilot does not involved real bullets. This is simulated. And when the pilot decides to “release” the smart bomb, the vector of the plane is known instantly along with weather conditions. So the pilot’s decision to aim a little high, to help it over a mountain, and a little left, to compensate for wind, can be reviewed. Should I mention the cost savings for not dropping these bombs? Without providing alternate training methods to simulate the release, then the EIS is not complete. Therefore the No Action is the only action that should be taken.</p> <p>If B-17 is the only space in the continental USA where this training can happen, then the closed area should be move farther West and away from Gaabs. The B-17 should be moved even further away to South West into the area away from</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) as the action alternatives, including training elsewhere. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).</p> <p>Although virtual training and simulators are an important aspect of training activities and are already utilized, there are numerous reasons they do not sufficiently re-create fully integrated real-life situations that may be encountered by military personnel in a combat environment. For example, as discussed in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS, virtual training and simulators cannot recreate the physical stresses (e.g., increased heart rate and adrenalin levels) that a live-fire exercise provides.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>Monte Cristo Range. More into the Rawhide area. Far less persons live and recreate in this area. Impact to the public would be less per person. By placing the B-17 near a town, and not further into the south west area, then the EIS is not complete. why is this area not being considered? Therefore the No Action is the only action that should be taken.</p> <p>If the training is so important, and a 360 degree is what is really needed, then we should find this area and make it the training ground. The new alternative for B-17 is narrowed down so much that it will not meet the training needs as discussed in the meetings. The existing B-17 bombing area is outdated with today's technology. Understood. So let's go find that huge 360 deg, 80 mile dia(?), area to provide the training. Without providing an alternate area for 360 degree release then the EIS is not complete. Therefore the No Action is the only action that should be taken.</p> <p>Public access corridors were not analyzed in this draft. By closing off the area for B-17, corridors will become overused and accidents may happen. Off Highway use in the area south of hwy 50, east/west of 361, and down to Gaabs is heavily used. These user groups will now be forced into a much smaller area and therefore will make congestion a real issue. The preferred "loop type" trails will now become "out and back dead end trails". The government and users know that these types of out and back trails cause accident. The Monte Cristo Range provides a much needed recreation area that allows ingress and regress for all sides. B-17 is pushed too far north into this area and will cut off access from the East Side of 361. Think of Middlegate Station at the 12 o'clock position and Gaabs at the 6 o'clock. Users traverse this area from both sides of 361. Now all traffic south will be forced in the narrow canyon heading south to Mud Springs. Traffic use will dramatically increase, accidents will happen, and then the government will use this as another reason to close this also. It happens all the time. Without studying the traffic patterns on</p>	<p>The FRTC is the only location where an entire carrier air wing can train as a single unit conducting the full arc of the mission, including pre-flight planning, ordnance handling, in-air activities, weapons deployment, and post-flight briefing. This cannot be accomplished via full mission simulations.</p> <p>The Alternative described by the commenter in which the B-17 area is further to the west, is discussed as Alternative 1 and 2 of the EIS.</p> <p>The Navy considered an Alternative to fully meet the TTP as set forth in Ninety Days to Combat (see Section 1.5, Training Needs and the Capabilities Evaluation Process). Under this alternative, the Navy would reach full TTP compliance and would allow air and ground forces to train in a realistic 360-degree combat scenario for all training scenarios. As Navy policy does not allow public use of any kind to occur within active WDZs or SDZs (OPNAVINST 3550.1A) for safety reasons, implementing this alternative would require almost double the land as that required for the Proposed Action (approximately 1.3 million acres), as well as extensive revisions to special use and civilian airspace. The Navy considered the withdrawal and acquisition of over 1.3 million acres but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, as the Navy considered this proposal not feasible because of severe and largely disruptive impacts to the local area, which would include the re-route of several major U.S. Highways (U.S. Route 50 and U.S. Interstate 80), and in light of the greatly increased amount of public lands that would need to be closed to the public for weapons safety considerations.</p> <p>The Navy prepared a Transportation Study that analyzed on-road and off-road vehicle use within affected areas as part of this EIS effort (see Supporting Study: Transportation Study [available at http://frtcmmodernization.com]). The EIS has been modified to present loss of access to non-traditional roads (those routes that underlie areas proposed for acquisition or withdrawal). However, the Navy is not anticipating relocating any of the non-traditional roads in the area.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		these public areas the EIS is incomplete. Therefore the No Action is the only action that should be taken.	<p>As discussed in Section 3.5 (Transportation), under Alternative 3, the WDZ would extend over a portion of SR 361, and that segment would need to be closed and re-routed outside of the WDZ due to mission and public safety requirements. The potential closure and rerouting of SR 361 associated with the expansion of B-17 would only occur if Congress chose Alternative 3. However, the affected segment of SR 361 would not be closed unless and until a suitable replacement route is established. Relocation of SR 361 would not cut off access to Gabbs or Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park. The notional relocation corridor for the potential re-routing of SR 361 can be found in Section 3.5.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p> <p>Any proposed rerouting is still conceptual in nature and would be evaluated prior to closure of the route. Follow-on NEPA efforts would need to be conducted for the potential relocation of SR 361 if Alternative 3 were to be selected. See Chapter 2, specifically Section 2.3.4.2.4 (Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 3) for further details. If Alternative 3 were chosen, the Navy would transfer any funds appropriated for relocating the road to the Federal Highway Administration, who in turn would make these funds available to NDOT for planning, design and construction of the replacement road to State standards.</p> <p>Public access changes under the action alternatives would result in a significant impact on transportation routes near the FRTC. Under Alternative 1 and 2, Sand Canyon Road and portions of the unpaved B-20 Access Road (open for Navy use only) that pass to the north of B-20 would be closed to the public, and there would be the potential need to re-route State Route 839. Preventing public travel on these roads would cause a loss of access via customary/familiar transit routes.</p> <p>Access to the planned Special Recreation Management Areas, discussed in detail in Section 3.12 (Recreation) and shown in Figure 3.12-4, in the withdrawal area would also be closed to OHV use and alternate routes would be utilized. Alternative 3 would impact the same roads with the exception of State route 839; Alternative 3 would instead cause the potential relocation of part of State Route</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			361. Closure of OHV use areas as a result of implementing any action alternative is discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Access impacts on cultural and sacred sites are discussed in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources).

F.7.3.56 Cole, A. J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Alison Jean	Cole	<p>I am an Oregonian with a deep and profound love for all things Nevada. My family and I travel to Nevada multiple times a year to explore the state's extraordinarily beautiful public lands. We are geology lovers and avid rockhounds. We log thousands of miles on Nevada's dirt roads each year. We spend a great deal of money on gas, lodging and provisions as we adventure around, especially in small towns like Gabbs and Austin.</p> <p>There are places within the proposed BLM Withdrawal Area along Hwy 361 that are deeply special to my family and I. The idea that we may never again get to visit the Fairview Peak earthquake faults, collect fluorite at the Kaiser Mine near Gabbs, or brave the muddy roads to Rawhide Hot Springs absolutely breaks my heart. These are our public lands! And places that we regularly return to. These sites are a treasure and they belong to us - all of us. I cannot bear to think of them as bombing targets. I feel deeply betrayed as an American to have the military encroach on the sacred institution of public lands.</p> <p>I heartily support of a NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE. Do not encroach on our public lands for military endeavors.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.</p> <p>As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p>

F.7.3.57 Collin, N.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Nick	Collin	Please rethink what you are planning to include how it impacts recreation, hunting etc as well as the economic impact to Middlegate station, Gabbs and the surrounding areas. My father was shut out of that area when i was young and now you want to take more ? Use what you have and leave Public Land to the public.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.58 Connelly, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Todd	Connelly	<p>February 11, 2019 RE: Comments to Draft FRTC Modernization EIS</p> <p>Dear Sirs,</p> <p>The land requirements in Table 4-3 of the Unclassified Ninety Days to Combat document do not match the footprint data for the DMLGB weapon class for Bravo 17 and Bravo 20.</p> <p>The "<180" attack azimuth in Table 1-2 of the EIS does not match DMLGB requirements. The descriptions on page 1-16 are inconsistent with, and contradict, information in the Ninety Days document and the EIS.</p> <p>Why is the Proposed Action justified with inconsistent and contradictory data for land requirements and training requirements?</p> <p>Todd Connelly</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The 90-Days to Combat document preceded the Draft EIS and ongoing revisions to the withdrawal footprint resulted in differences from the original study. This has been clarified in the Final EIS.</p>

F.7.3.59 Cooper, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Richard	Cooper	<p>Even Clint Eastwood made fun of the Armed Services difficulty to communicate and work together in joint operations in his movie "Heartbreak Ridge" about the invasion of Grenada. This is not a joke, we have heard in the past that operations have been compromised and personnel lost due to the individual pride of the separate services.</p> <p>Rather than the Air Force and Navy expand their individual, sequestered territories, they should share the massive Nellis facility and share it. This would improve cooperation enabling more effective, efficient and safer operations in the field. This should be an essential aspect of combat readiness to further success and reduce casualties from miscommunication resulting in what the services call "the fog of war" and "friendly fire".</p> <p>The services will argue they do have "joint training exercises" but these are highly choreographed events precisely because of the systemic dangers with different cultures occasionally working in proximity to each other. Nothing will improve the situation without being forced out of their comfort zones and working together on a day to day basis. In the name of combat readiness and the safety of our servicemen and women, I am against the proposal to expand the Fallon NAS.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training.</p> <p>While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts.</p> <p>The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p>
Richard	Cooper	<p>I am against the enlargement of the military facility and the taking of public lands from the American public. More than enough training areas exist in Nevada, California, and Arizona. There is an entire island in the State of Hawaii that has been permanently destroyed and taken from us.</p> <p>With the proposed Nellis expansion there is over 1 million acres of additional public land being taken away forever. The American military is already larger than the next 10 military's combined. It is time to reign in uncontrolled government spending.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) as the action alternatives, including training elsewhere. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).

F.7.3.60 Corbin, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Linda	Corbin	<p>Your latest attempt to take over PUBLIC Land which includes a WILDLIFE REFUGE is both irresponsible and disgusting. Wildlife refuges are in place to PROTECT WILDLIFE, how dare you take over a place THE PUBLIC OWNS, a place where we can hike and enjoy nature.</p> <p>Why do you need more room.. Seriously, bombing the hell out of land you already have isn't enough.. I don't believe that.</p> <p>You need to reconsider.. For the lives of the critters, like golden eagles and the public. As an ex Navy medic, I'm ashamed of you all.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. This expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS). The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).</p>

F.7.3.61 Cottle, G. R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Gary R.	Cottle	See attached file of my 29 comments	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

Comments for the Draft EIS: FRTC MODERNIZATION NOVEMBER 2018

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#	Page	Line/ Section	Reviewer	Comment	Response
1.	1	Abstract	GR Cottle	The US Fish and Wildlife Service is not listed as a Cooperating Agency.	
2.	15	Executive Summary	GR Cottle	Under the Management Practices, Monitoring and Mitigation sections on this page and throughout this EIS there is a proposal that two conservation law enforcement officers will be hired to monitor and repair fences. There is a range maintenance contractor that has monitored and repaired fences on the existing ranges. This contract needs to increase funding to keep up with the expansion of the ranges. The Navy Security Department also needs to increase funding to provide more personnel to keep the trespassers, thieves and vandals off the ranges. They also need to monitor the status of the fence lines and gates. The conservation law enforcement officers need to enforce wildlife protection laws and keep the livestock off the ranges and roads.	
3.	Pages 10-28	E.S. Photo captions	GR Cottle	Label photos- Pg10 Greater Sage-grouse, Pg 11 Fairview Peak Range B-17, Pg 12 What range is this? Pg 15 Horse Creek flowing to Dixie Valley, Pg 16 View from Dixie Valley Road (St Route 121) south to Fairview Peak, Pg 26 Who and what are these people working on? Pg28 Geothermal plant and bighorn sheep ewes.	
4.	1-3	Table 1-1	GR Cottle	Under Navy Fee for DVTA: Add acreage of the farm land acquired by the Navy in mid 1980s in Dixie Valley: Settlement Area 8481 Acres, North Dixie Valley 1440 Acres, Dixie Meadows 760 Acres, Horse Creek 272 Acres & Frenchman's 54 Acres.	
5.	1-5	Sec 1-3	GR Cottle	In History of FRTC Add information about the Navy acquisition of over 11,000 acres of private lands in Dixie Valley in mid 1980s.	
6.	2-8	Table 2-1	GR Cottle	Correct the existing acreage for Navy fee lands in the DVTA, over 11000. The acreage is in the NAS Fallon INRMP.	
7.	2-30	Fig 2-11 and other B-16 maps	GR Cottle	The land south of Sand Canyon Road is not fenced and isn't closed to the public. There are many ATV trails in this area. Shown as closed on the B-16 maps in EIS.	
8.	3.2-2	Fig 3.2-1	GR Cottle	The Navy lands in Dixie Valley Settlement Area are shown as Private on this Figure. Settlement Area 8481 acres and Horse Creek 272 acres.	

#	Page	Line/ Section	Reviewer	Comment	Response
9.	3.4-42	Sec 3.4.3.5.2	GR Cottle	Conservation Law Enforcement Officers do not need to be hired to monitor fences. There is a contractor that is supposed to maintain the fences and signs on the ranges. I submitted work requests for fence repairs and sign replacements to the NASF PWD years ago that haven't been completed yet. More funding is needed at NASF to build and maintain fences on the FRTC.	
10.	3.7-14	Fig 3.7-2	GR Cottle	There are some areas not designated as Noise Sensitive on the Figure: Eureka, Yerington, Walker River and Fallon Reservations, Pyramid Lake Reservation and towns Nixon & Sutcliff.	
11.	3.9-27	Fig 3.9-14	GR Cottle	Permitted well on west side of B-17 along State Route 839 is missing. Well in Bell Flat near Eastern Border of B-17 also not shown. There is another certified well in Horse Creek? It was forfeited when I worked at NASF.	
12.	3.10-31	Sec 3.10.2.3.1	GR Cottle	Need to correct section referred to from 3.10.3.4.2 to 3.10.2.4.2	
13.	3.10-34	Sec 3.10.2.4	GR Cottle	The bald and golden eagles are not ESA listed threatened species. The yellow billed cuckoo is a threatened species.	
14.	3.10-51	3.10.2.4.2	GR Cottle	The Northern leopard frog was also observed by Todd et al., 2011 Herpetological Inventory of NAS Fallon, Masse Slough near Hazen.	
15.	3.10-53	DV Toad	GR Cottle	The Dixie Valley toad lives in the Navy's 760 acre Dixie Meadows property. Numerous surveys have been conducted for the toad by USFWS, NDOW and the Navy. Dr. Richard Tracy from UNR has also collected data and wrote reports on the Dixie Valley toad.	
16.	3.10-57	White Pelican	GR Cottle	I was the NAS Fallon Natural Resources Manager there were pelicans observed in the irrigation drains on NASF and on ponds that are in the Dixie Valley Settlement Area.	
17.	3.10-58	3.10-58	GR Cottle	No birds observed by NDOW in the Carson Sink? Contact USFWS for their survey data. I have observed shorebirds and eagles.	
18.	3.10-59	Black Tern	GR Cottle	"A specific location is not given." I observed black terns on irrigated lands and drains south of the airfield on the Navy's safety buffer zone. I have also observed them at Harmon Reservoir.	
19.	3.10-63	Fig 3.10-23	GR Cottle	No birds observed south of existing B-20 range? The USFWS must have bird data for the adjacent Stillwater Refuge. About 3 years ago I filled out a report about a golden eagle that was hit by an F-18 south of B-20.	
20.	3.10-64	Fig 3.10-24	GR Cottle	In the Dixie Valley Settlement Area I have observed burrowing owls, common nighthawks, loggerhead shrikes, prairie falcons, Swainson's hawks, golden and bald eagles.	

#	Page	Line/ Section	Reviewer	Comment	Response
21.	3.10-74	Long-billed curlew	GR Cottle	(Observed but location was not identified) I observed curlews in wet meadows in DV Settlement Area and on irrigated pastures south of the airfield.	
22.	3.10-82	3.10-31	GR Cottle	No bat data from Carson Sink, Fallon NWR, or Stillwater NWR? Obtain survey data from the USFWS. They are a Cooperating Agency.	
23.	3.11-5	Fig 3.11-3	GR Cottle	Starting with this Figure and the rest of the Figures in this Cultural Resources Section add resource sites such as the Pony Express Trail, Fairview Peak, Fox Peak, Grimes Point and Salt Cave.	
24.	3.11-45	References	GR Cottle	The 2001 Navy Resource Management Plan is listed as a reference, add the current INRMP, US Dept of Navy (2014) Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan.	
25.	3.12-25	3.12.3.2.1	GR Cottle	On this page and throughout the EIS, the text says the Navy will hire two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers to monitor and repair fences. There is a contractor at NAS Fallon that repairs and installs fences. Law Enforcement Officers need to stop the poaching and vandalism on the FRTC. When I worked as the Natural Resource Manager I used environmental funding for the construction and repair of many fence lines and sign installations to manage wildlife habitat on the ranges. The Navy needs to provide more funding to NASF PWD to complete the fence construction and repair the fences/signs damaged by vandals on the FRTC.	
26.	3.14-9	Bird Strikes	GR Cottle	Aircraft need to stay above 3000' over Carson Lake as it was in the 1987 Agreement with Department of Interior. This area attracts thousands of shorebirds and waterfowl.	
27.	3.14-12	3.14.2.1.8	GR Cottle	Include information about the Navy program to secure mines with bat gates and fences. In 2012 I managed the project to install bat gates on 3 mines and fenced 2 mines on B-17. There were 7 bat gates installed on mines on B-19.	
28.	4-42	4.4.14.2	GR Cottle	The sentence that says the DVTA is not fenced or signed is not true. I worked on projects to fence wildlife areas/wetlands and install livestock management fences 1993-2017. Informational signs were also installed in the DVTA. The Natural Resource Specialists also repaired cut fences and replaced damaged signs since there was always a lack of funding in the maintenance contract.	
29.	4-68	Table 4-10	GR Cottle	These 3 transportation projects effect airspace?	
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F.7.3.61.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

Regarding number each comment by number:

1. The USFWS has been added to the list of Cooperating Agencies in the Abstract of the Final EIS.
2. Navy proposes the establishment of two Conservation Law Enforcement Offer positions at NAS Fallon. Part of the duties of these officers would include monitoring of the added fence line.
3. Thank you for the comment, however the Navy does not include captions to these photos.
4. Regarding comments 4, 5, and 6, details on the Navy's fee-owned lands can be found in Chapter 2, Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives.
5. See response to 4 above.
6. See response to 4 above.
7. The figures in the EIS show the lands that are officially closed and open per data that is publicly available.
8. The Navy has reviewed all land designations for accuracy on its figures and has updated them as necessary in the Final EIS.
9. As stated above, Navy proposes the establishment of two Conservation Law Enforcement Offer positions at NAS Fallon. Part of the duties of these officers would include monitoring of the added fence line. Currently the Navy is not proposing to repair fencing through this medium.
10. The Navy acknowledges that people may live on the edges of town and in adjacent areas. However, the Navy cannot define Noise Sensitive Areas using a town's perimeter because doing so would significantly constrain proposed training activities. Tracking irregular areas underneath aerial training areas would require pilots to pay more attention to where they are flying rather than concentrating on the mission that they are training for.
11. Regarding well locations, the Navy has completed a water resources study and has updated the data used in these figures throughout the Final EIS.
12. All section references have been checked and updated in the Final EIS.
13. All species-specific data has been checked and updated in the Final EIS.
14. Thank you for the data, the Navy has updated the Final EIS with the best available science for biological resources. Regarding data that is anecdotal, the Navy cannot cite this information or use it in its analysis.
15. See response to 14 above.
16. See response to 14 above.
17. See response to 14 above.
18. See response to 14 above.
19. See response to 14 above.

20. See response to 14 above.
21. See response to 14 above.
22. See response to 14 above.
23. The cultural resources figures have been reviewed and added to as necessary; if a resource is outside of the area proposed for expansion, it has not been included.
24. This correction has been made.
25. As stated above, Navy proposes the establishment of two Conservation Law Enforcement Officer positions at NAS Fallon. Part of the duties of these officers would include monitoring of the added fence line. Currently the Navy is not proposing to repair fencing through this medium.
26. The Navy abides by FAA guidance and the NAS Fallon Operations Manual for this area.
27. As discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy would be responsible for abandoned mines in B-16, B-17, B-19 and B-20 and would follow risk-based evaluations and procedures established by the State of Nevada if securing such abandoned mines were required for public health and safety needs. The BLM would be responsible for securing abandoned mines in the DVTa.
28. This sentence has been clarified. The DVTa as a whole is not fenced off from public access.
29. The impact to each resource from each project has been checked for accuracy and updated in the Final EIS.

F.7.3.62 Craig, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Lindsay	Craig	I am concerned that modernization of the Navy involves the taking of large tracks of lands and removing them from traditional public use. These lands are rich in natural resources, geothermal, wind, solar, strategic and precious metal potential and recreation opportunities aplenty, from hunting, prospecting, hiking, biking and exploring. New significant resource discoveries are being made on these lands, one particular recent resource discovery is a blind geothermal field found by the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology in conjunction with the DOE in Gabbs Valley. This site will be directly in a public exclusion area. This future of this significant discovery not being developed is likely and other future discoveries of many kinds will not be made on those lands removed from the public. I am not in opposition to the Navy modernizing, but there has to be a way for the modernization to use the land in a shared way with the public whereby the traditional ways of mining, agriculture, and recreation are preserved. Nevada is to rich in natural resources to be designated for a single military use. Do not take these lands from the public.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy added a figure in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS that illustrates the proposed withdrawal and requested acquisition lands included in the Draft EIS and highlights additional reductions that have been made to the proposed withdrawal and requested acquisition lands between the Draft and Final EIS under Alternative 3. The Final EIS further describes the process by which interested parties could pursue compatible geothermal development in a portion of the Dixie Valley Training Area. The proposed required design features are necessary for the Navy to meet training requirements. Development of the required design features affords an opportunity for geothermal development that would otherwise be lost. The Navy acknowledges that complying with required design features could add cost to a potential geothermal development; however, the Navy is committed to working with the developer on a case-by-case basis. This is addressed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).

F.7.3.63 Cramer, P.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Peter	Cramer	I absolutely oppose this land grab. We need to reduce our military budget and the Air Force certainly does not need any more land to bomb. Fuck your wars. Fuck this bullshit. No.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.64 Cramer, Z.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Zachary	Cramer	<p>Hello,</p> <p>My name is Zachary Cramer I am a former resident of Sparks, NV and have just recently relocated to Peoria, AZ. Although I am not a current resident I still regularly visit the area and participate in OHV recreation in the BLM land associated with the fallen range training modernization. This area and many others like it are used year round for OHV use and taking that away means taking away one of the unique freedoms we do have and enjoy here in the western United States. Trail riding in general is very limited in this modern time, and as I have mentioned in a previous comment I left during the initial comment period when this proposal was first introduced, the military has taken alot of it in an unthoughtful manner (i.e. the 29 palms marine base expansion taking 200,000 acres of BLM/OHV land in Johnson Valley). I have nothing but the upmost respect for the military and our service members, the only reason we have this freedom is because of those who lay their life on the line to ensure America stays as great as it is. I propose if you do opt to take the BLM/OHV land, that another OHV area</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. While OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20, OHV use would be allowed to continue within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after WSA designation removal by Congress.</p> <p>Topography and OHV trails similar to those that occur in the B-17 range area also occur in the Dixie Valley area or other nearby public lands and could be used by</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>nearby be opened or expanded to account for the deficit. Thank you for your time and consideration.</p> <p>Sincerely, Zachary Cramer</p>	<p>recreationists. These other public areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).</p>

F.7.3.65 Curlee, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Joanna	Curlee	<p>Hello.</p> <p>I enjoy nothing more then getting away from the city, by heading out to Dixie valley or Gabbs valley and exploring the vast openness.</p> <p>I am opposed to the possibility of closing this land to the public.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p>

F.7.3.66 D., S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
S.	D.	<p>Don't allow another land grab by the overreaching military. The military is not only destroying other countries, but ours too. It's irresponsible! It's laughable to say the military protects us, they only protect oil corporations, not the people. Cut the military budget in half instead.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p>

F.7.3.67 Darst, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Dolores	Darst	<p>Please consider the consequences of such an action as bombing our own lands to be ready to bomb other lands... Make it your objective to save the planet by engaging in safe and healthy alternatives to WAR. Its not the answer and never has proven to be.</p> <p>PLEASE STAND UP FOR LIFE, NOT EXPLODE BOMBS FOR DEATH!</p> <p>The land, the life on that land deserve better... don't they?</p> <p>Dolores Darst</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p>

F.7.3.68 Davis, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Lisa	Davis	<p>Proposal 3 is least restrictive and best suits my needs as a Nevadan resident.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p>

F.7.3.69 Davis, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Steve	Davis	I am writing to support the implementation of the no action alternative. Far too much public land in the state of Nevada has already been closed to the public in favor of military uses. The growing population of Northern Nevada includes a large number of people who seek out and enjoy recreating on public land. To further restrict their access to public lands in close proximity to the second largest population area in the state is not a wise use of available resources. Allowing the area in question to be cleaned up and as much as possible and returned to the public domain is warranted. The vast portions of the state already devoted to military use is more than adequate. Military use carries with it environmental abuse that would never be tolerated by any other user. Areas devoted to the military are often contaminated beyond rehabilitation and can not be reopened to non military uses. Portions of the FRTC already fall into this category.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. As discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities. The Navy continuously monitors its operations to find ways to minimize the use of hazardous materials and to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes. Spills would be managed and cleaned up in accordance with applicable state and federal regulatory requirements. If a spill were to exceed reportable quantities as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for regulated material, it would be immediately reported to the NAS Fallon Environmental Division for appropriate action per the Integrated Contingency Plan (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2009). Additionally, the Department of Defense created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure Department of Defense compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations. Lastly, the Navy complies with Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3571.4, Operational Range Clearance Policy for Navy Ranges, which establishes the policy and requirements for performing operational range clearance on Navy ranges. Under this program the impact areas are routinely swept of ordnance and target debris. This debris is disposed of or, if possible, recycled in accordance with all applicable regulations.

F.7.3.70 Dewey, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Myron	Dewey	The "Numu" Paiute people have been the strongest supporters with the highest number of people in the ratio per capita in the military. We have also been hit the hardest culturally, spiritually and traditionally by the military with militarized zones our traditional homelands and sacred sites. I am a professor, father, uncle, grandfather and educator advocating a new healthy narrative with the military from an Indigenous perspective. I am Agui-diccutta (trout eater) the original people of these lands you have invaded. I have experienced and witnessed what my ancestors endured in pain, historical trauma and lack of acknowledgement from the	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. In accordance with Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments, Department of Defense policies, the National Historic Preservation Act, and Navy instructions, the Navy engaged in Tribal consultations during scoping and following the public release of the Draft EIS. The Navy invited culturally affiliated Indian Tribes to participate in the NEPA process as Tribal Participants for this EIS (see Appendix C, Tribal Correspondence). The Navy invited these Indian Tribes to

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>military that we are still here caring for our traditional lands, harvesting and caring for sacred sites.</p> <p>The military has bombed in our Agui-Pah (colonized name Walker Lake), militarized our sacred mountain (colonized name Mt. Grant) and built your bunkers on burial sites in Hawthorne Nv traditional home of the Pugwe-Diccutta, smaller fish eaters. I have witnessed the loss of my traditional foods source from this in Agai-Pah along with encroachment and acknowledgment of our sacred sites (burial grounds).</p> <p>Paiute and Shoshone people are the biggest contributors to the United States Homeland security through these atrocities, bombings, chem trails, the migration changing of our natural laws the animals from the bombing and low jets, contaminated of water from munition, and all without any accountability to yourselves or the American people.</p> <p>I greatly disapprove of the expansion until you learn how to hold yourself accountable to honor our "Numu/Newe" Paiute and Shoshone lands as our ancestors did.</p> <p>I do not approve of this 2019 illegal action of forced encroachment once again on our traditional homelands!</p> <p>My name is: Aho-auh-Bud-sho-knaw-me Strong thinker Myron Dewey Numu/Newe Paiute/Shoshone</p>	<p>(1) participate in project meetings, (2) provide additional information related to cultural resources, (3) provide internal document review (e.g., the Class III Cultural Resources Inventory Report), and (4) review the draft reports in order to provide additional information regarding site locations during the development of the Draft EIS to assist the Navy in making the final determinations of eligibility of sites for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.</p> <p>The Navy invited and engaged in Government-to-Government consultations with the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada and the following federally recognized Tribes: the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribes, Lovelock Paiute Tribe, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Summit Lake Paiute Tribe, Te-Moak Tribe of Western Shoshone Indians of Nevada (consisting of the Battle Mountain Band, Elko Band, South Fork Band, and Wells Band), Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, Walker River Paiute Tribe, Winnemucca Paiute Tribe, Yerington Paiute Tribe, and Yomba Shoshone Tribe. Appendix C (Tribal Correspondence) of the Final EIS was updated to include a summary of all outreach performed by the Navy and copies of official correspondence.</p>

F.7.3.71 Dicom, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Ronnie	Dicom	<p>It's really hard to believe we need to send letters to stop people from dropping bombs on land in our own wilderness. What has happened to people that they have no respect for our own country's land. I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2),</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

F.7.3.72 Dingess, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
James	Dingess	<p>I fly light powered aircraft and gliders in the affected airspace. I believe that the proposed expansion of military airspace will endanger civil aircraft operating in the area.</p> <p>Many gliders fly Central Nevada as it's one of the best soaring areas in the world. People travel from as far away as Europe, Australia, and New Zealand to enjoy the world class soaring weather. Hotels, restaurants, and airport operators will lose valuable customers as many glider pilots would chose other safer areas to fly.</p> <p>I also own a lot at Rthe Kingston airport and am planning to build a hangar and home there. If this airspace expansion is approved, I'll build elsewhere.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. In order to minimize any aviation impacts under each of the proposed alternatives, the Navy is requesting that the FAA create Airspace Exclusion Zones (3-nautical-mile radius, surface to 1,500 feet AGL) for the Gabbs and Eureka airports. Current range procedures identify the town of Crescent Valley and the Gabbs Airfield as noise sensitive areas that shall be avoided by 3,000 feet AGL or 5 nautical miles. This would ensure those airports could operate regardless of the alternative ultimately chosen. The airspace exclusion zones would be avoided, unless the airport is specifically being utilized for take-offs and landings associated with military training activities. This is discussed in Section 3.6.2.2.4 (Local and Regional Airports).</p> <p>The Navy is also proposing to create a Noise Sensitive Area (5 nautical mile radius and surface to 3,000 feet AGL) for Kingston Airport.</p> <p>The Navy must follow all governing FAA rules and regulations when flying. Military aircraft fly in accordance with FAA Regulations, Part 91, General Operating and Flight Rules, which govern such flight components as operating near other aircraft, right-of-way rules, aircraft speed, and minimum safe altitudes. General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p>

F.7.3.73 DiPietro, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Crystal	DiPietro	As populations grow & resources & open spaces dwindle, we need more than ever to preserve the places we have wisely set aside. It is unacceptable that these spaces that we've come to love & need in our lives be taken away. Once taken, these resources will never be given back & will never be the same. I understand that the military needs training spaces, but what in the world are we fighting for, if we don't have beautiful, preserved open spaces? For many of us, these places are part of what makes this country great. We need places to escape the hustle and bustle of modern life, to escape noise & lights. We need places where we can hunt & fish & hike & climb, places where we can explore & test our limits. When we diminish these places, we are diminishing our country.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate.
Crystal	DiPietro	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station. We love & need our wild public lands!	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.74 Dixon, K.

First	Last	Comment	Response
om	Dixon	<p>First, I am appalled that this proposal even exists.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They are called public lands because it is the public, the citizens of the U.S., who owns them; not the armed forces, not the president, and not congress. • To even think about doing this to a wildlife refuge is abusing our rights as human beings. We are caretakers of these lands, it is our responsibility to protect wildlife as much as possible. We cannot continue to abuse our environment and think it will have no impact on us- it will. • Seriously, we do NOT even need more bombs. If the Navy is asking for more land to destroy it makes me wonder how much land have they destroyed already to be needing more, just to test, yet, another bomb? • How long as a modern civilization are we going to continue to destroy the very thing that sustains us? How many animals do we have to destroy in the name of “protection?” against our enemies. • I am someone who takes advantage of BLM land and the opportunity to experience the beauty this country provides. If we allow the Navy this “takeover” of public land, when would it stop? We would just be feeding the beast-it will always want more. • Please- I implore you, do not allow this takeover of our precious Public land by the Navy. Please- do the right thing, even if it doesn’t make anyone or agency any money. <p>Thank you, Kom Dixon</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding the need for the project, as discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to the wildlife refuge, this expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDC, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>Regarding impacts to wildlife, the Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species. Regarding impacts to recreation, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.</p>

F.7.3.75 Dolfin, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Luana	Dolfin	I believe that no more land needs to be taken away from Public Use, Alternative #3, would be the better option. Nevada people give enough. We only have 12% of the land, as it is.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.76 Dolph, P.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Phyllis	Dolph	There is no reasonable reason to increase a bombing range. We are not increasingly at war, and there is nothing to hit except wildlife habitat and the creatures which live there. We need to preserve our trees, our birds, our eagles, and the creatures which feed them. DO NOT do this enormous expansion of bombing range. There is NO need.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding your comments on wildlife, The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

First	Last	Comment	Response
		thank you, Phyllis Dolph	

F.7.3.77 Dore, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jacob	Dore	I hope the public lands near the Middlegate Station and the Station itself remain public land. I've been camping and dirt biking in that area for a long time. It's a wild and remote area of Nevada.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Although the Navy is proposing to close portions of the Salt Wells and Middlegate Recreation Areas, the Middlegate Station would remain open for public uses as it currently is.

F.7.3.78 Dugan, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jamess	Dugan	This expansion is not needed! The only reason they want this land is they can play with long range guided munitions. They are the Damn Navy , they can tow moth balled ships out to the Pacific ocean and practice like they have done for years. This is nothing but another land grab by the U.S. government.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command. Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.

F.7.3.79 Dugan, K.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Kyle	Dugan	The areas the base is taking is huge area that a lot of the public uses for hunting exploring taking quads out. It	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>effects species of big horn that are trying to make a come back and taking that land will kill that herd. Take the Carson sink flats an use that as a bombing range no one uses those. Taking all this land is only affecting the public in a negative way causing people to hate the military and not want to work with them. This affects thousands of people a lot more please don't take our public lands leave Nevada public</p>	<p>surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.</p> <p>The proposed B-16 and B-20 expansion areas are outside of the current mapped range of bighorn sheep and mule deer, and only the eastern portion of the proposed B-20 expansion area overlaps with year-round pronghorn range (Nevada Department of Wildlife (2017a). However, mule deer were observed within the proposed B-20 expansion area during camera trap surveys conducted in support of this EIS (see Supporting Study: Final Wildlife Remote Camera Trapping Survey Report, available at http://www.frtcmodernization.com). Given the estimated number of bighorn sheep within the vicinity of the existing B-17 and DVTA range areas are at an all-time high (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a), existing training operations are not having an effect on regional bighorn sheep populations. Therefore, it is expected that proposed training operations conducted within the proposed restricted areas (R-4805A and R4816S Low) and associated expansion areas at the same level as current training operations would not have a significant impact on bighorn sheep populations.</p> <p>The Navy would allow access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency and would set quotas and distribute permits, and maintain wildlife habitat. The Navy is developing a Memorandum of Agreement with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for the hunting program. Further details are provided in Section 3.12 (Recreation) and Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans) of the Final EIS.</p>

F.7.3.80 Duggan, E.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Eric	Duggan	<p>Instead of eliminating 74,400 acres of Wilderness Study Areas as part of their Dixie Valley Training Area, the military should support Wilderness designation for all of the WSAs within, or very close to, this area including; the Clan Alpine Mountain, Job Peak, Stillwater Range, and the Desatoya Mountains WSAs. Wilderness designation will provide a larger and more complete buffer for military actions, allow for continued public access, and be protected in perpetuity. This Wilderness buffer could also include lands with wilderness characteristics that Friends of Nevada Wilderness identified through our</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>Regarding the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, the Proposed Action would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>inventories (Stillwater additions and South Job Peak).</p> <p>The military needs to adjust their boundary proposals in B-20 to exclude the 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The 17,848-acre refuge was established by a Congressional Act in 1931 to "...provide a sanctuary and breeding ground for birds and other wildlife". It should not be part of a bombing area!</p> <p>The military must find a way to allow for more public access in B-17, at least on a seasonal or part-time basis. The military has made some minor allowances for OHV races and bighorn sheep hunting, but what about access for hiking, photography, rock hounding, and camping? Why should OHVs and the person who happens to draw a bighorn sheep tag get special privileges? Where is the social justice for all?</p>	<p>agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses in the B-17 range, as it is Navy policy that these ranges are generally closed to the public. Allowing hunting and special events would work only as managed access through strict Naval control to ensure public health and safety and scheduling of training events. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationalists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationalists.</p> <p>The Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is not a part of the proposed expansion area under the Proposed Action.</p>

F.7.3.81 Dummar, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jennifer	Dummar	My family lives in Gabbs. I lived there as a child. Living in rural Nevada has always been difficult. We have very little access to the things people in bigger towns take for granted. Taking away a main access road to those goods and making daily life harder on an already difficult way of life is inhumane of the government. The US government owns most of Nevada, we do are best to accommodate them, but there are times it would be nice for the government to remember why they are really here "to serve the US citizens". Thank you for your time.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 3.5 (Transportation), under Alternative 3, the WDZ would extend over a portion of SR 361, and that segment would need to be closed and re-routed outside of the WDZ due to mission and public safety requirements.</p> <p>The potential closure and rerouting of SR 361 associated with the expansion of B-17 would only occur if Congress chose Alternative 3. However, the affected segment of SR 361 would not be closed unless and until a suitable replacement route is established. Relocation of SR 361 would not cut off access to Gabbs or Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park. The notional relocation corridor for the potential re-routing of SR 361 can be found in Section 3.5.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p> <p>Any proposed rerouting is still conceptual in nature and would be evaluated prior to closure of the route. Follow-on NEPA efforts would need to be conducted for the potential relocation of SR 361 if Alternative 3 were to be selected. See Chapter 2, specifically Section 2.3.4.2.4 (Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 3) for further details. If Alternative 3 were chosen, the Navy would transfer any funds appropriated for relocating the road to the Federal Highway Administration, who in turn would make these funds available to NDOT for planning, design and construction of the replacement road to State standards.</p>

F.7.3.82 Dummar, Q.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Quentin	Dummar	I grew up in Gabbs and still have alot of family there. My uncle Ray Dummar owns most of the businesses that still operate in that small community. Those businesses will not run much longer as Ray isn't getting any younger. When his store and gas station close the very seemingly small necessities go away. If the U.S. government reroutes that highway, you will be making life in that small town near impossible.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 3.5 (Transportation), under Alternative 3, the WDZ would extend over a portion of SR 361, and that segment would need to be closed and re-routed outside of the WDZ due to mission and public safety requirements.</p> <p>The potential closure and rerouting of SR 361 associated with the expansion of B-17 would only occur if Congress chose Alternative 3. However, the affected segment of SR 361 would not be closed unless and until a suitable replacement route is established. Relocation of SR 361 would not cut off access to Gabbs or Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park. The notional relocation corridor for the potential re-routing of SR 361 can be found in Section 3.5.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p> <p>Any proposed rerouting is still conceptual in nature and would be evaluated prior to closure of the route. Follow-on NEPA efforts would need to be conducted for the potential relocation of SR 361 if Alternative 3 were to be selected. See Chapter 2, specifically Section 2.3.4.2.4 (Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 3) for further details. If Alternative 3 were chosen, the Navy would transfer any funds appropriated for relocating the road to the Federal Highway Administration, who in turn would make these funds available to NDOT for planning, design and construction of the replacement road to State standards.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		Thanks Quentin Dummar	

F.7.3.83 Dunsmore, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Seven	Dunsmore	<p>I respect the military and I understand the need for upgrading and for testing new weapons. What I am wondering is if we can come up with a creative way to use the lands that have already been destroyed by testing, in order to preserve the habitat of the remaining Nevada wilderness?</p> <p>Right thinking strategists might use this decision-making as PR then, subverting the current paradigm of right versus left, etc. and even advertising that you ARE protecting wild spaces by utilizing existing ranges in new ways. You could use this to widen the pride and appeal of our armed forces amongst the populace. Our soldiers deserve it, and it would be good for America right now as well.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described in Chapter 2 as the action alternatives, such as utilizing existing ranges. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).</p>

F.7.3.84 Eason, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Andrea	Eason	<p>As a mother and nature lover, I do not support this. The land is currently rich habitat for mule deer, important desert springs and nesting sites for raptors like golden eagles. In the very near future, due to rising sea levels and global warming, we will all need this water and land. It's disgusting and disturbing to think of the impact on the</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p> <p>The following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		wildlife. Work with the land you already have. Please protect this precious habitat and springs.	invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes.

F.7.3.85 Ebanez, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Matthew	Ebanez	Conservation of wildlife and land management out weighs an compulsory expensive, project. Funds could be partially be used for conservation purposes.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy does allocate funds to conservation purposes through the use of the Sikes Act.

F.7.3.86 Eckland, E.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Elena	Eckland	Please preserve the wilderness! These places are valuable for the recreational opportunities they provide for people to experience the beauty of Nevada. Conserving the wilderness allows plant and animal communities to thrive and further enhances the recreational value of these lands.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.

F.7.3.87 Edwards, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Tami	Edwards	I absolutely do NOT think you should be taking public lands! I grew up on Patrick AFB in Florida. We now have a cancer cluster because of all the dumping DOD was doing for decades and that includes the space program. I spent 10 years in naval aviation at NAS Miramar and there were places that were off limits in the 80s/90s because of unregulated dumping of the chemicals used. I cannot imagine what	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities. The Navy continuously monitors its operations to find ways to minimize the use of hazardous materials and to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes. Any spills would be managed and cleaned up in accordance with applicable state and federal regulatory requirements. If any such spill were to exceed reportable quantities as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for regulated material, the event would be immediately reported to the NAS Fallon Environmental Division for appropriate action per the Integrated Contingency Plan (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2009).

First	Last	Comment	Response
		kind of damage you could do with more land under your stewardship. You can't even clean up the messes you've already made! Short answer: NO!	Additionally, the DoD created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure DoD compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations. Lastly, Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3571.4, Operational Range Clearance Policy for Navy Ranges, establishes the policy and requirements for performing operational range clearance on Navy ranges.

F.7.3.88 Eldridge, G.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Gail	Eldridge	Having witnessed the terrible things done to the protectors at Standing Rock, I am appalled that no lesson was learned. Attacking those that protest the wrong doing by our government and big business is wrong. We the people matter. Our beliefs and hopes for the future matter. Not acknowledging and protecting our history is not acceptable. Money is not to be worshipped above the indigenous peoples and their beliefs. We are all enriched by learning from them. Not by encroaching on their lands and stealing from them.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.89 Esposito, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
June	Esposito	<p>As a citizen of Nevada, I am against the Navy's proposal to withdraw an additional 607,000 acres of public lands to modernize its training programs. While I do not dispute that training programs are a necessary and integral part of the Navy's function, still I would ask that the Navy take the No Action alternative or, perhaps, develop alternatives not currently being considered to avoid environmental and other impacts to the public lands of our state.</p> <p>I am against the Navy's preferred proposal for these reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It will be a substantial new withdrawal of public land from public use, increasing the federal control of Nevada to nearly 8% of our land area. Nevada already has the highest percentage in the nation of land 	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding reason one, the Department of the Navy's (DON's) environmental evaluations and NEPA analyses are for a potential legislative withdrawal of 772,370.75 acres of land at Naval Air Station Fallon that the Navy intends to propose to Congress to withdraw and reserve for military use. The other withdrawals or federal lands in Nevada are outside of the scope of the Proposed Action in this EIS.</p> <p>Public access changes under the action alternatives would result in a significant impact on transportation routes near the FRTC. Under Alternative 1 and 2, Sand Canyon Road and portions of the unpaved B-20 Access Road (open for Navy use only) that pass to the north of B-20 would be closed to the public, and there would be the potential need to re-route State Route 839. Preventing public travel on these roads would cause a loss of access via customary/familiar transit routes. Access to the planned Special Recreation Management Areas, discussed in detail in Section 3.12 (Recreation) and shown in Figure 3.12-4, in the withdrawal area would also be closed to OHV use and alternate routes would be utilized. Alternative 3 would impact the same roads with the exception of State route 839; Alternative 3 would instead cause the potential relocation of part of State Route 361.</p> <p>Regarding reason two, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>under federal control, and it is a disservice to our citizens for the federal government to control even more than it already does.</p> <p>2. It will cut off many recreational areas and access roads used by the public. This will not only impact the public's enjoyment of our lands but also have an impact on hunting and therefore the ecosystems of our state as a whole.</p> <p>3. It will remove several Wilderness Study Area (WSA) designations by a simple Congressional act. Our wilderness areas are delicate and unique, and by their very nature they should be left in their current state.</p> <p>4. It will prevent solar, wind, and geothermal development on many square miles of current public land. This is not only detrimental to the state of Nevada but by extension, since these are clean and renewable sources of energy that will help to mitigate human-caused climate effects, it will be harmful to our national security.</p> <p>5. It will lessen the amount of funds coming to the state and to affected counties from permits and taxes pertaining to recreation, hunting, and fishing on public land. This is an unfair burden to place upon this state.</p> <p>6. It will impact wildlife and its habitat, with particular impacts at Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge, which is a critical part of the Pacific Flyway with irreplaceable wetlands. Any disturbance to this area would negatively impact many species and is completely unacceptable.</p>	<p>recreational activities to other areas. Closure of OHV use areas as a result of implementing any action alternative is discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Access impacts on cultural and sacred sites are discussed in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources). While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.</p> <p>Regarding reason three, please note that removing the designation of WSA's or portions of WSAs is a separate Congressional action, however, the Navy would recommend for portions of the WSAs to be de-designated in order to be withdrawn. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>Regarding reason four, the Navy has made allowances for potential energy development in the DVTA that is compatible with the Navy mission. Additionally, under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative), the Navy reduced the amount of withdrawn land in the DVTA by creating the Special Land Management Overlay areas to allow future energy development pending BLM approval.</p> <p>Regarding reason five, the analysis in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics) found that lost hunting opportunities could result in a reduction in funding sources for the State of Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW). The Navy worked with a local Nevada scientist to develop the Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at http://frtcmodernization.com). The report found that hunting-related (touristic) economic losses would be similar in scale for Mineral, Pershing, and Nye counties based on the percentage of lost revenue compared to total economic activity (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at http://frtcmodernization.com], Table B-1). Therefore, no significant impacts would occur in the affected counties due to lost recreational or touristic opportunities. The Navy would provide access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the</p>

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		Thank you for considering my comments.	<p>managing agency that would set any quotas and distribute any permits, as well as maintenance of wildlife habitat. The Navy has developed a draft MOA in conjunction with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for this hunting program (further details are provided in Section 3.12, Recreation, and Appendix D, Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans, of the Final EIS). The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.</p> <p>Regarding reason six, the Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC. Therefore, the financial impact to communities from the loss of hunting in the area would be somewhat offset by this program, however, overall, lost hunting opportunities could result in a reduction in funding sources for NDOW (as discussed in Section 3.13 [Socioeconomics]).</p> <p>This Proposed Action and expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).</p>

F.7.3.90 Estill, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jim	Estill	<p>I bought the Anderson Ranch in 2005. It consist of the Copper Kettle and Rochester allotments near Bravo 20. 100% of our production (income) comes form the allotments. The value of this ranch is directly related to the AUMs we have. Any decrease reduces income and the ranch value.</p> <p>Vol. 1 pg. 24 of the EIS. "...not result in significant impacts on property values or.....agriculture." Then states later "may impact individual ranchers." It should read "will have a devastating impact on individual ranchers." Not only will our</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding socioeconomic impacts, the Navy recognizes the potential socioeconomic impacts on the community. To mitigate some of these impacts, affected private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land and all compensable rights associated with that land acquired by the United States. Rights of Way that are documented for private landowners would be discussed after any ultimate Congressional decision on a case by case basis. Noise impacts were modeled and assessed in Section 3.7 (Noise) and Section 3.15 (Environmental Justice) as required by the NEPA process. The Navy does not anticipate any risk of hearing loss because noise would not rise to a level at which hearing loss would occur. Areas that could experience noise levels of 65 dBA or greater during training activities are located in Churchill, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing counties. Regarding noise impacts, the EIS includes several figures (Figure 3.7-32 and Figure 3.7-40) that depict where changes to noise levels would occur using existing and proposed noise contour data.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>income be reduced but part of our initial investment will be lost. Therefore we oppose any taking. If takings occur we should be made whole.</p> <p>Vol 1pg. 3.4-3 Analyzes range use by cattle. Its conclusion that cattle seldom range more than 4 mi from water is incorrect. When there is snow or puddles (like now 2-11-19) they can and will go 5, 10 or more miles. Further, most of our cattle have Barmah influence. (bus indicus) They thrive in dry arid conditions.</p> <p>Water is essential to ranching. I have two stock wells East of East county road. I have been assured by the Navy's Natural Resource specialist that they are West of impact area. The EIS says on pg. 3.4-13 no stock wells near Bravo 20 are being taken. However, on Pg 3.4-15 of Vol 1, my corral appears in the expanded area. The well is a few feet N/W of the corral. I will assume the Specialist is correct. But if not I should be made whole.</p> <p>Wild Horse spring is our vested water right In on the N/W of the Bravo 20 withdraw. Vol 1 pg. 20 Says water right holders would continue to exercise beneficial use. But I don't now how. If it is taken we should be made whole. We also have ROWs in the proposed withdraw, none are listed in the EIS. They are recorded in Churchill, Pershing county, and with the state BLM office in Reno. pg. 3.5-17 list 14 ROWs but not mine. Vol 1 pg. 14. "analysis include potential impact by noise" pg 18. "new ares of sonic booms"</p>	<p>Regarding water claims, claim holders for water would be compensated as described in the Final EIS and below. Regarding impacts to grazing, the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives. The following information has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.</p> <p>Payment for Losses</p> <p>The Navy would first consider costs associated with obtaining replacement forage and otherwise restoring/maintaining a permittee's existing operational capacity. Working with BLM and the permittee, the Navy would determine the costs necessary to replace the area/capacity removed from a grazing permit. These costs could include, but would not be limited to, preparing new allotment applications; complying with BLM environmental requirements and water rights studies; procuring private market replacement forage; shipping or transporting forage, cattle and/or ranch personnel and their horses and equipment; one-time relocation expenses associated with any full or partial transferring of operations to any new location(s); any reasonably anticipated lost profits arising as a result of operational downtime while restoring and/or relocating operations; and any other costs identified, which would be properly payable under 43 U.S.C. section 315q.</p> <p>Should a permit holder decide not to seek replacement forage in conjunction with restoring operational capacity, or when restoring such capacity is not practicable, the Navy would make a good faith estimate of the financial impact the loss of that individual's permit would be expected to have on his or her ranching operation. The Navy would ask each permit holder to provide recent business operating expenses associated with the permit, their total operating expenses, an estimate of that portion of income believed to be directly related to utilization of the permit, and total income and taxes. This information would be used to determine a payment amount to compensate for losses resulting from permit cancellation, including reasonably anticipated lost profits for what would otherwise</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>pg 26 minority and low income communities (fence line communities) that could be exposed to environmental hazards (noise) were studied, but our ranch was not.</p> <p>Vol 1 pg 3. 7-69 The map appears to include points of interest and the increased noise increase. My home place is closer than any (3-5 mi from Bravo 20) and is not included.</p> <p>Vol 1 pg 3.2-8 Map legend shows private lands in Churchill co near Bravo 20. Many lands are shown but not mine.</p> <p>The maps of the new flight zones appear to be over our place, but they are so vague its impossible to tell. Any increase in flights and noise will interfere with our reasonable use and enjoyment of our place. It will also decrease the value of the ranch the open market.</p> <p>Churchill county has proposed a change in zoning around Bravo 20 that could deflate my land value. That would be a taking of some of my value.</p> <p>Vol 1 pg 3.4.3.5.3 "the navy has the authority to make payments for losses." All of our losses should be paid for. The navy should be sure any language necessary to make payments is included in the withdrawal process and any congressional bill or action that may be taken to be assure those who suffer loss can be made whole. The Navy should be aware that we are laymen, not represented legally or by experts. And unwilling sellers.</p> <p>The actual appraised, open market value of this ranch will be deflated by the withdrawal. The difference is what we are owed to be made whole.</p> <p>Jim Estill</p>	<p>have been the duration of the permit. If a permit holder does not wish to share their financial information, or if the information shared is incomplete, the Navy would make an estimate of the value of the losses based on existing information from other sources.</p> <p>It is possible that a payment amount would be based both on replacement forage along with other operational restoration-related costs, and on the financial impact the loss of a permit would be expected to have on a ranching operation (i.e., part of the payment would be based on obtaining replacement forage to the extent practicable and the rest based on payment for losses to the extent obtaining replacement forage is not practicable). In those instances, the costs to restore operational capacity would first be determined, and the remaining payment amount would then be determined in accordance with the paragraph above discussing permits holders who may elect not to seek replacement forage capacity.</p> <p>Payment for Allotment Improvements</p> <p>Improvements such as corrals, fencing, wells, and other appurtenances that cannot be relocated are considered real property, similar to a building. the Navy would appraise the value of all real property owned by a permit holder and would offer fair market value for the purchase of any such real property. Equipment, such as relocatable water tanks, is not considered real property, and the permit holder would be afforded an opportunity to remove their equipment prior to cancellation of a permit.</p> <p>Timing of Permit Cancellation</p> <p>The Navy anticipates issuing its Record of Decision with respect to FRTC modernization in January 2020. However, any Congressional withdrawal of the area currently supporting grazing permits would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Similarly, any Congressional appropriation for implementing the FRTC Modernization action, which would include funds for making payments to grazing permit holders, would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Accordingly, the earliest the Navy would request that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) cancel any permit would be October 1, 2020.</p> <p>If the Congressional withdrawal is enacted, and if Congress appropriates funds to implement the FRTC Modernization effort, the Navy would ask BLM to contact each affected permit holder. BLM would coordinate with the Navy on any action to initiate cancellation of a permit. Under 43 CFR Part 4100 Subpart 4110.4-2 (Decrease in Land Acreages), BLM would be required to provide two years advance notice of any permit cancellation. Once a given notification is made, the Navy, with assistance from BLM, would begin discussions with affected permit holders to determine payment amounts in accordance with the processes described herein.</p>

F.7.3.91 Evans, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
John	Evans	We need to preserve our open space, not use more of it for testing..	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.92 Farley, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Mike	Farley	Please do not test any bombs in Nevada or anywhere else. Humanity and the environment does not need more bombs. We need to work on our country and protect it's most valuable resource, a healthy environment. Instead of spending more money on bombs we need to fund healthcare, education, clean water, infrastructure ect. Let's work in co-operation with other nations helping them, not bombing them. Thank you, Mike	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.93 Fell, P.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Phil	Fell	I support proposal 3	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.94 Fendelander, E.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Eric	Fendelander	<p>First, I would like to congratulate the Navy on finding the smallest most unknown location for the Reno meeting. Lack of parking, small room, and relatively unknown location, and at the same time people are at work. Second, The attitude that this is a done deal is unforgivable. There was no listening. They had to have public meetings by law, but were very obvious they didn't care what the citizens and miners thought.</p> <p>Third, When I was discussing with the pilots why they needed extra space they said it was for safety that they needed this additional land. The problem is they said the training bombs would be launched from their aircraft over 30 miles out at 30,000 ft. Well if the missiles are duds they can fail immediately upon release, and this far out can easily hit populated towns. And they kept insisting the missiles are accurate within 10 feet. So, why do you need more land, This study technically supports not needing this land grab.</p> <p>Fourth, This location is heavily hunted with an array of wildlife that are not compatible with machine guns and missile strikes/ explosions, and the notion in this report that nobody will be bothered by this activity is absurd. What kind of study did you do to determine it will not affect wildlife? None I think. This is nothing but a land grab because you think you can get away with it. Unfortunately they have pulled the national defense card. However, if they used inert missile heads the pilots would get the same training without destroying our environment. This can be a dual use range, but only if our rights are protected.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding the need for extra space, as discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p> <p>Regarding impacts on wildlife, the Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		If the Navy wants to be a good neighbor they'd better start sounding like one.	impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.

F.7.3.95 Fenner, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Ryan	Fenner	The fact that Hector is gonna be running three Honda Civics with Spoon engines. On top of that, he just came into Harry'sm and ordered three T66 turbos with NOS and a Motec system exhaust.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Proposed Action does not include the topic of your comment. Please see Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) of the EIS for a definition of the scope of the project.

F.7.3.96 Fermoile, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Christy	Fermoile	<p>To whom it may concern, 12/28/18</p> <p>To some, looking out over the vast open spaces in Nevada there is nothing out there that a little bombing can hurt. To others, like myself who have lived, hiked or recreated out in some of those uniquely open, beautiful spaces, there are myriads of concrete and obscure reasons why that is substantively unacceptable to most humans and to the respect that is owed our planet and our state specifically. Listen to Friends of Nevada and take what they put forth to heart and mind because they are much more capable of expressing what I feel and believe with facts, figures and legalities. Nevada is not just for bombing and nuclear waste just because we have open spaces.</p> <p>Respectfully, Christy Fermoile</p>	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.97 Fiske, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
John	Fiske	Although I have great respect for our military, I am disturbed by the fact that the Navy wants to take more of our public wild lands away. I have seen the maps! I spend a great deal of time out in the Dixie Valley area, because its remote, quiet, most of the time. And I hike, do photography, and explore wild canyons in the Stillwater Range, Clan Alpine Range, and other near by mountains. It is also close to where I live. Please leave it alone!!!	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>Regarding the purpose and need for the Proposed Action, as discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>If you people and others keep snipping away at our wild lands the way you do, my grand kids may not have the freedom to wander our public lands the way I do, because it will all be gone! Nellis Air force Range is a huge area! Why can't the Air Force share it with the Navy!!! There's plenty of room for both!!! And don't tell me that can't be done!!!! Then you can leave our wild lands east of Fallon alone... and I can walk in peace in the canyons with the others who share our public land! This also goes for the Sheep Range north of Vegas!!! You have plenty of land already! And if you can put a bomb through a window as I have seen you do! Than you don't need more land for the F-35 and other aircraft.</p> <p>Regards, John Fiske</p>	<p>activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p> <p>Regarding sharing the base at Nellis with the Air Force, the Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to recreation, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.</p>

F.7.3.98 Flanagan, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
T	Flanagan	As an American citizen I disapprove of this illegal land grab for more military complex that is really unnecessary and it's probably going to be a waste of money let alone the effect of our public lands come on y'all we we got enough	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding the need for the Proposed Action, as discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.99 Floen, B.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Brian	Floen	I am in support of alternative 3, most of these lands other than grazing will not support full agriculture activities, most of these are used recreationally, Nevada is blessed with almost unlimited access to lands vs other states , therefore i feel we should allow our nations military to be able to expand their training area in support of nations freedoms.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.100 Florel, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Lela	Florel	<p>I am totally against using any land for any kind of munitions testing. We are in the midst of climate destruction, we are destroying the life support systems we need to survive on the planet. We should have at least fifty percent of the Earth for wildlife, in order to be sustainable. We are no where near that.</p> <p>I live in a city that used land for munitions testing, there has been an incredibly expensive clean up in process for the last 20 years, it is still not complete, and the land will never be the same as it's natural state.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>The DoD created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure DoD</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		There is no bare land that can be written off. If there is land that is in need of restoring to it's natural state that should be done. The military is suppose to protect the people and the land. If you continue to destroy the land and the natural systems that enable life, you are not protecting the life of the people, you are hastening our collective death. The threat is not from someone bombing us, it is from us destroying ourselves. Please do your job to protect us, by protecting the land.	compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations.
Lela	Florel	<p>I am totally against using any land for any kind of munitions testing. We are in the midst of climate destruction, we are destroying the life support systems we need to survive on the planet. We should have at least fifty percent of the Earth for wildlife, in order to be sustainable. We are no where near that.</p> <p>I live in a city that used land for munitions testing, there has been an incredibly expensive clean up in process for the last 20 years, it is still not complete, and the land will never be the same as it's natural state.</p> <p>There is no bare land that can be written off. If there is land that is in need of restoring to it's natural state that should be done. The military is suppose to protect the people and the land. If you continue to destroy the land and the natural systems that enable life, you are not protecting the life of the people, you are hastening our collective death. The threat is not from someone bombing us, it is from us destroying ourselves. Please do your job to protect us, by protecting the land.</p>	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. As discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities. The Navy continuously monitors its operations to find ways to minimize the use of hazardous materials and to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes. Any spills would be managed and cleaned up in accordance with applicable state and federal regulatory requirements. If any such spill were to exceed reportable quantities as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for regulated material, the event would be immediately reported to the NAS Fallon Environmental Division for appropriate action per the Integrated Contingency Plan (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2009). Additionally, Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3571.4, Operational Range Clearance Policy for Navy Ranges, establishes the policy and requirements for performing operational range clearance on Navy ranges.

F.7.3.101 Flores, B.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Barbara	Flores	I think it is very important that we preserve these open spaces.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.102 Fougner, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Craig	Fougner	<p>January 23, 2019</p> <p>Re: Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization - Area B-17</p> <p>To Whom It May Concern:</p> <p>As members of the Reno Gem and Mineral Society (in affiliation with the California Federation Mineral Society and the American Federation Mineral Society), whose mission is to create and develop and encourage interest in the earth's sciences and to locate and identify various material through field trips, we would like to state the following in regard to Area B-17.</p> <p>Our Society has conducted many field trips in Area B-17 (Slate Mountain and the surrounding areas). If the Navy does close off and restrict access to this exceptional land, it will have a definite impact on not only our Society but other individuals that frequent it for recreational activities.</p> <p>One thought we would like to have considered is when Area B-17 is not being utilized for training purposes, would it be possible for civilians to have certain time periods of access to study and collect the many various minerals known to exist in B-17, as well as other recreational activities?</p> <p>These sites are well known through the following rock and mineral books/publications: Gem Trails of Nevada by James R. Mitchell--Page 122, Site 47 lists Bell Canyon Agate; Page 124, Site 48 lists Middlegate Minerals; Page 128, Site 50 lists Quartz Mountain Minerals and Wood; Page 130, Site 51 lists Monte Cristo Jasper; Page 132, Site 52 lists Gabbs Opalized Wood; Rock Hounding Nevada by William A. Kappel--Page 164, Site 68 shows Kaiser Mine Road-Jasper/ Agate; Page 166, Site 69 shows Kaiser Mine Fluorite; Nevada Ghost Towns and Mining Camps by Stanley W. Paher--Page 456, lists Eagleville as a gold mining camp dating to the 1880's. This area also contains various minerals of interest.</p> <p>We thank you for extending the public comment period and also thank you in advance for taking into consideration the concerns that we have raised with regard to Area B-17.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding impacts to recreation, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses in the Bravo ranges, as there are too many recreationalists and it is difficult to control the number or people that would be allowed on range. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationalists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationalists.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		Craig Fougner and Rita Lencioni	

F.7.3.103 Frain, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Rosemary	Frain	Please do not expand into land that is already inhabited by many wildlife species and used for hiking and wildlife watching. I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.104 Fraley, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Michael	Fraley	Naval Facilities Engineering Command, I have uploaded a MS Word document which contain my comments supporting the use of the land, which is under consideration for closure to public use and a map of the area in Nevada we (the public) need to be preserved for our use. Please seriously consider my comments. It could go a long way towards good public relations. Thanks, Michael Fraley	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

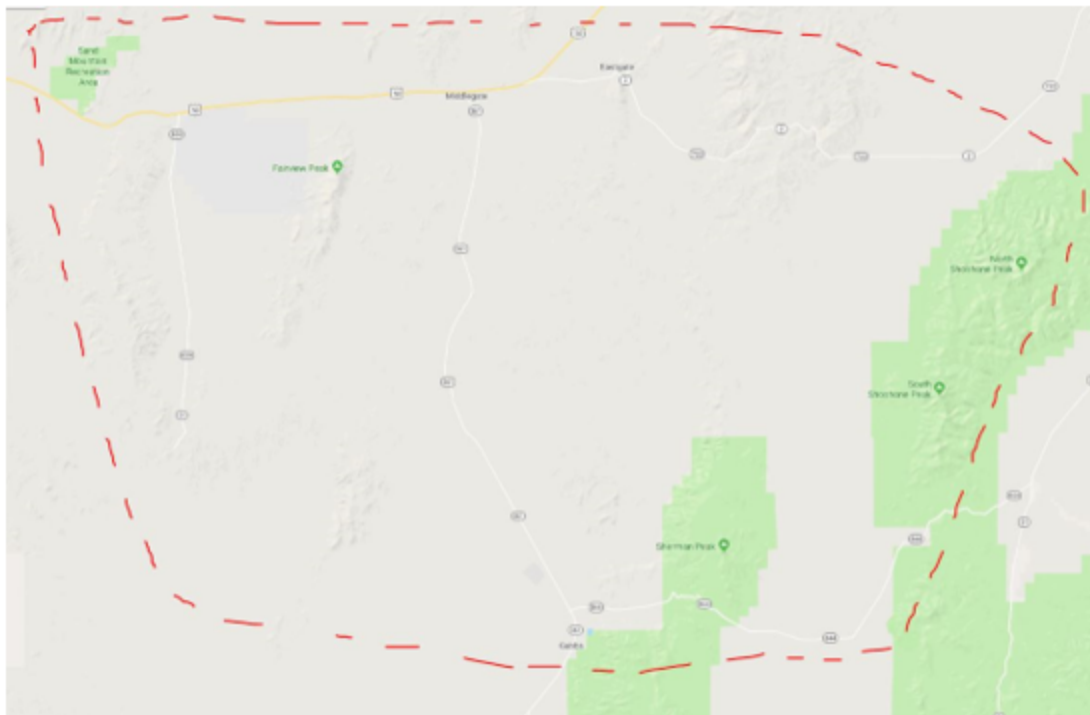
12/13/2018

Sirs,

I would request that you leave the area in Nevada between Sand Mountain and Middlegate Station to the North, Fairview Peak area to the West, the town of Gabbs and Sherman Peak to the South and Shoshone Peaks (North and South) to the East, available for public use. For decades this area has been used by many varying groups and families for study and recreation. The small business at Middlegate Station is an historic spot which supports those visiting this area with food, fuel and supplies, cheap lodging and a safe staging area for our activities. It has been frequented by generations of flyers from Fallon Naval Air Station. Their memorabilia is displayed on the walls and ceiling and has been a common topic of discussion for generations. If this area gets closed to the public, many livelihoods are going to be ruined and lost. But on the other hand, if this area is preserved for public use, our support for Naval Operations will grow with admiration. This is a key concept which should be important to our militaries so that public support will continue to grow. I respectfully request you consider this request. I have included a map of the area.

Thanks,

Mike Fraley (US Army Veteran)



F.7.3.104.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

Implementing Alternative 3 (the Navy's Preferred Alternative) would prevent public access to several important recreation resources, including the BLM's proposed Middlegate Extensive Recreation Management Areas. Unlike Alternatives 1 and 2, this alternative would not close portions of the BLM's proposed Salt Wells Extensive Recreation Management Area, Sand Springs Range, and Fairview Peak. Middlegate Station would remain open for recreation under the Proposed Action.

F.7.3.105 Francis, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Michaeljon	Francis	Stop it! Stop destroying American soil for war efforts. Just stop the stupidity and lies for destructive purposes. This is unacceptable! No! Absolutely not! We the people say stop doing stupid crap in the name of Americans! You are denied permission!	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.106 Franseen, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Laura	Franseen	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.107 Frederickson, B.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Bonnie	Frederickson	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are

First	Last	Comment	Response
		sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

F.7.3.108 French, P.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Pamela	French	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.109 Frey, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Joseph	Frey	<p>I believe that the proposed Naval Expansion in Northern Nevada is completely unnecessary in the size and scope that is currently proposed. We have not been given a good reason as to the reason for the expansion other than it is necessary for training exercises to be conducted safely. What training exercises are now necessary? Who or what has been placed in a situation of compromised safety as because of the current size of the training complex? I would like to know why there cannot simply be airspace restrictions that leave certain areas open for public use? Nevada is a land that the public owns for their enjoyment and livelihood. In order for the government to condemn public land for their own use and not that of the taxpayers directly requires some serious explanation. Not just smoke in mirrors and abstract reasoning.</p> <p>I have seen the valuation scenarios for purchasing the permits and at least two of the three options are completely unreasonable in my opinion. The one option that I believe holds any credence whatsoever is not being considered from what I have last heard. Even with appropriate compensation, you cannot take from the public what has been used by them for generations.</p> <p>My family is directly impacted by by this expansion and I am wholeheartedly opposed to this expansion!</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding the need for the Proposed Action, as discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.110 Frishman, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Andrew	Frishman	<p>Dear Decision Makers,</p> <p>I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed Fallon Range Training Complex expansion. Specifically, I wish to support Proposed Alternative #1 (Extend Existing Land Withdrawal and Management of the NTTR, North and</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Regarding combining activities with the Air Force, the NTTR project is not a part of this Proposed Action. Under this proposal, taking “no action” would mean that Congress would not extend the current land withdrawal, which expires in November 2021. Therefore, the land withdrawal would expire and FRTC lands would be reverted back as described under the No Action Alternative.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>South Range). If that alternative should prove unworkable, I support the No Action Alternative.</p> <p>I am strongly opposed to any land withdrawal that would result in loss of public access to currently open lands in Dixie Valley, Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge, nearby Wilderness Study Areas and adjacent mountain ranges. As a hiker, photographer, and amateur naturalist active in Nevada, the lands proposed for withdrawal offer me unique and significant opportunities for recreation and study in the region. The recent discovery of the Dixie Valley toad serves to underscore the scientific value of the region, and it is important that the public retain unimpeded access to the geologic and biologic resources of the area. Substantial and meaningful access must be maintained for the general public, not just for hunters and resource managers. In a time when Nevada is actively promoting and developing its outdoor recreation economy, loss of public access to such a wide swath of high quality landscape is simply unacceptable.</p> <p>Rather than eliminating any Wilderness Study acreage or limit public access, the military should instead support Wilderness designations in this area, including the Clan Alpine, Job Peak, Stillwater Range and the Desatoya Mountains WSAs.</p>	<p>Regarding impacts to refuge lands, the Dixie Valley, most of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, and Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge areas would remain open for hiking, photography and other currently approved recreation. This expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>Regarding Wilderness Study Areas, the proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTa, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>Regarding the loss of recreation, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTa and surrounding areas.</p> <p>Regarding other alternatives, the Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) as the action alternatives, including training elsewhere. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>While I appreciate the efforts to retain some public access for hunters and OHV users to B-17, I also believe such opportunities should be available (at least seasonally or part-time) to anyone with an interest in the area, not just special interest groups.</p> <p>I also believe that the regional context of military lands argues against further land withdrawal. Military lands without public access are enormous in the region. Between China Lake, Fort Irwin, Edwards, Twentynine Palms, Nellis, Hawthorne, Fallon and Utah TTR, recreation and natural landscapes in the Mojave and Great Basin desert ecosystems are already heavily impacted by military lands. This point only becomes stronger when one considers Nellis Test and Training Range's current proposal to limit access to a large portion of Desert National Wildlife Refuge. I believe it is reasonable to expect the highly competent and professional leaders of our military to achieve their training goals on existing land withdrawals via increased innovation, more efficient use of existing withdrawals and better cooperation between military branches. Population and development in Nevada is rapidly expanding, causing major increases in impacts to desert land via urban growth, growing demands on water resources and solar energy infrastructure. All this comes at a time when residents and tourists are visiting</p>	<p>public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).</p> <p>Regarding socioeconomics and tourism, in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics) of the EIS, the Navy determined that there would be no significant impacts on tourist areas, such as Fairview Peak earthquake fault, Berlin Ichthyosaur State Historic Park, Middlegate Station, Sand Mountain Recreation Area, and Lahontan State Recreation Area because these areas would be available for public use. In addition, tourism activities would continue to be allowed on lands surrounding the proposed withdrawal and acquisition area.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>Nevada's backcountry in unprecedented numbers and the state is attempting to diversify its economy with a substantial emphasis on outdoor recreation. In this context, ecologically healthy land in undeveloped condition is more important to the public than ever. Thank you for considering my comments.</p> <p>Sincerely, Andrew J Frishman Yakima, WA</p>	

F.7.3.111 Fuhlhage, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Michael	Fuhlhage	<p>I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station. Why don't you just bomb the places where you have already ruined ecosystems and scarred the land?</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.112 Furman, G.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Gary	Furman	<p>The obvious answer is the no action alternative, but I must assume that the Navy will not let that happen.</p> <p>Alternative 3 is the next best choice, although I hate to see Slate Mt and the Monte Cristos closed to public access.</p> <p>I feel very fortunate to live in the State of Nevada with all of its wonderful mountain ranges available to explore and hunt in and hate to see the above opportunities removed from our choices.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and has updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy has added tables discussing management practices, monitoring, and mitigation measures to the Final EIS in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation) to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts if applicable.</p>

F.7.3.113 Garber, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Daniel	Garber	<p>I am a USAF veteran. I was a Finance Specialist with a secondary AFSC of Military Policeman. I am against adding new test sites or the expansion of existing test sites. There are plenty of areas that the US Military has used to test ordinance. Find a way of using the existing spaces. Minimize your costs and use the monies WE give you in a more efficient way.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.114 Gartland, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Chris	Gartland	As a grand parent and concerned citizen I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.115 Gates, E.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Edward	Gates	Dear Sirs: I am a mining geologist with over 30 years of experience. I grew up in Nevada and spent much of my career working there. I am distraught about this proposed major withdrawal of public land in Nevada, which contains very substantial mineral potential. Just a few years ago, I was conducting exploration on a mineral property that would be impacted by this withdrawal. Mining is a very important component of the Nevada economy. However, I also understand the need for suitable training areas for our military, and that sparsely populated Nevada makes it a favored place for military bases. I	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. In the EIS, when a mineral resource potential is classified as either moderate or high, a lost exploration opportunity would represent a significant impact on that mineral resources. The resource potential classification considers occurrences, geologic relationship, and historic production for each mineral resource. As discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), Federal land withdrawn from mineral entry would no longer be open to new mining claims, and the lands would be prohibited from future mineral exploration and development. Implementation of any of the action alternatives would result in potential significant impacts on exploration and development of locatable, leasable, and salable mineral

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>would just ask that every effort be taken to minimize the withdrawal of areas with high mineral potential. Possibly, light and heat concerns about mining operations could be mitigated by special permitting requirements for operations.</p> <p>I read about the incident in 2010 about a "foreign mining company buying a gold mine close to the Fallon training area" being used as a reason for restricting mining activities near the range. This case seems to imply that the foreign company was from a hostile country. My guess is that the foreign company was Canadian, since much mineral exploration and development in the United States is done by companies from our friendly neighbor to the north.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Edward E. Gates Geologist</p>	<p>resources.</p> <p>In accordance with Navy policy, mining is not compatible within a surface danger zone of an operational range. The Navy would continue to follow existing operating procedures that prohibit the collection of materials from any mining area and prohibit entry to mine shafts and mines. Navy training activities would not impact mining activities outside of the proposed withdrawal boundaries. Therefore, there is the potential for a loss of access to salable and locatable minerals and mines in the land requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition. Closing the property may also affect mineral management by limiting the availability of mineral transport within certain areas. For example, new public roads, railroads, or other rights of way that would transport minerals could not be located within the proposed closed areas of the Bravo ranges, which would limit the availability to access and transport locatable and salable minerals. Closing the property would also limit the available means to transport mineral resources like oil/gas pipelines or geothermal energy transmission lines.</p>

F.7.3.116 Getto, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Myles	Getto	<p>Good Afternoon, my name is Myles Getto, I live and work in Fallon, I know I can speak for many when I say I cannot support the Navy's expansion into public lands located near Fallon. These lands are used by many people for recreational use including horseback riding, UTVs, hunting, hiking, and many other activities that would all be taken from them. One of the greatest things about our great state of Nevada is the ability to travel a short distance and to be able to partake in these activities, and with all the proposed plans these activities would either stop or be limited. I do support everything the Navy does for our great country but I cannot support the taking of public lands that have adverse effect on the surrounding populations.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and has updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy has added tables discussing management practices, monitoring, and mitigation measures to the Final EIS in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation) to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts if applicable.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.</p>

F.7.3.117 Giltner, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Matthew	Giltner	Please see attached PDF	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG,
1220 Pacific Highway Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

Re: Draft EIS for the Fallon Range Training Complex, (FRTC)

I have read through the modernization plan and alternatives.

In respect to the options offered for the modernization of the Fallon Range complex, I wanted to offer some insight that the proposed footprint for expansion creates a significant restriction from a historical inventory perspective.

As an avid off-road hobbyist, one of the primary attractions to this part of Nevada, an area that I frequent numerous times a year, is the opportunity to visit some of the sites of nineteenth and twentieth century mines and the associated period communities.

The area of this discussion, specifically in the Bravo – 17 training area, already has excluded access to numerous sites.

The proposed expansion to B-17 has the extension east of Fairview Peak. This will further exclude access to more than two dozen other historic sites.

Including, but not limited to:

- Dromedary Hump Mine
- Nevada Hills Mine
- Grand Central Mine
- Mizpah Mine
- Austrian Mine
- Nevada Fairview Mine
- Synder Mine
- Gold Coin Mine
- Nevada Crown Mine
- Gold Crown Mine
- Port Mine
- Sampson Mine
- Shamrock mine
- Gold Basin mine
- Gold Bug Mine
- Bell Mountain Mine
- Slate Mine
- Midday mine
- Midnight mine

Unlike a large barren space, that could (theoretically) be remediated once any use of this land was returned to full public access, repeated ordinance impacts, detonation, weapon testing and training, will irrevocably damage these sites in perpetuity.

To those who's interest is not in the history of our nation, and Nevada in particular, this may seem little more than a minor pebble in the road of progress. Yet if we look at it from the larger perspective, this expansion will erase the first half of Nevada's history for this area.

Forever.

It is no coincidence that federal law prohibits the removal or damage of artifacts more than 100 years old on Public Land. Be it a bottle top, or a large ore bin these sites are protected. It is an easy segue of logic to assign the same values surrounding the routine the destruction of those very same artifacts, mine shafts, adits, structures, or remains as a result of this proposed expansion.

I would ask that the entire project follow the guidance in the "No Action Alternative"

However, should the US Navy move forward against such sage advice, I would suggest an alternative as outline by the Pine Nut Mountains Trails Association, a letter you should already have in your possession.

I have included the relevant text from the PNMTA below as my endorsement for that compromise.

PNMTA supports the Navy's preferred alternative, Alternative 3. While Alternative 3 is the least restrictive alternative toward the loss of recreational access, this alternative will still close many miles of existing roads and trails that are very popular for public use. The closure of this public land will concentrate public use to a smaller area, creating over crowded roads and trails and overuse conditions on the existing roads and trails. This crowding and trail damage eventually leads to users going elsewhere to recreate. This will most certainly affect the economy of the Middlegate Station, Cold Springs Station, and the towns of Fallon and Gabbs due to fewer OHV-tourists using the area.

The placement of new boundaries, particularly the north eastern area of Bravo 17, and the closure of these existing roads and trails will also create out and back routes and lead to new user created loop trails. With the Navy's proposed willingness to reroute a section of State Highway 361 along the proposed eastern boundary, we believe the Navy should also consider constructing a new dirt road along the northeastern boundary to connect the remaining sections of existing dirt roads to State Highway 361. Boundary roads provide a clear, distinct visual delineation for OHV users while riding or planning a ride. Thereby maximizing the safety envelope and reducing inadvertent intrusion to dangerous areas.

An option to building a new road as stated above, would be to use the large dirt road that runs southeasterly connecting the Fairview/Earthquake Fault Road from Bell Flat to State Highway 361 approximately ½ mile north of the Churchill/Mineral Counties line. It would then connect to other existing roads in the area, particularly to the east of the proposed boundary. The use of that road as the northeast boundary would be consistent with the use of Nevada State Route 839 along the Bravo 17 western boundary, and the use of Simpson Road as the south boundary of the Bravo 16 expansion. This large road is approximately 1 to 3 miles within and south of the proposed Alternative 3 northern boundary. It would change the proposed boundary line further south by that approximate distance.

With the particular geography, historic sites, and geology of this area, motorized recreation is by far the most prominent use of these public lands. PNMTA believes that with the loss of the use of public land in this area due to the Navy's proposed land withdrawal, it is appropriate that Congress designate surrounding land as a Special Recreation Area.

PNMTA also believes that the Federal agencies involved should work to mitigate these public land recreation losses to motorized users, by releasing all Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's) throughout the State of Nevada.

This releasing of the WAS's back to a multiple use designation and the Special Recreation Area designation should be protected by statute by Congress as a "prescribed use" for motorized recreation and can be written in as a part of the Navy's modernization land bill.

Sincerely

Mathew D Giltner

F.7.3.117.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Regarding loss of recreation, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.

Regarding impacts under Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative), it would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowable in the DVTA. Grazing would also continue to be allowed in the DVTA. Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDSs are not compatible with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheep hunting, and events that are pre-coordinated with the Navy.

The requested mitigations to designate surrounding land as Special Recreation Area and to release all Wilderness Study Areas in Nevada are outside of the scope of the Proposed Action for this EIS, and therefore are not part of the Proposed Action.

Regarding the creation of a new dirt road, the Navy defers to the Department of the Interior and/or decisions of courts of appropriate jurisdiction with respect to making RS2477 determinations. In the absence of such determination, the EIS does not take a position with respect to any claimed RS2477 roads. In working with the BLM, no adjudicated RS2477 roads have been identified in the areas requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition. The Navy recognizes that there is loss of access to the areas withdrawn or acquired and potentially to non-traditional roads; however, where access to an area would no longer be available, there would be no reason to relocate the road to that area. With respect to areas that would still be open to public access generally even if a certain road would no

longer be available, other means of access these areas would remain available, and therefore roads would not need to be relocated in this situation either.

F.7.3.118 Givant, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Craig	Givant	I have been riding, jeeping and hiking in the proposed areas since before i moved to Nevada in 1985. I feel that the best use of the lands in question will be how they are utilized currently with NO NEED for further encroachment by the Navy.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and has updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy has added tables discussing management practices, monitoring, and mitigation measures to the Final EIS in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation) to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.119 Glover, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Robert	Glover	I really have no opposition to this, EXCEPT for closing off more public land. As somebody who enjoys recreating on public lands (particularly motorized recreation), I am tired of constantly losing more and more public land for whatever reason; be it military, environmental, or whatnot.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.

F.7.3.120 Godbey, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Lore	Godbey	To whom it may concern, I, as a public citizen, do not wish to have access to my public lands taken away. Also some of these lands are a wildlife refuge, and they don't respond well to having bombs dropped on them. Please contain	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable. Regarding the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, the Proposed Action would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WdZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to

First	Last	Comment	Response
		your modernization plans to within your existing borders, leaving my wildlife and wildlife spaces in peace. Sincerely, L. Godbey	<p>continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.</p> <p>Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.121 Golden, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Dennis	Golden	<p>How many Nevada public land ranchers grazing allotments would be impacted or canceled as part of your requested expansion?</p> <p>How will they be compensated for loss of income?</p> <p>Many ranchers , mining companies and individuals hold legitimate water rights on Nevada public lands including the area you wish to acquire. How do you plan to compensate for water rights?</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The allotments are discussed in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing) of the Final EIS. Depending on which alternative is chosen by Congress, the number of allotments impacted would vary.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges that it has the authority under 43 United States Code section 315q of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended, to make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered by the permit holders as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes. This authority has been incorporated into the Proposed Action.</p> <p>The Final EIS discusses the process that the Navy is proposing to use to determine payment amounts to each specific grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits.</p> <p>The Navy, as part of the proposed action, would acquire water rights within the proposed withdrawal areas if the water right can be maintained for beneficial use. If a condition of the water right can be modified (e.g., the point of use moved outside of the withdrawal areas), then the water right would not be acquired by the Navy. If wells are associated with the water right, then the Navy will evaluate on a case-by-case basis the disposition of the well (e.g., continued beneficial use or capping of the well). The Navy acknowledges that there may be impacts that have yet to be defined and will continue to develop and incorporate mitigation measures as necessary.</p>

F.7.3.122 Goncharoff, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Tim	Goncharoff	<p>Wildlife is at greater risk than at any time in our history. The proposed use is completely incompatible with maintaining essential and increasingly rare wildlife habitat. There is no way to implement the proposal without substantial damage to vulnerable populations and sensitive habitat.</p> <p>I am completely opposed.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.</p> <p>Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.123 Goodin, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Scott	Goodin	<p>I oppose the expansion of NAS Fallon into surrounding public lands. The elimination of thousands of acres of wildlife reserve would start to undo all that was done to reintroduce the Bighorn Sheep into their former habitat. The wild lands of Nevada are important to its inhabitants; please keep these wild and scenic lands open and available to the public and to wildlife and habitat conservation.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The proposed B-16 and B-20 expansion areas are outside of the current mapped range of bighorn sheep and mule deer, and only the eastern portion of the proposed B-20 expansion area overlaps with year-round pronghorn range (Nevada Department of Wildlife (2017a). Given the estimated number of bighorn sheep within the vicinity of the existing B-17 and DVTA range areas are at an all-time high (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a), existing training operations are not having an effect on regional bighorn sheep populations. Therefore, it is expected that proposed training operations conducted within the proposed restricted areas (R-4805A and R4816S Low) and associated expansion areas at the same level as current training operations would not have a significant impact on bighorn sheep populations.</p> <p>Within the FRTC region of influence, there are over 1 million acres of mapped bighorn sheep year-round range, over 51,000 acres of mapped bighorn sheep winter/lambing range, 5.6 million acres of mapped year-round pronghorn range, and 52,000 acres of mapped pronghorn crucial summer range. Navy operational doctrine dictates that during transiting, pilots avoid lambing areas. Therefore, impacts to these ungulate ranges would not have a significant or measurable impact to bighorn sheep populations.</p>

F.7.3.124 Goodnight, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Matthew	Goodnight	<p>I strongly oppose the expansion of the Fallon Range Training Complex. The Stillwater Range, Stillwater Marshes, Clan Alpines, and Sand Springs Range are publicly owned property that I visit regularly. This expansion will have a large negative impact on the wildlife, the environment, and the citizens that enjoy using these lands. The use of live ordinance over the proposed b-20 expansion site will greatly impact the waterfowl that use the Stillwater Marshes. Additionally, the increased frequency of plane and helicopter will further impact the wildlife that depend on these marshes.</p> <p>I also oppose the restriction of access to lands owned by the citizens of this country. Even more egregious is the transfer of ownership of these publicly owned lands. Despite the views of our elected officials, the removal of these lands does not benefit the public and wildlife that use them. I can appreciate a well trained Navy. Is anyone else better trained than the US Military?</p> <p>To me the costs of lost land outweigh the benefits of this expansion. I am very concerned that there isn't much the citizens can say to impact this matter. When it comes to big government, they usually get what they want.</p> <p>Please find a different way, or be content with what you have already.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. All of the areas, Stillwater Range, Stillwater Marshes, Clan Alpines, and Sand Springs Range, would remain open for recreation under Alternative 3 (the Navy's Preferred Alternative). All of these areas except the Sand Spring Range would remain open for recreation under Alternative 1 and 2. Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowable in the DVTA. Grazing would also continue to be allowed in the DVTA.</p> <p>This expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater NWR. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).</p> <p>NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes. Currently three Special Use Airspace (SUA) units overlap the Stillwater and Fallon NWRs: Fallon North 1 MOA, R-4813A, and R-4813B. Under the Proposed Action, there are no proposed changes to the operating altitudes of the SUAs that overlap the Stillwater NWR, no changes in number of aircraft operations, and no changes in the approach and departure tracks of aircraft utilizing targets in B-20. The proposed B-20 expansion area that overlaps the NWRs is for a ground-based safety zone and not due to an increase or change in aircraft operations over the NWRs. Therefore, there would be no change in the BASH potential with implementation of the proposed action.</p>

F.7.3.125 Glaser, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Alan	Glaser	<p>We noted in the No Action Alternative your reasoning why this would not be a viable option as, "...does not meet the purpose and need since it would not provide a suitable area for military training.". Please consider the fact that the United States has many bases--of particular note Nellis (which is also in the process of proposed expansion)--that can and should be shared among the various elements of our military establishment. One hears of "the fog of war", where confusion reigns coordinating the various branches of our military and therefore their effectiveness during hostile action(s). One could ameliorate this "fog" by having the naval air component practice with its air force equivalent at one base instead of two. Over time, the effective use of one base to mutually practice needed military maneuvers would save our government, and our taxpayers, an enormous amount of money.</p> <p>One critical area that the DON is proposing to expand into is the Gabbs Valley. When viewed only at the surface Gabbs Valley is a dry playa with limited use. However it is geologically unique. Gabbs Valley is a major dilatant zone along the Walker Lane Structural Trend (the northern most strike-slip faults associated with the San Andreas Fault. This dilatant feature promotes repeated deep-seated faulting which allow geothermal waters to ascend to the near surface. One prominent feature of this shallow geothermal phenomena is Ormat's newly constructed electrical geothermal plant on the south 1/3 of Gabbs Valley. It is quite likely that there are more such geothermal zones in Gabbs Valley and their discovery takes time. Should the Fallon Air Base expand into Gabbs Valley the search for geothermal energy will cease in this area eliminating yet another area for the generation of green energy.</p> <p>We encourage the mutual use of Nellis Air Base for both the Navy and the Air Force and eliminate the Fallon Naval Base altogether. Failing that option, we recommend that the proposed expansion does not impact a geothermally critical resource.</p>	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Regarding the consideration of another alternative such as moving activities to Nellis, Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the Final EIS discusses various alternatives the Navy considered, including those suggested by the public. The Final EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for not carrying specific alternatives forward for further analysis.</p> <p>While it would hypothetically be possible to develop training systems at Nellis Air Force Base, the United States (U.S.) Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training currently uses nearly all of the complex's available training capacity (time and space). Shared use of Nellis Air Force Base, as currently configured or as proposed, would not be able to support the intensity of both Navy and Air Force training, and therefore was not carried forward for further analysis.</p> <p>Regarding geothermal energy, the Navy has made allowances for geothermal energy in the DVT and the Special Land Management Overlay, however, these areas are not in the Gabbs Valley as described. The Final EIS further describes the process by which interested parties could pursue compatible geothermal development in a portion of the Dixie Valley Training Area. The proposed required design features are necessary in order for the Navy to meet necessary training requirements. Development of the required design features affords an opportunity for geothermal development that would otherwise be lost. The Navy is committed to working with the developer on a case-by-case basis and acknowledges that complying with required design features could add cost to a potential geothermal development. This is addressed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).</p> <p>The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWC China</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p>

F.7.3.126 Gray, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
David	Gray	<p>I do wish to comment on the proposed Expansion of the Fallon Range Training Complex. I have lived for years in Nevada as a mining resource geologist. Hometowns have included Fallon, Gabbs, and now Spring Creek, Nevada.</p> <p>I consider it vitally important that the United States military be supported and kept in efficient tip top shape for carrying out its essential function: that of defense of the United States of America. This is important as it pertains to National Security. This of course means primarily on the North American continent, but perhaps other locations on the globe as it truly pertains to National Security. This does not include the US military being a vassal global police force to the United Nations and other global government promoting interests. This does not include interventions in foreign regime</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has identified and analyzed impacts of the Proposed Action to mineral resources in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), and to cultural resources in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources).</p> <p>The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>changes without a declaration of war.</p> <p>I have watched over the years as the various bombing ranges have incrementally expanded to take ever more and more land in Nevada. Nevada is a region rich in mineral resources, many of which are vital and strategic. The expansion to the southeast towards Gabbs takes far too many resources including gold, silver, copper, fluorite, mercury, lithium, iron, manganese, geothermal, and many others.</p> <p>The North Carson sink expansion as proposed will close the Mopung Road to public through traffic with significant impact. This is a major artery of transportation across Central Nevada. In addition, there are significant archaeological resources that will be impacted and/or removed from public access including important sites of the early Transcontinental Air Mail system. The area is rich in prehistoric resources as well.</p> <p>If the military training needs are now requiring much more expanse of land, then the appropriate exercises should be conducted jointly with the Air Force on the already huge Nellis facility. Consider it an opportunity to combine and train jointly between services. This would only help real time operational efficiency.</p> <p>Thank you; David S. Gray Spring Creek, Nevada</p>	<p>systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p>

F.7.3.127 Gray, L. B.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Leda Beth	Gray	Please do not expand Fallon Naval Air Station! I am writing to ask you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping everything the same, and not expanding into nearby public and private lands. I spent many of my weekends as a child visiting this and other areas of Nevada with my family and it is a beautiful wild area. Those areas that the air station is proposed to expand to are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and important species. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge has over 200 species of birds use the area, more than famous birding locales in Texas like Big Bend National Park. Stillwater is a critical stop for migratory bird species-- please leave the area as it is! Bombing and other activities would kill birds and other creatures and destroy their habitats. And more plane activity would disturb wildlife, and close much of the area to visitors! Please don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station. Nevada is one of the few states that still looks much the same in some places, as when I was a kid. For a lot of places you can't go back-- please don't ruin this area.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.128 Greenfield, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Richard	Greenfield	I am disturbed by the plans to take over space for weapons testing that is crucial habitat. These spaces are becoming threatened by overdevelopment and misuse. The NAVY should review the way Eglin Air Force Base has handled its protection of pristine forests and PAM before making any decisions about this as a last resort, but as a first resort, it should use some of the 3.5 million acres of land the Department of Defense already claims in Nevada--5% of all acreage in the state. Surely there	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) as the action alternatives, including training elsewhere. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the

First	Last	Comment	Response
		are other options to utilize land already designated for weapons testing purposes, even if many of us oppose the weapons testing in the first place.	purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).

F.7.3.129 Greenway, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Lumina	Greenway	This is a ridiculous land grab! The military already owns more land than necessary! It is time to use the existing federal lands more judiciously.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Department of the Navy's (DON's) environmental evaluations and NEPA analyses are for a potential legislative withdrawal of 772,370.75 acres of land at Naval Air Station Fallon that the Navy intends to propose to Congress to withdraw and reserve for military use. Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.

F.7.3.130 Greyback, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
James	Greyback	I am a 40- year Nevada resident, a geologist and avid outdoor recreationist. I wish to express great concern with the vastness of the proposed withdrawal of public lands from any future development recreation or public access by the US DOD for the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization. The EIS states that "training activities will not increase". If this is so, what economic benefits does this "lands-taking" offer to the state and the rural counties where the lands are proposed to be withdrawn? Withdrawal of lands with high mineral potential such as Wildhorse-Pershing in Bravo 20 and high potential for continued development of geothermal resources in DVTA (and multiple others) are examples of a net negative economic impact for Nevada by the proposed action. Nevada is the second largest producer of geothermal energy in the country. Geothermal power is a "non-movable" resource.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS further describes the process by which interested parties could pursue compatible geothermal development in a portion of the Dixie Valley Training Area. The proposed required design features are necessary for the Navy to meet training requirements. Development of the required design features affords an opportunity for geothermal development that would otherwise be lost. The Navy acknowledges that complying with required design features could add cost to a potential geothermal development; however, the Navy is committed to working with the developer on a case-by-case basis. This is addressed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources). The BLM classifies minerals and energy (e.g., oil, geothermal, etc.) for development into three categories: locatable, leasable, and salable. The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>Withdrawals of surface lands to future exploration, development and production from KNOWN GEOTHERMAL RESOURCES is contrary to public energy policy. The withdrawals will reduce the available leasable land in areas acknowledged to have high geothermal potential.</p> <p>The positive impact of mineral production and mining is important to Nevada's economy. Potential resources of both leasable and locatable minerals will be negatively impacted by the proposed action. Withdrawal of areas with current mining claims and other prospecting-related activities along with closed access to additional mining districts is troubling. Are alternate access routes or alternate corridors being considered for claim holders to reach their mining claims? How will owners who have maintained claims, by faithful annual filings, to the US government, be compensated for their past costs in rental fees and property development? And for their loss of future rights to develop their minerals claims?</p> <p>The mineral district (Wildhorse-Pershing) on the northwest edge of proposed B – 20 land withdrawal should be wholly excluded from the FRTCM. Valid claims have been maintained in and near the district, which is classified to have a High Mineral Potential in the Minerals Report prepared by Golder. If minerals rights are taken from the claimants under the proposed action, how will the claim owners be compensated for their past costs and loss of any future potential ?</p> <p>I also question the quality of the wilderness experience in the adjacent Wilderness Study Areas. The WSA's will become more inaccessible than at present. Clearly the wilderness experience that any individual may have enjoyed will be impacted by the presence of military aircraft conducting live-fire bombing exercises. Wilderness Study Areas that are adjacent to the proposed FRTCM land withdrawals should be re-opened to the public to help offset the loss of public lands to the military's proposed action.</p> <p>The expansion proposed will negatively impact the potential for economic development for the State of Nevada and for</p>	<p>process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).</p> <p>For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value.</p> <p>For existing patented mining claims, the federal government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary.</p> <p>Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam demonstrating a valuable mineral deposit a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.</p> <p>Regarding Wilderness Study Areas, these areas would not become inaccessible. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		Churchill, Pershing, Nye and Mineral Counties if the public lands are withdrawn.	activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

F.7.3.131 Griffin, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Charles	Griffin	<p>Ladies and Gentlemen</p> <p>I am a long time glider pilot based out of Minden-Tahoe Airport KMEV. I believe the proposal for the Fallon Range Training Complex will have a significant negative impact on glider flying in the Great Basin. I commonly fly in the area that will be affected by this change. The change, due to the nature of gliding flight, will essentially stop my ability to fly in that large area. It is my opinion that there already is more than enough restricted airspace to train for military missions. I have no objection to adding MOA airspace if necessary with the ability of gliding aircraft to enter without prior clearance and maintaining the usual increased diligence for see and avoid.</p> <p>Feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss more in depth how cross country gliding flights are executed safely in this area.</p> <p>Charles Griffin</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Glider flying has always been allowed in any of the fifteen MOAs within FRTC, and will continue to be allowed as part of the Proposed Action. Please note that all FRTC airspace is open on Sundays and all major holidays.</p> <p>General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p>

F.7.3.132 Grimm, B.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Brad	Grimm	<p>In the summer of 2018 I drove far and wide looking for monarch butterflies. One of the few habitats they were using was in the Stillwater WSA. It's an important habitat and a good place for citizens to visit. Don't fuck it up for training land.</p> <p>Instead of eliminating 74,400 acres of Wilderness Study Areas as part of their Dixie Valley Training Area, the military should support Wilderness designation for all of the WSAs within, or very close to, this area including; the Clan Alpine Mountain, Job Peak, Stillwater Range, and the Desatoya Mountains WSAs. Wilderness designation will provide a larger and more complete buffer for military actions, allow for continued public access, and be protected in perpetuity. This Wilderness buffer could also include lands with wilderness characteristics that Friends of Nevada Wilderness identified through our inventories (Stillwater additions and South Job Peak). The military needs to adjust their boundary proposals in B-20 to exclude the 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The 17,848-acre refuge was established by a Congressional Act in 1931 to "...provide a sanctuary and breeding ground for birds and other wildlife". It should not be part of a bombing area! The military must find a way to allow for more public access in B-17, at least on a seasonal or part-time basis. The military has made some minor allowances for OHV races and bighorn sheep hunting, but what about access for hiking, photography, rock hounding, and</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as Wilderness is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTa, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>Regarding the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, the Proposed Action would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>The following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes.</p> <p>The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses beyond what is proposed under Alternative 2 and 3 as managed access for OHV races and the Bighorn Sheep hunting program in the B-17 range, as there are too many recreationists and it is difficult to control the number or people that would be allowed on range. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range;</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		camping? Why should OHVs and the person who happens to draw a bighorn sheep tag get special privileges? Where is the social justice for all?	these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationists.

F.7.3.133 Grossman, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Adam	Grossman	Oppose. We value our public lands and our wilderness study areas. Permanent wilderness designation will protect the wildlife, plant life, and backcountry recreational qualities in these areas.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as Wilderness is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process.

F.7.3.134 Hall, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
David	Hall	Please don't take away our beautiful riding area. My son learned to ride out near middlegate. And now we ride out there together several times a year. It's a family time we have been enjoying for a decade together.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas

F.7.3.135 Hamby, G.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Greg	Hamby	Greetings, I am opposed to the massive expansion of live fire target land in Nevada. The damage done in Culebra and Kahoolawe were very damaging and those places are only now recovering from the damage done. Inert target practice is all that is needed. These wild areas need to be left alone. They are home to wildlife. Live fire practice is expensive and unnecessary. Inert practice with a marker shows far better if the	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.

First	Last	Comment	Response
		munition was delivered accurately to the target. In this day and age there is a need to be accurate to within 25 feet due to civilians in the area when targeting terrorist cells. Why is an explosion needed for target practice? It is not done in Dare County NC. Thank You, Greg Hamby	Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.

F.7.3.136 Handley, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Darlene	Handley	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. And, at a time when we are facing a climate change crisis and massive wildlife and insect die-off within decades. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.137 Hansen, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jill	Hansen	<p>Voting for a no action alternative for these reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It will be a substantial new withdrawal of public land from public use, increasing the federal control of Nevada to nearly 8% of our land area. 2. It will cut off many recreational areas and access roads used by the public 3. It will remove several Wilderness Study Area (WSA) designations by a simple Congressional act 4. It will prevent solar, wind, and geothermal development on many square miles of current public land 5. It will lessen the amount of funds coming to the state and to affected counties from permits and taxes pertaining to recreation, hunting, and fishing on public land 6. It will impact wildlife and its habitat, with particular impacts at Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge 	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Department of the Navy's (DON's) environmental evaluations and NEPA analyses are for a potential legislative withdrawal of 772,370.75 acres of land at Naval Air Station Fallon that the Navy intends to propose to Congress to withdraw and reserve for military use.</p> <p>Public access changes under the action alternatives would result in a significant impact on transportation routes near the FRTC. Under Alternative 1 and 2, Sand Canyon Road and portions of the unpaved B-20 Access Road (open for Navy use only) that pass to the north of B-20 would be closed to the public, and there would be the potential need to re-route State Route 839. Preventing public travel on these roads would cause a loss of access via customary/familiar transit routes. Access to the planned Special Recreation Management Areas, discussed in detail in Section 3.12 (Recreation) and shown in Figure 3.12-4, in the withdrawal area would also be closed to OHV use and alternate routes would be utilized. Alternative 3 would impact the same roads with the exception of State route 839; Alternative 3 would instead cause the potential relocation of part of State Route 361.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. Closure of OHV use areas as a result of implementing any action alternative is discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Access impacts on cultural and sacred sites are discussed in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources). While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.</p> <p>Please note that removing the designation of WSA's or portions of WSAs is a separate Congressional action, however, the Navy would recommend for portions of the WSAs to be de-designated in order to be withdrawn. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>The Navy has made allowances for potential energy development in the DVTA that is compatible with the Navy mission. Additionally, under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative), the Navy reduced the amount of withdrawn land in the DVTA by creating the Special Land Management Overlay areas to allow future energy development pending BLM approval.</p> <p>The analysis in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics) found that lost hunting opportunities could result in a reduction in funding sources for the State of Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW). The Navy worked with a local Nevada scientist to develop the Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at http://frtcmodernization.com). The report found that hunting-related (touristic) economic losses would be similar in scale for Mineral, Pershing, and Nye counties based on the percentage of lost revenue compared to total economic activity (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at http://frtcmodernization.com], Table B-1). Therefore, no significant impacts would occur in the affected counties due to lost recreational or touristic opportunities. The Navy would provide access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency that would set any quotas and distribute any permits, as well as maintenance of wildlife habitat. The Navy has developed a draft MOA in conjunction with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for this hunting program (further details are provided in Section 3.12, Recreation, and Appendix D, Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans, of the Final EIS). The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.</p> <p>The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC. Therefore, the financial impact to communities from the loss of hunting in the area would be somewhat offset by this program, however, overall, lost hunting opportunities could result in a reduction in funding sources for NDOW (as discussed in Section 3.13 [Socioeconomics]).</p> <p>This Proposed Action and expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).</p>

F.7.3.138 Harper, N.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Nancy	Harper	No! No! No! The military does not need more land for testing. This is public land,	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training

First	Last	Comment	Response
		designated for preservation, and should not be stolen from the public. You cannot protect natural resources by bombing them! Make do with what you already have been given.	<p>facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.139 Harris, F.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Freya	Harris	<p>I am writing to express my opposition to your plan to turn 600,000 acres of public land in Nevada into just another bombing range. This land is home to mule deer, golden eagles, and other animals important to the ecology, as well as the site of important desert springs.</p> <p>You should not be putting wildlife and human health at risk just to test weapons. Do you not have enough land for bombing? Can't you find some barren land, hostile to life, where you can test your ordnance? Please, leave Nevada's</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. While the proposal includes over 600,000 acres of proposed withdrawn and acquired land, the entirety of the area is not proposed as actual targets. The vast majority of the lands being requested serve as a safety buffer (the weapons danger zone – [WDZ]) surrounding much smaller areas potentially designated as target areas. As described in Section 1.5.1 (Weapons Release Training and Need for Expanded Range Area), a WDZ represents the minimum safety requirements designed for aviation weapons training on Department of Defense ranges to protect public safety. A WDZ encompasses the ground and airspace for horizontal and vertical containment of projectiles, fragments, debris, and components resulting from the firing, launching, or detonation of aviation-delivered ordnance. This three-dimensional zone is calculated for each specific weapon type as delivered by a specific aircraft type up to specific air speeds, attack angle, heading, and distance from the target by the aircraft. The WDZ accounts not only for weapon accuracy, but also for potential weapon failures, ricochets, or broaches (a broach occurs when a weapon impacts the ground, burrows underground, and re-surfaces in another area, before finally coming to rest). To ensure public safety, and per Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3710 and FAA Joint Order 7400.8, the Navy must both (1) control and restrict public use of any land that is within a WDZ, and (2) ensure that restricted airspace configuration matches WDZs.</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		fragile - and spectacular - ecosystems alone.	analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.

F.7.3.140 Harvill, E. A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Elizabeth Annette	Harvill	I believe in defense; however, we have plenty of testing grounds, as it is. Use what we have, already, instead of disrupting the environment. I am opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.141 Hass, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Christine	Hass	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. Too much of Nevada is already used as a military training ground - without stealing it from the public. Nevadans are bombarded (pun intentional) daily with the health-damaging roar of these jets. To steal these lands from the public is unconscionable. Americans do not want to live in a war zone. It's time to back off and consider what	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis"

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>impact you are having on the residents in and near your training areas. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.</p>	<p>in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.</p>

F.7.3.142 Hawkins, G.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Gina	Hawkins	<p>I have several questions/comments/concerns in reading the draft EIS which are listed below.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In Alternative 3, which is your preferred alternative, you state that the DVTA will remain open to the public for hunting and other recreational activities. Since the land will be withdrawn and under control of the Navy, what is to prevent the Navy from denying public access to this area one, two or three years down the road? 2. I did not see any comprehensive studies on the effects of the bombing (sonic booms, etc.) on bats. One example is Townsend's big-eared bat (<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>) which is classified as a state "Sensitive" species (NAC 503.104), designated as a "Nevada Special Status Species" by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in addition "Sensitive" by the State Office. The US Fish and Wildlife has designated the <i>C. townsendii</i> as a "Species of Concern". This species and their roosts are further 	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The current DVTA is withdrawn for training activities but is still open to the public for recreation and grazing activities. The expanded area would be withdrawn and managed the same way, jointly with the BLM. The Navy has no plans to close DVTA in the future.</p> <p>Current and proposed aircraft operations within the FRTC region of influence would generate sonic booms, an impulsive sound similar to thunder. These sonic booms would be infrequent throughout the large FRTC region of influence. The baseline wildlife discussion (Section 3.10.2.6) provides a summary of the use of roosts and hibernacula by bats. Given the infrequent exposure of roost or hibernacula sites of non-listed (state or federal) bat species to sonic booms, no significant impacts to bats are expected.</p> <p>The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>protected by a species specific conservation plan by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife agencies (WAFWA). The areas that are going to be utilized have had historic mining and those areas may provide important habitat for bat hibernacula and maternity roosts. There should be studies performed to determine if maternity roosts, or hibernacula exist in the areas and what affects there would be on these populations. The Bat Study document that is available on the internet did not show any surveys being performed for hibernacula or maternity roosts.</p> <p>3. There are several mining claims that are on land that will be withdrawn by the Navy. What is the compensation for the people that have been maintaining their mining claims and paying their fees?</p> <p>4. Several grazing allotments will be affected by the land withdrawal. A lot of these ranchers rely on grazing these areas for their cattle, which may be their sole source of income. Many of these grazing allotments have been passed down for generations and are a way of life for the people that use them. What will be the compensation for the ranchers that rely on those areas that are being closed for grazing?</p> <p>5. Hunting/recreation on public land is a way of life in Nevada. I am fortunate to have grown up here where you can explore and enjoy over 86% public land. While the attempt was made to allow some hunting (in a limited/restricted form), access to several thousands of acres where hunting and recreation were previously enjoyed will now be closed. Once this land is turned over to the Navy, it will be forever lost as public land. In the draft EIS, it states that if the Navy requested all of the acres required to follow the 90-days to combat training document, it would be almost double of what Alternative 3 is requesting. Is the Navy going to</p>	<p>For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value. With regard to existing patented mining claims, the Federal Government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary. Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges that it has the authority under 43 United States Code section 315q of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended, to make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered by the permit holders as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes. This authority has been incorporated into the Proposed Action. The Final EIS discusses the process that the Navy is proposing to use to determine payment amounts to each specific grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>continue to ask for more and more of Nevada's public land?</p> <p>Thank you for considering my questions/comments/and concerns. Gina Hawkins Lovelock, NV</p>	<p>the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.</p>

F.7.3.143 Hawkins, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Joe	Hawkins	<p>No loss of off-road areas. None. Not one square inch.</p> <p>Every year off-road areas become smaller and smaller.</p> <p>If the Navy wants to take land for the range then they need to provide an acre for acre replacement of those off-road areas.</p> <p>I love the Navy and I realize that as warfare and weapons change so too must the training areas.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. While OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20, OHV use would be allowed to continue within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after WSA designation removal by Congress.</p> <p>Topography and OHV trails similar to those that occur in the B-17 range area also occur in the Dixie Valley area or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These other public areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).</p>

F.7.3.144 Hawley, F.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Frederick	Hawley	<p>Greetings, my wife and I attended the Lovelock Public comment meeting and we have the same concerns.</p> <p>I am concerned about the area of expansion of the B20 bombing range. I have four concerns.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I don't believe the expansion should expand into the National Wildlife Refuge, but should border it. 2. Loss of the road along the east side of the West Humboldt Range is unacceptable as it is used for 	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. This expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater NWR. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>recreation and as an access to the whole east side of the mountain range.</p> <p>3. There is a lot of privately owned land in the expansion and acquiring that will cause hardship to people who purchased the land with plans for homes or recreation AND it will take money from the county tax roll.</p> <p>4. A man spoke at the public comment in Lovelock. He mentioned the loss of air space south of the Lovelock Airport. He felt the expansion could endanger pilots with bigger planes if they had to make the decision to abandon a landing at the last minute. I don't remember the terminology he used, but he showed me his map of air space and it sure seemed like a valid concern.</p>	<p>The Navy prepared a Transportation Study that analyzed on-road and off-road vehicle use within affected areas as part of this EIS effort (see Supporting Study: Transportation Study [available at http://frtcmmodernization.com]). The EIS has been modified to present loss of access to non-traditional roads (those routes that underlie areas proposed for acquisition or withdrawal). However, the Navy is not anticipating relocating any of the non-traditional roads in the area.</p> <p>For any acquisition of privately-owned property, private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land acquired by the United States due to the proposed expansion. Just compensation would be determined by calculating the fair market value of parcels in accordance with federal appraisal rules codified in the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions.</p> <p>As discussed in 3.6.2.2.3 (Civilian Air Traffic) and 3.14.2.1.1 (Emergency Services), all emergency flights, both helicopter and fixed-wing, are given priority transit through the FRTC at all times. Fallon Air Traffic Control (Desert Control), the range coordinator for airspace, ensures that real-time adjustments to airspace occur to expedite emergency aircraft and deconflict all Navy training events along the required routes or in the vicinity of fire suppression activities. Emergency aircraft are permitted to pass through restricted airspace when necessary.</p>

F.7.3.145 Hayes, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Sara	Hayes	<p>I'm strongly opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station. Act responsibly instead.	would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

F.7.3.146 Heading, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Lelia	Heading	<p>Geological: Area contains visual shoreline of the great California Sea, a geological formation from prehistory that should not be destroyed. Near highway 361 large petrified trees have been excavated. It is unknown how many of these prehistoric trees are still buried in that area. This area is critical to be saved. The area is rich with physical evidence of the earth's history including remnants of a volcanic earth, a molten earth, the fossils from when the land was covered with forests and seas. Nowhere that I have ever been is so reach in the visual history of the earth.</p> <p>Land Use: This expansion is adjacent to proposed wilderness areas. The purpose of wilderness areas is to preserve some of this country in a pristine nature so that we, and our grandchildren, can experience some of its beauty and splendor before it is all raped and pillaged. A large part of experiencing wilderness is the lack of noise pollution. Jet roar travels more than five miles. Expanding into a wildlife refuge should not be allowed. If the expansion into the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge is a "weapons danger zone" for humans then it is also a weapons danger zone for wildlife. It is a sham to call it a "refuge" if the wildlife</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding geological comments, the Navy thanks you for the information. The Final EIS analyzes impacts to geological resources as a result of the Proposed Action in Section 3.1 (Geological Resources). Regarding land use and the Proposed Action, under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. However, this de-designation would not prohibit the use of these areas by recreationists. Additionally, if the public is recreating in the area, the Navy would seek an alternate location to train until the area used by the public is available, as is currently done in the existing DVTA. Noise in the DVTA is not expected to increase significantly as a result of the Proposed Action. Noise modeling presented in Section 3.7 (Noise) included 24 representative locations throughout the FRTC that could be considered sensitive receptors, these areas include Austin, Kingston, the Yomba Tribal area, Reese River Valley, Antelope Valley, and Lander County. Noise Sensitive Areas that include a 5-nautical-mile radius and ground surface to 3,000</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>is exposed to weapons danger and constant noise disruption to their lives.</p> <p>Since Fox Peak is an area of Critical Environmental concern, the BLM should not release it. The environmental concern has not changed just because the Navy now wants that area.</p> <p>The Navy now has more than their share of OUR public land without the proposed expansion. They need to modify their training to use the Nevada Test Site. The military has already confiscated and ruined that area.</p> <p>Transportation: I do not want my tax dollars spend on the relocation of perfectly good highways, fences and guards.</p> <p>Noise: It is not acceptable to sacrifice the hearing of the children of Gabbs in exchange for widening the Navy's area. The American Academy of Otolaryngology and other organizations working with children's health recognize noise as being detrimental to children's hearing. The EPA says that sounds over 85 decibels requires protection. Load noise and sonic booms disrupt the peace, tranquility and general quality of life for everyone exposed. There are many studies that show a negative relationship to health from noise which long-term health issues. It is unconscionable to expose even a small population to these health issues.</p> <p>Water Resources: You admit that expanding your range could result in pollution to water sources. In this fragile ecosystem, water is scarce and therefore extremely valuable. Any pollution to the water sources that the native species rely on could cause diminishment or extinction of a species. There are species in the</p>	<p>feet AGL avoidance buffer currently include Austin, Kingston, and the Yomba Tribal Settlement.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to the refuge, this expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>Regarding impacts of noise to humans, the Navy does not anticipate any risk of hearing loss because noise would not rise to a level at which hearing loss would occur. Areas that could experience noise levels of 65 dBA or greater are located in Churchill, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing counties. The EIS includes several figures (Figure 3.7-32 and Figure 3.7-40) that depict where changes to noise would occur using existing and proposed noise contour data. In accordance with Executive Order 13045, the Navy studied whether the impacts identified in the analysis would disproportionately impact children under the Proposed Action. Additional analysis and information are provided in Section 3.7.1.3.3 (Noise Effects).</p> <p>Regarding impacts to water resources, the Navy's training and testing activities are in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations concerning the impact of explosives and associated chemical constituents in the soils environment both on and off range. Munitions constituents are not considered recalcitrant to biodegradation like some other organic chemicals commonly known as groundwater and soil contaminants at hazardous waste sites. The Navy conducts Range Conditions Assessments as part of the Navy's Range Sustainment Environmental Program Assessment every five years. The most recent Range Conditions Assessment for FRTC was completed in 2015 (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015b). A team of environmental and operational range experts evaluated the history of range use within FRTC ranges, the types and quantities of munitions or military expended materials used and their chemical constituents, range location, spatial distribution of activities, available environmental data, environmental regulatory requirements, and compliance efforts. The Range</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>Nevada Great Basin that are not found anywhere else in the world.</p> <p>Biological Resources: During certain times of the year, bombing activity will disrupt nesting birds and the tarantula migration.</p> <p>Cultural Resources: Archeological resources: 1. Within proposal 3, there is a geoglyph site that goes for miles. It would be unconscionable to destroy this, especially before it is ever studied by archeologists. 2. The area proposed is abundant with Native American artifacts, petroglyph and pictograph sites and fossils.</p> <p>Architectural Properties 1. There are remnants of ghost town and old mines within the proposed area. These are living history museums that should be preserved.</p> <p>Recreation: 1. You have allowed special permits for hunters and off road vehicles, what about those of us who just want to hike and take photos? 2. No areas should be allowed to be removed from being WSAs. This are areas that should be preserved in as pristine a quality as possible. There is so little pristine area remaining.</p> <p>Environmental Consequences: Though statistically the impact on the population would be small, the impact on the population affected would be tremendous. I have never owned any property in Gabbs, NV, but I would suspect proposal 3 will have huge consequences on the value of property there. The ranches that are losing their grazing allotments are suffering a defeating financial blow.</p>	<p>Conditions Assessment information and data were derived from site visits, personnel interviews, archive search reports, and document reviews conducted in 2013 and 2014. The review team's findings, based on these data, concluded that the range and training operations are in compliance with environmental laws and policies, and there are no munitions constituents migrating off of the ranges. Regarding impacts to biological resources, the Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to cultural resources, the Navy's evaluation includes archaeological and architectural resources, cemeteries, and traditional cultural properties-- particularly those that are historic properties (i.e., those listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places). Archaeological surveys were conducted within the lands requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition (see Supporting Study: Class I Cultural Resources Investigation, available at http://www.frtcmodernization.com). The Navy abides by stipulations found within the current 2011 Programmatic Agreement (PA) between Nevada SHPO, BLM, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation with respect to withdrawn lands.</p> <p>Currently, existing withdrawn lands are managed under the prescriptions of the 2011 PA. The Navy is required to consult with the signatories of the 2011 PA (ACHP, SHPO & BLM) for approval of an amendment which adds the newly withdrawn lands. As part of this action, the Navy drafted an amendment to the 2011 PA for consultation and completion by 2021 (when the 2011 PA expires). This amended PA would stipulate requirements for Navy cultural resources management of all Navy managed lands (withdrawn and purchased). Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources) of the Final EIS was updated regarding the PA process.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>Your table of impacts is a gross misrepresentation of “economic and employment losses”, “impacts on populations and demographics” and “reduced property values”.</p> <p>Public Health and Safety and Protection of Children: Increasing the area and the bombing increases the danger of accidents from unexploded ordinance. Move the training to the Nevada test site which is already isolated from public exposure, thus minimizing the chance of an accident. Gabbs is so close to the edge of the restricted area that it is not a safe distance to allow for a “training” pilot's error.</p> <p>Cumulative Impacts: Totally inaccurate and insensitive conclusion. This looks like knowing the conclusion you wanted to reach and writing all of this just to justify your forgone conclusion.</p>	<p>The Navy will continue to engage with all interested Tribes. This engagement will continue past the ROD, as the modernization would be implemented over the coming years. The Navy will avoid and/or minimize impacts on cultural resources wherever possible and follow Section 106 requirements. The Navy is committed to providing access to Tribes to the closed ranges and pushing for funding to conduct surveys in range “buffer” areas. The Navy will work with the tribes to prioritize survey areas. The Navy is working with the Nevada SHPO and ACHP to amend the current 2011 PA they are under for withdrawn lands. The Navy would complete Section 106 consultation on impacts due to loss of access for Tribes prior to the fencing of the newly withdrawn and acquired lands after any ultimate Congressional decision.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to recreation, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to Gabbs, Gabbs is an unincorporated town in Nye County. Only 28.8 percent of the working age population in Gabbs were in the labor force in 2016. The Navy understands the impacts that federal actions have on Nye County and acknowledges that other federal actions have impacted Nye County in the past. With respect to the proposed withdrawal action, the Navy has conducted analysis on various affected resources associated with the alternatives that would impact Nye County. Details regarding each of these impacts are located in the designated sections of the EIS. The Navy recognizes the impacts of federal actions on the Nye County tax base and addressed this issue in the Socioeconomics section (Section 3.13). As part of the EIS process the Navy included the Nevada Association of Counties (NACO) as a cooperating agency to ensure all county concerns were thoroughly understood and suitably addressed. Additionally, the EIS evaluates PILT impacts on Nye County and has included</p>

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			<p>military activities such as the NTTR Legislative EIS in the Cumulative Impacts section of the FRTC Modernization EIS.</p> <p>Regarding cumulative impacts, the Proposed Action for NTTR was evaluated in Chapter 4 (Cumulative Impacts) in the Final EIS. There would be no overlap between the residents or resources affected by aircraft noise in the FRTC range areas and those affected by aircraft noise in the areas surrounding the NTTR (see Figure 4-1, 4-2, and 4-3). However, it was determined based on the analysis in the Final EIS that Nye County would experience a significant impact to their recreation and economic resources due to the cumulative nature of the NTTR Proposed Action and the Navy's Proposed Action at the FRTC. Therefore, the Navy is working and will continue to work with Nye County and other impacted Counties to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts when feasible and consistent with the Navy's authority.</p>

Geological:

- Area contains visual shoreline of the great California Sea, a geological formation from prehistory that should not be destroyed.
- Near highway 361 large petrified trees have been excavated. It is unknown how many of these prehistoric trees are still buried in that area. This area is critical to be saved.
- The area is rich with physical evidence of the earth's history including remnants of a volcanic earth, a molten earth, the fossils from when the land was covered with forests and seas. Nowhere that I have ever been is so rich in the visual history of the earth.

Land Use:

- This expansion is adjacent to proposed wilderness areas. The purpose of wilderness areas is to preserve some of this country in a pristine nature so that we, and our grandchildren, can experience some of its beauty and splendor before it is all raped and pillaged. A large part of experiencing wilderness is the lack of noise pollution. Jet roar travels more than five miles.
- Expanding into a wildlife refuge should not be allowed. If the expansion into the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge is a "weapons danger zone" for humans then it is also a weapons danger zone for wildlife. It is a sham to call it a "refuge" if the wildlife is exposed to weapons danger and constant noise disruption to their lives.
- Since Fox Peak is an area of Critical Environmental concern, the BLM should not release it. The environmental concern has not changed just because the Navy now wants that area.
- The Navy now has more than their share of OUR public land without the proposed expansion. They need to modify their training to use the Nevada Test Site. The military has already confiscated and ruined that area.

Transportation:

- I do not want my tax dollars spend on the relocation of perfectly good highways, fences and guards.

Noise:

- It is not acceptable to sacrifice the hearing of the children of Gabbs in exchange for widening the Navy's area. The American Academy of Otolaryngology and other organizations working with children's health recognize noise as being detrimental to children's hearing. The EPA says that sounds over 85 decibels requires protection.
- Loud noise and sonic booms disrupt the peace, tranquility and general quality of life for everyone exposed. There are many studies that show a negative relationship to health from noise which long-term health issues. It is unconscionable to expose even a small population to these health issues.

Water Resources:

- You admit that expanding your range could result in pollution to water sources. In this fragile ecosystem, water is scarce and therefore extremely valuable. Any pollution to the water sources that the native species rely on could cause diminishment or extinction of a species. There are species in the Nevada Great Basin that are not found anywhere else in the world.

Biological Resources:

- During certain times of the year, bombing activity will disrupt nesting birds and the tarantula migration.

Cultural Resources:

- Archeological resources:

1. Within proposal 3, there is a geoglyph site that goes for miles. It would be unconscionable to destroy this, especially before it is ever studied by archeologists.
2. The area proposed is abundant with Native American artifacts, petroglyph and pictograph sites and fossils.

- Architectural Properties

1. There are remnants of ghost town and old mines within the proposed area. These are living history museums that should be preserved.

Recreation:

1. You have allowed special permits for hunters and off road vehicles, what about those of us who just want to hike and take photos?
2. No areas should be allowed to be removed from being WSAs. This are areas that should be preserved in as pristine a quality as possible. There is so little pristine area remaining.

Environmental Consequences:

- Though statistically the impact on the population would be small, the impact on the population affected would be tremendous.
- I have never owned any property in Gabbs, NV, but I would suspect proposal 3 will have huge consequences on the value of property there.
- The ranches that are losing their grazing allotments are suffering a defeating financial blow.
- Your table of impacts is a gross misrepresentation of "economic and employment losses", "impacts on populations and demographics" and "reduced property values".

Public Health and Safety and Protection of Children:

- Increasing the area and the bombing increases the danger of accidents from unexploded ordinance. Move the training to the Nevada test site which is already isolated from public exposure, thus minimizing the chance of an accident.

- Gabbs is so close to the edge of the restricted area that it is not a safe distance to allow for a "training" pilot's error.

Cumulative Impacts:

- Totally inaccurate and insensitive conclusion. This looks like knowing the conclusion you wanted to reach and writing all of this just to justify your forgone conclusion.

F.7.3.146.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding geological comments, the Navy thanks you for the information. The Final EIS analyzes impacts to geological resources as a result of the Proposed Action in Section 3.1 (Geological Resources).

Regarding land use and the Proposed Action, under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. However, this de-designation would not prohibit the use of these areas by recreationists. Additionally, if the public is recreating in the area, the Navy would seek an alternate location to train until the area used by the public is available, as is currently done in the existing DVTA. Noise in the DVTA is not expected to increase significantly as a result of the Proposed Action. Noise modeling presented in Section 3.7 (Noise) included 24 representative locations throughout the FRTC that could be considered sensitive receptors, these areas include Austin, Kingston, the Yomba Tribal area, Reese River Valley, Antelope Valley, and Lander County. Noise Sensitive Areas that include a 5-nautical-mile radius and ground surface to 3,000 feet AGL avoidance buffer currently include Austin, Kingston, and the Yomba Tribal Settlement.

Regarding impacts to the refuge, this expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).

Regarding impacts of noise to humans, the Navy does not anticipate any risk of hearing loss because noise would not rise to a level at which hearing loss would occur. Areas that could experience noise levels of 65 dBA or greater are located in Churchill, Lander, Lyon, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing counties.

The EIS includes several figures (Figure 3.7-32 and Figure 3.7-40) that depict where changes to noise would occur using existing and proposed noise contour data. In accordance with Executive Order 13045, the Navy studied whether the impacts identified in the analysis would disproportionately impact children under the Proposed Action. Additional analysis and information is provided in Section 3.7.1.3.3 (Noise Effects).

Regarding impacts to water resources, the Navy's training and testing activities are in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations concerning the impact of explosives and associated chemical constituents in the soils environment both on and off range. Munitions constituents are not considered recalcitrant to biodegradation like some other organic chemicals commonly known as groundwater and soil contaminants at hazardous waste sites. The Navy conducts Range Conditions Assessments as part of the Navy's Range Sustainment Environmental Program Assessment every five years. The most recent Range Conditions Assessment for FRTC was completed in 2015 (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015b). A team of environmental and operational range experts evaluated the history of range use within FRTC ranges, the types and quantities of munitions or military expended materials used and their chemical constituents, range location, spatial distribution of activities, available environmental data, environmental regulatory requirements, and compliance efforts. The Range Conditions Assessment information and data were derived from site visits, personnel interviews, archive search reports, and document reviews conducted in 2013 and 2014. The review team's findings, based on these data, concluded that the range and training operations are in compliance with environmental laws and policies, and there are no munitions constituents migrating off of the ranges.

Regarding impacts to biological resources, the Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.

Regarding impacts to cultural resources, the Navy's evaluation includes archaeological and architectural resources, cemeteries, and traditional cultural properties-- particularly those that are historic properties (i.e., those listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places). Archaeological surveys were conducted within the lands requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition (see Supporting Study: Class I Cultural Resources Investigation, available at <http://www.frtcmodernization.com>). The Navy abides by stipulations found within the current 2011 Programmatic Agreement (PA) between Nevada SHPO, BLM, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation with respect to withdrawn lands.

Currently, existing withdrawn lands are managed under the prescriptions of the 2011 PA. The Navy is required to consult with the signatories of the 2011 PA (ACHP, SHPO & BLM) for approval of an amendment which adds the newly withdrawn lands. As part of this action, the Navy drafted an amendment of the 2011 PA for consultation and completion by 2021 (when the 2011 PA expires). This proposed amended 2011 PA would stipulate requirements for Navy cultural resources management of

all Navy managed lands (withdrawn and purchased). Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources) of the Final EIS was updated regarding the Programmatic Agreement process.

The Navy will continue to engage with all interested Tribes. This engagement will continue past the ROD, as the modernization would be implemented over the coming years. The Navy will avoid and/or minimize impacts on cultural resources wherever possible and follow Section 106 requirements. The Navy is committed to providing access to Tribes to the closed ranges and pushing for funding to conduct surveys in range “buffer” areas. The Navy will work with the tribes to prioritize survey areas. The Navy is working with the Nevada SHPO and ACHP to amend the current 2011 PA they are under for withdrawn lands. The Navy would complete Section 106 consultation on impacts due to loss of access for Tribes prior to the fencing of the newly withdrawn and acquired lands after any ultimate Congressional decision.

Regarding impacts to recreation, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.

Regarding impacts to Gabbs, Gabbs is an unincorporated town in Nye County. Only 28.8 percent of the working age population in Gabbs were in the labor force in 2016. The Navy understands the impacts that federal actions have on Nye County and acknowledges that other federal actions have impacted Nye County in the past. With respect to the proposed withdrawal action, the Navy has conducted analysis on various affected resources associated with the alternatives that would impact Nye County. Details regarding each of these impacts are located in the designated sections of the EIS. The Navy recognizes the impacts of federal actions on the Nye County tax base and addressed this issue in the Socioeconomics section (Section 3.13). As part of the EIS process the Navy included the Nevada Association of Counties (NACO) as a cooperating agency to ensure all county concerns were thoroughly understood and suitably addressed. Additionally, the EIS evaluates PILT impacts on Nye County and has included military activities such as the NTTR Legislative EIS in the Cumulative Impacts section of the FRTC Modernization EIS.

The Navy has verified that for the year PILT was calculated for the FRTC EIS (2018), the correct calculation method for estimating PILT was Alternative A. This Alternative was selected based on population, receipt-sharing payments made in 2017, and the amount of federal land within an affected county, and was the greater PILT value calculated for 2018 when compared to the calculation methods of Alternative B.

For estimating potential impacts to PILT payments in the Final EIS and using the 2018 information, even with the reduced acreage as proposed under Alternative 1, 2 or Alternative 3, the methodology is proposed to remain the same (Alternative A) and there would be no impact to the potential PILT payment. However, if there is a change in receipt-sharing payments from contributing agencies relative to previous years, or population changes, there is the potential for the calculation method to change to Alternative B. If Alternative B becomes the method for calculation of PILT, the potential removal of

acreage under any of the Proposed Alternatives would decrease the authorized PILT payment to Nye County. Sections 3.13.3.2.3, 3.13.3.3.3, and 3.13.3.4.3 (Potential Impacts on Regional and Local Economy) are being updated to reflect the potential PILT loss if the calculation methodology were to change to Alternative B.

Regarding cumulative impacts, the Proposed Action for NTTR was evaluated in Chapter 4 (Cumulative Impacts) in the Final EIS. There would be no overlap between the residents or resources affected by aircraft noise in the FRTC range areas and those affected by aircraft noise in the areas surrounding the NTTR (see Figure 4-1, 4-2, and 4-3). However, it was determined based on the analysis in the Final EIS that Nye County would experience a significant impact to their recreation and economic resources due to the cumulative nature of the NTTR Proposed Action and the Navy's Proposed Action at the FRTC. Therefore, the Navy is working and will continue to work with Nye County and other impacted Counties to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts when feasible and consistent with the Navy's authority.

F.7.3.147 Heath, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Roger	Heath	<p>1) Given that Preferred Alternative #3 removes 424,466 acres of public land from citizen's use, People of the United States of America (POTUSA) demand that, in replacement, an equal 424,466 acres of existing private land in Nevada and adjacent states be obtained and transferred to public land for citizen use controlled by Department of Interior and Federal Land Policy and Management Act.</p> <p>2) If the military chooses not to provide replacement public land, POTUSA insists the NAVY join the Nellis Air Force Base Complex containing 3,200,000 Training/Bombing acres (plus 4,928,000 adjacent air-space acres) in southern Nevada and share this land and air space instead of closing more public land only for Naval Air training use.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p>
Roger	Heath	<p>1) Given that Preferred Alternative #3 removes 424,466 acres of public land from citizen's use, People of the United States of America (POTUSA) demand that, in replacement, an equal 424,466 acres of existing private land in Nevada and adjacent states be obtained and transferred to public land for citizen use controlled by Department of Interior and Federal Land Policy and Management Act.</p> <p>2) If the military chooses not to provide replacement public land, POTUSA insists the NAVY join the Nellis Air Force Base Complex containing 3,200,000 Training/Bombing acres (plus 4,928,000 adjacent air-space acres) in southern Nevada and share this land and air space instead of closing more public land only for Naval Air training use.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training.</p> <p>While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p> <p>The Navy does not have the control or the authority to alter land outside of the scope of the Proposed Action in this EIS.</p>

F.7.3.148 Heil, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Cynthia	Heil	No. DoD has contaminated and ruined enough of the globe. Enough is enough.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. As discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities. The Navy continuously monitors its operations to find ways to minimize the use of hazardous materials and to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes. Any spills would be managed and cleaned up in accordance with applicable state and federal regulatory requirements. If any such spill were to exceed reportable quantities as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for regulated material, the event would be immediately reported to the NAS Fallon Environmental Division for appropriate action per the Integrated Contingency Plan (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2009).</p> <p>Additionally, the DoD created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure DoD compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>Lastly, Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3571.4, Operational Range Clearance Policy for Navy Ranges, establishes the policy and requirements for performing operational range clearance on Navy ranges.</p>

F.7.3.149 Henry, H.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Hudson	Henry	<p>I know a bit about this area. I support your acquiring it fully.</p> <p>I have done a lot of both consulting and training work for the Navy, NARF (Naval Air Rework Facilities) and helped turn the Harrier Jet program from the red to the black at Cherry Point, or Havelock, NC working with the top command, Dept. heads and Dept. key personnel a few years back. As a resident of Henderson, NV since 2010 I have followed your actions as much as I can. I know you will use this area in full support of the goals of Navy and support of the United States.</p> <p>Hudson Henry</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p>

F.7.3.150 Hensley, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Justin	Hensley	<p>The agency has failed to consider and adequately mitigate the negative and potentially devastating negative financial effects of the proposed expansion to Middlegate Station and the Cold Springs RV Park.</p> <p>The agency must mitigate the negative effects to OHV (off highway vehicles) access to the public lands in the vicinity of Middlegate Station and Cold Springs RV Park.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Middlegate Station and Cold Springs RV Park are outside of the Study Area for the FRTC Modernization Proposed Action. The Navy worked with a local Nevada scientist to develop the Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at http://frtcmodernization.com). The report found that hunting-related (touristic) economic losses would be similar in scale for Mineral, Pershing, and Nye counties based on the percentage of lost revenue compared to total economic activity (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at http://frtcmodernization.com], Table B-1). Therefore, no significant impacts would occur in the affected counties due to lost recreational or touristic opportunities.</p>

F.7.3.151 Hess, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Ron	Hess	<p>I have attached a file with my comments. Please address them as part of the Fallon Navy Draft EIS process. I submitted these same comments in this online window yesterday but it appeared to lose all formatting when submitted.</p> <p>My contact information is:</p> <p>Ron Hess P.O. Box 9118 Reno, Nevada 89507 Email: hess_r@aol.com</p> <p>Thanks for your time.</p> <p>Ron</p>	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.</p>
Ron	Hess	<p>RE: Withdrawal of Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>The current Draft EIS is inadequate to allow for an informed and accurate determination of the most appropriate alternative. Furthermore, the Draft EIS lacks a “continuation of the status quo” alternative where the existing operational foot print is renewed and the cost and resources of moving certain long range munition exercises to other ranges in the region would be documented in detail. This alternative would most certainly look at the details and costs involved with cooperative training programs and shared resources with the Air Force. The Air Force, you may recall, is that other Service that has fast planes and large training ranges.</p> <p>The three currently listed alternatives (1 through 3) all remove the mineral resources from somewhere between 10 and 15 mining districts, depending on the alternative. Many of these mining districts have potential resources including but not limited to gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, tungsten, fluorite, and barite. Much of the overall area proposed for withdrawal has good potential for geothermal, wind, and solar energy production. Realizing that a strong national defense not only relies on a strong military but also requires a strong and vibrant economy to fund that military and in today's world a strong and vibrant economy requires access to abundant and secure mineral and energy resources. With this in mind, I believe it is imperative that the Draft EIS provide a detailed long term impact analysis of the loss of mineral and energy resources that these potential withdrawals will have on the National economy. This should also include a detailed analysis of the potential loss of property, employment, and revenue tax to the State of Nevada, Churchill County, and the surrounding communities.</p> <p>Generation of carbon and other green house gases are not documented for any of the alternatives. Part of this</p>	<p>The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative, also known as the “status quo” alternative, would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.</p> <p>The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWA China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p> <p>The BLM classifies minerals and energy (e.g., oil, geothermal, etc.) for development into three categories: locatable, leasable, and salable. Locatable minerals are those which, when found in valuable deposits, can be acquired under the General Mining Law of 1872, as amended. In the Final EIS, when a mineral resource potential is classified as either moderate or high, a lost exploration opportunity would represent a significant impact on that mineral</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>documentation must also include the loss of potential geothermal, wind, and solar power production which will require production from other fuels, some of which would be carbon based. The loss of these potential resources will also impact the State of Nevada in its efforts to increase it's green energy portfolio.</p> <p>Alternatives 1 through 3 would procure in excess of 65,000 acres of currently private land for the Navy. I was not able to locate in the Draft EIS what the long term parcel tax losses to the County would be with this change in ownership. This needs to be documented. The payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) program will not significantly increase to cover the lost property tax dollars for the above acreage since its formula is population capped. The PILT program and dollars from it are not guaranteed to be permanent since the program is funded and voted on by Congress through the annual Federal budget process.</p> <p>The Draft EIS identifies various grazing allotments that will be reduced or eliminated. It discusses various formulas that address the potential cost associated with the loss of AUMs. But it fails to identify in a meaningful way how much of the loss will be made up by payments to effected ranches and businesses, the length of time that these payments will be maintained, and the long term estimate of cost that will have to be carried by the Federal Government.</p> <p>The "no action alternative" in the Draft EIS is extremely incomplete. At one meeting, this alternative was characterized by Navy personnel by the statement "the Navy would take its mission and go elsewhere". As such, there is no significant analysis in the Draft EIS that documents the potential local impacts, either negative or positive, in regards to this alternative. Negative impacts</p>	<p>resource. The resource potential classification considers occurrence, geologic relationship, and historic production for each mineral resource. As discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), the proposed for withdrawal would no longer be open to new mining claims and the lands would be barred from future mineral exploration and development. Implementation of any of the action alternatives would result in potential significant impacts on exploration and development of locatable, leasable, and salable mineral resources.</p> <p>Potential losses associated with currently unknown mining and geothermal opportunities as defined under Alternative 1 would be less under Alternative 3 because geothermal opportunities would be allowed in DVTA. However, significant impacts could still occur under Alternative 3 due to such potential lost mining and geothermal opportunities in the expanded B-16, B-17, and B-20. Therefore, while reasonably foreseeable economic impacts associated with lost mining and geothermal opportunities cannot be accurately determined at this time, there is the potential that significant economic impacts could occur due to the potential loss of mining and geothermal opportunities all Alternatives. The Navy has made allowances for potential energy development in the DVTA that is compatible with the Navy mission. Additionally, under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative), the Navy reduced the amount of withdrawn land in the DVTA by creating the Special Land Management Overlay areas to allow future energy development pending BLM approval.</p> <p>There are no proposed increases in the types or tempo of training activities under any Alternative in the Final EIS and, as such, there would be no increase in greenhouse gas emissions. See Section 3.8 (Air Quality), specifically Sections 3.8.3.2.9 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions), 3.8.3.3.9 (Greenhouse Gases), and 3.8.3.4.9 (Greenhouse Gases) of the Final EIS for more information.</p> <p>A detailed analysis of PILT as well as other lost tax losses is located in the Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at http://frtmodernization.com) and discussed in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). There would be no change in PILT for Churchill, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing counties, and very little change in PILT for Lyon County; therefore, there would be no significant impacts from lost revenues from reduced PILT under any of the action alternatives. However, there could be a modest reduction in revenues at</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>would be loss of base and navy personnel expenditures in the local community and associated effects on tax revenue. Positive impacts could include re-purposing the air base for use as a west coast air freight hub, Nevada Air Guard use, development of an industrial complex, etc. Water rights could be re-assigned to agriculture or other uses. The range land that would be freed up could be used to develop additional energy and mineral resources and add additional areas for a variety of recreational activities. None of this information is presented in the current Draft EIS.</p> <p>Due to the extreme shortcomings, missing alternative, and lack of appropriate detailed information in the Draft EIS I request that it be withdrawn. It fails to fairly discuss all appropriate alternatives and lacks a variety of necessary details for the alternatives listed. A new Draft EIS should be developed with the above listed issues properly and fully addressed. Release of this new draft document should be scheduled with an adequate public review period. After this process, you will then be prepared to move on to the preparation of a fully documented, fairly presented, and credible final EIS.</p>	<p>the state level insofar as lost hunting opportunities could result in a reduction of funding sources for NDOW.</p> <p>The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives. Detailed information has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.</p> <p>Under this proposal, taking “no action” would mean that Congress would not extend the current land withdrawal, which expires in November 2021. Therefore, the land withdrawal would expire and FRTC lands would be reverted back as described under the No Action Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, current and proposed training at FRTC would need to be accommodated elsewhere. This would result in the potential loss of the integrated nature of training, as well as the fragmentation and total loss of essential training functions. At this time, identifying where and how those training needs could be accommodated—and what the ultimate consequences of such a scenario would be—would involve a complex planning, budgeting, and acquisition program that is speculative and beyond the scope of this EIS.</p>

To: Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest, Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway, Building 1, 5th Floor, San Diego, CA 92132

RE: Withdrawal of Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The current Draft EIS is inadequate to allow for an informed and accurate determination of the most appropriate alternative. Furthermore, the Draft EIS lacks a "continuation of the status quo" alternative where the existing operational footprint is renewed and the cost and resources of moving certain long range munition exercises to other ranges in the region would be documented in detail. This alternative would most certainly look at the details and costs involved with cooperative training programs and shared resources with the Air Force. The Air Force, you may recall, is that other Service that has fast planes and large training ranges.

The three currently listed alternatives (1 through 3) all remove the mineral resources from somewhere between 10 and 15 mining districts, depending on the alternative. Many of these mining districts have potential resources including but not limited to gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, tungsten, fluorite, and barite. Much of the overall area proposed for withdrawal has good potential for geothermal, wind, and solar energy production. Realizing that a strong national defense not only relies on a strong military but also requires a strong and vibrant economy to fund that military and in today's world a strong and vibrant economy requires access to abundant and secure mineral and energy resources. With this in mind, I believe it is imperative that the Draft EIS provide a detailed long term impact analysis of the loss of mineral and energy resources that these potential withdrawals will have on the National economy. This should also include a detailed analysis of the potential loss of property, employment, and revenue tax to the State of Nevada, Churchill County, and the surrounding communities.

Generation of carbon and other green house gases are not documented for any of the alternatives. Part of this documentation must also include the loss of potential geothermal, wind, and solar power production which will require production from other fuels, some of which would be carbon based. The loss of these potential resources will also impact the State of Nevada in its efforts to increase its green energy portfolio.

Alternatives 1 through 3 would procure in excess of 65,000 acres of currently private land for the Navy. I was not able to locate in the Draft EIS what the long term parcel tax losses to the County would be with this change in ownership. This needs to be documented. The payment in lieu of taxes (PILT) program will not significantly increase to cover the lost property tax dollars for the above acreage since its formula is population capped. The PILT program and dollars from it are not guaranteed to be permanent since the program is funded and voted on by Congress through the annual Federal budget process.

The Draft EIS identifies various grazing allotments that will be reduced or eliminated. It discusses various formulas that address the potential cost associated with the loss of AUMs. But it fails to identify in a meaningful way how much of the loss will be made up by payments to effected ranches and businesses, the length of time that these payments will be maintained, and the long term estimate of cost that will have to be carried by the Federal Government.

The "no action alternative" in the Draft EIS is extremely incomplete. At one meeting, this alternative was characterized by Navy personnel by the statement "the Navy would take its mission and go elsewhere". As such, there is no significant analysis in the Draft EIS that documents the potential local impacts, either negative or positive, in regards to this alternative. Negative impacts would be loss of base and navy personnel expenditures in the local community and associated effects on tax revenue. Positive impacts could include re-purposing the air base for use as a west coast air freight hub, Nevada Air Guard use, development of an industrial complex, etc. Water rights could be re-assigned to agriculture or other uses. The range land that would be freed up could be used to develop additional energy and mineral resources and add additional areas for a variety of recreational activities. None of this information is presented in the current Draft EIS.

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F.7.3.151.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative, also known as the “status quo” alternative, would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex’s available training time. Without terminating the Air Force’s existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.

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withdrawn land in the DVTA by creating the Special Land Management Overlay areas to allow future energy development pending BLM approval.

There are no proposed increases in the types or tempo of training activities under any Alternative in the Final EIS and, as such, there would be no increase in greenhouse gas emissions. See Section 3.8 (Air Quality), specifically Sections 3.8.3.2.9 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions), 3.8.3.3.9 (Greenhouse Gases), and 3.8.3.4.9 (Greenhouse Gases) of the Final EIS for more information.

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The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives. Detailed information has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.

Under this proposal, taking “no action” would mean that Congress would not extend the current land withdrawal, which expires in November 2021. Therefore, the land withdrawal would expire and FRTC lands would be reverted back as described under the No Action Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, current and proposed training at FRTC would need to be accommodated elsewhere. This would result in the potential loss of the integrated nature of training, as well as the fragmentation and total loss of essential training functions. At this time, identifying where and how those training needs could be accommodated—and what the ultimate consequences of such a scenario would be—would involve a complex planning, budgeting, and acquisition program that is speculative and beyond the scope of this EIS.

F.7.3.152 Heusinkveld, P.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Patricia	Heusinkveld	I am against any land grab by the military of public spaces. I don't agree that we need to practice bombing our own wildlife and territory	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.
Patricia	Heusinkveld	I am against any land grab by the military of public spaces. I don't agree that we need to practice bombing our own wildlife and territory	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.
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F.7.3.153 Hibbs, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
David	Hibbs	As a American Citizen and Army Veteran, I vote -"NO".....on the Fallon Range Land Grab.....the military has nellis range,TTR,Hill AFB,Dungway proving grounds,area-51,area-6 and many other ranges in use. This is being done too expand Buffer-Zones for restricted areas and air -space..at the expense of Tax-	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure

[illegible]

F.7.3.154 Hill, G. D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Garland D	Hill	As a former member of the US Navy and previously avid outdoorsman, I am appalled at these proposed actions. Gathering public lands simply for the purpose of further destruction to our precious landscape and Native American heritage in some area's is absolutely preposterous and completely irresponsible. I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC

First	Last	Comment	Response
		it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

F.7.3.155 Hill, H.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Howard	Hill	For the past 20 years, a large group of friends have met at Middlegate Station for a reunion of sorts. We do this twice a year, spring and fall. To take this area away from us, is an imposition of authority, that has consequences that have far reaching impact. Far beyond our small group of friends of Middlegate, but those at Middlegate itself. I have traveled over many miles of highway in Nevada and I see the broke down, shuttered up, motels, gas stations, whole communities, just 'wiped' off the map. Nothing left but trash, graffiti, and urine filled water bottles. To do this to Middlegate seems a desecration of "History". This was an important stop for our Pony Express riders, a stage stop for Overland Express, a movie set for an old John Wayne movie. Please reconsider your actions which will turn this "oasis" into just another roadside eyesore. I know the 30 -60 old friends who reunion there, twice a year, would thank you. Tap-out, Howard	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. The Navy is not proposing to close Middlegate Station. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.

F.7.3.156 Hisey, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jack	Hisey	Closing Highway 361 is unacceptable. This will not only cut off access to the town of Gabbs, it will also limit the	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 3.5 (Transportation), under Alternative 3, the WDZ would extend over a portion of SR 361, and that segment would need to be closed and re-routed outside of the WDZ due to mission and public safety requirements. The potential closure and rerouting of SR 361 associated with the expansion of B-17 would only occur if Congress chose Alternative 3. However, the affected segment of SR 361 would not be closed unless and until a suitable replacement route is established. Relocation of SR 361 would not cut off access to Gabbs or Berlin Ichthyosaur State

First	Last	Comment	Response
		public's access to vast public lands and existing commercial endeavours. This needs to be reconsidered.	<p>Park. The notional relocation corridor for the potential re-routing of SR 361 can be found in Section 3.5.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p> <p>Any proposed rerouting is still conceptual in nature and would be evaluated prior to closure of the route. Follow-on NEPA efforts would need to be conducted for the potential relocation of SR 361 if Alternative 3 were to be selected. See Chapter 2, specifically Section 2.3.4.2.4 (Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 3) for further details. If Alternative 3 were chosen, the Navy would transfer any funds appropriated for relocating the road to the Federal Highway Administration, who in turn would make these funds available to NDOT for planning, design and construction of the replacement road to State standards.</p>

F.7.3.157 Hnasko, P.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Patty	Hnasko	PM OPI'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.</p>

F.7.3.158 Hoffman, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Dave	Hoffman	Recent Public meetings hosted by the Navy for the purpose of gathering information and comments on the Navy's Draft EIS were inadequate and non-	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy complies with all applicable environmental laws, including its requirements for public participation under NEPA when developing this EIS. NEPA requires federal agencies to provide</p>

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		<p>representative. Most information gathered by the Navy was from individuals/groups NOT directly impacted by the proposed activities. Only information collected from individuals/groups directly affected by the Modernization EIS should be considered relevant and used in the decision-making process. Use of data gathered from external special interest groups has skewed and biased the results.</p> <p>Since the inception of the Navy's Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization EIS began, the Navy's need for more land for training has been repeatedly expressed. However, the needs of the community and the individuals that are directly affected by the Modernization EIS plan have not been adequately discussed. The Proposed Action and Alternates 1, 2, and 3 do not sufficiently consider the impacts to the economic backbone of our community, specifically historic ranching and mining industry that presently uses this public land. The use of eminent domain of this large of scale will permanently impact foundational agricultural and mining activities and culturally important livelihoods. The core economic base of the region over the last 150+ years has been ranching and mining products. Without inclusion of these use impacts, the is EIS incomplete.</p> <p>The Navy does not adequately consider the impacts of proposed land use changes and local user groups. Options which identify creative ways to reuse or repurpose existing training resources were not included. All the proposed activities expand the military footprint. The Navy should find ways to reuse, reclaim, and refurbish the numerous abandoned and existing ranges and test sites which the military has already in Nevada. In those areas,</p>	<p>opportunities for meaningful public involvement. Comments received during the scoping period were considered in the development of the Draft EIS. Comments received on the Draft EIS have been considered in the development of this Final EIS. The purpose of the NEPA process is to ensure that environmental information is available to public officials and citizens before any ultimate decisions are made and before actions are taken.</p> <p>This Final EIS analyzes the potential environmental effects of the Proposed Action. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate.</p> <p>The EIS includes analyses of the impacts to ranching in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), mining in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), and socioeconomics in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). Affected private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land and all compensable rights associated with that land acquired by the United States. Claim holders for mining and water would be compensated as described in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources) and Section 3.9 (Water Resources). Pursuant to the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended (43 U.S.C. section 315q), the Navy would make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes.</p> <p>The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) as the action alternatives, including training elsewhere. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the</p>

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		<p>the ecosystem and natural resources have already been impacted. Instead of spreading impacts to more of Nevada’s land, why not structure a plan to reuse millions of acres associated with Area 51, 52 or 53, Yucca Mountain Creech, Nellis Air Force Range, Tonopah Test Range, Hawthorne Army Depot, Nevada National Security Site, or Nevada Test and Training Range. Why are these military facilities continuing to operate within silos? Sharing test and training facilities would better emulate combat situations and save taxpayer dollars.</p> <p>What about environmental laws associated with 43 CFR Subpart 3809: Surface Management of the U.S. Department of The Interior Bureau of Land Management? These laws were organized and are enforced to ensure that operators prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of public lands. Before a person or entity can operate or request renewal of existing public lands and/or acquire additional public land use, compliance to requirements illustrated in 43 CFR Subpart 3809: Surface Management is mandatory before any action on public lands can be granted. As a result of their activities, a person or entity operating on public land will be held accountable for environmental impacts and is required to formulate and execute an approved reclamation plan compliant to 43 CFR Subpart 3809 for the cleanup, detoxification, contamination, pollution, and ultimate environmental restoration of public lands. 43 CFR Subpart 3809 applies to farmer, ranchers, miners, and any other users of public lands. The Navy is NOT exempt from these responsibilities. Abandoning 202,864 acres of military test-damaged public land without mitigation plans in place in exchange for</p>	<p>purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).</p> <p>Under this proposal, taking “no action” would mean that Congress would not extend the current land withdrawal, which expires in November 2021. Therefore, the land withdrawal would expire and FRTC lands would be reverted back as described under the No Action Alternative. Expiration of the land withdrawal would terminate the Navy’s authority to use nearly all of the FRTC’s bombing ranges, affecting nearly 62 percent of the land area currently available for military aviation and ground training activities in the FRTC. The Navy would remove training infrastructure and instrumentation from these lands, including those that are part of the Electronic Warfare Complex.</p> <p>The Navy would retain administrative control of the land withdrawn under Public Law 106-65 until any required environmental remediation was completed and health and safety concerns were sufficiently addressed to allow the return of the land to the Bureau of Land Management or Bureau of Reclamation for reincorporation into the public domain.</p>

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		<p>'new' test areas is not good stewardship or management of public resources.</p> <p>One can understand the importance of modernized training facilities for the Navy and the defense of our country, but at what cost? Are the likely damages to these livelihoods and associated communities and 1,000s of acres of public lands in addition to what has already been done justifiable? Why is reuse and/or shared use of other larger abandoned, under used, and/or existing military training sites that are nearby and readily available not being considered? What will the long-term costs be if we continue to take more? Land is a limited resource. If activities such as this continue, soon there will be no more land left.</p> <p>Therefore, based on the EIS gaps discussed above, "No Action Alternative" is the only legal option going forward until the Navy appropriately addresses these issues. In the past, the military has simply abandoned the mess and responsibility to other federal or state agencies. Evidence from those past policies are present throughout Nevada. Abandonment should no longer be an option for the Navy.</p>	

F.7.3.159 Hoffman, N.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Nancy	Hoffman	<p>I am writing against the proposed withdrawal of public lands for the purpose of expanding the Fallon Range Training Complex. I am particularly against any appropriation of public lands where Wilderness Study Areas exist. As a hiker & camper, I object to these proposals</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]) but it would not prohibit the use of this area by the public for recreational activities. Please note that this expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required</p>

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		that will cut off many recreational areas and access roads that I and others have used in the past & hope to use in the future. As an active birdwatcher, I am particularly concerned about the impacts on wildlife and its habitat, especially at the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. I support the "No Action Alternative".	<p>in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.</p>

F.7.3.160 Hoh, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Matthew	Hoh	<p>I was an officer in the Marines for ten years, I went to Iraq twice and Afghanistan once.</p> <p>This land grab by the Navy and DOD is completely unnecessary and profligate. It takes land that belongs to all Americans and utilizes simply for destruction and violence. When will the madness of</p> <p>This is land that by law was to be protected and nurtured, not to be ripped apart by bombs and missiles and contaminated with heavy chemicals and fossil fuels. Live is to be sustained in these lands not murdered.</p> <p>Undoubtedly someone is defending this proposed theft of land, saying it is necessary for training and to make sure our men and women in combat are successful- that this land grab will save lives. This is rubbish and anyone at DON and DOD who possess the courage to think critically and honestly knows it is rubbish; just disingenuous and specious arguments meant to shout down and bully those who cherish our land.</p> <p>The Navy and the Department of Defense should be embarrassed at this naked and vain attempt to grow the military empire. When will this Leviathan ever be satisfied? When will its appetite for murder and destruction be satiated?</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p>

F.7.3.161 Holcomb, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Doug	Holcomb	<p>Please accept this comment letter on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization EIS from the Pine Nut Mountains Trail Association (PNMTA).</p> <p>PNMTA is a 501c-3 multiple use recreation organization based in Gardnerville Nevada.</p> <p>This comment letter shall not supplant the rights of Pine Nut Mountains Trail Association members from submitting their own comments and the agency should consider and appropriately respond to all comments received.</p> <p>PNMTA appreciates and supports the Navy's desire to modernize Naval Air Station Fallon and do it in a manner that emphasizes public safety, while recognizing and showing a willingness continue as much as possible, historic and existing uses of Nevada's public land.</p> <p>PNMTA supports the Navy's preferred alternative, Alternative 3. While Alternative 3 is the least restrictive alternative toward the loss of recreational access, this alternative will still close many miles of existing roads and trails that are very popular for public use. The closure of this public land will concentrate public use to a smaller area, creating over crowded roads and trails and overuse conditions on the existing roads and trails. This crowding and trail damage eventually leads to users going elsewhere to recreate. This will most certainly affect the economy of the Middlegate Station, Cold Springs Station, and the towns of Fallon and Gabbs due to fewer OHV-tourists using the area.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.</p> <p>Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowable in the DVTA. Grazing would also continue to be allowed in the DVTA. Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheep hunting, and events that are pre-coordinated with the Navy.</p> <p>Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis.</p> <p>The requested mitigations to designate surrounding land as Special Recreation Area and to release all Wilderness Study Areas in Nevada are outside of the scope of the Proposed Action for this EIS, and therefore are not part of the Proposed Action.</p>

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		<p>The placement of new boundaries, particularly the north eastern area of Bravo 17, and the closure of these existing roads and trails will also create out and back routes and lead to new user created loop trails. With the Navy's proposed willingness to reroute a section of State Highway 361 along the proposed eastern boundary, we believe the Navy should also consider constructing a new dirt road along the northeastern boundary to connect the remaining sections of existing dirt roads to State Highway 361. Boundary roads provide a clear, distinct visual delineation for OHV users while riding or planning a ride. Thereby maximizing the safety envelope and reducing inadvertent intrusion to dangerous areas.</p> <p>An option to building a new road as stated above, would be to use the large dirt road that runs south-easterly connecting the Fairview/Earthquake Fault Road from Bell Flat to State Highway 361 approximately ½ mile north of the Churchill/Mineral Counties line. It would then connect to other existing roads in the area, particularly to the east of the proposed boundary. The use of that road as the northeast boundary would be consistent with the use of Nevada State Route 839 along the Bravo 17 western boundary, and the use of Simpson Road as the south boundary of the Bravo 16 expansion. This large road is approximately 1 to 3 miles within and south of the proposed Alternative 3 northern boundary. It would change the proposed boundary line further south by that approximate distance.</p> <p>With the particular geography, historic sites, and geology of this area, motorized recreation is by far the most prominent use of these public lands. PNMTA believes that with the loss of the use of</p>	

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		<p>public land in this area due to the Navy's proposed land withdrawal, it is appropriate that Congress designate surrounding land as a Special Recreation Area.</p> <p>PNMTA also believes that the Federal agencies involved should work to mitigate these public land recreation losses to motorized users, by releasing all Wilderness Study Areas (WSA's) through out the State of Nevada.</p> <p>This releasing of the WAS's back to a multiple use designation and the Special Recreation Area designation should be protected by statute by Congress as a "prescribed use" for motorized recreation, and can be written in as a part of the Navy's modernization land bill.</p> <p>The Pine Nut Mountains Trail Association looks forward to continuing to work with the Navy on this project.</p> <p>Sincerely, Doug Holcomb Pine Nut Mountains Trail Association info@pnmta.org PO Box 3012, Gardnerville, Nevada 89410</p>	

F.7.3.162 Houston, P.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Pauline	Houston	<p>Dear members of congresss or to whom ever hears or reads this note, I hope it finds you well!! May you also be someone of worth and compassion!!! As a native Nevadan, I strongly protest all three of the Navy's proposals to remove land from public access... Most of my husbands and my families have</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable. The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training</p>

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		<p>lived in and around Gabbs most of our lives! My Great, Great Grandfather, Thomas Jefferson Bell (Named after his fathers best friend, Thomas Jefferson) lived and owned most of Reese River Valley before Nevada even became a state. He was also Nye County's first State Senator! Bell Flats that was named after him is a part the land in the purposed land withdrawal....</p> <p>I believe there are other ways for the Navy to get their required training without taking away our rights and freedom of life... The Air Force and Navy should work together In both of their existing vast areas of Nevada that they have already taken for their training programs.. The People of Gabbs will be impacted the most severely by noise and mentally by being closed in as if in a Concentration Camp with the fence coming right up within a mile or so of town... I can't imagine looking out my front door, knowing that for as far as I can see would be non-accessible land! Should this mess go through, the Gabbs people should be well compensated monetarily for their many Inconveniences that will take place... Life will become almost unbareable for many and it will impact the mental health of all in someway or another.. Our home has been damaged by the sonic boom's as is, leaving cracks in the plaster and dropping a ceiling beam several inches... Currently, the noise levels are already high as Jets dogfight right over our house all the time! We have even been dive boomed by Middlegate almost causing us to wreck with our 7 kids! This also happened to a friend who did lose control</p>	<p>Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges noise sensitive areas and has established Noise Sensitive Areas (such as around wildlife refuges, incorporated areas, and certain tribal areas) in the past. The Navy is proposing new Noise Sensitive Areas as part of the Proposed Action around the incorporated areas of Crescent Valley and Eureka. The establishment of these Noise Sensitive Areas is considered compatible with military training activities and will include a 5 nautical mile radius and an elevation of 3,000 feet AGL. The Navy is planning on implementing a 3-nautical-mile radius and a surface to 1,500 feet AGL airspace exclusion zone surrounding the Gabbs airport. This will allow for safe arrivals and departures at the airport as discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace).</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. As discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), the response to sonic booms or other sudden disturbance is similar among many wildlife species—sudden and unfamiliar sounds usually act as an alarm and trigger a “flight” response; however, reaction to a given noise can vary widely depending on factors such as time of day, physical condition of the animal, physical environment, or whether or not other physical stressors are present. Although the startle effect of a sonic boom can be stressful to an animal, it is hard to generalize animal responses to noise disturbances across species. Recent literature suggests a fright is a common response</p>

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		<p>causing an accident in Smoky Valley several years ago... She rolled her pick up with her two small kids causing severe injuries to all three! She was also expecting twins which she lost as a result of this accident!!!</p> <p>Another major concern of mine is the impact it will have on the vast varieties of wildlife in the withdrawal areas... Who will protect them from being boomed or keep their watersources up??? The Big Horn sheep is our state animal and should be protected! They are rarely seen and many will never see one other than in a zoo... The idea of opening part of the area once a year for the Soul purpose of allowing hunters to go in and shoot them is appalling!!!! Keep in mind that there are many more nonhunters then hunters!!! I feel this is so discriminatory against those of us who do NOT hunt with a gun but with a camera.. I along with many others would love to go take pictures and enjoy them rather than to kill them!!! Please don't play favorites with hunters... It's not fair and just plain wrong!!! Move the Big Horn sheep to safe areas where they can reproduce and be enjoyed not Slaughtered for a hunters trophy...</p> <p>I'm told it doesn't matter what we want or say, this will happen like it or not! Can't fight the government... K sera sera, what will be will be but, please reconsider and pursue other less invasive options... Thank you for your valuable time and Consideration! Please keep in mind that Nevada is not a wasteland!!! Neither is it's people or wildlife...</p>	<p>across a variety of species, and that this ultimately leads to habituation. It has been reported that the intensities and durations of the startle response decrease as the number and frequency of exposures increase, suggesting no long-term adverse effects. Given the historical use of the airspace and the coexistence of wildlife, animals within the MOA are likely habituated to aircraft overflights and associated noise (e.g., sonic booms). Many of the above-listed behavioral and physiological responses to noise are within the range of normal adaptive responses to external stimuli (such as predation) that wild animals face on a regular basis. In many cases, individuals would return to homeostasis or a stable equilibrium almost immediately after exposure to a brief stimulus such as an aircraft overflight or sonic boom. Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Section 3.10.3.1 (Potential Stressors) of the Final EIS was updated to incorporate the best available data regarding noise and startle effects on wildlife.</p> <p>The Navy will also allow hunting on B-17 once a year with permits and required Navy instruction. The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses in the B-17 range, as it is Navy policy that these ranges are generally closed to the public. Allowing hunting and special events would work only as managed access through strict Naval control to ensure public health and safety and scheduling of training events. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationists. The Navy would provide access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency that would set any quotas and distribute any permits, as well as maintenance of wildlife habitat. The Navy has developed a draft MOA in conjunction with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for this hunting program (further details are provided in Section 3.12, Recreation, and Appendix D, Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans, of the Final EIS). The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.</p> <p>The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC.</p>

F.7.3.163 Hutchens, Lee and Dianne

First	Last	Comment	Response
Lee and Dianne	Hutchens	<p>We appreciate the Navy and the benefits NAS Fallon brings to the community. However, we strongly feel that an expansion at the expense of grazing, hunting and recreating will be very detrimental not only to the community but the individuals directly affected. Loss of grazing permits will surely put several local ranchers out of business. A drastic decrease in recreational area will have a very negative effect on Middlegate Station and might even lead to closure of this historic icon that has served Highway 50 travelers so well over the years. Reduction in Zone 18 hunting will undoubtedly increase competition for tags in other areas and a lesser number of tags will be awarded. We strongly believe that removing public access is against the original intent of establishing public lands for multiple use and would urge the Navy to look at less publicly used lands for their expansion. On a personal basis, we currently ranch and farm in the Reese River area and are subjected to excessive noise and sonic booms from low flying fighter aircraft. This expansion will surely increase the frequency and intensity of these events; rattling windows, frightening cattle and in general being startling and annoying. Thank you for providing this forum for public comment.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p> <p>The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives. The information has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is similar to that of the bombing ranges, and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing mitigation.</p> <p>Lastly, the Navy is not proposing to increase the types or levels of training activities under any alternative.</p>

F.7.3.164 Inmon, W.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Whitney	Inmon	I do not agree with expanding the bombing range. Fairview Peak holds an abundance of wildlife I personally enjoy, from chuckar and quail, to mule deer, antelope, and desert big horn sheep. Nevada has worked hard to restore our big horn population, and the thought of jeopardizing the large population calling the area home could mean it's been an act of futility for all involved in helping these sheep thrive. I enjoy the ability to use our public lands for many purposes, from hunting and fishing, to camping and stargazing. While I also love and support all our armed forces, I refuse to see Nevada's abundant public lands be continually reduced.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Under Alternative 3, the Navy's Preferred Alternative, Fairview Peak would remain open for recreation. The proposed B-16 and B-20 expansion areas are outside of the current mapped range of bighorn sheep and mule deer, and only the eastern portion of the proposed B-20 expansion area overlaps with year-round pronghorn range (Nevada Department of Wildlife (2017a)). Within the FRTC region of influence, there are over 1 million acres of mapped bighorn sheep year-round range, over 51,000 acres of mapped bighorn sheep winter/lambing range, 5.6 million acres of mapped year-round pronghorn range, and 52,000 acres of mapped pronghorn crucial summer range. Navy operational doctrine dictates that during transiting, pilots avoid lambing areas.

F.7.3.165 Jacques, K.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Karen	Jacques	I am outraged by your plan to expand the Fallon military base by turning a portion of Nevada the size of Delaware into a bombing range. This will result in massive wildlife kills and turning what is now beautiful public land that belongs to the American people into a toxic death zone. This is being done with no thought to our natural heritage, no thought to the pressures that are already being placed on native species and wildlife due to climate change, no thought for the spewing of toxics that will result from this and probably little thought as to the reason the military needs to test still more bombs. Despite what's left of our shredded environmental protections, I don't imagine there has been any consultation with wildlife biologists or any scientists who might be able to throw light on the terrible destruction this proposal will cause. This administration has no regard for environmental protection, no regard for the best interests of the	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species. As discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities. The Navy continuously monitors its operations to find ways to minimize the use of hazardous materials and to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes. Any spills would be managed and cleaned up in accordance with applicable state

First	Last	Comment	Response
		majority of the American people and no regard for what kind of a world it leaves for our children. The U.S. is now involved in fighting all over the world and seems to see no solution to the world's problems except to kill more people and destroy more of the planet and use more an more of our public lands to practice how to kill. This proposed massive destruction in Nevada is another sad reflection of what this country has become, a militaristic regime with no regard for the natural world or for life. As with so much else that this terrible administration has done it leaves me sad and ashamed to be an American and steals whatever hope I once had for the future. This is yet one more act of a government that has lost its conscience and holds the people of the world, including its own citizens, in contempt.	and federal regulatory requirements. If any such spill were to exceed reportable quantities as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for regulated material, the event would be immediately reported to the NAS Fallon Environmental Division for appropriate action per the Integrated Contingency Plan (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2009). Additionally, the DoD created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure DoD compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations. Lastly, Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3571.4, Operational Range Clearance Policy for Navy Ranges, establishes the policy and requirements for performing operational range clearance on Navy ranges.

F.7.3.166 James, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Achaessa	James	<p>This land grab by the Navy and DOD is completely unnecessary and profligate. It takes land that belongs to all Americans and utilizes it simply for destruction and violence. When will this unrelenting madness, these continual parades and marches of killings be done? When will the Pentagon and the killing it serves be fulfilled?</p> <p>This is land that by law was to be protected and nurtured, not to be ripped apart by bombs and missiles and contaminated with heavy chemicals and fossil fuels. Life is to be sustained in these lands not murdered.</p> <p>Undoubtedly someone is defending this proposed theft of land, saying it is necessary for training and to make sure our men and women in combat are successful- that this land grab will save lives. This is rubbish and anyone at DON and DOD who possess the courage to think critically and honestly knows it is rubbish; just disingenuous and specious arguments meant to shout down and bully those who cherish our land.</p> <p>The Navy and the Department of Defense should be embarrassed at this naked and vain attempt to grow the military empire. When will this Leviathan ever be satisfied? When will its appetite for murder and destruction be satiated? How much more will your service of killing take?</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p>

F.7.3.167 James-Reeves, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Sonya	James-Reeves	<p>Dear US Navy and President Trump ,</p> <p>Please do not expand the bombing range with this plan. We cannot continue to use our American land and resources in way that promote war and destruction. We need safe quiet places in our country to visit and restore our balance and human stewards. Our wildlife deserve safe quiet places with little or no human interaction by air or land. I place far more value in peaceful usage and solutions of our country's resources. As an American , I do not promote this plan . As a human , world citizen I feel it is my duty to speak against further and continued destruction of this kind.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>In Ninety Days to Combat (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015b), NAWDC analyzed the land and airspace (see Section 1.5.2, Airspace Training Need versus Current Range Capability, for discussion of airspace requirement) needed to meet combat training requirements for modern aircraft and weapon systems. When comparing older aircraft and mission profiles with modern aircraft and weapons systems, NAWDC noted the following differences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older aircraft flew at lower altitudes, approached targets at closer distances (4–5 miles) before dropping munitions, and because of this close-range release, required a smaller safety area surrounding the target area during training. Modern aircraft fly at higher altitudes, release munitions at targets from 10–12 miles away, and require a larger safety area surrounding the target area during training. <p>Though munitions can reach targets at greater distances than ever before, current range boundaries (which do not accommodate modern weapons safety requirements) limit this type of training. Even if actual target areas were to remain the same, if release distances are increased, the safety area that is required during training in case of weapons failure also increases.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		Thank you, Sonya James-Reeves	species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.

F.7.3.168 Johnson, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Diana	Johnson	<p>I oppose this massive land grab for many reasons...</p> <p>Congressman Amodai, please oppose this public land grab. It is home to wildlife and could be contaminate the sage grouse breeding grounds as well as the Pronghorn Antelope and Bighorn sheep... not to mention the livelihood of ranchers grazing cattle in these areas!</p> <p>The expansion of the B-17 range will impact beautiful lands with wilderness characteristics and wildlife values to the west of Gabbs Valley and the Monte Cristo Mountains, near Slate Mountain to the south of B-17, all of which will become off-limits to the public and exposed to damage by increased military activities.</p> <p>The expansion of B-17 will consume much of the Sand Springs range to the west of the existing B-17 range, and closed to public use. Gabbs Valley would be closed to the public, diminishing recreation opportunities in the region. The Navy proposes to create new live ordnance target zones in Gabbs Valley. The people in the town of Gabbs, as well as visitors, would be negatively affected by experiencing frequent nearby explosions and increased jet traffic. Live bombing is infrequent at B-17 currently; there appears to be little justification in establishing new live target areas outside of the existing range.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.</p> <p>Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p> <p>The following specific grazing mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Policies and procedures in the NAS Fallon INRMP would continue to be implemented to avoid conflicts with livestock grazing. This includes routine monitoring of fence lines surrounding potentially hazardous areas to ensure that the fence is secure and cannot be crossed by people or animals; the monitoring area would be increased to include new perimeter fences on lands proposed for withdrawal. The Navy is proposing to provide funds for BLM to hire two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers who would assist with management of the additional area. The Standard Operating Procedures for handling cattle on the FRTC training ranges would be revised and implemented. Livestock friendly erosion controls would be used when performing construction activities on or adjacent to grazing land that is actively being used.</p> <p>The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process allows</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>The newly proposed expansion of the B-17 range into Gabbs Valley is an addition to the original proposed expansion of B-17 into beautiful lands that have wilderness characteristics, and support plentiful wildlife. These lands include the entire pristine and remote Monte Cristo range adjacent to Gabbs Valley. The Monte Cristos have unique geologic formations consisting of sculpted volcanic tuffs and multi-colored sedimentary hills and pinnacles.</p> <p>The new 92,482-acre addition to the proposed FRTC expansion includes segments of Wilderness Study Area (WSA) lands that will become part of the Navy-owned Dixie Valley Training Area. The Jobs Peak WSA and the Clan Alpine WSA would also be withdrawn from public use. Removing WSA lands from Wilderness Area consideration is a serious step that Congress is being asked to approve. WSA lands are extremely valuable for their wilderness characteristics and are very close to being approved by Congress as official Wilderness Areas. These WSAs could then be subject to increasing levels of disturbance and roadbuilding, potentially losing their wilderness characteristics.</p> <p>The FRTC expansion will consume the Fairview Peak range and adjacent rugged foothills to the east of the existing B-17, all of which will be closed to public use, including interesting geological features such as a massive earthquake fault scarp.</p> <p>Desert bighorn sheep and pronghorn antelope inhabit these areas--how will the military manage</p>	<p>for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives. The process for valuating losses to ranchers has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.</p> <p>The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVT, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>The Navy would implement a 3-nautical-mile radius and a surface-to-1,500 feet AGL airspace exclusion zone around the Gabbs airport to allow for safe arrivals and departures, as discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace).</p> <p>Under the U.S. Department of Defense Reauthorization, P.L. 105-85, Div. A, Title X, Section 1079, Nov. 18, 1997, 111 Stat. 1916, special use airspace actions are exempt from Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act because establishment of avoidance areas result in unacceptable and severe operational and safety concerns.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges noise sensitive areas and has established Noise Sensitive Areas (such as around wildlife refuges, incorporated areas, and certain tribal areas) in the past. The Navy is proposing new Noise Sensitive Areas as part of the Proposed Action around the incorporated areas of Crescent Valley and Eureka. The establishment of these Noise Sensitive Areas is considered compatible with military training activities and will include a 5 nautical mile radius and an elevation of 3,000 feet AGL.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>these precious wildlife herds? Golden eagles also nest and forage here.</p> <p>The Navy states that this area would still be open for “certain public uses such as recreation and grazing”. This is too vague: what kinds of recreation and other public uses will be permitted -- hiking? camping? hunting? fishing? use of all dirt roads? Will the Navy will have the option of withdrawing permission for these uses whenever it deems necessary and without public input?</p> <p>Please consider this when and I do urge you to oppose this land grab.</p> <p>The military should expand within land already in use.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p> <p>Sincerely, Diana Johnson</p>	<p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.</p> <p>The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>Under Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative), Fairview Peak would not be closed to public access. Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p> <p>The proposed B-16 and B-20 expansion areas are outside of the current mapped range of bighorn sheep and mule deer, and only the eastern portion of the proposed B-20 expansion area overlaps with year-round pronghorn range (Nevada Department of Wildlife (2017a). However, mule deer were observed within the proposed B-20 expansion area during camera trap surveys conducted in support of this EIS (see Supporting Study: Final Wildlife Remote Camera Trapping Survey Report, available at http://www.frtcmodernization.com). In addition, the estimated 60-65 DNL dBA aircraft noise contours within the proposed B-17 expansion area overlies a portion of currently mapped bighorn sheep winter-lambing range (i.e., the flats at the southern end of the Fairview Range) and year-round range within the central Monte Cristo Mountains and</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>southern Sand Springs Range. The estimated 70-75 DNL dBA contours would not appreciably change from existing conditions (see Figures 3.7-9 and 3.7-22). Given the estimated number of bighorn sheep within the vicinity of the existing B-17 and DVTA range areas are at an all-time high (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a), existing training operations are not having an effect on regional bighorn sheep populations. Therefore, it is expected that proposed training operations conducted within the proposed restricted areas (R-4805A and R4816S Low) and associated expansion areas at the same level as current training operations would not have a significant impact on bighorn sheep populations.</p> <p>Within the FRTC region of influence, there are over 1 million acres of mapped bighorn sheep year-round range, over 51,000 acres of mapped bighorn sheep winter/lambing range, 5.6 million acres of mapped year-round pronghorn range, and 52,000 acres of mapped pronghorn crucial summer range. Navy operational doctrine dictates that during transiting, pilots avoid lambing areas. Therefore, impacts to these ungulate ranges would not have a significant or measurable impact to bighorn sheep populations.</p> <p>The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) as the action alternatives, including training elsewhere. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).</p>

F.7.3.169 Johnson, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
John	Johnson	This is bs. Do not buy land for bomb testing!!!!	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.170 Johnson, Mart.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Martha	Johnson	I have spent my entire life living in Churchill County, Nevada. I was born in Fallon, but moved with my family to Dixie Valley when I was 3. I grew up on an alfalfa farm until nearly all of the valley residents were displaced by the Navy when it was decided to create a supersonic operations area over our heads. I have been through this before. I know how it ends. The military takes what they want and we citizens must make do with what is left to us, if anything. If it's going to be taken away, I feel it should at least be known what is being taken away. Please read the attached story of why the area is so important to me. I hope to still have access to these beautiful places.	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

Dixie Valley holds a special place in my heart. Bordered on one side by the Clan Alpine range and by the Stillwater Mountains on the other, it's a narrow and remote valley with a starkly beautiful setting. These mountain ranges were my adventure getaway as a kid. I'd like to tell you about one of our experiences there.

When I was 12, my dad, two brothers and I decided to hike up to a prominent rock outcropping below Job Peak in the Stillwater Range. We had been told that bighorn sheep lived on those rocks. We had never seen any bighorn, being very poor and not being able to afford trips or vacations. So we set out one Saturday morning in September, driving as close as possible, then proceeding on foot. In those days, crazy as it may seem, we hiked without anything more than what would fit in our pockets. We had no food, water or other supplies along. We drank from streams or springs along the way. I suppose the water was cleaner then, because we never got sick. We had a long-sleeved layer that could be tied around the waste when it got warm. Anyway, climbing up to the rock outcrop was very difficult work. The mountains are very steep, and the footing is anything but sure. By early afternoon, we had made good progress and were looking forward to finding those bighorn any time, but fate would write a different story.

The younger of my brothers reached above him for a grip with which to leverage himself up, but the rock he grasped gave way, and as he fell back, the rock struck his leg just above his knee, breaking his leg. Instantly our outing changed from one of exploration to one of survival and recovery. My other brother and dad formed a chair with their arms and carried my brother with the broken leg to a small flatter place on the ridge of a dogleg. My older brother left his cigarette lighter (he didn't smoke, he just liked fire), from his pocket and headed down the mountain alone to go home and call for help. This was many years before cell phones, but at least we had a phone at home on the farm, even if we were on a 4-party line. My dad and I set to work to make my brother as comfortable as possible and to prepare for what we knew would be a chilly night for which we were not dressed.

My brother was placed with his back against a pinion pine tree, and we worked to create a rock reflective wall in front of him, in front of which we built a fire with deadfall wood lying around. Then we settled in for the long wait for help. Occasionally my dad would step to the brow of our flat spot and give his special whistle down into the canyon below. I tried to add my own whistle, but it wasn't nearly as effective. Sometime several hours after dark, there was a responding call from below! After a bit, my older brother came scrambling up, accompanied by a volunteer search and rescue team and a husband and wife ambulance team. They had lugged a stretcher with medical supplies with them up the mountain. All of this was not per my family's request. My dad knew that the only way to get someone with a broken leg off that mountain was by helicopter and instructed my older brother to ask for one, but of course, others wanted to help.

What followed was a perfectly miserable night spent by all. The team had not thought to bring any usable supplies with them. I guess when they heard it was only a couple of miles up, they must have thought they'd be back down in no time, but mileage isn't the most important factor when travelling in rough terrain without trails. The male ambulance driver was wearing cowboy boots, and his EMT wife still had high heels on. How they managed to make it up the mountain I'll never know. The only liquid

available was a couple bottles of IV fluid, which tastes really nasty. There was no food, and the only blankets were the thin emergency blankets. While they are better than nothing, they crinkle quite irritatingly in the wind, which is always blowing at that elevation. We took turns warming ourselves at the fire and waited for morning.

Slowly, daybreak dawned over the Clan Alpine Range. At last, the team could be useful. They had a radio with which to communicate with the emergency community. Soon after the sun arose, a Navy helicopter from NAS Fallon showed up. There was no place flat enough to land, so they hovered while someone rappelled down. My brother was loaded into the stretcher and winched into the helicopter. The lady EMT was also airlifted out, suffering from hypothermia and exhaustion. The rest of us found our way down the mountain as best we could. What a relief to find a spring on the way down from which to drink! We drove home and took a long nap before my parents started out to visit my brother in a Reno hospital. He had to have surgery and ended up with a long, zipper-shaped scar on his thigh from the adventure.

I have tried in recent years to find that spot we spent the night on the mountain but have been unsuccessful. Now I suppose I never will. But as luck would have it, each time I try, I see a small herd of bighorn sheep. Often you can hear them before you can see them, as they cause small rocks to fall and clatter as they bounce across the rock faces. It's a wild, rugged place, but it's a very special place to me.

Martha Johnson

F.7.3.170.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process and for your story. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTAs and surrounding areas.

F.7.3.171 Johnson, Mary

First	Last	Comment	Response
Mary	Johnson	I'm believe these lands help protect species that absolutely shouldn't be bombed for their sake and for mine as a user of these public lands. I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. I'm not understanding why you need to expand areas to be destroyed. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

F.7.3.172 Johnson, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Stoney	Johnson	Dear Congressmen, please oppose the additional takeover of our Nevada Public and private lands! NAS Fallon was quoted at to “give ranchers fair consideration”... for how long and what do they consider fair? What about Middlegate Station and other privately owned property? What is fair to them? What about the Ranchers in Dixie Valley or the wildlife within the Stillwater Refuge?	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives.

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>NAS Fallon has already been quoted to be “the Carrier in the Desert”.</p> <p>“According to information provided during the public meeting in Fallon on December 12th, 2018, the FRTC is the only place where an entire carrier air wing can train with over 60 aircraft and their entire support crews prior to deployment. The Navy often refers to NAS Fallon as “the Carrier in the Desert.””</p> <p>They currently have plenty of land to expand upon without apprehension of any more of Nevada’s Public Lands!</p> <p>Please Oppose any further apprehension of Nevada’s Public Lands!!</p> <p>Thank you Sincerely, Stoney Johnson</p>	<p>The process for valuation of losses as a result of the Proposed Action to ranchers has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.</p> <p>The Navy recognizes the potential socioeconomic impacts on the community. To mitigate these impacts, affected private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land and all compensable rights associated with that land acquired by the United States.</p> <p>The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and has updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy has added tables discussing management practices, monitoring, and mitigation measures to the Final EIS in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation) to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts if applicable.</p> <p>The following specific grazing mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Policies and procedures in the NAS Fallon INRMP would continue to be implemented to avoid conflicts with livestock grazing. This includes routine monitoring of fence lines surrounding potentially hazardous areas to ensure that the fence is secure and cannot be crossed by people or animals; the monitoring area would be increased to include new perimeter fences on lands proposed for withdrawal. The Navy proposes to establish two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers at NAS Fallon. Part of the duties of these officers would include monitoring of the added fence line. The Standard Operating Procedures for handling cattle on the FRTC training ranges would be revised and implemented. Livestock friendly erosion controls would be used when performing construction activities on or adjacent to grazing land that is actively being used. The Navy would also engage in one-to-one discussions with affected ranchers to seek to identify further opportunities for impact minimization, including but not limited to potential payments under 43 U.S.C. Sec. 315q. Such discussions would be on a case-by-case basis and thus would need to occur only after any ultimate implementation of the action.</p> <p>For any acquisition of privately-owned property, private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land acquired by the United States due to the proposed expansion. Just compensation would be determined by calculating the fair market value of parcels in accordance with federal appraisal rules codified in the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions.</p> <p>The DVTA (Dixie Valley Area) would remain open for grazing and ranching as it is now. The Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge lands are not part of the Proposed Action.</p>

F.7.3.173 Johnston, W.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Wade	Johnston	<p>This is not a comment on the EIS specifically but rather to voice my disapproval of the entire modernization program and the Alternatives presented.</p> <p>The ability to appropriate 680,000 acres of land is not something that would ever be considered if it were proposed by a private entity. The only exception to that would be if there were some kind of land swap. Why should an exception be made for the federal govt, whose claim to this land is tenuous to begin with?</p> <p>Currently the ownership of this land has been assumed by the federal govt but is open for entry, for recreation, mineral entry or other uses. The cost of managing this land is assumed by the tax payer. Under Alternatives 1-3 the tax burden becomes greater and the use of the land to the public is withdrawn, not a lot of upside for Joe Schmoe. After perusing the frtc modernization website I honestly don't know what the upside is. There doesn't appear to be any explanation of what actual restrictions are being placed on the training facility by the currently land position. I assume this is a typical case of use it or lose it tax dollars burning a hole in the pocket of the DoD, the most inefficient socialist program our country has.</p> <p>Furthermore, when all of our recent use of our air "defense" systems has been for completely pointless, coercive, overtly offensive and detrimental conflicts, I can't support 99% of what this agency does. The useless meddling in Libya, a country that we helped destroy to the point where they have an active slave trade and despite the fact that their leader complied with dearmament. Or Syria, another completely pointless conflict where demonstrable lies were told to justify our involvement and we side with ISIS/Al Qaeda, the only entity to actually initiate harm on our country- that was the most blatant act of treason committed by this govt in my lifetime. Or Yemen, where we support a POS nation in their holy genocide and have caused the worst cholera epidemic in history; where the US has the blood on their hands of thousands of dead babies literally shitting themselves to death. Or Afghanistan, a war so pointless that soldiers can't even tell you what the purpose is, and the american public has just acquiesced to a perpetual decades-long crusade to waste our money creating new enemies in a country that has bankrupted and destroyed multiple great empires (one of which, the Soviet Union's war, was provoked intentionally by the US's fail-proof template of backing young rebel groups, but that lesson has apparently slipped the military's collective memory). I degress but, in short, I</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described in Chapter 2 as the action alternatives. See Section 2.5 for Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in this section. The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>can't support, either voluntarily or by having tax dollars stolen from me, with anything this inept agency does.</p> <p>You dolts should've proposed an option between No Action and the Alternatives 1-3 that would allow the naval base to renew the withdrawal of the existing acreage but not seek to steal from the public any additional acreage. The base deserves to get stuffed for such an all-or-nothing proposal. Maybe then you could go get jobs contributing to society.</p>	<p>alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).</p>

F.7.3.174 Jones, N.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Nina	Jones	<p>Please. I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to keep operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please— keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.</p>

F.7.3.175 Jones, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Suzanne	Jones	I'm just curious about the benefits it's going to give the people in the counties. I live in Mineral, we are already hurting due to the facts that we have little mining and SOC doesn't like to pay their taxes.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The counties may benefit socioeconomically and recreationally with new opportunities in the portions of the WSAs that would be de-designated

F.7.3.176 Kajans, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Donald	Kajans	It is hard to fly east and south from Reno already. This additional restricted area makes it even worse. Personally I don't understand it. New technology does not require more, it makes it easier to operate in tighter more managerial area. More maneuverable. We could at least share this additional area. Most of the time these restricted areas don't seem to be used anyway. Please consider other options.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).

F.7.3.177 Kajans, Stephanie and Doug

First	Last	Comment	Response
Stephanie & Doug	Kajans	I generally oppose expansion of military land and airspace in Nevada. Nevada already has almost 1/3 of its area dedicated to military operations. I am a pilot and enjoy the use of Nevada public lands. I understand the economic value of FNAS for Nevada. I'm not as opposed to the expansion as I'm opposed to being locked out of the use areas. I'm happy to share the use of these areas with the navy. Please don't lock us out of our public lands. Please provide liberal pass through of civil aircraft flights	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p> <p>Due to the extension of Military Operating Areas in the eastern portion of the FRTC SUA, the Navy is proposing to implement a five nautical mile buffer around the towns of Crescent Valley and Eureka. In order to minimize any aviation impacts under each of the proposed alternatives, the Navy is requesting that the FAA create Airspace Exclusion Zones (3 nautical-mile radius,</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		when not in use. Flights from west to eastern Nevada would be severely impacted without acceptable pass through procedures.	surface to 1,500 feet AGL) for the Gabbs, Crescent Valley, and Eureka airports. This would ensure those airports could operate regardless of the alternative ultimately chosen. The airspace exclusion zones would be avoided, unless the airport is specifically being utilized for take-offs and landings associated with military training activities. This is discussed in Section 3.6.2.2.4 (Local and Regional Airports).

F.7.3.178 Kelly, K.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Kelli	Kelly	<p>As NAS Fallon is the largest employer in Churchill County, the continued presence of FRTC is vital to the health, success, and growth of our community. However, NAS Fallon does not exist in a vacuum! While it is clear that the navy is doing strategic planning in order to prepare for the coming decades, the land and air space needs of the base need to be balanced with the needs of the community in which it exists. I hope that some compromise can be reached where the training abilities of the base can grow to accommodate changing technologies while still allowing reasonable public land access for community members. I am particularly concerned about the 11 families who hold grazing permits in the regions identified by the navy to be removed from public access. While I am sure there will be some accommodation for these families, it is unlikely that they will be recompensed in a way that will allow them to purchase equivalent rights in another region. Additionally, the available parcels for grazing rights will likely be further away from their operations. Hunting, grazing, off-roading, hiking, and other activities in the regions described in the navy's EIS are key elements of the collective 'sense of self' that is held by the community. While it is unrealistic to expect the navy to restrict their</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The following specific grazing mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Policies and procedures in the NAS Fallon INRMP would continue to be implemented to avoid conflicts with livestock grazing. This includes routine monitoring of fence lines surrounding potentially hazardous areas to ensure that the fence is secure and cannot be crossed by people or animals; the monitoring area would be increased to include new perimeter fences on lands proposed for withdrawal. The Navy is proposing to provide funds for BLM to hire two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers who would assist with management of the additional area. The Standard Operating Procedures for handling cattle on the FRTC training ranges would be revised and implemented. Livestock friendly erosion controls would be used when performing construction activities on or adjacent to grazing land that is actively being used.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges that it has the authority under 43 United States Code section 315q of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended, to make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered by the permit holders as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes. This authority has been incorporated into the Proposed Action. The Final EIS discusses the process that the Navy is proposing to use to determine payment amounts to each specific grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		training needs based on the 'wants' of community members, I hope that some conciliation is made to allow for the people of Fallon and Churchill County to feel that they achieved some of what they asked.	While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.

F.7.3.179 Kershaw, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Alexander	Kershaw	There are still micronized toxic chemicals and metals blowing around the area poisoning the people including residents of Nevada, visitors and military personnel and families. The people, wildlife and the environment need no more toxins spread by carrier flight wings that are outmoded for serious combat anyway. Grow up and be serious about the planet and the people. If you want to protect us stop poisoning us.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities. The Navy continuously monitors its operations to find ways to minimize the use of hazardous materials and to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes. Any spills would be managed and cleaned up in accordance with applicable state and federal regulatory requirements. If any such spill were to exceed reportable quantities as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for regulated material, the event would be immediately reported to the NAS Fallon Environmental Division for appropriate action per the Integrated Contingency Plan (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2009). Additionally, the DoD created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure DoD compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations. Lastly, Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3571.4, Operational Range Clearance Policy for Navy Ranges, establishes the policy and requirements for performing operational range clearance on Navy ranges.

F.7.3.180 Knight, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Cody	Knight	This is going to ruin access to hunting unit 18. The sportsmen are responsible for taking care of the natural habitat. Including guzzlers, increasing sheep numbers. If the Navy is going to block off this large of an area of hunting, they need to have sportsman's access. This land is to be shared and not to be used only by the Navy.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy would provide access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency that would set any quotas and distribute any permits, as well as maintenance of wildlife habitat. The Navy has developed a draft MOA in conjunction with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for this hunting program (further details are provided in Section 3.12, Recreation, and Appendix D, Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans, of the Final EIS). The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.</p> <p>The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC.</p>

F.7.3.181 Knowles, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Cybele	Knowles	I'm totally opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with NO expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation, and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station. If you really need more land for bombing, find it elsewhere.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.</p>

F.7.3.182 Koehl, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Dennis	Koehl	<p>Thank you for this opportunity to comment.</p> <p>I have the utmost respect for the Navy and its aviators. Training is a mission that assures success. So does cooperation and efficiency.</p> <p>The vast majority (almost 85%) of Nevada is under control of the federal government, and now they want to remove more airspace from public access.</p> <p>The mission of our armed services should be a coordinated effort, with ground, naval, and airborne forces working toward a common goal. Shouldn't training be carried out in the same manner? Between the Navy and Air Force, a vast system of restricted airspace and MOA's exists now. Why can't the Navy's training and Air Force's be combined within existing airspace?</p> <p>General aviation in the western states is difficult enough with mountainous terrain and sometimes difficult weather conditions, along with EXISTING military restrictions. Control of more airspace will not make general aviation pursuits easier, nor will it improve the performance or results of naval aviation.</p> <p>PLEASE do not pursue the expansion of additional airspace restrictions in Nevada. Another 700,000 acres will not make our country more secure, our military aviators any better, or serve our training needs more efficiently. It is just more control over public land, and training operations would be better served by better utilization of existing reservation</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p> <p>Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the Final EIS discusses various alternatives the Navy considered, including those suggested by the public. The Final EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for not carrying specific alternatives forward for further analysis. While it would hypothetically be possible to develop training systems at Nellis Air Force Base, the United States (U.S.) Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training currently uses nearly all of the complex's available training capacity (time and space). Shared use of Nellis Air Force Base, as currently configured or as proposed, would not be able to support the intensity of both Navy and Air Force training, and therefore was not carried forward for further analysis.</p> <p>General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p>

F.7.3.183 Koerner, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Mike	Koerner	<p>I appreciate the need for effective military training but oppose the proposed expansion of restricted airspace in the Fallon Range Training Complex.</p> <p>The Great Basin is a unique asset to the soaring community. It offers the best soaring conditions in the United States and is one of the best soaring areas in the world. Each year, from late April through early September, hundreds of sailplane flights transition through the Fallon area. These flights are almost exclusively in the afternoon and are concentrated on weekends. The flights originate at Minden, Air Sailing, Inyokern, Tehachapi, and Crystal Airport primarily, but also occasionally from Tonopah, The Flying M Ranch, Ely, Parowan, Bishop, Lone Pine, Jean and Nephi.</p> <p>Unlike powered aircraft that can navigate around restricted airspace, or though corridors such as provided between R-4816N and R-4813, sailplanes are much less maneuverable in that they must follow lift to maintain flight. And if they are no longer able to find lift, the need to be able to glide to an airport to avoid an off-field landing.</p> <p>Of particular concern to sailplane traffic are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The proposed horizontal expansion of R-4803 which makes it more difficult for northbound traffic to get into Fallon Airport, either around to the north or to the south between R-4803 and R-4810. 2) The Addition of R-4805 which impacts east-west traffic by extending the southern limit of the complex, a north-south barrier that is already over 55 nm long, by an additional 20 nm. R-4805 also pushes sailplanes off the mountains north of Gabbs Valley, a likely source of lift. 3) The addition of R-4814 which pushes sailplanes negotiating around the complex to the north further off the ridge between Derby and the Carson Sink, again, a likely source of lift. <p>In contrast, the proposed additional restricted areas R-1416N Low and R-4816S Low, do not appear to impact sailplane flights as the lower limits of the overlying restricted areas, 1500 and 500 feet AGL respectively, already preclude sailplane operations in these areas. Similarly, the proposed expansion of the Fallon Complex MOAs is also not an issue for sailplanes.</p> <p>Mike Koerner</p>	<p>In order to minimize any aviation impacts under each of the proposed alternatives, the Navy is requesting that the FAA create Airspace Exclusion Zones (3-nautical-mile radius, surface to 1,500 feet AGL) for the Gabbs and Eureka airports. Current range procedures identify the town of Crescent Valley and the Gabbs Airfield as noise sensitive areas that shall be avoided by 3,000 feet AGL or 5 nautical miles. This would ensure those airports could operate regardless of the alternative ultimately chosen. The airspace exclusion zones would be avoided, unless the airport is specifically being utilized for take-offs and landings associated with military training activities. This is discussed in Section 3.6.2.2.4 (Local and Regional Airports).</p> <p>General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).

F.7.3.184 Kofoed, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Robert	Kofoed	I am completely against the purposed Navy Land expansion. Removing access to public land for Hunting, grazing, recreational use is unacceptable. This will eliminate one of the premier Dester Bighorn sheep hunting areas in Northern Nevada (Fairview).	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy would provide access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency that would set any quotas and distribute any permits, as well as maintenance of wildlife habitat. The Navy has developed a draft MOA in conjunction with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for this hunting program (further details are provided in Section 3.12, Recreation, and Appendix D, Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans, of the Final EIS). The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission. The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC.

F.7.3.185 Koski, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jess	Koski	I strongly discourage expanding the bombing range area. I have seen what this does to land (in islands off of Puerto Rico) and, as a veteran, know that this type of training/testing is almost always unnecessary. Though much of the land in Nevada might seem barren, it is	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		actually teeming with life. Do not destroy more of it.	Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.

F.7.3.186 Kuykendall, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Rory	Kuykendall	I'm strongly opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station. I'm asking you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. These wild public lands are so important to me as a citizen of the United States. I love the land and the wildlife who lives on it. This land must be protected for future generations to enjoy. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

F.7.3.187 Lalonde, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Terry	Lalonde	I strongly agree that a "top notch" training area is vital, not to mention the advantages of the similarities geographically to likely conflict areas in today's world dictating the Fallon area, as such I am supportive of Fallon and its operations. However, the proposed changes to the restricted areas and MOAs impact civilian aviation more than a bit unreasonably. The "Updated Airspace Under Alternative 1" is a rather cryptic milieu to interpret. An example of which would be the seemingly serpentine "VFR Corridor". I would seem a better solution would be to look at the typical or often used IFR and VFR routes or courses in the region and provide	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to

First	Last	Comment	Response
		clearly interpretable channels or corridors through the military areas. Regards	airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).

F.7.3.188 Lambert, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Timothy	Lambert	Please do not grab more public land for nas Fallon. The area around middle/Eastgate is some of the most beautiful and best land in Nevada for recreation. There is already PLENTY of public land not accessible to the public in nevada-military bases, top secret bases and former & current test sites. And, many limited use areas which are currently called wilderness study areas ☹️. So again, please do not expand the master at Fallon. It would be a huge loss for us nevadans that enjoy our great out doors	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. For clarity, the land areas around Middlegate and Eastgate are not proposed for withdrawal or acquisition. Recreational activities in these areas would continue as they do today.

F.7.3.189 Lamphere, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Cord	Lamphere	I am a frequent user of the public lands near Sand mountain for recreation. Many of us enjoy the public land there throughout the year. Please do not take this nice recreational land. Instead please use the Nellis Air Force Base Complex for your expansion. Thank you, Cord Lamphere	Thank you for your comment and participation in the NEPA process. The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWs China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.

F.7.3.190 Lance, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Annie	Lance	DO NOT SEND ME ANYTHING IN THE MAIL. IT SHOULD BE ILLEGAL TO FORCE ME TO SUBSCRIBE TO YOUR "PROJECT" BULLSHIT JUST TO ELECTRONICALLY COMMENT.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>It should also be illegal for you to propose this land grab.</p> <p>I am a Nevadan against the Fallon Training Facility Expansion.</p> <p>KEEP PUBLIC LANDS IN PUBLIC HANDS.</p>	<p>process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p>

F.7.3.191 Lange, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Corey	Lange	<p>This is a terrible idea. The military already has plenty of land to train on, and transferring private land, wilderness study areas, and a National Wildlife Refuge over to DOD would be criminal. Don't do it!</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.192 Langstaff, G.

First	Last	Comment	Response
George	Langstaff	<p>comments are submitted as pdf file</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p>

Comment on
FALLON RANGE TRAINING COMPLEX DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT,
November 2018

The November 2018 Fallon Range Training Complex Draft Environmental Impact Statement (hereafter DEIS) does not analyze a reasonable range of alternatives for the following reasons:

1. Effects of Alternatives 1, 2, 3 are nearly the same for resources which will experience the most severe adverse impacts.
2. None of Alternatives 1, 2, or 3 would reach full compliance with the Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP) set forth in "Ninety Days to Combat" (June 2015) in order to allow training in realistic 360° combat scenarios (DEIS, p. 2-50).

To assist the Navy in developing a more appropriate range of more meaningful alternatives, this comment outlines three alternatives which minimize some or all of the adverse impacts to private lands, infrastructure, mining, and geothermal energy while better, or equally, meeting the TTP than Alternatives 1, 2, or 3. One alternative moves the Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) to an existing military reservation and two alternatives move two or more of ranges B-17, B-20, and the Dixie Valley Training Area (DVTa) to other federal lands in Nevada.

Submitted by:
George Langstaff

F.7.3.192.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis.

The 90-Days to Combat identifies the required warfighting capabilities for naval aviation and Naval Special Warfare and describes the current capability of NAWDC and the FRTC to support those requirements. It compares the current range capabilities against what would be needed to be able to fully train to Navy Doctrine Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTP). These TTP are informed by current policies, available resources, current strategy and campaign concepts, threats, lessons learned, fielded or emerging technologies, and threat tactics and procedures. Finally, it identifies FRTC land and airspace capability gaps that inhibit the ability to train aircrew and Special Forces to a tactically acceptable level of combat capability prior to deployment.

The Draft EIS document indicated that regional roadways, commercial airspace, and population centers were some examples of constraints that the Navy used to initially (before proposing ANY withdrawal) screen the potential for a full modernization of the FRTC range. Because of the size that would be required to fully meet the requirements, the Navy determined that requesting over 1.6 million acres of land would be far more impactful and complicated than modifying the TTP to be able to achieve realistic, but somewhat limited, training. The 90-Days to Combat document fully details the limitations of the existing FRTC as well as the requirements that would be required in order to fully meet the Navy's mission. This document has been made available on the FRTC Modernization website at: <https://frtcmodernization.com/Public-Involvement/Public-Information/Public-Informational-Materials>.

The Navy evaluated Alternate Training Locations in Section 2.5.3 (Alternate Training Locations) of the Draft EIS.

F.7.3.193 Lanni, K.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Kathryn	Lanni	As a former resident of Fallon I am familiar with the military presence and its effect on the surrounding area. My husband and I are ghost town and mining history enthusiasts as well as explorers and nature lovers. I believe everything possible should be done to protect the desert ecosystem and rich history of Nevada while allowing the public access to explore and learn in the field. Taking away this much land from the public wilderness for military testing is unnecessary and irresponsible. The desert is a beautiful place to preserve not a wasteland to destroy. Please keep the majestic Stillwaters as a wilderness area for future generations to enjoy.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA, Special Land Management Overlay, and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.

F.7.3.194 Larson, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Thomas	Larson	I oppose the Navy's wish to expand their use of the open desert near Middlegate, Nevada. This one of the few open areas left in Nevada. This area is used by the public for many different types of recreation. Off-roading,	The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>hunting and sightseeing etc.</p> <p>Please don't fence us out !</p> <p>The Navy can get by using the current land near Middlegate and\ or share use of the Nellis AFB if necessary.</p> <p>Thanks for your consideration Thomas Larson</p>	<p>The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts.</p> <p>The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p>

F.7.3.195 LaRue, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Liz	LaRue	<p>President Eisenhower once said, "We must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence by the military-industrial complex" — a line that's all too true right now in Nevada. The military is grabbing land all over the state, and our beloved Great Basin desert could be next. I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and has updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species. This expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, the USFWS would need to</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station -- and don't bomb the bighorn!	undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee). The following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes.

F.7.3.196 Lavelle, N.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Nicole	Lavelle	<p>I write, as a member of the American public, to share my extreme opposition to the further enclosure of and reduced access to public lands as proposed in the Navy's expansion of the Fallon Range Training Complex. The proposal to close more than 400,000 acres of public land, almost tripling the size of the training complex (aka bombing range) is an attack on the American public's access to OUR public lands, which I hold as a primary American value. The proposed expansion would include parts of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, further denigrating important wildlife habitat. The activities on the existing bombing range continues to desecrate Paiute Tribe sacred sites, and to expand it would mean to destroy ecologically, culturally, scenic, and historically relevant lands. This is unacceptable.</p> <p>I have visited the BLM lands adjacent to the Bravo 20 bombing range for recreation and landscape study. I have camped overnight beside a former copper smelt, and walked the flat basin of the Carson Sink to witness the landscape. I have hiked up a creek canyon nearby, glimpsing the lush flora that emerges in the desert when water is present. This landscape is not barren, and it is not empty. It is rich and subtle, full of layers of human history, full of rich ecosystems of wildlife.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats.</p> <p>This expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		I implore you to reconsider the scope of the proposed expansion to a more reasonable size. This is a decision with irreversible consequences; you can't un-bomb a tender wildlife habitat. Access to public lands is a critical component of the health of this nation. Please do not desecrate our lands any further.	USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).

F.7.3.197 Lawnicki, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Tim	Lawnicki	<p>To whom it may concern,</p> <p>Instead of eliminating 74,400 acres of Wilderness Study Areas as part of their Dixie Valley Training Area, the Navy should support Wilderness designation for all of the WSAs within or close to this area including the Clan Alpine Mountain, Job Peak and Stillwater Range and the Desatoya Mountains WSAs. Wilderness designation will provide a bigger and more complete buffer for the military actions, allow for continued public access, and be protected in perpetuity. This Wilderness buffer could also include lands with wilderness characteristics that Friends of Nevada Wilderness identified through our inventories (Stillwater additions and South Job Peak).</p> <p>The Navy needs to at a minimum adjust their boundary proposals in B-20 to exclude the 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The 17,848-acre refuge was established by a Congressional Act in 1931 to "...provide a sanctuary and breeding ground for birds and other wildlife". It should not be part of a bombing area, and the military should not be able to unilaterally abridge an Act of Congress.</p> <p>The Navy needs to find a way to allow for more public access in B-17 at least on a seasonal or part time basis. Minor allowances for OHV races and bighorn</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as Wilderness is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVRTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. Through withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses in the B-17 range, as it is Navy policy that these ranges are generally closed to the public. Allowing hunting and special events would work only as managed access through strict Naval control to ensure public health and safety and scheduling of training events. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationists.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>sheep hunting have been made, but what about access for hiking, photography, rock hounding, or camping? Why do OHVers and a person who happens to draw a bighorn sheep tag get special privileges?</p> <p>Thank you for your time and careful consideration.</p> <p>Sincerely, Tim Lawnicki</p>	<p>Regarding the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, the Proposed Action would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p>

F.7.3.198 Lay, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Thomas	Lay	<p>To whom it may concern, I believe the US Navy is already a very well prepared and trained fighting force with no equal on the planet. Expanding the already sizable land withdraw at the Fallon site is an unnecessary step. I personally use the land in question to recreate and further closure of public land with have a serious negative impact on the freedoms I enjoy as a Nevadan and an American. As a pilot and an off-road enthusiast this closure would be a detriment to me and to the thousands of people like me who use this area in any number of ways. I urge the Navy to halt consideration of expansion of the test range and continue to use what they have which has</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>been very successful to this point.</p> <p>Sincerely, Thomas Lay</p>	<p>same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.</p>

F.7.3.199 Lee, H.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Heather	Lee	<p>Leave the land alone! Nature needs it, and you do not.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources.</p>

F.7.3.200 Leigh, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Laura	Leigh	<p>I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Clan Alpine is home to protected wild horses that have limited space in the American West. Habitat destroyed can not be replaced. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please —</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.201 Leigh, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Mike	Leigh	As a native Nevadan, I recognize the unique value that our open public lands provide to the military branches to better prepare our armed forces in their respective missions. Nevada has a long history of allowing our land to be removed from general public access in support of our military. All parties I have spoken to on this subject recognize, and appreciate, the critical functions that are being accomplished through the use of a vast portion of Nevada's lands. The Navy has explained that the capabilities of aircraft and weapon systems have improved such to require a larger surface area for realistic training exercises. This situation unfortunately creates a serious dilemma where such removal of public land will negatively impact so many members of the public that have both invested in the affected area and utilize the lands in diverse manner as intended for "public" land. As such, I urge you to consider a compromise in the amount and location of the proposed land withdrawal to enable the desired training objectives but also provide for continued public use in those areas with a history of usage.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowable in the DVTa. Grazing would also continue to be allowed in the DVTa. Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheep hunting, and events that are pre-coordinated with the Navy.

F.7.3.202 Linebaugh, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
James	Linebaugh	<p>February 13, 2019</p> <p>The Public Land Access Network-High Desert Coalition (PLAN-HDC) is an organization of resource developers/managers, recreationists, sportsmen, livestock producers, miners, local governments and others who support access, wise use, conservation, sustainability, and economic contributions of public and private lands in the American West.</p> <p>PLAN-HDC supports ALTERNATIVE NO. 1 NO CHANGE for the future of the Fallon Naval Air Station in NV at this time.</p>	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable. The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described in Chapter 2 as the action alternatives. See Section 2.5 for Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>If change is contemplated in the future please keep in mind that there is room on military lands for many uses and activities to co-exist. Collaboratively work with all interests on any future plans to reach agreement on proposed changes for the benefit of all stakeholders while addressing military needs. Our people will cooperate.</p> <p>Thank you for considering our interests.</p> <p>/s/ James Linebaugh, Chairman PUBLIC LAND ACCESS NETWORK-HIGH DESERT COALITION 4 Jasper Lane, Dayton, NV 89403 Phone 775 246-7930</p>	<p>of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in this section. The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).</p>

F.7.3.203 Loesch, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Ryan	Loesch	<p>Please do not close our public Ohv trails</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. While OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20, OHV use would be allowed to continue within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after WSA designation removal by Congress.</p> <p>Topography and OHV trails similar to those that occur in the B-17 range area also occur in the Dixie Valley area or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These other public areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).</p>

F.7.3.204 Low, I.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Loretta	Low	<p>Hello, Please do NOT eliminate 74,700 acres of high-quality wilderness study areas (WSAs)! What can be done is to recommend that all of the Wilderness Study Areas surrounding your proposed expansions be fully designated as Wilderness. These Wilderness</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>areas would serve as excellent development buffers while still allowing for protecting wildlife habitat and recreation.</p> <p>The entire Stillwater Range, from Highway 50 to the Pershing County line, including the WSAs and lands with wilderness characteristics, has been identified as having extremely important cultural resources, wildlife habitat and recreational value and needs to be protected. The Range has been proposed as an ACEC because of the cultural, historic, religious and scenic values important to Native Americans, dating back 10,000 years. The Stillwater Range is a popular year-round hiking area and provides for scenic backcountry touring. Therefore it should be protected and remain out of the expansion plan.</p> <p>The plan would threaten the geologic and archeologic resources from the ancient days of Lake Lahontan dating back to the Pleistocene period. Pluvial formations can still be found as well as fossil evidence of the wildlife and plant life unique to the Great Basin from that period. The interconnectivity of the marshlands and mountain ranges is a natural resource rich in habitat, cultural and scenic values.</p> <p>The military should NOT expand into the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The proposal to eliminate 3,200 acres of the refuge and close it to the public IS NOT ACCEPTABLE! To move Highway 361 to Gabbs and take a safe, relatively flat highway through the valley and pushing it up into the mountains creates a very expensive and potentially more dangerous highway for truck and passenger travel. That seems unnecessary and a BIG EXPENSE to the taxpayers. Highway construction would negatively impact wildlife habitat.</p>	<p>Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The proposed de-designation would not prohibit the use of the area for recreation and the Navy would work with land managers to endure that wildlife management continues.</p> <p>This expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDW, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>The potential closure and rerouting of SR 361 associated with the expansion of B-17 would only occur if Congress chose Alternative 3. However, the affected segment of SR 361 would not be closed unless and until a suitable replacement route is established. Relocation of SR 361 would not cut off access to Gabbs or Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park. The notional relocation corridor for the potential re-routing of SR 361 can be found in Section 3.5.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p> <p>Any proposed rerouting is still conceptual in nature and would be evaluated prior to closure of the route. Follow-on NEPA efforts would need to be conducted for the potential relocation of SR 361 if Alternative 3 were to be selected. See Chapter 2, specifically Section 2.3.4.2.4 (Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 3) for further details. If Alternative 3 were chosen, the Navy would transfer any funds appropriated for relocating the road to the Federal Highway Administration, who in turn would make these funds available to NDOT for planning, design and construction of the replacement road to State standards.</p> <p>The Navy has implemented and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce the occurrence of wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan, and where possible, proposed elements and goals of this plan were added to the Final EIS. For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>Given how easily wildfires have started with warming climate and drought I am very concerned with military operations starting fires that could sweep through our homes, ranches and public lands.</p> <p>I support keeping the Fairview Peak area open to the public for a wide variety of recreation. There are concerns with the massive expansion of B-20 and proposed public closures and how that would impact recreation and wildlife habitat in wet years in the Carson Sink.</p> <p>Rural communities are not being given adequate time to thoroughly and accurately analyze the economic impacts of the preferred alternative. Rural economies could suffer from the loss of grazing allotments and greatly reduced public access to lands with high recreational value.</p> <p>We greatly value our public lands, wildlife, and WSA's! Please do not add them to the expansion plan!</p> <p>Thank you! Loretta Low</p>	

F.7.3.205 Lyman, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Thomas	Lyman	I've uploaded a file in Microsoft Word	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

February 11, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.AK
120 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th floor
San Diego, CA 92132

Re: Naval expansion plan

The Navy's proposal to expand the Fallon Range and air space expansion and modifications in the Gabbs Valley Area present negative impact on the people living in this quiet, isolated Town of Gabbs. These facts and concerns should be considered first:

1. There are many square miles in the Nevada desert in which to establish military training and bomb ranges other than near a community. There are also very advanced simulators which can access the most modern technology and options available for pilots. This particular aspect applies to the ACTUAL DROPPING of the new bombs which seem to be at the crux of the expansion. The actual release and flight of the bomb can be done anywhere. Each simulated strike mission takes place in an environment as real as possible WITHOUT real weapons being released and that includes air to air. What is the point of dropping real bombs here when the actual release of the bombs can be done elsewhere.
2. We get that the Navy wants to train as realistically as possible---but the control of the bomb's flight isn't actually done from the dropping plane – or is it? Doesn't the bomb get controlled from other entities involving laser or satellites or forward personnel or ??? Maybe I'm wrong but it's hard to believe that a hundred million dollar fighter jet parks in an orbit and controls the flight of a bomb all the way to the target while jinking and dodging enemy ground to air and air to air ordnance. I hope that's not the way it's done as the likelihood of success in a conflict with competent enemies is rather doubtful. It would probably work for third world opponents but not likely against advanced adversaries.
3. This action would result in closing many mining claims and curtailing exploration, future thermal and solar electric facilities, oil exploration, the possibility of wind farms, many grazing allotments, and drastically reduce outdoor recreation.
4. The nearby desert holds that would be affected by expansion holds fossils and artifacts that need to remain untouched. They have been there hundreds or in some cases millions of years.

5. The unknown potential negative impact to our aquifer with bombs and ammunition being dropped on the surface above.
6. Live ammunition will be fired at moving targets within eyesight of our homes—this one makes no sense. Why does the moving target range have to be on the Gabbs side of the Monte Cristo Mountains. Why not add the moving target range to the existing target complexes within B-17.
7. Gabbs valley residents are making ALL the concessions in the proposed Navy expansion without return other than the obvious increased training opportunities for our Navy which should make all our futures more secure. All of us want the Navy to be as well trained as possible and if indeed there is no other way then so be it. We will make the sacrifice as Americans have for centuries. However, there needs to be some kind of consideration for Gabbs valley residents if this expansion is to be carried out. Our Emergency services such as fire protection and ambulance are woefully undermanned or unmanned. We simply no longer have the population to maintain these services. If the Navy plan to expand as indicated in Option 3 of the proposal, perhaps the Navy might find it to their advantage to place an emergency services outpost here or minimal auxiliary facility that could serve both the Navy and Gabbs.

We the citizens of Gabbs choose to live in this remote area for reasons that would be drastically impacted if you choose to expand the range in the manner indicated.

First, our wonderful laid-back quiet life style is important to all of us and we work passionately to preserve it.

Secondly, our recreational access to hiking, horseback riding, and off-road vehicles in the adjacent desert areas would be severely curtailed. We have had these available to us for as long as the town has been here (over 65 years). Many of our families have been here for generations. Furthermore, desert wildlife has been roaming freely here for many thousands of years and should continue to be protected.

Thomas G and Janice L Lyman and the concerned citizens of our lovely, quiet community of Gabbs

Tom and Janice Lyman

F.7.3.205.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) as the action alternatives, including training elsewhere. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of

the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).

Although virtual training and simulators are an important aspect of training activities and are already utilized, there are numerous reasons they do not sufficiently re-create fully integrated real-life situations that may be encountered by military personnel in a combat environment. For example, as discussed in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS, virtual training and simulators cannot recreate the physical stresses (e.g., increased heart rate and adrenalin levels) that a live-fire exercise provides.

The FRTC is the only location where an entire carrier air wing can train as a single unit conducting the full arc of the mission, including pre-flight planning, ordnance handling, in-air activities, weapons deployment, and post-flight briefing. This cannot be accomplished via full mission simulations.

The safety zone is not the result of pilot control of the missile from the air, but rather the result of the distance from the target at which the pilot would release the missile. If the missile were to malfunction upon release, the Navy needs to be sure that the missile would not drop straight into a populated area.

In accordance with Navy policy, mining is not compatible within a surface danger zone of an operational range. The Navy would continue to follow existing operating procedures that prohibit the collection of materials from any mining area and prohibit entry to mine shafts and mines. Navy training activities would not impact mining activities outside of the proposed withdrawal boundaries. Therefore, there is the potential for a loss of access to salable and locatable minerals and mines in the land requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition. Closing the property may also affect mineral management by limiting the availability of mineral transport within certain areas. For example, new public roads, railroads, or other rights of way that would transport minerals could not be located within the proposed closed areas of the Bravo ranges, which would limit the availability to access and transport locatable and salable minerals. Closing the property would also limit the available means to transport mineral resources like oil/gas pipelines or geothermal energy transmission lines.

The Final EIS further describes the process by which interested parties could pursue compatible geothermal development in a portion of the Dixie Valley Training Area. The proposed required design features are necessary in order for the Navy to meet necessary training requirements. Development of the required design features affords an opportunity for geothermal development that would otherwise be lost. The Navy is committed to working with the developer on a case-by-case basis and acknowledges that complying with required design features could add cost to a potential geothermal development. This is addressed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources). Solar energy could potentially be developed in these areas in the future as well, depending on the ability of the solar facilities to reduce the glint and glare of the structures to acceptable standards for training to occur concurrently with the renewable energy. Wind would not be a possibility in the DVTA due to constraints of structure height for

training requirements; however, in the Special Land Management Overlay, wind energy development may be possible pending a review of the Proposed Project.

The Navy performed cultural resources surveys on the land proposed for withdrawal or requested for acquisition. Based on the cultural surveys conducted in support of this EIS (see Section 3.11.2.5.1, Studies Conducted), when possible, the proposed new target areas would be placed such that no impacts would occur to identified cultural resources.

Munitions constituents are not considered recalcitrant to biodegradation like some other organic chemicals commonly known as groundwater and soil contaminants at hazardous waste sites. The Navy conducts Range Conditions Assessments as part of the Navy's Range Sustainment Environmental Program Assessment every five years. The most recent Range Conditions Assessment for FRTC was completed in 2015 (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015b). A team of environmental and operational range experts evaluated the history of range use within FRTC ranges, the types and quantities of munitions or military expended materials used and their chemical constituents, range location, spatial distribution of activities, available environmental data, environmental regulatory requirements, and compliance efforts. The Range Conditions Assessment information and data were derived from site visits, personnel interviews, archive search reports, and document reviews conducted in 2013 and 2014. The review team's findings, based on these data, concluded that the range and training operations are in compliance with environmental laws and policies, and there are no munitions constituents migrating off of the ranges.

Proposed activities on B-17 do not include moving targets. The Navy is not proposing to change the level or type of aviation or ground training from what was analyzed in Alternative 2 of the *2015 Military Readiness Activities at Fallon Range Training Complex, Nevada Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)* (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015a). Rather, the Navy would redistribute training activities for more efficient use of the training space.

Over the past several decades Joint Land Use Studies have assisted in preserving and protecting the lethality and readiness of our nation's military. During that time, the Navy identified that the compatibility challenges that the military and communities face go beyond the use of land. Joint Land Use Studies can also address encroachment challenges such as spectrum interference, unmanned aerial systems, and cyber vulnerabilities. In recognition of the broader challenges faced by our military and communities the Joint Land Use Study is being rebranded as the Compatible Use Plan. State and community driven Compatible Use Plans will continue to be the primary tool to promote compatible use in order to sustain the military missions. The Navy is not authorized currently to fund emergency services in Gabbs. Following any ultimate Congressional decision, it is anticipated that the U.S. Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment Program will provide technical and financial assistance to state and local governments to undertake Compatible Use and Joint Land Use Studies in response to Military Department compatibility concerns. Joint land use studies represent a planning process that promotes open, continuous dialogue among the Military, surrounding jurisdictions, and states to support long-term sustainability and operability of military missions. The last Joint Land Use Study was completed for NAS Fallon in May of 2015, and serves as a comprehensive strategic plan with specific implementation actions to address and prevent incompatible civilian development that could impair the operational utility of military missions or impact available resources (i.e., air, land, electromagnetic spectrum). Building off of the successful Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) Federal

Funding Opportunity (FFO) focused on placement of energy projects, OEA is launching a new FFO in an effort to further the Compatible Use Program. In addition to assistance with energy placement, the new FFO is expanded to allow state and local governments to request funding to assist states and communities to work with their local military installations to promote and guide civilian development and activities which are compatible and support the long-term readiness and operability of military installations, ranges, special use air space, military operation areas and military training routes. This FFO allows states and communities to nominate their installation(s) and region for compatible use efforts. OEA will maintain a concurrent annual process for the military services to nominate installations for Compatible Use Plans (see <http://oea.gov/office-economic-adjustment-announcement-federal-funding-opportunity-ffo>).

The Navy would implement a 3-nautical-mile radius and a surface-to-1,500 feet AGL airspace exclusion zone around the Gabbs airport to allow for safe arrivals and departures, as discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace).

Under the U.S. Department of Defense Reauthorization, P.L. 105-85, Div. A, Title X, Section 1079, Nov. 18, 1997, 111 Stat. 1916, special use airspace actions are exempt from Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act because establishment of avoidance areas result in unacceptable and severe operational and safety concerns.

The Navy acknowledges noise sensitive areas and has established Noise Sensitive Areas (such as around wildlife refuges, incorporated areas, and certain tribal areas) in the past. The Navy is proposing new Noise Sensitive Areas as part of the Proposed Action around the incorporated areas of Crescent Valley and Eureka. The establishment of these Noise Sensitive Areas is considered compatible with military training activities and will include a 5 nautical mile radius and an elevation of 3,000 feet AGL.

The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.

While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.

F.7.3.206 Lyon, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Max	Lyon	<p>I would like to see NO ACTION.</p> <p>The inability to adequately address the swallowing up of Private Property, Wilderness Study Areas, public highways and roads, valuable public land open to a variety of multiple use, the impact to grazing allotments, the impact to mining claims, a reduction of land in the FNWR, increased risk for wildfire, impact to wildlife, the burden on rural businesses such as the Middlegate Station, the impact on local economies on decreased hunt units, the ability to effectively manage the wildlife in these hunt units, and the reduced access to areas that are commonly and historically used for recreation, leads me to the conclusion the Navy does not care about the concerns of the people who live, recreate, and depend on this land for their livelihood. Therefore I cannot support any new action, or expansion.</p> <p>My understanding is that the Navy has threatened to pull out of Fallon and this area if they do not get what they want. If this is true, I'd suggest that if this area is not serving your needs, perhaps the Navy does need to find another area in which the local people who live, work, and recreate in the area are more obliging.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Under this proposal, taking “no action” would mean that Congress would not extend the current land withdrawal, which expires in November 2021. Therefore, the land withdrawal would expire and FRTC lands would be reverted back as described under the No Action Alternative. The FEIS includes a thorough analysis of acquisition of private property, land use, grazing, mining, socioeconomics, biological resources, and recreation.</p>

F.7.3.207 Macartney, B.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Bill	Macartney	<p>Instead of trying to eliminate 74,700 acres of high-quality wilderness study areas (WSAs) the military should recommend that all of the Wilderness Study Areas surrounding their proposed expansions be fully designated as Wilderness. These Wilderness areas would serve as excellent development buffers for the military while still allowing for protecting wildlife habitat and recreation.</p> <p>The entire Stillwater Range, from Highway 50 to the Pershing County line, including the WSAs and lands with wilderness characteristics, has been identified as having extremely important cultural resources, wildlife habitat and recreational value and needs to be protected. The Range has been proposed as an ACEC because of the cultural, historic, religious and scenic values important to Native Americans, dating back 10,000 years. The Stillwater Range is a popular year-round hiking area and provides for scenic backcountry touring.</p>	<p>Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>The military's plan could threaten the geologic and archeologic resources from the ancient days of Lake Lahontan dating back to the Pleistocene period. Pluvial formations can still be found as well as fossil evidence of the wildlife and plant life unique to the Great Basin from that period. The interconnectivity of the marshlands and mountain ranges is a natural resource rich in habitat, cultural and scenic values.</p> <p>The military should not expand into the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. They are proposing to eliminate 3,200 acres of the refuge and close it to the public. This is not acceptable.</p> <p>The military is proposing to move Highway 361 to Gabbs to the east of its current location, taking a safe, relatively flat highway through the valley and pushing it up into the mountains creating a very expensive and potentially more dangerous highway for truck and passenger travel. That seems unnecessary and a big expense to the taxpayers. Highway construction would negatively impact wildlife habitat.</p> <p>Given how easily wildfires have started with warming climate and drought we are very concerned with military operations starting fires that could sweep through our homes, ranches and public lands.</p> <p>We support keeping the Fairview Peak area open to the public for a wide variety of recreation.</p> <p>We have concerns with the massive expansion of B-20 and proposed public closures and how that would impact recreation and wildlife habitat in wet years in the Carson Sink. Rural communities are not being given adequate time to thoroughly and accurately analyze the economic impacts of the preferred alternative. Rural economies could suffer from the loss of grazing allotments and greatly reduced public access to lands with high recreational value.</p>	<p>of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as Wilderness is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process.</p> <p>This expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>As discussed in Section 3.5 (Transportation), under Alternative 3, the WDZ would extend over a portion of SR 361, and that segment would need to be closed and re-routed outside of the WDZ due to mission and public safety requirements. The potential closure and rerouting of SR 361 associated with the expansion of B-17 would only occur if Congress chose Alternative 3. However, the affected segment of SR 361 would not be closed unless and until a suitable replacement route is established. Relocation of SR 361 would not cut off access to Gabbs or Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park. The notional relocation corridor for the potential re-routing of SR 361 can be found in Section 3.5.3 (Environmental Consequences). Additionally, Fairview Peak would remain open under Alternative 3.</p> <p>Any proposed rerouting is still conceptual in nature and would be evaluated prior to closure of the route. Follow-on NEPA efforts would need to be conducted for the potential relocation of SR 361 if Alternative 3 were to be selected. See Chapter 2, specifically Section 2.3.4.2.4 (Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 3) for further details. If Alternative 3 were chosen, the Navy would transfer any funds appropriated for relocating the road to the Federal Highway Administration, who in turn would make these</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>funds available to NDOT for planning, design and construction of the replacement road to State standards.</p> <p>The Navy has implemented and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce the occurrence of wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan, and where possible, proposed elements and goals of this plan were added to the Final EIS. For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).</p> <p>The comment period was extended to February 14, 2019 as a result of these public comments. A notice of availability was published in the Federal Register (FR) by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on November 16th, 2018 (83 FR 57726) for the Navy's Draft FRTC Modernization EIS at Naval Air Station Fallon, NV. The public review period was set to end on January 15, 2019. On December 27, 2018, the Department of the Navy published a 30-day comment extension in the Federal Register (83 FR 66685), which extended the commenting period to February 14, 2019.</p>

F.7.3.208 MacDougall, B.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Brandon	MacDougall	<p>To Whom It May Concern,</p> <p>I am writing to express my overwhelming disapproval of Alternatives 1, 2 and 3 pertaining to the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization EIS. I am a lifelong Nevadan. I was born and raised in Lovelock and currently reside in Fallon. I am a licensed Professional Mining Engineer and have strong ties to both the mining and agriculture sectors in this state. In my personal life, I enjoy visiting public lands, hunting, fishing, and exploring historic mining sites. I am of the strong opinion that none of the proposed alternatives are conducive to the personal or professional undertakings of myself or the public at large.</p> <p>The issue of greatest concern is the withdrawal of hundreds of thousands of acres of land from all locatable mining activity. The proposed withdrawal includes multiple well known historic mining districts with high potential for future mining activity. The current Fairview district is already off limits under the existing range layout. The proposed expansion of just the B-17 range would additionally impact Eagleville, Nevada Scheelite, Sand Springs,</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheet hunting, and events that are pre-coordinated with the Navy. Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would grant limited</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>Wonder, and several smaller mining districts. Several more districts would be impacted by the proposed expansion of the B-20 range as well.</p> <p>The proposed actions would also take large portions of land away from outdoors enthusiasts. Areas that I enjoy hunting, fishing or simply taking my family and exploring would be lost. If this proposal were to go through it is very unlikely that the public would ever regain access to these lands.</p> <p>Ultimately, I fail to see how any of the proposed actions will create a net benefit for the public at large. I understand the importance of defense and national security. However, hundreds of thousands of acres of land that the public has benefited from for generations, land that future generations may never be able to enjoy, for a small piece of mind? That is not a trade I am willing to make. Defense is only a small piece of national security. I would also consider energy, agricultural and mineral independence important to the security of any nation and these alternatives strip them all from large swaths of land. When I consider the unprecedented accuracy of modern weapon systems, coupled with the economic, historic and recreational losses being proposed, I find it hard to justify such a massive expansion.</p> <p>I live in Fallon and I am not against the Fallon NAS or its mission. I am sympathetic to the benefits that the base brings to the community and I would like to see their work continue. With this in mind, I would be more amenable to the EIS proposal if it were simply a small expansion of the B-20 range. This would allow for the type of training this plan is designed for and would have a much lower overall impact to the public. I would likewise not be opposed to the full expansion of the B-20 range if the land were exchanged from elsewhere. I strongly feel that the amount of land being requested in Alternatives 1, 2 and 3 of this proposal is excessive and therefore I cannot support any of the options as they currently stand.</p>	<p>public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowable in the DVTA. Grazing would also continue to be allowed in the DVTA. Similarly, all recreational activities and mining exploration activities would continue to be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay that is proposed on the east and west sides of the proposed B-17 range.</p> <p>Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis.</p>

F.7.3.209 Maddox, M. K.

First	Last	Comment	Response
M. Kathleen	Maddox	We don't need more bombing/training areas in Nevada. We need to protect our public lands including the Stillwater Wildlife Refuge, for recreation and public use.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Please note that this expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility

First	Last	Comment	Response
		Too much land is being sold out from under the public by this administration. This is another land grab by the government.	determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee). Also, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.

F.7.3.210 Maniatis, N.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Nick	Maniatis	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. >>> You have your range in Arizona... and that is ENOUGH! You've already killed and toxified that landscape... now stay in the sandbox you created for this purpose! <<< The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.211 March, E.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Eric	March	<p>I grew up in Fallon. I spent my childhood watching flares drop over range B-16 and listening to sonic booms. Much of my youth and "formative" years were spent exploring the off-road areas of Fallon with my father. We spent countless hours in the Dead Camel, Stillwater, and Clan Alpine mountain ranges. I still remember the exciting drive to Fairview Peak and the amazing view it afforded - thirty years later. I hope to share some of these areas with my own son.</p> <p>I am strongly opposed to the apparent land-grab by the US Navy. I am particularly opposed to the expansion of area B-16 as it looks to overtake nearly half of the Dead Camel range.</p> <p>The military needs to respect the existing Wilderness Study Areas, exclude any trespass into the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, and increase public access to the B-17 area.</p> <p>Sincerely, Eric March</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>Regarding the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, the Proposed Action would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>The following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes.</p> <p>The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses beyond what is proposed under Alternative 2 and 3 as managed access for OHV races and the Bighorn Sheep hunting program in the B-17 range, as there are too many recreationists and it is difficult to control the number or people that would be allowed on range. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationists.</p>

F.7.3.212 Marcussen, P.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Paul	Marcussen	The military already has plenty of bombing ranges. They should reevaluate and reassess the usage of these, in order to use them more efficiently, instead of destroying more wilderness and wildlife habitat. Better yet, retire some of the ones they are already wasting our taxpayer dollars bombing to smithereens and reclaim them, in order to help bring our decimated wildlife back, in those places.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) as the action alternatives, including training elsewhere. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).

F.7.3.213 Martinelli, E.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Ellen	Martinelli	First of all, thank you to the Naval Facilities Engineering Command & all personnel. I am a 42 yr resident of Washoe County, Nevada and hope you can reconsider the proposed Navy expansion which impacts the Stillwater & Fallon Nat'l Wildlife refuges, Job Peak, Monte Cristo Mtn range, Gabbs Valley etc. This is a huge impact to wilderness access which I never believed it could ever be denied access. My family have served in the military, my grandfather loved hunting & all of us want to see these wilderness areas protected for all to enjoy. Please rethink the expansion proposal. These areas are unique and appreciated which is part of wild Nevada. I biked, hiked and ATV'd. Once it's gone it's gone. No access, no preservation of an already fragile ecosystem doesn't make sense to me. Thank you for reading my comments.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.</p> <p>Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowable in the DVTA. Grazing would also continue to be allowed in the DVTA. Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheep hunting, and events that are pre-coordinated with the Navy.

F.7.3.214 Martinez, E.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Elveda	Martinez	<p>I am totally against this EIS for the expansion of land and airspace for the US Navy. Historically the FNAS has contaminated tribal lands of the Walker River Paiute Tribe with live and inert ordnance and has done nothing to compensate the tribe for that trespass and contamination. This is totally unacceptable. This has been going on since the 1940's. The Navy is proud to state that there has been a \$517 million dollar economic impact to Churchill, Lyon and Washoe Counties. The Tribe has asked for years for compensation or a lease agreement of the contaminated lands. The Fallon representatives continually say that they are not the ones to make the decisions, so nothing has been decided. The expansion will cause more negative impacts to the reservation and the residents of Schurz.</p> <p>I say NO, NO, NO to the proposed expansion.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy implemented operational changes in November 1989 to eliminate off-range munitions, including reorienting strafing/bomb run-in lines and increasing surveillance of all drops. These operational changes have been effective in reducing off-range ordnance occurrences. A Memorandum of Understanding between NAS Fallon and the Walker River Paiute Tribe establishing protocols for both the Indian Tribe and the Navy to follow in responding to potential future off-range ordnance incidents (e.g., notification and coordinating access to reservation lands) was signed on May 14, 2007. A Memorandum of Agreement between the Indian Tribe and Navy was signed on May 24, 2017, updating and clarifying procedures for addressing any future off-range ordnance incidents on the Reservation. The Navy is actively working with the Indian Tribe to seek a mutually-agreeable resolution for the issue of historical off-range ordnance present on the Reservation. An effort to locate and clear historic ordnance was conducted and the Navy implemented measures that seek to eliminate (or at least dramatically reduce) the possibility of off-range ordnance near the southern boundary of training range B-19.</p> <p>Per Navy policy (OPNAVINST 3710.7 [Series]), the release of any air-to-surface ordnance should be accomplished within Restricted Airspace and all such releases should impact on Navy land. As required by the Department of Defense Military Munitions Rule Implementation Procedures (April, 2017), ordnance that inadvertently lands outside Navy property would be retrieved as soon as possible once the Navy learns that it has landed off range. NAS Fallon has conducted cleanup operations in the past and repaired facilities in accordance with tribal wishes, and is planning to conduct additional cleanup operations in the near future.</p> <p>Resolution of legacy off-range munitions will continue to be addressed with the Walker River Paiute Tribe as a separate issue from the FRTC Modernization EIS. Since the Navy's requirements do not call for an expansion of B-19, legacy off-range ordnance is beyond the scope of this EIS and therefore is discussed only for purposes of background information.</p>

F.7.3.215 Martinez, Ra.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Rafael	Martinez	<p>You've got enough land to accomplish the current training mission. The needs of the military have to be balanced with the needs of the public and the legacy we leave or kids. In combined total the DoD owns enough land to simulate any actual theater we're already engaged in. In this modern era of combined arms and joint operations maybe you should start looking at consolidating bases. If you want X amount of land, start closing down other bases and consolidate training lands. These useless wars are already costing us our children's future. The debt load is going to bankrupt this nation.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p> <p>With respect to potentially having enough land to simulate any require theater of engagement, please see Section 2.5.3 (Alternate Training Locations) of the FEIS for a discussion of alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis, some of which illustrate the practical difficulties inherent in a potential attempt to combine multiple major training functions at single locations.</p>

F.7.3.216 Martinez, Ro.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Robert	Martinez	<p>First, growing up in that area, it felt so incredible hearing the jets in the air, as well as seeing them close in from the West off 95 to drop their loads.</p> <p>I'm curious, as the last I'd heard about this bombing range, that there were lawsuits ongoing with the local Paiute Tribe. Have those suits been settled?</p> <p>Which directions will the Navy be expanding into?</p> <p>What kinds of training will take place on this range? What types of ordnance will be expended in this range?</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p> <p>Resolution of legacy off-range munitions will continue to be addressed with the Walker River Paiute Tribe as a separate issue from the FRTC Modernization EIS. Since the Navy's requirements do not call for an expansion of B-19, legacy off-range ordnance is beyond the scope of this EIS and therefore is discussed only for purposes of background information.</p> <p>Details on the proposed expansion and alternatives, as well as descriptions of the training anticipated to occur can be located in both the Executive Summary and in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS.</p>

F.7.3.217 Mason, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Larry	Mason	<p>I am opposed to the Navy annexing land near Middlegate and Gabbs. I believe the Navy could leave a buffer area so as not to interfere with the public access in these areas.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.</p>

F.7.3.218 Mathers, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Merry	Mathers	How big a war machine does the US really need? Does taking public lands improve our safety? How about actually caring for those people who have served in our military before adding more to the lists of veterans on the streets?! These are more than rhetorical questions; think on these before expanding military bases! Thanks	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command. Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.

F.7.3.219 McClain, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Anne	McClain	I am strongly against taking public land away from the public. I object to having more land torn up as a bombing range. We need land for native plants and animals. Land for people to freely roam in peace.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.220 McCleary, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Debora	McCleary	WHAT THE HECK IS WRONG WITH YOU PEOPLE? I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of

First	Last	Comment	Response
		important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

F.7.3.221 Mccuiston, P.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Patrick	Mccuiston	<p>Hello and Thank You for your public open comment.</p> <p>I wish to first say that I strongly support the US Military and understand the necessity to expand and implemant new technology and training. I ask just one thing. Please do not close down or take away the public access to the BLM's Sand Mountain OHV park.</p> <p>Thank You</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p> <p>The BLM's Sand Mountain OHV Park does not overlap with any of the Navy's proposed withdrawal or acquisition and is not part of this EIS action.</p>

F.7.3.222 McDermott, B.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Bart	McDermott	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization proposal. I appreciate the need for our armed forces to have the capacity and resources to maintain their skills to protect our nation. However, I believe there may be other alternatives the Navy can consider that are not included in this current proposal for modernizing your training facility and programs that do not take additional lands out of the public domain. While the majority of the land in the state of Nevada is managed by federal agencies, a large proportion is already administered by the Department of Defense which does not provide multiple use activities to the public for obvious reasons. Our</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, OHV use, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.</p> <p>The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>public lands are a unique feature of the nation and highly valued by the American public.</p> <p>Nevada is one western state that offers many recreational opportunities for the American public. I have enjoyed fishing and exploring the landscapes and history of Nevada as a nonresident for over 20 years. It's a place my family enjoys camping where my children can play and discover rocks, bugs and experience wildlife. I also enjoy exploring old two track roads and following wild horse trails on my motorcycle.</p> <p>Over the past few years, I have joined a group of riders from across the west who have an event twice a year within your proposed expansion area. Two of the alternatives would significantly affect the groups ability to maintain the quality of experience the riders have come to enjoy for many years and hope to share with future generations of riders. Additionally, the scope of your alternatives are too broad and limiting, leaving the reviewer, and affected landowners, that include the public and lease holders, the only option of the No Action Alternative. This modernization proposal includes expanding and restricting use and access to 5 separate sites in some fashion. There is no consideration for only expanding one or a few of these sites or ranking them in priority for training needs.</p> <p>Your proposal also raises the concerns for increases noise and the spread of lead and other munitions contaminants that are toxic to wildlife and humans. One of the areas that would be affected within the the B-20 site is a portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge which provides habitat for</p>	<p>Special Land Management Overlay and within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after WSA designation removal by Congress. Topography and OHV trails similar to those that occur in the B-17 range area also occur in the Dixie Valley area or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These other public areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).</p> <p>Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis. While it would hypothetically be possible to develop training systems at Nellis Air Force Base, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training currently uses nearly all of the complex's available training capacity (time and space). Nellis Air Force Base, as currently configured or as proposed, would not be able to support the intensity of both Navy and Air Force training, and therefore was not carried forward for further analysis.</p> <p>For this EIS, an Economic Impact Analysis was conducted to determine potential economic impacts associated with the requested land withdrawal and proposed acquisition (see Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at http://frtcmodernization.com]). The methodology for determining impacts uses input-output or inter-industry modeling techniques.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>migratory birds and golden eagles. The Refuge is also an area where public activities like waterfowl hunting and wildlife photography are permitted. An increase in target practice and bombing runs near this area may affect habitat and wildlife and possibly restrict or diminish the quality of public use activities.</p> <p>Please consider the following items in your analysis for selecting your final alternative: The impact on local and regional business providing services to the recreating public: hotels, restaurants, gas stations, RV/campsites, grocery stores, off road vehicle dealers etc. How expanded training activities may affect existing noise and light levels and the impact on public use activities in adjacent open lands. The reduction in the number of state fishing and hunting licenses due to limiting access in this region. Remove the proposed portion of the B-20 site that would overlay on Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. Rank the 5 training sites in priority as to how each meets the modernization needs for Navy personnel and choose the top 1-3 for the proposed expansion. Minimize fencing and restricted access to the public. Consider if any of the other air bases in Nevada can accommodate this training need in the existing foot print. A large section of southern Nevada already supports several military bases with substantial restricted areas used for aerial combat training and weapons testing.</p>	

F.7.3.223 McFarren, K.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Katie	McFarren	<p>PLEASE DO NOT TAKE OUR PUBLIC LANDS FROM US! I've grown up in this state and the public lands and open space are two of the things that I love most about it, and this is true for many native Northern Nevadans. Our lands are why we love it here, and access to them is VERY important. This bill will sequester land in the basin closest to Reno/ Carson City; the largest population center in Northern Nevada and remove it from public access for minimal gain. The mountain ranges on both sides are critically popular for outdoor enthusiasts. Bighorn sheep antelope and deer live in these mountains and the geology is beautiful, it's not right for the government to take those outdoor opportunities away from us.</p> <p>I object strenuously to having the area removed from public use. The military is already using a lot of land and airspace in Northern Nevada and our military is very strong. I do not believe that taking these extra lands away from the us will make any difference to how expert our military is. To deprive this large population of Nevadans the use of this recreational opportunity is wrong. PLEASE DO NOT take these lands away from us!!</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.</p>

F.7.3.224 McFarren, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Sandra	McFarren	<p>The B 17 bombing range occupies the basin closest to Reno/ Carson City; the largest population center in Nevada outside of Las Vegas. The mountain ranges on both sides are popular for outdoor enthusiast. Bighorn sheep antelope and deer are among the easiest to see. The geology is beautiful.</p> <p>I object strenuously to having the area removed from public use. There is already plenty of airspace available in the southern part of Nevada. To deprive this large population of. Is recreational opportunity is wrong.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowable in the DVTA. Grazing would also continue to be allowed in the DVTA. Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheet hunting, and events that are pre-coordinated with the Navy.</p>

F.7.3.225 McFarren, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Tim	McFarren	I am against the expansion and public land grab that you are proposing! My family and I have used this area for recreation, wildlife viewing, and camping. The Navy does not need this area. Will you give up other land that is under your control to mitigate this public land loss? Why can't you fly in Southern Nevada at the Nellis base? Would save taxpayer money!	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.

F.7.3.226 McGarry, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Mike	McGarry	I think this is very important for US Navy training. Please expand the FRTC ASAP.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.227 McLellan, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Tracy	McLellan	I am totally against the plan for the Navy to seize 600,000 acres of public land in central Nevada to bomb. It is boneheaded ideas like this that make me ask myself, "how do you refute the irrefutable?" Shouldn't we be thinking of protecting and	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep, mule deer, and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		preserving our environment rather than maliciously destroying? The proposal is made the worse in that it would take and destroy the habitats of mule deer and golden eagles.	Regarding eagles, potential impacts to bald and golden eagles are analyzed on an individual animal basis (not just on effects to populations). Species protected under the MBTA are analyzed by major taxonomic groups within subcategories (e.g., passerines, shorebirds), and the impact analysis is conducted in terms of potential effects to populations of migratory birds. Based on the impact analysis presented in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources) for wildlife and special-status species, temporary direct impacts to bald and golden eagle populations from proposed aircraft operations and construction activities associated with the implementation of the Proposed Action would not be significant. Therefore, the Navy has determined that implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in the “taking” of bald or golden eagles, their nests, or their eggs as defined by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

F.7.3.228 McMahan, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Michael	McMahon	<p>I have two issues:</p> <p>First, I am concerned about the Restricted Airspace (R4814) under Alternate #3. From the maps presented, R4814 appears to abut the controlled airspace surrounding Lovelock, NV airfield. Further, it is in close proximity to V-6 airway. My question is, what will be the impacts to air safety for both commercial and general aviation air traffic? What airspace restrictions can we anticipate with this new airspace?</p> <p>Secondly, this is a comment on federal land use in Nevada. There are a number of communities in Nevada that are on federal land, e.g., Lovelock, Elko, etc. If these communities want to upgrade municipal infrastructure, they must go through a long drawn out set of federal processes in order to do the needed infrastructure repair/upgrades. What not give these communities the land they are on? Why not eliminate an ongoing source of irritation and resentment? Thank you.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p> <p>The Navy cannot change the designation of lands that are not under its control. This request would be a separate action and does not fall under the scope of this EIS.</p>

F.7.3.229 McMinn, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Ryanna	McMinn	I do not want to see the upgrades or expansion of any military base. I have lived in this area nearly 2 decades and the bombing and trainings are disruptive to Sacred Tribal Sites and ceremonies, aside from my Belief that we need to spend far less on the war machine and far more on our Elders and Children.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.230 Meck, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Sandra	Meck	<p>NO ADDITIONAL PUBLIC LAND WITHDRAWN FOR NAVY EXPANSION</p> <p>Public land users are to be kicked off our land to accommodate our military. I support a strong military, but not at the expense of the vested interests of Nevada's citizens and economy.</p> <p>The proposed public land is now used by our fellow ranchers, miners, farmers, rockhounds, hunters, recreationists, wildlife, off-road-vehicles, etc. Within these multiple land users, revenue is generated by geothermal leases, grazing allotments, mining claims, oil and gas leases for our counties, state and federal governments. How much revenue and potential revenue will Nevada and her citizens lose by this proposed Navy expansion?</p> <p>The Navy held public meetings which were basically like a time-share sales pitch. The meetings were an affront to the dignity and livelihood of those directly affected by the Navy's proposal. Many of these stakeholders are trying to produce and earn livings for their families, and do not have the time, staff, money or resources to combat the egregious public land grab by the military and the endless attacks on our Nevadan way of life.</p>	<p>The Navy evaluated impacts to ranchers, miners, farmers, recreationists and other land uses in Section 3.1 (Geological Resources), Section 3.2 (Land Use), Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), and Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy performed a socioeconomic analysis in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). A detailed analysis of PILT, impacts to the agricultural industry, mining industry, and the recreation industry is located in Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at http://frtcmodernization.com). The Navy found that the Proposed Action would have no significant impacts on population and demographics, housing, agriculture, property values, or recreation and tourism revenues. Finally, that it would have no significant impacts to PILT or lost sales and tax revenues but would impact funding sources for the Nevada Department of Wildlife (via lost sales of hunting permit tags). However, it would result in significant impacts to geothermal and mining opportunities.</p> <p>To mitigate the potential impacts to geothermal and mining opportunities, the Final EIS further describes the process by which interested parties could pursue compatible geothermal development in a portion of the Dixie Valley Training Area. The proposed required design features are necessary in order for the Navy to meet necessary training requirements. Development of the required design features affords an opportunity for geothermal development that would otherwise be lost. The Navy is committed to working with the developer on a case-by-case basis and acknowledges that complying with required design features could add cost to a potential geothermal development. This is addressed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources).</p> <p>From past experience, the Navy has concluded that the public hearing format used during the public hearings is the most conducive to effective dialogue. The Navy complies with all applicable environmental laws, including its requirements for public participation under NEPA when developing this EIS. NEPA requires</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>As Americans and Nevadans, we cannot survive and prevail as a “service” economy. We need to “produce” as in mining, ranching, farming, logging, fishing and manufacturing. Furthermore, the Navy’s proposal is in direct conflict with President Trump’s Executive Order on Critical Minerals. There are at least eight critical minerals (vanadium, tungsten, fluorspar, barite, antimony, arsenic, titanium and manganese) within the proposed expansion area along with the economically valuable minerals-gold and silver.</p> <p>Perhaps there needs to be a military bipartisanship between the Navy and Air Force. They could share the 2,949,603 acres at Nellis Air Force base and NTTR that is already available for military purposes. This would save taxpayers millions perhaps billions of dollars. Mutual collaboration by the Navy and the Air Force will benefit all.</p>	<p>federal agencies to provide opportunities for meaningful public involvement. Comments received during the scoping period were considered in the development of the Draft EIS. Comments received on the Draft EIS have been considered in the development of this Final EIS.</p> <p>In the EIS, when a mineral resource potential is classified as either moderate or high, a lost exploration opportunity would represent a significant impact on that mineral resources. The resource potential classification considers occurrences, geologic relationship, and historic production for each mineral resource. As discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), Federal land withdrawn from mineral entry would no longer be open to new mining claims, and the lands would be prohibited from future mineral exploration and development. Implementation of any of the action alternatives would result in potential significant impacts on exploration and development of locatable, leasable, and salable mineral resources.</p> <p>The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training.</p> <p>While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex’s available training time. Without terminating the Air Force’s existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts.</p> <p>The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS, because this alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p>

F.7.3.231 Meyer, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Sandy	Meyer	Personally, I abhor and completely disagree with this proposal! The military DOES NOT need more space to expand their capacity for destruction. This country already has the largest military force in the world, and more than enough nuclear weapons of mass destruction to destroy the entire world with the simple push of a button. Why would we, the citizens of this country and legitimate owners of this property, even want to sanction something so destructive and devastating that it could potentially lead to the complete destruction of the earth that sustains us and makes our human existence possible?! Destruction of the earth, and subsequently the human race, defeats the entire purpose of life on this planet, and must not be encouraged or supported in any way. We are the caretakers of the earth-a huge responsibility-and to further destroy even a "few million acres" so that we can expand our capacity for earth's destruction, makes absolutely NO SENSE! The earth is a delicate, balanced and complicated infrastructure, with each desert, forest, ocean, mountain, etc. serving a purpose; to balance, sustain, and maintain life-animal, plant and human-on the planet!	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command. Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.

F.7.3.232 Miller, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jeanne	Miller	Enough already! Our public lands are for ALL of us, not just for the military to take whenever they want. More bombing ranges will NOT lead to a more peaceful world. Just stop, before you have destroyed even more of our land, more of our wildlife, more of our wealth, and more of our self respect. Please leave Fallon Naval Air Station as is. NO EXPANSION. I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.

First	Last	Comment	Response
		other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

F.7.3.233 Miller, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Tristen	Miller	I am writing to let you know that I love Nevada's wilderness areas and I am opposed to closing it off to military training. As a software engineer, I know that we have technologies for virtual air training methods that provide better solutions. There is no need in this day and age to close off and damage the unique wilderness areas Nevada has.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Although virtual training and simulators are an important aspect of naval training, there are numerous ways in which they do not sufficiently re-create fully integrated, real-life situations that may be encountered in a combat environment. For example, as discussed in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS, virtual training and simulators cannot re-create the physical stresses, such as increased heart rates and adrenalin levels, that a live-fire exercise provides. The Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) is the only location where an entire carrier air wing, consisting of more than 60 aircraft and associated support crews, can train as a single unit conducting the full arc of the mission, including pre-flight planning, ordnance handling, in-air activities, weapons deployment, and post-flight briefing. This cannot be accomplished via simulations.

F.7.3.234 Milne, K.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Kay	Milne	<p>This is an unneeded land grab by the US government. Leave the Nevada land alone. There are already plenty of areas for testing armaments.</p> <p>This area is a nesting area for golden eagles as well as habitat for many other species. We must protect our earth and its inhabitants, not keep killing them irresponsibly.</p> <p>Do not take any more land.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>Please see Section 3.10 (Biological Resources) the discussion on the golden eagle, and for discussion concerning the determination that the implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in the “take” of bald or golden eagles, their nests, or their eggs as defined by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.</p>

F.7.3.235 Mitchell, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Laura	Mitchell	<p>This proposed conversion of public lands to military testing sites is outrageous. We already provide the military far too much monetary and environmental resources. This land should be protected for the people, animals and plants who rely on it. It should not be given to the military for wanton and unnecessary destruction.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p>

F.7.3.236 Moe, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Ronald	Moe	<p>Captain David Halloran gave very strong and factual arguments for expanding the Fallon N.A.S. I believe we as United States citizens should have a strong military. But there are those of us that also like and appreciate our Nevada mountains and nature.</p> <p>I'm sure the Navy must coordinate at times with the Air Force. I would think it would do both forces and our country well, if they could work together in the Nellis A.S. This a huge amount land where both forces can work together.</p> <p>If the Navy cannot work with the Air Force, the Navy needs to greatly reduce live bombing. Bombs can be tracked. For buffer zones Wilderness Study Areas need to be kept in place or</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>changed to Wilderness which will keep areas open to both military and recreational users. Even if the area is taken over by the Navy, a number of weeks throughout the year should be open to recreational users - hikers, rock hounders, mountain climbers, hunters, nature lovers, etc.</p> <p>I have climbed many of the peaks in the areas the Navy hopes to close and would hate that future hikers/climbers would not be able to enjoy the opportunities I have had.</p> <p>Ronald Moe Carson City, NV</p>	<p>technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p> <p>Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]) but would not prohibit the use of the area by recreationists.</p>

F.7.3.237 Moellendorf, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Donnie	Moellendorf	<p>I am opposed to this action as it will severely and negatively cause impacts to wildlife, cultural resources and public access to to this large and largely pristine area. The expansion of the testing and training site will also result in disruption for locals and visitors to the area wishing to access mines and a state park located in near proximity to the proposed site. I believe the Navy can develop alternative forms of training that don not (ie virtual technology) that does not result in locking up such an immense and beautiful area.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>Although virtual training and simulators are an important aspect of training activities and are already utilized, there are numerous reasons they do not sufficiently re-create fully integrated real-life situations that may be encountered by military personnel in a combat environment. For example, as discussed in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS, virtual training and simulators cannot recreate the physical stresses (e.g., increased heart rate and adrenalin levels) that a live-fire exercise provides.</p> <p>The FRTC is the only location where an entire carrier air wing can train as a single unit conducting the full arc of the mission, including pre-flight planning, ordnance handling, in-air activities, weapons deployment, and post-flight briefing. This cannot be accomplished via full mission simulations.</p>

F.7.3.238 Moore, G.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Gary	Moore	I am totally opposed to the land grab proposed by the U.S. Military for the Fallon Training complex in Nevada. Once public lands are taken from us they are gone forever!!!. The military has enough. Maybe a small corridor for down range armor or flight path but not nearly as much public and private land as they want to TAKE. I love our military and I am a veteran but "we the people" do not want OUR land taken from us forever to be bombed and blown to pieces while we watch. Public land as it is is shrinking for our use and this can not be allowed to happen.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.239 Morgan, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Dan	Morgan	Do not expand into public lands. Myself and my family oppose the move to take more lands from we the people. Thank you.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.240 Morton, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
John	Morton	<p>I own 40 acres of virgin Nevada land on the edge of the proposed b16 expansion. I run a small organic farm. How can I sell my food with a clear conscience or even run it safely this close to live munitions training? Electronic signature training seems like a much better fit.</p> <p>If this expansion goes through I will be forced to abandon my farm and move elsewhere, losing all I have worked hard for.</p>	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Regarding the commenter's concerns for their organic farm, the Navy's training and testing activities are in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations concerning the impact of explosives and associated chemical constituents in the soils environment both on and off range. As discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities. The Navy continuously monitors its operations to find ways to minimize the use of hazardous materials and to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes. Any spills would be managed and cleaned up in accordance with applicable state and federal regulatory requirements. If any such spill were to exceed reportable quantities as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for regulated material, the event would be immediately reported to the NAS Fallon Environmental Division for appropriate action per the Integrated Contingency Plan (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2009).</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>Additionally, the DoD created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure DoD compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>Lastly, Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3571.4, Operational Range Clearance Policy for Navy Ranges, establishes the policy and requirements for performing operational range clearance on Navy ranges.</p>

F.7.3.241 Moscatello, B.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Brian	Moscatello	<p>I wish to express my opposition to the proposed expansion of the Fallon Naval Air Station bombing range. The west's wildlife is under severe threat from many causes, and there is NO justification for further stress to delicate ecosystems or eliminating public access to hundreds of square miles. There are bombing ranges in tiny, over-crowded New Jersey; the Navy and air forces already control more than enough territory.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.242 Motter, S. K.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Susan Kit	Motter	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station. I would think that after all these years of practice, you wouldn't need any more.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.243 Mowery, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Dave	Mowery	Please don't close this wonderful OHV area, too many recreation areas are being lost , thanks for considering our requests, Dave	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. While OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20, OHV use would be allowed to continue within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after WSA designation removal by Congress. Topography and OHV trails similar to those that occur in the B-17 range area also occur in the Dixie Valley area or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These other public areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).

F.7.3.244 Mullins, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Adrian	Mullins	I do not believe the ranges should be extended. I think we as a public have had enough taken away from us. I do not think it is okay to continue to take our land away. This limits us. It is not fair. There shouldn't even be the opportunity for anyone to buy up PUBLIC land. We need this land to stay in public hands and open at all times with no restrictions. We as humans need to be able to explore wild spaces. To head to the mountains wherever and whenever we want. STOP SELLING PUBLIC LAND!! STOP TAKING AWAY OUR FREEDOMS. The generations now and the generations to come need wide open spaces!	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.245 Mullins, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Christian	Mullins	<p>I support our military and particularly our Navy. Close family members serve in harms way for the Navy to preserve our way of life.</p> <p>I am also a pilot and fly to and from work in rural Nevada. I am a physician and work mostly in under served areas of the state.</p> <p>The current degree of military consumption of airspace in the state of Nevada is excessive in my opinion. The addition of more restricted airspace areas should not be allowed. All of central and southern Nevada is already over run with complex and off limits airspace for general aviation. The amount of airspace which has already been consumed is astounding.</p> <p>Specifically the proposed R4803 would result in deviations of common flight paths for me and future generations of GA pilots as I fly from my home in central California to points east and north.</p> <p>Additionally proposed R4805 consumes an area I have been flying and training in literally for decades. The Gabbs Valley there is literally like a second home to me.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p> <p>In order to minimize any aviation impacts under each of the proposed alternatives, the Navy is requesting that the FAA create Airspace Exclusion Zones (3-nautical-mile radius, surface to 1,500 feet AGL) for the Gabbs and Eureka airports. Current range procedures identify the town of Crescent Valley and the Gabbs Airfield as noise sensitive areas that shall be avoided by 3,000 feet AGL or 5 nautical miles. This would ensure those airports could operate regardless of the alternative ultimately chosen. The airspace exclusion would be avoided, unless the airport is specifically being utilized for take-offs and landings associated with military training activities. This is discussed in Section 3.6.2.2.4 (Local and Regional Airports).</p> <p>As discussed in 3.6.2.2.3 (Civilian Air Traffic) and 3.14.2.1.1 (Emergency Services), all emergency flights, both helicopter and fixed-wing, are given priority transit through the FRTC at all times. Fallon Air Traffic Control (Desert Control),</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>These Restricted Areas and MOAs are too numerous and too extensive and too contiguous already. The proposed expansion would be a terrible thing for this area, if it came to pass. Small aircraft need to be able to move in these areas. The distances are great. The military airspace as it is already functions as a barrier to my use of these areas. The proposals are even more onerous from this perspective.</p> <p>Combinations of poor weather and long circuitous routings around military airspace have resulted in very significant safety of flight issues for me.</p> <p>I frequently fly point to point and off established flight routes due to the nature of my service. Dealing with the complexities of these conglomerate airspaces as a GA pilot in areas which are otherwise open and uncongested, can be very difficult. The NOTAMS and times of use can be difficult to decipher.</p> <p>I also utilize the services of medical evacuation companies, both rotor and fixed wing on a very regular basis. I feel the reliability and efficiency of these services will obviously be impacted by your proposals. These effects fall directly to impacting the health and welfare of citizens living in Nevada.</p> <p>Many rural medical facilities also rely on GA to efficiently bring primary care and specialty medical service providers into their communities. Your proposals will make these already somewhat tenuous arrangements even more challenging.</p> <p>The military already controls too much of this airspace! I absolutely want military pilots/</p>	<p>the range coordinator for airspace, ensures that real-time adjustments to airspace occur to expedite emergency aircraft and deconflict all Navy training events along the required routes or in the vicinity of fire suppression activities. Emergency aircraft are permitted to pass through restricted airspace when necessary.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>controllers/mechanics and all military personnel to be competent, well trained and current. But there are people living and working and traversing these massive spaces. These people will be directly affected by these military proposals.</p> <p>There are options for military training, aside from taking additional massive swaths of land and airspace off the table from use by citizens. Additional At the very least extensive additional mitigations for all GA IFR and VFR traffic are needed.</p> <p>Military confiscation of additional land and airspace will serve to further marginalize a part of this country which is already struggling.</p>	

F.7.3.246 N., V.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Victoria	N.	<p>Wile I live n urban downtown San Francisco I have over 30-plus years enjoyed frequent respite from city life by wanderings in Nevada's wonderful, remote public lands-- remote from human influence that is, but not hard to reach via a network of dirt roads. In particular I have enjoyed two outings in the Clan Alpine Mountains, two in the Desatoya range, several in the Shoshones, and so forth. Your DEIS has not provideed essential information to convince me of the need to turn most of these WSA and related lands away from pubic access to military use. there is no clear need presented.</p> <p>Instead of eliminating 74,400 acres of Wilderness Study Areas as part of their Dixie Valley Training Area, the military should support Wilderness designation for all of the WSAs within, or very close to, this area including; the Clan Alpine Mountain, Job Peak, Stillwater Range, and the Desatoya Mountains WSAs. The military could not</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as Wilderness is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses, beyond the managed access proposed under Alternative 2 and 3 for OHV races and a Bighorn Sheep hunting program in the B-17 range, as there are too many recreationists and it is difficult to control the number or people that would be allowed on</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>ask for a better practical buffer" from its essential activities from excessive public intrusion than a wilderness designation. Getting CONgressional approval for wilderness for these WSAs would continue public access, and be protected in perpetuity. Pending Congressional approval, the existing WSA category offers similar, though not permanent, protection. This Wilderness buffer could also include identified lands with wilderness characteristics such as Stillwater additions and South Job Peak.</p> <p>In addition, I oppose inclusion in the military withdrawals of the 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge, presently comprising 17,848-acre, was established by a Congressional Act in 1931 to "...provide a sanctuary and breeding ground for birds and other wildlife". These directive of Congress must be heeded.</p> <p>A bombing area cannot offer adequate sanctuary for bird life.!</p> <p>The military has made some minor allowances to permit OHV races and bighorn sheep hunting, but these are far from the only valued public activities taking place. Access is also needed for camping, hiking, photography, geologic study and more. It Why give special privileges only to OHV recreationists and to someone who happens to draw a bighorn sheep tag and unjustly discriminate against other visitors?</p> <p>It is worthwhile and reasonable for the Navy to consider more carefully its existing areas and use the large amounts of land within the present Fallon Range and Training Complex more efficiently and effectively. The DEIS should have an alternative with that kind of focus. Where there's a will there's a way for the military to accomplish this, without annexing so much more of the public's lands. the historic tradition of public lands is a unique and treasured value in our nation--not lightly to be removed, bit by bit, area by area.</p>	<p>range. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationists.</p> <p>Regarding the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, the Proposed Action would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>The following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes.</p>

F.7.3.247 Navato, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Tim	Navato	<p>THE MILITARY IS THE SCUM OF THE EARTH!!!! President Trump is going to designate the entire STATE OF NEVADA AS WILDERNESS. WATCH THE NEWS CLOSELY!!!! I AM A GOOD FRIEND OF HIS!!!! He first is going to designate Basin and Range as TRUMP NATIONAL MONUMENT #1 AND GOLD BUTTE AS TRUMP NATIONAL MONUMENT #2!!!! TRUMP WILL ALSO SEND THE MILITARY TO SIBERIA. BUT THEY WILL BE GIVEN WARM CLOTHING, and will stay in heated buildings.</p> <p>Lida Summit, in Esmeralda County, Nevada is the CENTER OF THE UNIVERSE!!!! FRESNO, CALIFORNIA IS GOD'S CHOSEN CITY!!!! PIGEON SPRING, ESMERALDA COUNTY, NEVADA IS THE SITE OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN!!!!</p> <p>Sincerely, Brian Timothy Navato</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. This topic is outside of the scope of the EIS. Please see Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) of the EIS for a definition of the scope of the project.</p>

F.7.3.248 Nellemann, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Christina	Nellemann	Do not turn Nevada wilderness or public lands over to the government or the military. So much of the state is already owned by the military.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.249 Nelson, G.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Greg	Nelson	<p>As a former Marine Sergeant, Golf 2/5, 65-69 I was wounded in Hue City, Tet 1968. I understand the need for our Navy and Marine pilots to be the best trained in the world. I also see the need of land Seal training. However, I do not see the need for 1,000 additional miles of Nevada ground to be with drawn from public use. My house is right next to the range where the Seals train. Many nights we sit on our front porch and listen to Ma-deuce chatter and follow her traces into the night sky. If they think that they need more ground fine, but why close the only road into the rest of the Dead Camel Mountains?</p> <p>Also, my wife and I have raised two boys and five grand boys in the hills and valleys within a 100 miles of Fallon. Too many days to count we have spent out-and-about on foot, horseback or in our truck hunting, rock hounding, taking wildlife photos or just</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and has updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy has added tables discussing management practices, monitoring, and mitigation measures to the Final EIS in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation) to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts if applicable.</p> <p>Dead Camel Mountain Road and Simpson Road offer access to the Dead Camel Mountains and the Lahontan State Recreation Area from U.S. Route 95. There are other routes available off-road that can be used to access these areas (e.g., Dead Camel Mountains). These impacts are discussed further in Section 3.12 (Recreation). While OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		soaking up the Nevada outdoors. Can't tell you how many times we have been flown over, sometimes low enough to see the pilot's helmet colors or sonic boomed. It was no big deal because it was our choice to be out there. As far as new drop points for PGM's...they have been dropping these for ten or fifteen years with no accidents being reported. When we first moved to Fallon 34 years ago the Navy had, what, 11 or 12 Carrier Battle Groups. It seemed like training was 24/7 except on big holidays. Now it is down to 6 CBG's and there are way fewer days that Jets are in the air training. Please find a way to train and leave citizens access to their Nevada land. This does not have to be an either/or situation. We have been living together for many, many years...don't bar us from Nevada lands...	areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20, OHV use would be allowed to continue within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after WSA designation removal by Congress. Topography and OHV trails similar to those that occur in the B-17 range area also occur in the Dixie Valley area or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These other public areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).

F.7.3.250 Nelson, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Mark	Nelson	Based on my initial reading of the alternatives, I am in alignment with the preferred alternative. I urge the Navy and Congress to continue to work to allow as much public access as possible during times when it does not interfere with the primary mission of the Navy's Fallon facility.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheet hunting, and events that are pre-coordinated with the Navy. Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowable in the DVTA. Grazing would also continue to be allowed in the DVTA, as well as recreational activities.

F.7.3.251 Nelson, P.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Pamela	Nelson	We oppose the military land withdrawals of public lands and support the status quo to keep things the way they are, Please keep Wilderness Study Area protection for 74,000 acres in the Clan Alpine Mountain, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range WSAs. Do not eliminate recreation use and public access to 18	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>percent of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, or to more than 400,000 acres of public land in all.</p> <p>Large areas of public land like this are becoming a rare commodity and wildlife are being driven to extinction without this sort of area. Human quality of life nearby will be degraded and our generations to come will not be able to experience all that will be destroyed.</p> <p>Pam and Greg Nelson Warner Springs, CA</p>	<p>Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>This expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p>

F.7.3.252 Nelson, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Timothy	Nelson	I object to the range expansion and the closing down of public hunting grounds.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p> <p>The Navy would provide access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency that would set any quotas and distribute any permits, as well as maintenance of wildlife habitat. The Navy has developed a draft MOA in conjunction with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for this hunting program (further details are provided in Section 3.12, Recreation, and Appendix D, Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans, of the Final EIS). The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission. The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC.</p>

F.7.3.253 Nisbet, W.

First	Last	Comment	Response
William	Nisbet	I support the requests for modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex, to keep our nation at the leading edge of national defense preparedness. The Navy has historically been a good steward of the land under its control,	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.254 Norrington, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Linda	Norrington	As a Citizen and a member of a military family (Navy), I strongly object to this proposal. There is already adequate land designated for bombing and munitions testing	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>in our country. There is also a history of land destruction which reflects poorly on our armed forces. Like previous chosen land and sea sites, this area is not empty or devoid of life, but rather is wildlife habitat. As American public land it belongs to us all. The proposal would triple the size of Fallon Naval Air Station bombing ranges, seizing land in the Fairview Peak area and the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The plan released Friday adds to a proposal to expand the Nevada Test and Training Range in southern Nevada, which would take more than 1.1 million acres of Desert National Wildlife Refuge, currently managed to protect bighorn sheep and other wildlife.</p> <p>I urge rejection of this expansion plan and better management of current areas already damaged by testing usage, such as sites in my State of Hawaii.</p>	<p>Regarding the comment stating that the Navy already has adequate land designated for bombing and munitions testing, the Navy cannot just combine training activities with other ranges. For example, the Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training.</p> <p>While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts.</p> <p>The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p> <p>This expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (the USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge) or Fairview Peak. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.255 Nygaard, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Cynda	Nygaard	<p>I am white, but your continued 'projects' disgust me. How about you show respect for Indigenous people?</p> <p>And, respect for sacred sites, and land??</p> <p>When all the clean water is gone, and the earth is dying, the very people you now ignore, will help you and show you how to survive on the very land you are killing. If you survive...many won't.</p> <p>YOU ARE STANDING ON STOLEN LAND.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy is not requesting land ceded to indigenous peoples as a part of the Proposed Action. The following Native American reservations are either fully or partially below FRTC SUA and within the region of influence: Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Reservation and Colony (Bandit ATCAA), Pyramid Lake Reservation (Reno MOA), Walker River Paiute Reservation (Churchill MOA, Ranch (High) MOA, Ranch (Low) MOA, Fallon South 2 MOA, R-4810, R-4812), and Yomba Reservation (Fallon South 2 MOA, Fallon South 3 MOA, and Duckwater ATCAA). The Bureau of Indian Affairs administers these reservations.</p> <p>The southern boundary of B-19 shares a 9-mile border with the 339,181-acre Walker River Paiute Reservation. The majority of the reservation is within Mineral County with portions in Churchill and Lyon Counties. Schurz, Nevada, is the main community on the reservation and is located approximately 15 miles southwest of B-19, off U.S. Route 95.</p> <p>The Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Reservation and Colony is located northeast of NAS Fallon, within Churchill County. The Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Reservation and Colony, which is a federally recognized tribe of Northern Paiute and Western Shoshone, governs this reservation. The Pyramid Lake Reservation is located northwest of Reno, in Washoe, Storey, and Lyon Counties. The Pyramid Lake Band Paiute Tribe governs this reservation. The Yomba Reservation is located in Nye County along the Reese River. The Yomba Shoshone Tribe of the Yomba Reservation, which is a federally recognized tribe of Western Shoshone, governs this reservation.</p>

F.7.3.256 O'Brien, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Daniel	O'Brien	<p>We need to keep all the public lands protected no matter what. Please stop expansion.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and has updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy has added tables discussing management practices, monitoring, and mitigation measures to the Final EIS in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation) to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts if applicable.</p>

F.7.3.257 Ochs, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Susan	Ochs	<p>Our first outing as a married couple 25 years ago was a camping trip to the Kofa preserve in Arizona. We went on a long hike, and were rewarded with a sight of a Bighorn sheep against the sky. Many creatures are magnificent and all are created by God, but this was a memorable sight. Years later, my husband works as an environmental engineer, with projects all over the Southwest and I volunteer for the</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		Phoenix Zoo and lead hikes to teach people about the desert. I am opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

F.7.3.258 Ogle, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Charles	Ogle	Americans are still dying from our nuclear bomb tests fallout. I remember a time when we dropped bombs on our enemies not ourselves. Just as we now have computer simulations for nuclear weapons testing we have simulations for other weapon testing as well. There is no need to kill the planet or create more brown zones where no life can exist. STOP THE MADNESS	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Although virtual training and simulators are an important aspect of training activities and are already utilized, there are numerous reasons they do not sufficiently re-create fully integrated real-life situations that may be encountered by military personnel in a combat environment. For example, as discussed in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS, virtual training and simulators cannot recreate the physical stresses (e.g., increased heart rate and adrenalin levels) that a live-fire exercise provides. The FRTC is the only location where an entire carrier air wing can train as a single unit conducting the full arc of the mission, including pre-flight planning, ordnance handling, in-air activities, weapons deployment, and post-flight briefing. This cannot be accomplished via full mission simulations.

F.7.3.259 Oliver, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jennifer	Oliver	Our global ecosystems are under assault and collapsing as it is. Public lands should be treated as biological banks, protecting our precious biodiversity because extinction means the death of birth. They should NEVER be destroyed for the benefit of the greed crazed military industrial complex! America needs an Apollo project to address the climate change crisis. Yes, I realize that most of our lawmakers have either two digit IQs, are willfully obtuse, are old and don't give a damn about	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered

First	Last	Comment	Response
		anyone else, not even their own children, or are evangelical zealots who are completely disconnected from reality. They should not have the right to continue this suicidal destruction of the world that we call home. America needs to END it's focus on mass murder, ecocide, and cultural destruction as it's primary export and means of generating fiat currency out of thin air. Start thinking for a change, start behaving morally for a change, start being a Nation that is worthy of respect for a change, start using your imaginations; A BETTER WORLD IS POSSIBLE, but*not* if we bomb it into dust first!! If you don't respect creation, you don't respect the Creator you pretend to worship!	all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.260 Osborne, G.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Gillian	Osborne	<p>Public lands like the Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Area and the Job Peak Wilderness Study Area, within the range of land you are considering for your project, are a public asset, and deserve to be preserved as such. These are spaces where citizens come to know the land and other creatures to which they belong, and find spiritual sustenance and healing.</p> <p>Conversely, there is absolutely no need for any branch of the U.S. military to further test bombs. We know that bombs work. We have too many of them. At this point, the U.S., along with other countries across the world, should be in negotiations about how to reduce weapons production and distribution, rather than amping up and continuing weapons development programs whose only real outcome is HARM.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]) but it would not prohibit the use of this area by the public for recreational activities.</p> <p>As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.261 Overbey, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Linda	Overbey	Evidently, Nevada is seen as a wasteland by the Dept. of Energy, they think it's fine to ship nuclear waste here without the Governor's consent or even awareness. I am opposed to the destruction of more desert land.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.262 Parachou, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Christine	Parachou	I feel proposal 3 would best suit my needs as a Nevada resident as an avid user of OHV lands	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.263 Parachou, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Thomas	Parachou	I feel proposal 3 would best suit my needs as a Nevada resident as an avid hunter and OHV land user	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.264 Patterson, D. R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
D.R.	Patterson	I'm a NV hunter/angler in Nye County. I'm opposed to the proposed expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure,	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently

First	Last	Comment	Response
		and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.265 Payne, W.

First	Last	Comment	Response
William	Payne	I use this area for recreation. When the Navy takes this area, will it ever be returned to the public? The Navy may believe this to fight for our freedom, but what freedom will be left when there is no public space to use it. Please find an alternative, rather than bomb our beautiful desert.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would likely result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.

F.7.3.266 Pease, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Amelia	Pease	I oppose the expansion of the military into public lands and wilderness study areas.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.267 Pena, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Ruby	Pena	NO This is not how I want my tax dollars spent. I don't approve killing wildlife and destruction	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command. Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or

First	Last	Comment	Response
		of the environment. STOP THIS SENSELESS LAND GRAB!	<p>configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.268 Pepin, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Constance	Pepin	I strongly oppose the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I urge you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.269 Perez, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Juan	Perez	<p>Hello I do not agree with you guys taking over that land I believe there is a lot of wild life that live in and around that area that will be push away plus we dont know what you guys what would be testing. #do not take over the land.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Please see Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) of the EIS for a definition of the scope of the project.</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.</p> <p>Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.270 Perry-Jones, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jean	Perry-Jones	<p>I love the Stillwater area and believe the Stillwater wilderness Study area needs to be preserved for all of its wildlife, ecosystems, Nevadans and Americans for future generations.</p> <p>Protectively and wisely use the generous abundance of land you have been given for your military exercises without taking more land.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs.</p> <p>The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTa, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p>

F.7.3.271 Peterson, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Ryan	Peterson	To whom it may concern,	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy's training and testing activities

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>I was born in Hawthorne and I'm a fourth-generation Northern Nevadan. I'm a proud veteran of these United States and my younger brother is currently serving. My great grandfather, both my grandfathers, my grandmother, her sister, and children worked at the base in Hawthorne. Our Nevada family understands the important task the US Navy faces when trying to fight the global war on terrorism and we have always strongly supported the Department of Defense at every threat the nation has faced. We have also benefited greatly from a cohabitation with DOD over the 100 years that our family has called Nevada home.</p> <p>Unfortunately, after reviewing this currently planned expansion from the US Navy, I am at a loss for words on how ridiculous this congressional request for additional land is.</p> <p>The Nevada I know and love is already owned (84.9%) by the federal government which is a blessing in some ways, as well as a curse. The federal government keeps our land accessible and free to everyone, but this can cause lots of problems when the land is not stewarded correctly as seen in recent years on the national news. The Department of Defense already has a huge share of Nevada's federal land with over 20,800,000 acres at their disposal. Judging from history "disposal" is the correct word to use when considering the irreversible damage done to our land and its people by the DOD due to nuclear testing. The scope of the damage is so unfathomable it's still a national security secret.</p> <p>When reviewing this request, I am amazed the US Navy would even make it. Simply look at how little the US Navy respects and stewards the current lands</p>	<p>are in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations concerning the impact of explosives and associated chemical constituents in the soils environment both on and off range. Further, the Navy is not proposing to test nuclear weapons in the FRTC.</p> <p>As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p> <p>As discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities. The Navy continuously monitors its operations to find ways to minimize the use of hazardous materials and to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes. Any spills would be managed and cleaned up in accordance with applicable state and federal regulatory requirements. If any such spill were to exceed reportable quantities as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for regulated material, the event would be immediately reported to the NAS Fallon Environmental Division for</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>it has in Nevada. We Nevadans have been tolerating the US Navy's poor track record and outright denial of responsibility (until proven guilty) of the incidents and accidents they have caused here because of the importance of our national defense. We even try and understand and overlook the DOD's poor stewardship of Nevada's land over the better part of the last century for the greater good. The bottom line is, the US Navy and the DOD have proven time and time again, they are not responsible enough to be given more land than they currently have in Nevada. I hope congress will stand up and hold the DOD and US Navy accountable for their poor track record by refusing this request. I hope our local and state politicians will stand up and weigh in on this important issue.</p> <p>I hear by submit a proposal to the US Navy: Whomever is behind this request, go and walk the land you want to take from us. I certainly have many times and I'll try and share what you might find there. When you get to the middle of it, stop and listen. The one thing you will notice is how deafeningly quiet and unmolested this land is. Then, look around and see how few humans there are. With the correct attitude, you will quickly discover the awesome power and beauty a place like this has. After you've contemplated that, look down on the ground. You're likely standing on evidence of ancient Native American culture and civilization unique to this area of the Great Basin. Finally, ask yourself if your god or conscience thinks you should destroy this land or take it away from me or my son. If my son chooses to grow up and stare down the next threat this nation faces, I will need this land to show him what it is he is fighting for.</p>	<p>appropriate action per the Integrated Contingency Plan (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2009).</p> <p>Additionally, the DoD created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure DoD compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>Lastly, Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3571.4, Operational Range Clearance Policy for Navy Ranges, establishes the policy and requirements for performing operational range clearance on Navy ranges.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>My family is still is serving our country but the US Navy needs to leave our home be and learn to be grateful for the land they already have by utilizing it to the fullest and attempting to be good neighbors. This place is our home and this land is why we are here.</p> <p>My name is Ryan S. Peterson. I live in Fernley, Nevada and home means Nevada to me.</p>	

F.7.3.272 Phemister, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Molly	Phemister	<p>I'm vehemently opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.</p>

F.7.3.273 Piercy, E.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Earl	Piercy	I oppose the withdrawal of public access lands for military training. Nevada has some of the few remaining wild lands in our country. We need to preserve them as a public resource.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command. Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.

F.7.3.274 Pierson, Gary and Janette

First	Last	Comment	Response
Gary and Janette	Pierson	The people of Nevada are once again asked to give up their rights and way of life to benefit the mysterious military. We say mysterious because we have no idea what happens in the training areas or areas like the Nevada Test Site. We have no guarantee that the land that is restricted will not be destroyed or contaminated forever. Having lived in Gabbs, Nevada for twelve years we saw first hand navy jets so low that windows were blown out and structures damaged. We even saw the results to one family when a Navy jet blew a friend's car off the road resulting in their daughter having a miscarriage. The Navy denied the incident until a witness following the car spoke out. Noise level is the least of the problem! When the navy makes denials that they are not involved in such incidents it leaves a nasty taste in the mouths of Nevada families. Ranchers who have lived in this area or have run their cattle in this area for generations will be asked to give up everything the family has worked for and loved. A "fair market value" does not compensate	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process evaluates the cost of providing replacement forage and/or the losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy shall use this process to determine payments to individuals who may suffer losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their

First	Last	Comment	Response
		people for giving up their hopes, dreams, hard work and a family's way of life. Even though a major population does not inhabit this land, shouldn't some part of this pristine, beautiful area be left for the coming generations to enjoy and appreciate? My husband and I feel the "no action alternative" is the correct choice for Nevada and its people.	livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives. This information has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.

F.7.3.275 Pineda, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Cecile	Pineda	I oppose the Navy expansion of its bombing range to add the wildlife refuge at Fairview Peak area and the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. I oppose it on ecological grounds. I oppose it on bugetary grounds. I oppose it because this is land ceded to the WEstern Shoshone and Paiute Peoples, and does not belong to the U.S. government to do with as it pleases. and I oppose it on the grounds of resisting cliamate change becasue as the largest consumer of fossil fuels in the world, the U.S. military, must change its posture if the planet is to survive. Thank you.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable. The Navy's Preferred Alternative (Alternative 3) does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (the USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge) or Fairview Peak. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee). There are no proposed increases in the types or tempo of training activities under any Alternative in the Final EIS and, as such, there would be no increase in greenhouse gas emissions. See Section 3.8 (Air Quality), specifically Sections 3.8.3.2.9 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions), 3.8.3.3.9 (Greenhouse Gases), and 3.8.3.4.9 (Greenhouse Gases) of the Final EIS for more information.

F.7.3.276 Pinkerson, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Alexandra	Pinkerson	I am writing in opposition to the proposal to withdraw public lands. Modernization should not include further negative impact on wildlands. The preservation of parklands and natural environments, including expansion of same when possible, should be incorporated into any	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis

First	Last	Comment	Response
		modernization program given the importance of these spaces to the protection of our nation and the Earth in the context of current rates of ecological collapse and climate change.	where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.277 Pirch, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Charlotte	Pirch	I strongly oppose the expansion of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest. Any expansion will severely impact wild life habitats. The last thing this nation needs is more wars.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.

F.7.3.278 Pitts, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Susan	Pitts	<p>I value our public lands and our wilderness study areas. I enjoy hiking, camping and wildlife viewing. Permanent wilderness designation will protect the wildlife, plant life, and backcountry recreational opportunities in these areas.</p> <p>The entire Stillwater Range, from Highway 50 to the Pershing County line, including the wilderness study areas and lands with wilderness characteristics, has been identified as having extremely important cultural resources, wildlife habitat and recreational value and needs to be protected.</p> <p>The military is proposing to move Highway 361 to Gabbs to the east of its current location, taking a safe, relatively flat highway through</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the bombing ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.</p> <p>As discussed in Section 3.5 (Transportation), under Alternative 3, the WDZ would extend over a portion of SR 361, and that segment would need to be closed and re-routed outside of the WDZ due to mission and public safety requirements. The potential closure and rerouting of SR 361 associated with the expansion of B-17 would only occur if Congress chose Alternative 3. However, the affected segment of SR 361 would not be closed unless and until a suitable replacement route is established. Relocation of SR 361 would not cut off access to Gabbs or Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park. The notional relocation corridor for</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>the valley and pushing it up into the mountains creating a very expensive and potentially more dangerous highway for truck and passenger travel. That seems unnecessary and a big expense to the taxpayers. Highway construction would negatively impact wildlife habitat.</p> <p>Given how easily wildfires have started with warming climate and drought I am very concerned with military operations starting fires that could sweep through homes, ranches and public lands.</p> <p>I support keeping the Fairview Peak area open to the public for a wide variety of recreation.</p>	<p>the potential re-routing of SR 361 can be found in Section 3.5.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p> <p>Any proposed rerouting is still conceptual in nature and would be evaluated prior to closure of the route. Follow-on NEPA efforts would need to be conducted for the potential relocation of SR 361 if Alternative 3 were to be selected. See Chapter 2, specifically Section 2.3.4.2.4 (Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 3) for further details. If Alternative 3 were chosen, the Navy would transfer any funds appropriated for relocating the road to the Federal Highway Administration, who in turn would make these funds available to NDOT for planning, design and construction of the replacement road to State standards.</p> <p>The Navy has implemented and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce the occurrence of wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan, and where possible, proposed elements and goals of this plan were added to the Final EIS. For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).</p>

F.7.3.279 Plunk, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Donald	Plunk	<p>This is an ill conceived plan. How much more of our public lands does the military and the Trump administration expect us to give up? This is important land for the mule deer and the great bald eagle. Does the military even care that they would be taking the land that numerous animals and birds need to survive? I don't think</p>	<p>Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis.</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep, mule deer, and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to eagles, potential impacts to bald and golden eagles are analyzed on an individual animal basis (not just on effects to populations). Species protected under the MBTA are analyzed by major taxonomic groups within subcategories (e.g., passerines, shorebirds), and the impact analysis is conducted in terms of potential effects to populations of migratory birds. Based on the impact analysis presented in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources) for wildlife and special-status species, temporary direct impacts to bald and golden eagle populations from proposed aircraft operations and construction activities associated with the implementation of</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		so. I'm most definitely opposed to this land grab!	the Proposed Action would not be significant. Therefore, the Navy has determined that implementation of the Proposed Action would not result in the "taking" of bald or golden eagles, their nests, or their eggs as defined by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act.

F.7.3.280 Potashin, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Richard	Potashin	<p>I do not support the expansion of the Fallon Training complex and its preferred alternative as proposed. This is an all-out attack on our public lands in the name of national security and the military industrial complex. The expansion, Navy officials say, would help pilots and other personnel conduct missions that better simulate realistic conditions. Considering that technology will continue to advance in respect to weapons needs and war making abilities....this won't be the last time you ask for expansion.</p> <p>The EIR is inadequate in not addressing in a comprehensive fashion the alternatives of using existing ranges at China Lake or the Nevada Test Site or dovetail its mission with the proposed military expansion in Southern Nevada. The Navy states in its EIS that expansion to other existing ranges is technically feasible but economically unfeasible citing the exorbitant expense of 1.5 billion dollars. This is laughable. You've been able to manage quite well up until this time. Have our combat operations in Afghanistan and Syria been seriously compromised by the current size of the complex?</p> <p>The Navy makes the case that it needs to expand to meet training demands and better technology, yet in the EIS, it states that much of the withdrawals have to do with public safety which dampens the main argument for expansion. So why not a more limited expansion for a safety buffer. i.e reconfiguring the</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p> <p>The Navy develops Range Compatibility Zones (RCZs) for all targets in order to provide recommendations for land use around ranges for compatibility with training and safety for public use and discusses these in a Range Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (RAICUZ) program. RCZs represent aviation and ordnance delivery safety concerns in areas based on degrees of safety that can be reasonably attained on the ground. There are three RCZs designated for Air-to-Ground ranges, RCZ-I, RCZ-II, and RCZ-III. RCZs are activated and deactivated according to training activities, but unexploded ordnance is potentially present in RCZ-I zones at all times. The RCZ-I is the minimum range surface area needed to contain ordnance employed in Air-</p>

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		<p>existing ranges to create a more realistic margin of error.</p> <p>I'm very concerned about the economic impacts the preferred alternative poses to Mining and ranching, the backbones of Nevada's rural economy, the preferred alternative poses. A number of grazing allotments and mining claims would be retired with no guarantee of adequate compensation to ranchers and miners affected by the expansion. How will the Navy address the economic impacts, i.e. the loss of tax base to the affected counties. The Navy so far has not adequately addressed these concerns raised by Pershing, and other counties. They don't feel they are being heard by a Navy that shows no flexibility in tailoring its expansion plans to the needs of local government.</p> <p>This expansion would also affect wilderness study areas by eliminating 74,400 acres of Wilderness Study Areas in parts of the Clan Alpine Mountain, Job Peak and Stillwater Range WSA's. My wife and I document carvings left by Basque sheepherders on aspen trees. Under this proposal, we would be locked out of documenting carvings in the Clan Alpine and Stillwater ranges. Finally, it would eliminate all recreational use on 359,000 acres of public land with the exception of some limited big game hunting and licensed OHV races. Why curry favor with hunters and off-roaders, while discriminating against the rest of us who a similar, valid right to recreate on public lands. Unfair!</p> <p>How about current and future scientific studies on the ecological components of these affected lands. Who will manage the ecological and cultural resources caught in this land grab?. I certainly don't trust the Navy given the future impacts their preferred alternative will unleash. Increased bombing and</p>	<p>to-Ground training, including the initial impact and ricochet. RCZ-I zones are a combination of the individual WZDs and SDZs and are not accessible to the public as they are the areas of highest safety risk.</p> <p>The Final EIS has been updated to further describe the process by which the Navy would compensate both valid mining claims and unpatented mining claims with no validity exam. Valid and existing mining rights, existing patented mining claims, and unpatented mining claims are discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources). For there to be a valid existing mining right, the claim holder must demonstrate that the claim contains a discovery of a valuable mineral deposit. Having a valid existing claim would exclude any such claim from any moratorium imposed by the requested withdrawal legislation for development of the claim. Therefore, under the Proposed Action, the Navy would acquire any valid existing claims within the proposed withdrawal at fair market value. With regard to existing patented mining claims, the Federal Government has passed the title of these lands to the claimant, making these lands private lands. The Navy would therefore need to acquire any such lands within the proposed FRTC land boundary. Holders of unpatented mining claims on public lands may conduct a validity exam, which is a formal process that determines whether the claim holder has a valid existing right. The Secretary of the Interior determines the validity of a claim based on this validity examination. However, holders of unpatented mining claims are not required to conduct a validity exam. In instances where a claim holder has not conducted a validity exam, any value associated with the claim is assumed to be nominal. Accordingly, the Navy would offer to claim holders without a validity exam a nominal amount to extinguish the claim. The Navy would consider the investment made by the holder of these unpatented claims when making an offer to extinguish the claim.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges that it has the authority under 43 United States Code section 315q of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended, to make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered by the permit holders as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes. This authority has been incorporated into the Proposed Action. The Final EIS discusses the process that the Navy is proposing to use to determine payment amounts to each</p>

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		<p>overflights will impact sensitive wildlife resources, wetlands and archaeology sites,” “Habitat for pronghorn and sage grouse would be damaged and animals may be killed directly. This expansion is just too large to guarantee any degree safety for wildlife, wetlands and arch sites. That’s why the Navy’s Final EIR must show some degree of compromise in shrinking these new buffer areas.</p> <p>Much of the expansion takes in the former homes of the Western Shoshone and other indigenous groups. These lands have many areas that are sacred to these Native Americans. What degree of access will they have to these lands in practicing traditional lifeways and religious ceremonies. This EIR is inadequate in addressing the the connections Native Americans have to these lands.</p> <p>This draft EIR is inadequate in that it doesn’t offer a full range of alternatives. It ties the continuation of current training at Fallon NAS to approving the preferred alternative rather than a separate alternative that renews base operations at their current levels. It’s an either-or scenario. “If you don’t give us our land grab.....we’ll just shut down. This is ludicrous. Though opposed to this land grab, I support continued operations at Fallon NAS. The public should not be held at gunpoint.</p> <p>I appreciate the need for our armed forces to be well trained, and maintain a strong sense of readiness but this proposed expansion does not balance that need with the public’s use of public lands. These lands will be closed to countless future generations of Nevadans who will never know the beauty and peace these lands offer. What did Eisenhower say about the threat from the military industrial complex?</p>	<p>specific grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits.</p> <p>A detailed analysis of PILT is located in the Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at http://frtcmernization.com) and discussed in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). There would be no change in PILT for Churchill, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing counties, and very little change in PILT for Lyon County; therefore, there would be no significant impacts from lost revenues from reduced PILT under any of the action alternatives. However, there could be a modest reduction in revenues at the state level insofar as lost hunting opportunities could result in a reduction of funding sources for NDOW.</p> <p>Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed. However, this de-designation would not prohibit the use of these areas by recreationists. Additionally, if the public is recreating in the area, the Navy would seek an alternate location to train until the area used by the public is available, as is currently done in the existing DVTA.</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species. The following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes.</p> <p>The Navy abides by stipulations found within the current 2011 Programmatic Agreement (PA) between Nevada SHPO, BLM, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation with respect to withdrawn lands. Currently, existing withdrawn lands are managed under the prescriptions of the 2011 PA. The Navy is required to consult with the signatories of the 2011 PA (ACHP, SHPO & BLM) for approval of an amendment which adds the newly withdrawn lands. As part of this action, the Navy drafted an amendment of the 2011 PA for consultation and completion by 2021 (when the 2011 PA expires). This proposed amended 2011 PA would stipulate requirements for Navy cultural resources management of all Navy managed lands (withdrawn and purchased). Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources) of the Final EIS was updated regarding the PA process.</p> <p>The Navy will continue to engage with all interested Tribes. This engagement will continue past the ROD, as the modernization would be implemented over the coming years. The Navy will avoid and/or minimize impacts on cultural resources wherever possible and follow Section 106 requirements. The Navy is committed to providing access to Tribes to the closed ranges</p>

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			<p>and pushing for funding to conduct surveys in range “buffer” areas. The Navy will work with the tribes to prioritize survey areas. The Navy is working with the Nevada SHPO and ACHP to amend the current 2011 PA they are under for withdrawn lands. The Navy would complete Section 106 consultation on impacts due to loss of access for Tribes prior to the fencing of the newly withdrawn and acquired lands after any ultimate Congressional decision.</p> <p>The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative, also known as the “status quo” alternative, would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.</p>

F.7.3.281 Powell, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Randy	Powell	<p>Dear Sir or Madam;</p> <p>While I do support our military one hundred percent, I do not favor expansion of the NAS Fallon air space.</p> <p>In particular, the proposed R 4814. I travel along this portion of the MOA and RA a few times a year. I would like the boundary moved south (for both RA and MOAs).</p> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Randy Powell</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. R-4814 is being proposed in order to overlap the Weapons Danger Zone proposed for B-20. General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		Private Pilot Member EAA and AOPA	alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).

F.7.3.282 Priester, B.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Brandy	Priester	I bought 20 acres off of Lahontan Dam Road because the land was backed to BLM land and that no one would build on it and my family and myself could enjoy Nevada's natural beauty. With the proposed expansion of the military base this will back right up to my back line. There for taking the only reason I bought land there away from me and my family, not to mention the reason all the people that call that area home too. There are a number of homes and new ones arriving just for this reason. The saddest part is that most of those people don't even know that this is even happening. Not a single person has gone out there informing them! They don't have internet. Please for my family and many other families do not expand by Lahontan Dam Road. Thank you for your time.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Although land to the East of Lahontan Dam Road would be closed off to recreational users, BLM land still exists to the West, North, and South of the area you are referring to. As for providing the public notice of the Navy's intentions, Notices of Intent were published in various local newspapers and mailed out in postcards in addition to the website. The Navy encourages you to talk with your neighbors and inform them as well. You can also join the mailing list if you want to receive further updates.
Brandy	Priester	I bought 20 acres off of Lahontan Dam Road because the land was backed to BLM land and that no one would build on it and my family and myself could enjoy Nevada's natural beauty. With the proposed expansion of the military base this will back right up to my back line. There for taking the only reason I bought land there away from me and my family, not to mention the reason all the people that call that area home too. There are a number of homes and new ones arriving just for this reason. The saddest part is that most of those people don't even know that this is even happening. Not a single person has gone out there informing them! They don't have internet. Please for my family and many other families do not expand by Lahontan Dam Road. Thank you for your time.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Although land to the East of Lahontan Dam Road would be closed off to recreational users, BLM land still exists to the West, North, and South of the area you are referring to. As for providing the public notice of the Navy's intentions, Notices of Intent were published in various local newspapers and mailed out in postcards in addition to the website. The Navy encouraged you to talk with your neighbors and inform them as well. You can also join the mailing list if you want to receive further updates.

F.7.3.283 Prince-Dotson, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Carol	Prince-Dotson	Upon review of the draft EIS for the (FRTC), I respectfully have the following comments and concerns: The withdrawal of 600,000 acres of private and publically owned land that currently supplies, grazing mining and energy production and recreation will be very impactful to the region. The economics of this vast withdrawal has not been fully addressed in the draft EIS. I	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy recognizes the potential socioeconomic impacts on the community. To mitigate these impacts, affected private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land and all compensable rights associated with that land acquired by the United States. Claim holders for mining and water would be compensated as described in

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>would encourage the accommodation of these uses, as the done with the geothermal resources on the proposed areas where possible.</p> <p>Additionally, the proposed expansion of uses and area in B-16 is extremely close to existing development and residential uses. Air traffic from the main base to that site already exists, and to my knowledge is not in a flight path, so to increase that air traffic (helicopter) would be very detrimental to the community and land values in the area.</p> <p>In closing, I understand the need to enhance and expand the FRTC, and fully support the preparation of military personnel to provide national security - I just would like to encourage the inclusion of the pre-existing multi- uses on some of the proposed lands to allow for continued grazing, mineral production, and recreation (where possible), and to limit expansion of the B-16 area, specifically do not fly over the area between the main base and B-16.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted,</p> <p>Carol E. Prince-Dotson</p>	<p>Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources) and Section 3.9 (Water Resources).</p> <p>Pursuant to the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended (43 U.S.C. section 315q), as amended, the Navy would make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes.</p> <p>When developing the proposed alternatives, the Navy designed special use airspace to maximize the Navy's use of the airspace while allowing as much public and commercial use as possible. To minimize aviation impacts under each of the alternatives, the Navy is requesting the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) create "airspace exclusion zones" (3 nautical-mile radius, surface to 1,500 feet Above Ground Level [AGL]) around the Gabbs and Eureka airports. Current range procedures identify the town of Crescent Valley and the Gabbs Airfield as noise sensitive areas that shall be avoided by 3,000 feet AGL or 5 nautical miles. These exclusion areas would ensure those airports could continue to operate under all of the alternatives. The Navy would avoid the exclusion areas unless the airport is specifically being used for takeoffs and landings associated with military training activities. Airspace exclusion zones are discussed further in Section 3.6.2.2.4 (Local and Regional Airports).</p>

F.7.3.284 Procter, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Sharon	Procter	Please do not absorb more land for your bombing.	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

F.7.3.285 Prose, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Doug	Prose	See attached file	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

Comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

COMMENT 1: I have visited all of the public lands that the Navy proposes to take into ownership to hike, camp, and photograph their wild and pristine expanses because they are the closest such lands in the Basin and Range desert that I can reach from my home in under half a day's drive. The proposed action would constitute a significant loss to people like myself who value these lands as accessible, undisturbed places in which to hike, camp, and pursue solitude and other low-impact activities such as photography.

COMMENT 2: The total proposed FRTC expansion is a very massive area, about 1,000 square miles, an area almost as large as Yosemite National Park. The environmental, social, and economic impacts of the expansion are too large to be supported as one package by the public.

COMMENT 3: Regarding the expansion lands in Gabbs Valley, southeast of the B-17 range, this wide valley is beautiful and remote, currently used as grazing land, and it supports antelope and other wildlife, which would be severely impacted by proposed military activities. Gabbs Valley would be closed to the public, diminishing recreation opportunities in the region. [FIGURE 1]



Figure 1. Gabbs Valley, as seen from the Monte Cristo Mountains.

The Navy proposes to create new live bombing zones in Gabbs Valley, but does not discuss what will actually happen during bombing exercises. The people in the town of Gabbs, and anyone else in the area, would be negatively affected by experiencing frequent nearby explosions and increased jet traffic flying low and fast. Live bombing is infrequent at B-17 currently; there appears to be little justification in establishing new live target areas outside of the existing range.

COMMENT 4: The new addition of B-17 takes in some 15-20 miles of Route 361, with no clear explanation as to why this is necessary. This is the only paved, north-south through-route in the region, and it permits people who live in Gabbs to travel freely; it permits the many workers who live in Fallon to reach the large mines near Gabbs where they work; it is the only route that permits tourists to reach Berlin-Ichysaur State park on paved roads intersecting with Route 50; it allows easy access to the region for recreation. The Draft EIS proposes to keep this road open until a new route is constructed, but realigning the road would be a major federal activity that would likely take years to plan and to be approved and funded (and may never be approved) and would have significant environmental impacts.

COMMENT 5: The proposed expansion of the B-17 range on its southern end would take in the entire pristine and remote Monte Cristo range adjacent to Gabbs Valley. The Monte Cristos have unique and colorful geologic formations. [FIGURE 2]



Figure 2. Monte Cristo Mountains, to be closed to the public.

I have camped and photographed and hiked several times in this area and it offers outstanding solitude and opportunities for viewing bighorn sheep, antelope, coyote, eagles, and other wildlife. Public uses like this will be lost. [FIGURE 3] Live bombing in the newly-created bombing zones in adjacent Gabbs Valley will result in increased low level aircraft activity over these mountains and explosions, imparting severe impacts to the range's wildlife.

The Draft EIS contradicts itself when it states that there will be no general increase in training activity in the expansion lands over today's levels, yet proposes to greatly increase the size of the B-17 range (and other ranges) and add new live target areas. It is not possible to get a clear picture of what is really going to happen.



Figure 3. Bighorn sheep in Monte Cristo Mountains.

COMMENT 6: The expansion of the B-17 range will also impact beautiful lands with wilderness characteristics and high wildlife values to the west of Gabbs Valley and the Monte Cristo Mountains, near Slate Mountain to the south of B-17, all of which will become off-limits to the public and exposed to damage by increased military activities. [FIGURE 4]



Figure 4. Towering granite outcrop near Slate Mountain, south of B-17.

There are stunning granitic outcrops here, easily accessible for rock climbers in this area. There are also beautiful, multicolored sedimentary and volcanic rock formations, easily accessible by dirt road, that offer excellent photographic and hiking and camping opportunities. [FIGURE 5]



Figure 5. Colorful sedimentary formations, south of B-17, to be closed to public.

COMMENT 7: The expansion of B-17 will consume much of the Sand Springs range to the west of the existing B-17 range, and closed to public use. This range is rugged and mostly undisturbed and offers fine hiking and rock climbing on its beautiful granitic outcrops. [FIGURE 6]



Figure 6. Granitic outcrops, Sand Springs Range, west of B-17, to be closed to public.

Camping is superb and there are nice dirt roads leading up into the range. Wildlife is plentiful, I have seen antelope and eagles numerous times here. Cattle grazing occurs in this entire area and this economic activity will be lost if the expansion occurs.

COMMENT 7: The proposed FRTC expansion includes segments of Wilderness Study Area lands that will become part of the Navy-owned Dixie Valley Training Area. Removing WSA lands from Wilderness Area consideration is a serious step, which I adamantly oppose, that Congress would have to approve. This major issue is barely discussed in the Draft EIS and appears to contain

erroneous information.

WSA lands are extremely valuable for their wilderness characteristics and are very close to being approved by Congress as official Wilderness Areas. The BLM has spent decades and millions of dollars analyzing public lands in Nevada and managing the WSAs as wilderness until Congress votes to make them Wilderness. A relatively sudden transfer to the Navy would forever eliminate this possibility, as the lands would then be subject to disturbances that would disqualify them from future wilderness consideration.

Overall, the Dixie Valley Training Area would be expanded at the expense of about half of the beautiful, pristine Jobs Peak WSA [FIGURES 7 and 8].



Figure 7. Northern Jobs Peak WSA lands proposed for expansion.



Figure 8. Southern Jobs Peak WSA lands proposed for expansion.

Large chunks of the beautiful, forested Clan Alpine WSA would become Navy lands, as will much more of Dixie Valley. [FIGURE 9].



Figure 9. Clan Alpine WSA and Dixie Valley lands proposed for expansion.

Chalk Mountain is a scenic feature in Dixie Valley that will be taken over by the Navy and subject to damage. I have camped and observed wild horses, antelope, eagles, and other wildlife here.

[FIGURE 10]



Figure 10. Chalk Mountain, proposed for expansion.

There is no adequate explanation in the EIS as to why the Dixie Valley Training Area needs to be so greatly expanded by the Navy, and taken into Navy ownership, for training. It seems that the stated training activities proposed for the expansion area -- ground exercises that are in support of naval aerial operations -- could easily be done in the current Dixie Valley Training Area, which is very large already.

The EIS for the FRTC expansion states that this area would still be open for "certain public uses such as recreation and grazing". This is too vague: the Final EIS must state exactly what kinds of recreation and other public uses will be permitted -- hiking? camping? hunting? fishing? use of all dirt roads? Will the Navy will have the option of withdrawing permission for these uses whenever it deems necessary and without public input?

The FRTC expansion in this area would take in a fantastic earthquake scarp that runs for many miles along the eastern flanks of the Stillwater Mountains in the Jobs Peak WSA. [FIGURE 11]

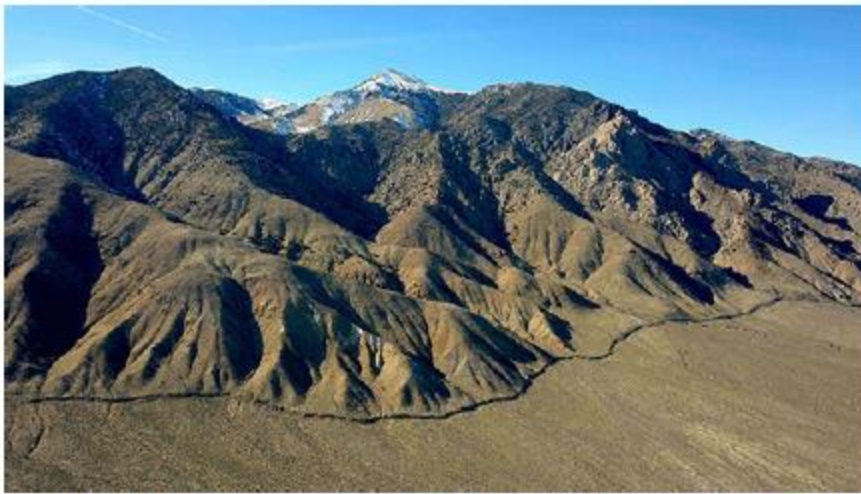


Figure 11. Fault scarp running along lower flank of Jobs Peak WSA, Stillwater Mountains.

This scarp, up to 10 feet high, was caused by a magnitude 6.9 earthquake in Dixie Valley in 1954, just after the large quake in the nearby Fairview Peak range. It is a fine example of an intact fault scarp that provides an outstanding educational exhibit for geology students and the general public. The FRTC expansion here would put this feature under Navy ownership and subject it to destruction by training activities.

COMMENT 8: The FRTC expansion will consume most of the Fairview Peak range and adjacent rugged foothills to the east of the existing B-17, all of which will be closed to public use. [FIGURE 12]



Figure 12. Fairview Range, to become part of B-17 and closed to the public.

COMMENT 9: Ground exercises carried out during Naval ground operations that involve off-road vehicle travel in any part of the proposed expansion lands (as well as in lands currently owned by the Navy) will impart extremely long-lasting damage to the desert soils and geomorphic surfaces. Damages may last centuries, as documented in studies by the U.S. Geological Survey. The Army trained armored battalions and air force units in the Mojave Desert during World War Two and many impacts are still visible, 75 years later. [FIGURE 13]



Figure 13. 75-year old tank track produced during military exercises in Mojave Desert.

COMMENT 10: Broadly, the Navy states that the FRTC has become too small to do fully realistic training because the capability of new weapons systems now extends beyond the size of the FRTC and will only continue to grow into the future. Yet restrictions in the scope of training have already occurred at many military bases nationwide, due not only to ever-improving weapons capabilities, but also to a greatly expanded human population and the increased value and interest in multiple land uses on lands surrounding military bases.

COMMENT 11: The Navy states that, for safety purposes, it needs to own and close off the entire region below the firing-point at which a jet fighter launches a live round at, for instance, 30,000 feet, and 10-12 miles from its target, in the event that a bomb falls short of the target. Cannot this type of training be effectively accomplished with a simulator or by using inert rounds, thereby negating the need to lock away vast amounts of land in the name of public safety?

COMMENT 12: Based on the facts given in the Draft EIS, the Navy can continue to meet training goals and challenges in the future using the large amount of land it already controls, and using advanced technology and creative planning for training exercises, and thereby ensure that our military remains the most capable in the world, and our public lands in central Nevada remain beautiful, healthy, and open to multiple public uses.

Sincerely,



Douglas Prose

F.7.3.285.1 Response

As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operations ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.

Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in *Ninety Days to Combat*. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.

The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.

The Navy worked with a local Nevada scientist to develop the Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at <http://frtcmodernization.com>). The report found that hunting-related (touristic) economic losses would be similar in scale for Mineral, Pershing, and Nye counties based on the percentage of lost revenue compared to total economic activity (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at <http://frtcmodernization.com>], Table B-1). Therefore, no significant impacts would occur in the affected counties due to lost recreational or touristic opportunities.

As discussed in Section 3.5 (Transportation), under Alternative 3, the WDZ would extend over a portion of SR 361, and that segment would need to be closed and re-routed outside of the WDZ due to mission and public safety requirements. The potential closure and rerouting of SR 361 associated with the expansion of B-17 would only occur if Congress chose Alternative 3. However, the affected segment of SR 361 would not be closed unless and until a suitable replacement route is established. Relocation of SR 361 would not cut off access to Gabbs or Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park. The notional relocation corridor for the potential re-routing of SR 361 can be found in Section 3.5.3 (Environmental Consequences). Any proposed rerouting is still conceptual in nature and would be evaluated prior to closure of the route. Follow-on NEPA efforts would need to be conducted for the potential relocation of SR 361 if Alternative 3 were to be selected. See Chapter 2, specifically Section 2.3.4.2.4 (Road and

Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 3) for further details. If Alternative 3 were chosen, the Navy would transfer any funds appropriated for relocating the road to the Federal Highway Administration, who in turn would make these funds available to NDOT for planning, design and construction of the replacement road to State standards.

The Navy used the best available science and a comprehensive review of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions to develop its Cumulative Impacts analysis found in Chapter 4 (Cumulative Impacts). As required under NEPA, the level and scope of the analysis is commensurate with the potential impacts of the action as reflected in the resource-specific EIS, discussions in Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences). The EIS considered its Proposed Action alongside other actions in the region when those impacts are cumulatively significant. Past and present actions are also included in the analytical process as part of the affected environment baseline conditions presented in Chapter 3. The Navy has done so in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality 1997 guidance. Per the guidance, a qualitative approach and best professional judgment are appropriate where precise measurements are not available. Where precise measurements and/or methodologies were available they were used. Guidance from the Council on Environmental Quality states it “is not practical to analyze cumulative effects of an action on the universe; the list of environmental effects must focus on those that are truly meaningful.” In accordance with Council on Environmental Quality guidance, the cumulative impacts analysis focused on impacts that are “truly meaningful.” This was accomplished by reviewing the direct and indirect impacts that would occur on each resource under each of the alternatives. Key factors considered were the current status and sensitivity of the resource and the intensity, duration, and spatial extent of the impacts of each component of the Proposed Action. In general, long-term rather than short-term impacts and widespread rather than localized impacts were considered more likely to contribute to cumulative impacts. Those impacts to a resource that were considered to be negligible were not considered further in the analysis. The level of analysis for each resource was commensurate with the intensity of the impacts identified in Chapter 3 (Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences).

A cumulative impact is the impact on the environment that results from the incremental impact of the action when added to the 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. The scope of the cumulative impacts analysis involves both the geographic extent of the effects and the time-frame in which the coincidental effects could be expected to occur. For this analysis, the study area is resource-specific, as identified in Chapter 4 for the respective resource areas. The time-frame for cumulative impacts centers on the timing of the Proposed Action.

The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.

Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the

potential for impacts to individuals of a species.

The Navy is planning on implementing a 3-nautical-mile radius and a surface to 1,500 feet AGL airspace exclusion zone surrounding the Gabbs airport. This will allow for safe arrivals and departures at the airport as discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace). Under the U.S. Department of Defense

Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]), but it would not prohibit the use of the area by recreationists.

Under Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative), the Sand Springs Range would be in the Special Land Management Overlay, which would be open to public uses such as recreation and grazing. Fairview Peak range and adjacent rugged foothills to the east of the existing B-17 would also be in the Special Land Management Overlay, which would be open to public uses such as recreation and grazing under Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative).

The Navy would drive on established roads and trails during most ground training activities, and would follow all standard operating procedures and protocols to cause the least impact possible. Much of the land that is requested for acquisition or proposed for withdrawal is currently used for off-road vehicle recreation.

Although virtual training and simulators are an important aspect of training activities and are already utilized, there are numerous reasons they do not sufficiently re-create fully integrated real-life situations that may be encountered by military personnel in a combat environment. For example, as discussed in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS, virtual training and simulators cannot recreate the physical stresses (e.g., increased heart rate and adrenalin levels) that a live-fire exercise provides.

The FRTC is the only location where an entire carrier air wing can train as a single unit conducting the full arc of the mission, including pre-flight planning, ordnance handling, in-air activities, weapons deployment, and post-flight briefing. This cannot be accomplished via full mission simulations.

F.7.3.286 Publieee, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jean	Publieee	<p>re federal register 2018 0272 fallon range in nevada to expand size triply- no way should this be allowed. america needs to save this land from the pollution of the use by the u.s. navy. they have polluted all over the usa. every military base in the usa is pollution. i see no reason to allow more pollution in nevada.</p> <p>they can continue to use the land they have. they are total polluters. they pollute their own personnel. they pollute everybody else who lives near their use. no way should more land be turned into hell on earth that nobody can live on. this usage should be denied. we have 328 million people in this country. they deserve better than they are getting from this polluting military branch.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>The DoD created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure DoD compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations. Active sites are those that require additional action to clean them up to the level(s) required by applicable federal and state laws and regulations, before they can be closed as "No Further Action."</p>

F.7.3.287 Quandt, I.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Illya	Quandt	<p>Hello,</p> <p>As a patriotic citizen I am concerned by the expansion plans of the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization EIS. All across the country more and more public lands are becoming less public. Being a Nevada citizen I am grateful that there is so much open land available for public use (over %85). Any move to grab land and restrict public access to it, no matter how noble, is worrisome. Texas has less then %5 of its land public. Having lived there, all you come across are fences and locked gates. Please don't let that happen to Nevada.</p> <p>The Military is full of smart people. With the current funding and technology, they should be</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) as the action alternatives, including training elsewhere. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		able to figure out how to make due with the land they have.	standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).

F.7.3.288 Queener-Plourde, S. N.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Sarah NightBear	Queener-Plourde	<p>The twenty-six Piaute Indian tribes and colonies call this HOME where their children and grandchildren learned to thrive from imprinted cultural teachings onto their memories for several generations and thousands of years: their future. A peoples history is in this land called Nevada: their future. To destroy all this is genocide and ecocide.</p> <p>A complete impact statement must be done before any work begins: these are sacred lands to Indigenous People of Nevada. You have no right to intrude on Indian lands without their permission with proper sovereignty negotiations at the table.</p> <p>“Tribes have the inherent power to govern all matters involving their members, as well as a range of issues in Indian Country. The essence of tribal sovereignty is the ability to govern and to protect and enhance the health, safety, and welfare of tribal citizens within tribal territory. Tribal governments maintain the power to determine their own governance structures and enforce laws through police departments and tribal courts. The governments exercise these inherent rights through the development of their distinct forms of government, determining citizenship; establishing civil and criminal laws for their nations; taxing, licensing, regulating, and maintaining and exercising the power to exclude wrongdoers from tribal lands.”</p> <p>http://www.ncai.org/about-tribes last visited on 11-20-2018</p> <p>In 1951 there were one hundred above ground nuclear tests made in Nevada. In 1957 there were five made. In 1957 there were 828 below the ground tests detonated. In 1992 This proposal would complete the poisoning of this planet if granted. On September 24, 1996, President Bill Clinton signed the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), prohibiting nuclear weapons test detonations. The U.S. Congress has never ratified the treaty; however, the United States has maintained this cessation in nuclear testing.</p> <p>http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/underground-nuclear-testing-nevada-test-site (last visited 11-20-2018)</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Nuclear power and testing are not included as part of the Proposed Action for this EIS. Please see Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) of the EIS for a definition of the scope of the project.</p> <p>In accordance with Executive Order 13175, Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments; DoD policies; the National Historic Preservation Act; and Navy instructions, the Navy engaged in Tribal consultations during scoping, during the public comment period for the Draft EIS, and following release of the Draft EIS. The Navy invited culturally affiliated Tribes to take part in the NEPA process as Tribal Participants for this EIS (see Appendix C, Tribal Correspondence). The Navy invited these Tribes to (1) participate in project meetings, (2) provide additional information related to cultural resources, and (3) provide internal document review (e.g., of the Class III Cultural Resources Inventory Report) during the development of this Draft EIS.</p> <p>The Navy invited and engaged in Government-to-Government consultations with the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada and the following federally recognized Tribes: the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribes, Lovelock Paiute Tribe, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Summit Lake Paiute Tribe, Te-Moak Tribe of Western Shoshone</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>Nuclear power is not Our Future! Renewable resources are: hemp and all other soil and air restorative green plants. God have mercy on your souls if you don't see the consequences of such an action.</p> <p>I absolutely do not give permission, invite nor encourage the implementation of this nuclear testing in the state of Nevada and further more, there absolutely can not be more weapons of mass destruction tested or manufactured.</p> <p>Map and list of 26 tribes and colonies of Indigenous First Nations living in the state of Nevada: https://www.nevadadot.com/home/showdocument?id=142</p>	<p>Indians of Nevada (consisting of the Battle Mountain Band, Elko Band, South Fork Band, and Wells Band), Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, Walker River Paiute Tribe, Winnemucca Paiute Tribe, Yerington Paiute Tribe, and Yomba Shoshone Tribe. Appendix C (Tribal Correspondence) of the Final EIS was updated to include a summary of all outreach performed by the Navy and copies of official correspondence.</p>

F.7.3.289 Ralston, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Robert	Ralston	<p>I oppose the proposed expansion of the Navy's bombing range in Nevada. This proposed expansion will endanger critical wildlife habitat, wildlife itself, and close off much needed recreational land, and opportunities.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.</p> <p>Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVT and surrounding areas.</p>

F.7.3.290 Ramey, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Mark	Ramey	<p>This is totally wrong, to take people's land, to close long time recreation area's is so wrong ! Shame on you !!!!</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p>

F.7.3.291 Ratliff, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Joe	Ratliff	I am a retired federal scientist with more than 30 years of experience in managing natural resources in Nevada, the Great Basin and on Naval reservations such as the Camp Pendleton Marine Corps Base. And I strongly oppose the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station. I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these ecologically important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin ecosystems. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

F.7.3.292 Reardon, G. E.

First	Last	Comment	Response
George E.	Reardon	I am against expansion as added lands will become contaminated with the chemicals associated with bombs. Weapons testing has been done adequately up	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		to now and should be able to work in a limited capacity. We already have guided bombs that are quite effective. I am against expanding the military complex as well. Leave well enough alone!	<p>weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p> <p>As discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities. The Navy continuously monitors its operations to find ways to minimize the use of hazardous materials and to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes. Any spills would be managed and cleaned up in accordance with applicable state and federal regulatory requirements. If any such spill were to exceed reportable quantities as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for regulated material, the event would be immediately reported to the NAS Fallon Environmental Division for appropriate action per the Integrated Contingency Plan (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2009).</p> <p>Additionally, the DoD created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure DoD compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>Lastly, Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3571.4, Operational Range Clearance Policy for Navy Ranges, establishes the policy and requirements for performing operational range clearance on Navy ranges.</p>

F.7.3.293 Reed, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Christina	Reed	This is totally ridiculous to take over more public lands and destroy the wildlife out there! I am ABSOLUTELY AGAINST it!!!	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.294 Reed, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Roger	Reed	I strongly object to any expansion into the traditional territory of the original people of the territory. I've been on training ranges and believe there is more than sufficient land already under occupation. If anything, refine your training to utilize existing space more efficiently. Thank you.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.

F.7.3.295 Reid, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Richard	Reid	I do not support the expansion of the US Department of Navy Fallon Range Training Complex. I am an Exploration Geologist and continued withdrawal of Public Lands is creating a significant issue for my continued employment in the state of Nevada. In addition the expansion would result in significant negative impacts on the wildlife and environment in terms of wildlife management and additional naval facilities in the desert. The proposal will close the popular back country access in the area of our public lands. In addition there will be negative impacts to Native American cultural and historical sites. The expansion will be severely felt in the rural areas of Nevada, an area where the loss of recent mining jobs has left the economy weak. I do support the status quo but since this is not listed as an alternative I will have to support the No Action Alternative as represented by Alternative 1. Congress should not renew the current withdrawal and the Navy should find another area for training. Enough is enough with public land grabs within our state.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.
Richard	Reid	I just submitted a comment and realized that I listed the wrong alternative. I do not support the expansion of the US Department of Navy Fallon Range Training Complex and recommend that the No Action Alternative be taken. Further withdrawal of Public lands should not be allowed due to loss of access by the public for work, recreation and wildlife as well as cultural considerations.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.296 Rice, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jerry	Rice	You're an asshole. Fuck off	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.297 Rimer, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Richard	Rimer	We have an average of 60% of members of all species since the 1970's. Humans are creating the 6th wave of extinctions to face our planet; about 10,000 times the evolutionary rate; species lost are about 150-200 species per day. We need wildlife to survive in order for us to survive. Destabilizing the ecosystems will kill many more humans then bombs when the web of life gets more torn by habitat loss, invasive species, overpopulation/consumption, pollution, over-hunting/over-harvesting, climate change etc. Species keep one another in check and prevents spread of infectious diseases and stabilizes	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>the biosphere (Gaia hypothesis which is proven correct). Please preserve our precious habitats for all beings including humans; they are our eco-life support systems . Big horn sheeps are already being attacked by domestic animal diseases that graze on federal lands.</p> <p>Thanks, Dr. Richard Rimer D.O.</p>	<p>EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.298 Rinaldo, K.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Ken	Rinaldo	<p>I am completely opposed to this further expenditures on expansion of the base in the name of security.</p> <p>Why the US conintues to waste our tax dollars and money through more unnecessary military testing, is robbing our future children of their right to have land and environment untouched by our the military-industrial complexes and the toxic waste they leave in their wake.</p> <p>The Fallon Naval Air Station bombing ranges will be damaging the iconic Fairview Peak area and the Stillwater National Wildlife a national place of beauty and refuge, of more than 1.1 million acres of Desert National Wildlife, that is designed to protect bighorn sheep and other wildlife.</p> <p>As we now know, that global warming is our major future threat, the military would be better deployed to really serve the people and to start remiating all the damage done to environment vs creating new weapons for purposes of enriching only the captains of industries.</p> <p>Invest in the state department and reduce our massive overexpenditures on our military.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>This proposed expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (the USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge) or Fairview Peak. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.299 Ringler, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
John	Ringler	<p>To me, this seems like yet another intrusion into our public lands under a president who has demonstrated much disdain for them. Though this seizure was already underway it does not need to proceed and I believe that the U.S. military already has access to plenty of lands in this area of the country for exercises like the ones being mentioned. It is especially unconscionable that the Air Force and Navy BOTH want to expand into our public lands at this same time. I don't like either expansion but ONE might be palatable if the need is truly demonstrable.</p> <p>This is a rich habitat for numerous species that would be highly impacted, and this is not our land to take away from future generations of Americans.</p> <p>Thanks for the opportunity to comment.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>The Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR) Military Land Withdrawal at Nellis Air Force Base and the FRTC Modernization EIS are distinct and separate actions based on their mission, type of training activities, and training schedules. The Proposed Action for NTTR was evaluated in Chapter 4 (Cumulative Impacts) in the Final EIS. There would be no overlap between the residents or resources affected by aircraft noise in the FRTC range areas and those affected by aircraft noise in the areas surrounding the NTTR (see Figure 4-1, 4-2, and 4-3). However, it was determined based on the analysis in the Final EIS that Nye County would experience a significant impact to their recreation and economic resources due to the cumulative nature of the NTTR Proposed Action and the Navy's Proposed Action at the FRTC. Therefore, the Navy is working and will continue to work with Nye County and other impacted Counties to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts when feasible and consistent with the Navy's authority.</p> <p>Regarding impacts to species, the Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.</p> <p>Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.300 Robinson, K.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Kirk	Robinson	<p>As founder and executive director of Western Wildlife Conservancy in Utah, I am greatly concerned about protecting wildlife habitats in Utah and Nevada. I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.301 Rose, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jared	Rose	This "modernization" is nothing more than a land-grab by the Navy and DoD. It is not only unnecessary, but also flies in the face of laws meant to protect this land for the people who recreate on it and the animals that inhabit it. Instead, you are attempting to seize it for nothing more than destruction. Furthermore your decision to limit the public comment period shows that you know this is not in the public's best interest and you want to fast track this illegal land-grab as quickly as possible. Wide-open natural spaces like this are what makes America great. They are the basis of that cherished song 'America The Beautiful' and need to	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Department of the Navy's (DON's) environmental evaluations and NEPA analyses are for a potential legislative withdrawal of 772,370.75 acres of land at Naval Air Station Fallon that the Navy intends to propose to Congress to withdraw and reserve for military use. The comment period was extended to February 14, 2019 as a result of these public comments. A notice of availability was published in the Federal Register (FR) by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on November 16th, 2018 (83 FR 57726) for the Navy's Draft FRTC Modernization EIS at Naval Air Station Fallon, NV. The public review period was set to end on January 15, 2019. On December 27, 2018, the Department of the Navy published a 30-day comment extension in the Federal Register (83 FR 66685), which extended the commenting period to February 14, 2019.</p> <p>As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		be protected for generations to come. Not seized from the public and used as a bombing range for our bloated military empire. I oppose this plan and respectfully request that the US Congress listen to their employers and reject this request and provide further protections from this type of land-grab taking place in the future.	<p>Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.302 Rutski, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
John	Rutski	<p>no no no</p> <p>do it somewhere else</p> <p>these are public lands - lets keep that way</p> <p>training can be done some where else. a far remote place would (like afganistan, kasakstan would give us</p> <p>more bang for our buck not to mention our influence in that part of the world</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis.</p>

F.7.3.303 Sabo, B.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Betty	Sabo	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.304 Sampson, K.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Kent	Sampson	Can't you keep training isolated to the areas already provided, and areas that have been demolished from years of training. Quit trying to tread on new turf. That is what foreign wars are for!	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operations ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.305 Samuels, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Dulcinea	Samuels	I have a house in gabbs it has been a part of my family since Gabbs started. I have been a native in the area my whole life and my family as there before white people invaded Nevada. Leave our public land public! It is devastating to the rural people who call Nevada home. You are uprooting lives and taking what cannot not be replaced. The military has been doing fly overs and even breaking the sound barriers forever out	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operations ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		there. Why steal this public land? It is disgraceful.	to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.

F.7.3.306 Sanders, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Timothy	Sanders	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station. The U.S. government already owns 85% of this state. Enough is enough!	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.307 Sangster, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Thomas	Sangster	In your proposal you have not provided ample support for the necessity of this expansion to either the Public, the Navy or the protection of either. The Navy and other military branches have amassed more NV lands already than necessary. There are already countless square miles of unutilized open lands that have been restricted to the public in the name of military expansion. We the people and the financiers of our great military should not be required to continuously relinquish that which makes the state of NV so great to us. It's vast open lands. We are	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered

First	Last	Comment	Response
		a recreational population that loves to utilize our beautiful deserts by exploring it through off road vehicles, horse back and continuing a long heritage of conquering the desert through challenging desert races that is unique to our state. Your expansion would seek to remove lands that are currently open to OHV access, horse back riding and hunting. A little land grab here and a little land grab there begins to detereorate a fabric that makes NV so unique to other states. I propose the Navy reassess the current use of their lands and the ineffectiency of maximizing the utilization of those lands. I can only support a 'No Expansion' decision.	but not carried forward for full analysis. While it would hypothetically be possible to develop training systems at Nellis Air Force Base, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training currently uses nearly all of the complex's available training capacity (time and space). Nellis Air Force Base, as currently configured or as proposed, would not be able to support the intensity of both Navy and Air Force training, and therefore was not carried forward for further analysis.

F.7.3.308 Sasaki, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Scott	Sasaki	Stop blowing up stuff.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.309 Sax, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jacob	Sax	Nevada's public lands are the rightful property of every taxpaying American. A military land grab further extends the unnecessary reach and size of the US military at the expense of wildlife, ecosystem health, and, ultimately, the health of Nevadans. By commandeering more public land, of which I am proud part owner and user, military the puts the US further into a unfree police state, and further away from foundational American ideals of freedom, open spaces, and peace.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.310 Scruggs, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
TJ	Scruggs	I strongly oppose the Navy's proposal to seize the Great Basin, also known as the wild heart of Nevada. The American people have given our military something like 25 million acres. That isn't enough?!!! Don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.311 Shaffer, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Justin	Shaffer	I live in NV for the open public lands. To get on my motorcycle and ride pretty much where I want to. I am very much opposed to losing any public Land in this Great state.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.312 Sheldon-Davis, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Carrie	Sheldon-Davis	<p>Our family has hunted in this area for years and enjoys exploring and camping. I can't understand why everyone can't share public lands. Also the damage you are going to these ranching families is unheard of. They were here before the navy was even in Fallon. This is just showing the over reach of the government. Where will these 12 families be able to buy grazing rights when there are only 5 available in Nevada share public land.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.</p> <p>Water rights are considered real property; therefore, if impacted, they would be purchased following the valuation of water rights process that has been included in Section 3.9 (Water Resources) of the Final EIS. The Navy acknowledges that the loss of water rights could be a factor in determining the amount of payments for losses associated with the cancellation of grazing permits. Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex) addresses the valuation of losses due to the cancellation of such permits. This valuation process would also apply to Alternatives 2 and 3.</p> <p>The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives.</p> <p>The following information has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.</p>

F.7.3.313 Sherk, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Larry	Sherk	Our destructive relationship to Gaia, our living planet, is terrible. We don't need any more bombing ranges because we do't need any more bombs. The world agrees that the age of wars is over, except for our little bombing raids on civilians.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.314 Sherman, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Tom	Sherman	<p>first the military is basically useless. it is completely ineffective in the medium to long run against environmental collapse, terrorism, and resource depletion. also all they do is waste money catherine fitts or is it stitts has documented 20 T totally unaccounted for in a 15 year period. finally they are major polluters themselves. they dumped radioactive barrels in the ocean and now they are afraid their sonic blasts will open them. they routinely blast the ocean to test their sonar whatever in environmentally sensitive areas like off alaska. the above are generalities about why i hate the military. to be specific the military is incompetent, untrustworthy, and greedy, so anything the military wants should be looked with great skepticism.</p> <p>they can't protect us very effectively now and improving their weapon systems won't help as especially per lines 1 & 2. so why wreck the environment to do it.? now the latest is a report that says we cannot defeat or will lose to china or russia is some imagined war with them. so the report said then we need more money. trump just gave them more. its up to 700B. this report was drummed up by the military itself to get more money. in other words they are always asking for things they don't deserve and this is probably another.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Proposed Action does not include the topic of your comment. Please see Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) of the EIS for a definition of the scope of the project.</p>

F.7.3.315 Shipton, J. R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
John Raymond	Shipton	it will close down big game hunting,,upland game birds, & waterfowl areas to hunting, and off road vehicle use , don't do it.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Under Alternative 2 and 3, the Navy would provide access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency that would set any quotas and distribute any permits, as well as maintenance of wildlife habitat. The Navy has developed a draft MOA in conjunction with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for this hunting program (further details are provided in Section 3.12, Recreation, and Appendix D, Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans, of the Final EIS). The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission. The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC.</p> <p>While OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20, OHV use would be allowed to continue within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after WSA designation removal by Congress.</p> <p>Topography and OHV trails similar to those that occur in the B-17 range area also occur in the Dixie Valley area or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These other public areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).</p>

F.7.3.316 Simas, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jeff	Simas	Please stop taking our public land and OHV areas!	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>While OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20, OHV use would be allowed to continue within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after WSA designation removal by Congress. Topography and OHV trails similar to those that occur in the B-17 range area also occur in the Dixie Valley area or other nearby public lands and could be used by recreationists. These other public areas would not be impacted by the proposed withdrawal or acquisition and would continue to be available for full public use and recreation, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).</p>

F.7.3.317 Skelton, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
David	Skelton	<p>NAVY EXPANSION</p> <p>During public comment, Lovelock Valley farmer and rancher Carl Clinger reviewed an earlier meeting on the Navy's proposed expansion of the Fallon Range Training Complex. The project would reduce the county's PILT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) revenues with the military's planned acquisition of 16 sections or 16 square miles of public land. It would also reduce the AUMs (Animal Unit Months) and incomes of ranchers with grazing allotment permits on the public land.</p> <p>U.S. Congressman Mark Amodei, state BLM and Navy officials as well as ranchers from Pershing County and Churchill County attended the earlier meeting, Clinger said.</p> <p>"The congressman held the meeting with all of the allotment holders, five people from the Navy, the new BLM director in Reno, the DWR interim director, several people from the state and Churchill County," Clinger said. "The congressman</p>	<p>A detailed analysis of PILT is located in the Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at http://frtcmmodernization.com) and discussed in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics). There would be no change in PILT for Churchill, Mineral, Nye, and Pershing counties, and very little change in PILT for Lyon County; therefore, there would be no significant impacts from lost revenues from reduced PILT under any of the action alternatives. However, there could be a modest reduction in revenues at the state level insofar as lost hunting opportunities could result in a reduction of funding sources for NDOW.</p> <p>As discussed in the Draft EIS in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics), under Alternative 3, minimum and maximum AUMs lost and lost value of AUMs would be higher as compared to Alternative 1 and 2. Table 3.13-20 represents allotments for the minimum and maximum allotment loss in AUMs annually under Alternative 3. Table 3.13-21 represents the direct minimum and maximum values of lost AUMs and lost value of AUMs by impacted counties under Alternative 3.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>said you might not get the answer you want but you should at least be talking to the right people to ask your questions. It was clear that their allotment person had not talked to most of the allotment holders.”</p> <p>Clinger said his Humboldt Sink grazing allotment could be “split in half” by the FRTC expansion but a Navy official said told him that could be an error.</p> <p>“She said that two months ago and there’s been nothing done to solve the error,” Clinger said. “At least she’s talking to people which is not the case with the BLM Winnemucca range cons. I think maybe the Lander County BLM office people are talking to some of the allotment holders.”</p> <p>If half of his grazing allotment is lost to the military expansion, Clinger said he would lose “maybe 42 percent of my allotment” but other ranchers would lose much more than that.</p> <p>“There’s other people that could lose anywhere from 92 to 98 percent,” he said. “They’re talking about the loss of really almost 11,000 AUMs. If you figure 10-month grazing, then you’re talking about a thousand animals at a thousand dollars apiece and you’re looking at a million dollars per year just in lost animals for the community.”</p> <p>The Navy employs thousands of people and provides other economic benefits for Churchill County but now even those county officials are now looking at the costs versus the benefits.</p> <p>“The Churchill County Commission talked extensively about what was just mentioned here, about trying to figure out the real cost to the county,” Clinger said. “There’s so much geothermal there. From what I understand, at 150 feet, they’re getting 280 degree water and that’s going to be in</p>	<p>Total economic impacts would be higher under Alternative 3 in comparison to Alternatives 1 and 2. By adding the overall economic impact from the decrease in AUMs (ranging from \$490,126 to \$682,758 [Table 3.13-22]) and the associated direct and secondary labor income loss (ranging from \$137,771 to \$183,854 [Table 3.13-24]) and comparing these figures to the total economic activity for the beef cattle ranching and farming sector in Churchill County (\$35 million), there would only be a reduction in economic output ranging from 0.016 percent to 0.024 percent. The reduction is significantly less when compared to the total economic activity for all sectors for Churchill County, which is 1.7 billion dollars (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at http://frtcmmodernization.com], Table B-1). Economic losses associated with reduced AUMs would be similar in scale for Lander, Mineral, Pershing, and Plumas counties based on the percentage of lost revenue compared to sector and total economic activity. While there would be significant impacts to individual ranching operations, there would be no significant impacts to overall economic activity within the affected counties due to lost AUMs.</p> <p>The following specific grazing mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Policies and procedures in the NAS Fallon INRMP would continue to be implemented to avoid conflicts with livestock grazing. This includes routine monitoring of fence lines surrounding potentially hazardous areas to ensure that the fence is secure and cannot be crossed by people or animals; the monitoring area would be increased to include new perimeter fences on lands proposed for withdrawal. The Navy is proposing to provide funds for BLM to hire two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers who would assist with management of the additional area. The Standard Operating Procedures for handling cattle on the FRTC training ranges would be revised and implemented. Livestock friendly erosion controls would be used when performing construction activities on or adjacent to grazing land that is actively being used.</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges that it has the authority under 43 United States Code section 315q of the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934, as amended, to make payments to federal grazing permit holders for losses suffered by the permit holders as a result of the withdrawal or other use of former</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>the bombing range so the cost to Churchill County is astronomical.”</p> <p>Pershing County Commissioner Rob McDougal agreed the economic impacts on Fallon and Churchill County would be even greater than the significant impacts on Pershing County.</p> <p>“They started looking into it and they’re finding a lot of potential problems,” he said. “I think they are kind of getting a little dose of reality on the resources that would be taken out of the mix.”</p> <p>The proposed FRTC expansion would also impact water resources according to Clinger.</p> <p>“At the Central Nevada Water Authority meeting, they had a presentation on the water from Dixie Valley that would go away,” he said. “There’s significant impact to Pershing County and astronomical impact to Churchill County.”</p> <p>Clinger said he commented on Pole Line Road, a south county road, part of which could be condemned by the Navy with the expansion of the B-20 Bombing Range into Pershing County.</p> <p>“They’ve stressed that only one out of every 8,000 bombs may go awry,” he said. “I said I’d be happy to sit out there on that road with those kinds of odds because my house shakes every time they bomb. When it does shake, it’s maybe 8 to 10 times then it doesn’t shake again for months. For them to condemn 20 miles of road for that high of probability, I think is wrong.”</p>	<p>federal grazing lands for war or national defense purposes. This authority has been incorporated into the Proposed Action. The Final EIS discusses the process that the Navy is proposing to use to determine payment amounts to each specific grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits.</p> <p>As discussed in detail in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics), access to geothermal power plant facilities and infrastructure, including miles of power transmission lines, both via road and air is critical to maintaining the financial viability, safety, and efficient operation of the facilities. For example, inefficient power transmission due to longer than necessary transmission lines would increase operating costs and reduce revenue for companies that own the power plants and potentially increase the cost of geothermal power for consumers. Limited access to facilities could also restrict or prevent future development. Repositioning the B-17 and DVT A withdrawal area would potentially allow greater access to areas located west of the B-17 expansion area under Alternative 3 for mining and geothermal opportunities; however, the socioeconomic impacts would likely be very similar to impacts under Alternative 1. In addition, State Route 839 would not potentially need to be rerouted, which would maintain access to locations off of the existing route (e.g., the Denton-Rawhide mine) as they are currently.</p> <p>Potential losses associated with currently unknown mining and geothermal opportunities as defined under Alternative 1 would be less under Alternative 3 because geothermal opportunities would be allowed in DVT A. However, significant impacts could still occur under Alternative 3 due to such potential lost mining and geothermal opportunities in the expanded B-16, B-17, and B-20. Therefore, while reasonable foreseeable economic impacts associated with lost mining and geothermal opportunities cannot be accurately determined at this time, there is the potential that significant economic impacts could occur due to the potential loss of mining and geothermal opportunities all Alternatives.</p>
David	Skelton	<p>I am opposed to the proposed expansion as laid out to date. The negative impacts to Pershing County have been unaddressed and far out way the benefit to the Navy where</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p>

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		other options exist though inconvenient. There data in the voluminous 1.500 page document, where the same information was repeated over and over again, lacked accuracy and was presented incorrectly as fact. I believe with minor adjustment a viable solution to our (Pershing County) issues could have resulted in support of your proposal. Alas in a heavy handed fashion our negative impacts were swept aside forcing me to choose the NO ACTION alternative to the Navy's land grab.	

F.7.3.318 Sloan, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Rita	Sloan	<p>The U.S. Navy needs to pay special attention to those who deal with Nevada's environmental health all the time. I concur with Friends of Nevada Wilderness:</p> <p>The public comment period must be extended by at least 30 days. It is unacceptable for the Navy to release a 1500-page document just before the Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's holidays and allow only 60 days for comment. The public must be given a reasonable amount of time for review and comment.</p> <p>Instead of trying to eliminate 74,700 acres of high-quality wilderness study areas (WSAs) the military should recommend that all of the Wilderness Study Areas surrounding their proposed expansions be fully designated as Wilderness. These Wilderness areas would serve as excellent development buffers for the military while still allowing for protecting wildlife habitat and recreation.</p> <p>The entire Stillwater Range, from Highway 50 to the Pershing County line, including the WSAs and lands with wilderness characteristics, has been identified as having</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The comment period was extended to February 14, 2019 as a result of these public comments. A notice of availability was published in the Federal Register (FR) by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on November 16th, 2018 (83 FR 57726) for the Navy's Draft FRTC Modernization EIS at Naval Air Station Fallon, NV. The public review period was set to end on January 15, 2019. On December 27, 2018, the Department of the Navy published a 30-day comment extension in the Federal Register (83 FR 66685), which extended the commenting period to February 14, 2019. This expansion would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>This Proposed Action and expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd-668ee).</p> <p>The proposed relocation of SR 361 is not part of the Proposed Action, nor is it a certainty pending any ultimate Congressional decision on the alternatives proposed for implementation, and therefore has not been analyzed to the same level of detail as other components of the Proposed Action for the FRTC Modernization EIS. Therefore, follow-on</p>

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		<p>extremely important cultural resources, wildlife habitat and recreational value and needs to be protected. The Range has been proposed as an ACEC because of the cultural, historic, religious and scenic values important to Native Americans, dating back 10,000 years. The Stillwater Range is a popular year-round hiking area and provides for scenic backcountry touring.</p> <p>The military's plan could threaten the geologic and archeologic resources from the ancient days of Lake Lahontan dating back to the Pleistocene period. Pluvial formations can still be found as well as fossil evidence of the wildlife and plant life unique to the Great Basin from that period. The interconnectivity of the marshlands and mountain ranges is a natural resource rich in habitat, cultural and scenic values.</p> <p>The military should not expand into the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. They are proposing to eliminate 3,200 acres of the refuge and close it to the public. This is not acceptable. The military is proposing to move Highway 361 to Gabbs to the east of its current location, taking a safe, relatively flat highway through the valley and pushing it up into the mountains creating a very expensive and potentially more dangerous highway for truck and passenger travel. That seems unnecessary and a big expense to the taxpayers. Highway construction would negatively impact wildlife habitat.</p> <p>Given how easily wildfires have started with warming climate and drought we are very concerned with military operations starting</p>	<p>NEPA efforts would need to occur for the relocation of this state route in the future to address the concerns of dangerous mountain conditions.</p> <p>The Navy has implemented and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce the occurrence of wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan, and where possible, proposed elements and goals of this plan were added to the Final EIS. For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management).</p> <p>Public access changes under the action alternatives would result in a significant impact on transportation routes near the FRTC. Under Alternative 1 and 2, Sand Canyon Road and portions of the unpaved B-20 Access Road (open for Navy use only) that pass to the north of B-20 would be closed to the public, and there would be the potential need to re-route State Route 839. Preventing public travel on these roads would cause a loss of access via customary/familiar transit routes. Access to the planned Special Recreation Management Areas, discussed in detail in Section 3.12 (Recreation) and shown in Figure 3.12-4, in the withdrawal area would also be closed to OHV use and alternate routes would be utilized. Alternative 3 would impact the same roads with the exception of State route 839; Alternative 3 would instead cause the potential relocation of part of State Route 361. Closure of OHV use areas as a result of implementing any action alternative is discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Access impacts on cultural and sacred sites are discussed in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources).</p> <p>The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas.</p> <p>While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.</p> <p>Please note that removing the designation of WSA's or portions of WSAs is a separate Congressional action, however, the Navy would recommend for portions of the WSAs to be de-designated in order to be withdrawn. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>fires that could sweep through our homes, ranches and public lands.</p> <p>We support keeping the Fairview Peak area open to the public for a wide variety of recreation.</p> <p>We have concerns with the massive expansion of B-20 and proposed public closures and how that would impact recreation and wildlife habitat in wet years in the Carson Sink. Rural communities are not being given adequate time to thoroughly and accurately analyze the economic impacts of the preferred alternative. Rural economies could suffer from the loss of grazing allotments and greatly reduced public access to lands with high recreational value.</p> <p>I also agree with the concerns that the Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club, have voiced:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It will be a substantial new withdrawal of public land from public use, increasing the federal control of Nevada to nearly 8% of our land area. 2. It will cut off many recreational areas and access roads used by the public 3. It will remove several Wilderness Study Area (WSA) designations by a simple Congressional act 4. It will prevent solar, wind, and geothermal development on many square miles of current public land 5. It will lessen the amount of funds coming to the state and to affected counties from permits and taxes pertaining to recreation, hunting, and fishing on public land 	<p>other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTa, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>The Navy has made allowances for potential energy development in the DVTa that is compatible with the Navy mission. Additionally, under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative), the Navy reduced the amount of withdrawn land in the DVTa by creating the Special Land Management Overlay areas to allow future energy development pending BLM approval.</p> <p>The analysis in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics) found that lost hunting opportunities could result in a reduction in funding sources for the State of Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW). The Navy worked with a local Nevada scientist to develop the Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at http://frtcmernization.com). The report found that hunting-related (touristic) economic losses would be similar in scale for Mineral, Pershing, and Nye counties based on the percentage of lost revenue compared to total economic activity (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at http://frtcmernization.com], Table B-1). Therefore, no significant impacts would occur in the affected counties due to lost recreational or touristic opportunities. The Navy would provide access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency that would set any quotas and distribute any permits, as well as maintenance of wildlife habitat. The Navy has developed a draft MOA in conjunction with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for this hunting program (further details are provided in Section 3.12, Recreation, and Appendix D, Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans, of the Final EIS). The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.</p> <p>The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC. Therefore, the financial impact to communities from the loss of hunting in the area would be somewhat offset by this program, however, overall, lost hunting opportunities could result in a reduction in funding sources for NDOW (as discussed in Section 3.13 [Socioeconomics]).</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		6. It will impact wildlife and its habitat, with particular impacts at Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge 7. and there are many more!	
Rita	Sloan	<p>Instead of eliminating 74,400 acres of Wilderness Study Areas as part of their Dixie Valley Training Area, the military should support Wilderness designation for all of the WSAs within, or very close to, this area including; the Clan Alpine Mountain, Job Peak, Stillwater Range, and the Desatoya Mountains WSAs. Wilderness designation will provide a larger and more complete buffer for military actions, allow for continued public access, and be protected in perpetuity. This Wilderness buffer could also include lands with wilderness characteristics that Friends of Nevada Wilderness identified through our inventories (Stillwater additions and South Job Peak). The military needs to adjust their boundary proposals in B-20 to exclude the 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The 17,848-acre refuge was established by a Congressional Act in 1931 to "...provide a sanctuary and breeding ground for birds and other wildlife". It should not be part of a bombing area!</p> <p>The military must find a way to allow for more public access in B-17, at least on a seasonal or part-time basis. The military has made some minor allowances for OHV races and bighorn sheep hunting, but what about access for hiking, photography, rock hounding, and camping? Why should OHVs and the person who happens to draw a bighorn sheep tag get special privileges? Where is the social justice for all?</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as Wilderness is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVT, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p> <p>Regarding the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, the Proposed Action would include approximately 3,200 acres of land under Alternative 1 and 2, and 2,720 acres under Alternative 3 currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDW, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>The following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes. The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses beyond what is proposed under Alternative 2 and 3 for managed access of OHV races and the Bighorn Sheep hunting program in the B-17 range, as there are too many recreationists and it is difficult to control the number or people that would be allowed on range. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationists.

F.7.3.319 Smallwood, N.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Nick	Smallwood	I strongly suggest that the land in question, is left alone for the public to enjoy the amazing places in this beautiful desert. By closing public lands to the public, you will be denying the people access to some of the wildest and scenic places left in our country.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and has updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy has added tables discussing management practices, monitoring, and mitigation measures to the Final EIS in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation) to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.320 Smith, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Clayton	Smith	My biggest frustration is the closing of access to Slate and Monte Cristo mountain ranges.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy has reviewed and considered all comments received and has updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy has added tables discussing management practices, monitoring, and mitigation measures to the Final EIS in Chapter 5 (Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation) to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.321 Smith, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Donald	Smith	<p>Comment: Expansion of Training Range.</p> <p>As one who visits much of the area to be expanded into the Training Range, I urge the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The military should exclude 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, protecting it as a sanctuary and breeding ground for birds and other wildlife. 	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy and the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge, 14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as Wilderness is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>2) That all 74,400 acres of Wilderness Study Areas in the Dixie Valley Training Area receive Wilderness designation, including the Clan Alpine Mountain, Job Peak, Stillwater Range, and the Desatoya Mountains WSAs, allowing for continued public access, and be protected in perpetuity.</p> <p>Donald Smith 5685 Westside Road Cave Junction, Oregon 97523</p>	<p>electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTA, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.</p>

F.7.3.322 Smith, G.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Greg	Smith	<p>I would ask that you consider a different area and much smaller as the chosen area is taking critical Sheep habitat and other wildlife environments. The financial impact to surrounding communities from the loss of income from the hunters and other sportsmen who now utilize these areas are most substantial.</p> <p>On the wildlife side, your proposal will have a net reduction of 10-15% of the total Sheep in the state. It has taken over 30 years to reestablish the Sheep population to current levels. The waiting list to draw a Sheep tag in Nevada is long and takes many years to draw. By reducing hunters potential areas to apply for, your impact would be detrimental to a hunter wanting to hunt Sheep.</p> <p>On the conservation side, we as sportsmen have worked for 30 years to improve Sheep habitat and expand areas that were historically occupied by Sheep. Many guzzlers were constructed and springs were improved and protected to enable the expansion of Sheep areas. In doing so we have grown our Sheep numbers from near extinction to currently over 10,000. It makes no sense to destroy decades of volunteer efforts to allow you to decimate more of our beloved state to a point where no public access would be allowed.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Please see Chapter 1, Purpose and Need, and Chapter 2, Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives, for discussion of the Navy's rationale for the particular withdrawals and acquisitions of land set forth in the proposed action The Navy is drafting a MOA with NDOW for a managed Bighorn Hunt Program on B-17 with the Navy. A draft of the document is located in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans). The MOA would outline management practices, including the annual review process. NDOW would be the managing agency that would set any quotas and distribute any permits, as well as maintenance of wildlife habitat (further details are provided in Section 3.12, Recreation, of the Final EIS). However, the Navy acknowledges that there would be an overall reduction in opportunities for bighorn sheep hunting. The Navy also acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.</p> <p>The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC. Therefore, the financial impact to communities from the loss of hunting in the area would be somewhat offset by this program, however, overall, lost hunting opportunities</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>I strongly encourage you to drop this idea. I have hunted many parts of the area outside the actual area you now utilize and on many occasions been buzzed by Navy aircraft. (So much for stalking my prey) Personally I consider this Airspace you now have access to, even though it is clearly outside your boundary. Using this logic, your expanded proposal would far exceed your requested 600,000 acres.</p> <p>When is enough, enough. Try another state, I'm sure Utah or Idaho have similar areas.</p>	<p>could result in a reduction in funding sources for NDOW (as discussed in Section 3.13 [Socioeconomics]).</p> <p>Additionally, within the FRTC region of influence, there are over 1 million acres of mapped bighorn sheep year-round range, over 51,000 acres of mapped bighorn sheep winter/lambing range, 5.6 million acres of mapped year-round pronghorn range, and 52,000 acres of mapped pronghorn crucial summer range. Navy operational doctrine dictates that during transiting, pilots avoid lambing areas. Therefore, impacts to these ungulate ranges would not have a significant or measurable impact to bighorn sheep populations.</p>

F.7.3.323 Smith, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Michael	Smith	<p>I am an off-road enthusiast that enjoys riding dirt bikes with friends and family in BLM land in the Middlegate area. I also enjoy the off-road racing that occurs in this area I. northern Nevada. Please do not close/reduce access to our public lands for military expansion. Thank you</p>	<p>While OHV activities would not be allowed within the proposed withdrawal areas associated with B-16, B-17, and B-20, OHV use would be allowed to continue within the DVTA. The BLM has proposed to open/un-restrict OHV use in the Sand Mountain and Dead Camel Mountain Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on the playa north of the DVTA. Continued OHV use would also be allowed in the Special Land Management Overlay and within new areas of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range Wilderness Study Areas after WSA designation removal by Congress.</p>
Michael	Smith	<p>I've been a civilian pilot for more than 50 years and have seen our flying airspace being more and more restricted. I would like to see some of this restricted airspace returned and opened for general aviation and not expanded for military use. I believe you can find an alternative plan which reduces the airspace you now restrict. This plan may include an alternative location for some training.</p> <p>Bottom line, I would be for the No Action Alternative rather than any expansion of the Fallon Range Training Complex. Thanks for taking my comments.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p>

F.7.3.324 Smith, N.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Nicolette	Smith	<p>To Whom it May Concern,</p> <p>I write this comment in protest of the Navy's modernization project. As a Nevadan I along with my family believe in the public use of lands for hunting and public access. There are many individuals and families that will be negatively impacted by the navy seizing this land. It dramatically impacts the landowners that are tied to this level land being taken, for goddess sake one is s Vietnam vet who will lose his home and livelihood. Unacceptable. This project should not go forward. We must honor the meaning of government and not seize property in a manner that will hurt citizens.</p> <p>Nicolette Smith</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. For any acquisition of privately-owned property, private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land acquired by the United States due to the proposed expansion. Just compensation would be determined by calculating the fair market value of parcels in accordance with federal appraisal rules codified in the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions.</p>

F.7.3.325 Smith Fillmore, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Laura	Smith Fillmore	<p>The bombing range disturbs sacred sites where indigenous people make their prayers, and disturbs both wildlife and communities that are already impacted by the testing. In the most bombed area of the world, we do not need to render more land useless by continuing to expand the bombing range.</p> <p>Respectfully, Laura Fillmore</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy abides by stipulations found within the current Programmatic Agreement between Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), BLM, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) with respect to withdrawn lands.</p> <p>The Navy has completed cultural resources surveys in B-16, 17, and B-20 where there is a reasonable expectation of direct impact from the placement of targets and in construction areas. Additionally, the Navy conducted cultural resource inventories in potential target areas on B-16 and B-17 to provide some latitude for the placement of targets should there be a conflict between targets and eligible cultural properties. The Navy is consulting with Indian Tribes on the identification of any additional known cultural resources and associated potential direct and indirect impacts from the Proposed Action.</p>

F.7.3.326 Snooks, V.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Vonnie	Snooks	<p>Gabbs is very far from hospitals, food and everything you need to live, this would</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 3.5 (Transportation), under Alternative 3, the WDZ would extend over a portion of SR 361, and that segment would need to be closed and re-routed outside of the WDZ due to mission and public safety requirements.</p> <p>The potential closure and rerouting of SR 361 associated with the expansion of B-17 would only occur if Congress chose Alternative 3. However, the affected segment of SR 361 would not be closed unless and until a suitable replacement route is established. Relocation of SR 361 would not cut off access to Gabbs or Berlin Ichthyosaur State</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		make it way more difficult to get to all vital necessities. I strongly object to rerouting the highway.	<p>Park. The notional relocation corridor for the potential re-routing of SR 361 can be found in Section 3.5.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p> <p>Any proposed rerouting is still conceptual in nature and would be evaluated prior to closure of the route. Follow-on NEPA efforts would need to be conducted for the potential relocation of SR 361 if Alternative 3 were to be selected. See Chapter 2, specifically Section 2.3.4.2.4 (Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 3) for further details. If Alternative 3 were chosen, the Navy would transfer any funds appropriated for relocating the road to the Federal Highway Administration, who in turn would make these funds available to NDOT for planning, design and construction of the replacement road to State standards.</p>

F.7.3.327 Snow, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Adrienne	Snow	<p>I write to you today as a Nevadan with roots going back nearly 100 years in this state, as well as one of the permit holders that will be directly affected by this expansion. The Navy has tried to explain that this project is needed for the greater good of the country, and with all due respect, it is just another group of government bureaucrats knocking on my door telling me what I need to give up for the greater good of the country. I would urge you to develop an interagency deal and utilize the VAST space the military already controls in southern Nevada. The naval planes can travel from Fallon to southern Nevada in a matter of minutes. Not one representative from the Navy has an understanding of how their actions to move this proposal forward will affect the men and women who have built their lives around the land they are about to change the landscape of. As they said in the meeting, "they are just doing their jobs". This isn't part of an SOP for us. As I explained in the Amodei meeting, the federal personnel that sat across from me were all paid to be there and explain their positions, while the self employed ranchers paid others to tend to their operations in order to be present at said meeting. The irony that I turn on the news every day to see the panic over a limited government shut down, while facing what will be a lifetime furlough, leaves me at a loss for words. The Navy has claimed they need the boundaries for security. Foreign agencies can watch our planes train through satellites and drone technology if they so wish. They Navy has claimed they need the land for "our safety". They've been dropping bombs all over this state for the entire duration of my life, and as of today, not one human (or cow for that matter) has died or had a near miss. I didn't grow up in rural country, and until married into ranching family, I had no clue what government overreach looked like, but I stand</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described in Chapter 2 as the action alternatives. See Section 2.5 for Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in this section. The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		today fully aware of what it feels like to defend my land, my community, and my way of life. I'm asking the Navy to put a halt to this project, and continue doing what we've always done. Share the public land.	presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). However, the Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.328 Snow, B. J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Billie Jo	Snow	I want it noted that I am against the Navy modernization project, as it will affect my family's life long cattle ranching operation. I am in favor of continued shared use, and for the Navy to listen to the citizens of Nevada as well as the state government.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate.

F.7.3.329 Snow, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Justin	Snow	<p>Comments to: Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)</p> <p>“The proposed Navy Expansion appears to jeopardize some portion of my ranching operation. This comment is to Notice the Navy and Demand just compensation for whatever loss I may suffer. At jeopardy are, without limitation, my adjudicated grazing allotments, water rights, right of ways, infrastructures, corrals, fences, watering facilities and also my economic expectations for the future of my investments along with the expected additional expenses of maintaining my current ranching operation, and whatever other loss may occur. If this expansion occurs,</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The following specific grazing mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Policies and procedures in the NAS Fallon INRMP would continue to be implemented to avoid conflicts with livestock grazing. This includes routine monitoring of fence lines surrounding potentially hazardous areas to ensure that the fence is secure and cannot be crossed by people or animals; the monitoring area would be increased to include new perimeter fences on lands proposed for withdrawal. The Navy is proposing to provide funds for BLM to hire two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers who would assist with management of the additional area. The Standard Operating Procedures for handling cattle on the FRTC training ranges would be revised and implemented. Livestock friendly erosion controls would be used when performing construction activities on or adjacent to grazing land that is actively being used.</p> <p>The Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		and I suffer any loss whatsoever, I expect the Navy and the Government of the United States to make me whole."	The process that the Navy is proposing to use to determine payment amounts to each specific grazing permit holder for losses resulting from cancellation of their permits has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.

F.7.3.330 Southwell, K.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Kirsten	Southwell	I oppose the bombing range expansion at the Fallon Naval Air Station. As a rockhound, Nevada has some of the most interesting areas to explore. Please allow the public to continue use of this land.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.

F.7.3.331 Spiares, K.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Kevin	Spiares	To Whom it may concern, I respectfully request that Alternative 2 be chosen. I am an active backcountry hobbyist, Veteran, and am I am married into a Native American family. I feel alternative 2 meets the needs of providing for the training needed to offer a defense capability for the country and the right amount of access for the civilian population for recreational and traditional activities. Thank you for training the greatest military in the world. Regards, Kevin Spiares	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.332 Srinivasan, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Ashwin	Srinivasan	With the ongoing biodiversity crisis, grabbing hundreds of thousands of acres of important wildlife	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.

First	Last	Comment	Response
		habitat will be an incredibly devastating action. Please consider the overall effect of this proposal and withdraw from it.	Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.

F.7.3.333 St. Martin, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Corina	St. Martin	As a U.S. citizen I am extremely concerned about our country's environment. We have the largest military force in the world and we did that without this land. We don't need more militarized land, we need more forests, fields and streams. We need to be stewards of the land, not those who destroy it. Please do not allow this land grab to happen. The land belongs to everyone.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.334 Staas, B.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Bonita	Staas	NO! NO! NO! Stop this insanity! Nevada, its residents, visitors and wildlife are already poisoned by decades of depleted uranium and other toxic chemicals and metals that have been micronized explosively and are still blowing around the desert to be inhaled. The carrier wings that are being trained are outmoded. China and Russia has the capability to sink the entire fleet of 13 carriers at will and the US has no defense for them. The major use is just posturing or against a defenseless population like Somalia. The whole fleet needs to be retired and stop wasting taxpayers' money. With the money to be spent for the expanded training area the Navy could build and staff a full four year University	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities. The Navy continuously monitors its operations to find ways to minimize the use of hazardous materials and to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes. Any spills would be managed and cleaned up in accordance with applicable state and federal regulatory requirements. If any such spill were to exceed reportable quantities as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for regulated material, the event would be immediately reported to the NAS Fallon Environmental Division for appropriate action per the Integrated Contingency Plan (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2009). Regarding depleted uranium, the Navy is not proposing to use nuclear weaponry under this Proposed Action. They have been used in the past for training, however, they are not used currently. Regarding other issues brought up in this comment, the Proposed Action does not include the topic of your comment. Please see Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) of the EIS for a definition of the scope of the project. Additionally, the DoD created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure DoD compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations.

First	Last	Comment	Response
		and provide free tuition. That is something the citizens of Nevada could use. No more bombs! The US military is the single worst polluter in the world! The military is exacerbating climate change! We don't need more of that.	Lastly, Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3571.4, Operational Range Clearance Policy for Navy Ranges, establishes the policy and requirements for performing operational range clearance on Navy ranges. There are no proposed increases in the types or tempo of training activities under any Alternative in the Final EIS and, as such, there would be no increase in greenhouse gas emissions. See Section 3.8 (Air Quality), specifically Sections 3.8.3.2.9 (Greenhouse Gas Emissions), 3.8.3.3.9 (Greenhouse Gases), and 3.8.3.4.9 (Greenhouse Gases) of the Final EIS for more information.

F.7.3.335 Staniforth, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
James	Staniforth	The expansion of Fallon airspace will adversely effect the safety of glider flying in the great basin.	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. The changes to SUA would not impact the safety of glider flying. General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).

F.7.3.336 Stanley, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jared	Stanley	Please do not withdraw this land from public access. My family and I enjoy this public land, and it has better uses	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Alternative 3 (the Preferred

First	Last	Comment	Response
		than to be reduced to a bombing range.	Alternative) would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowable in the DVTA. Grazing would also continue to be allowed in the DVTA.

F.7.3.337 Starkey, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Mike	Starkey	<p>This expansion looks like it would have a big impact on my airport, and traffic to the east of where we often fly.</p> <p>Please reconsider your boundaries to account for local traffic in the Dayton, Silver Springs, Yerington , Fernely, and Fallon areas.</p> <p>Also, what about the VFR corridor that currently exists along Hwy 50---will it stay in place or will it be taken away?</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. In order to minimize any aviation impacts under each of the proposed alternatives, the Navy is requesting that the FAA create Airspace Exclusion Zones (3 nautical-mile radius, surface to 1,500 feet AGL) for the Gabbs and Eureka airports. Current range procedures identify the town of Crescent Valley and the Gabbs Airfield as noise sensitive areas that shall be avoided by 3,000 feet AGL or 5 nautical miles. This would ensure those airports could operate regardless of the alternative ultimately chosen. The airspace exclusion zones would be avoided, unless the airport is specifically being utilized for take-offs and landings associated with military training activities. This is discussed in Section 3.6.2.2.4 (Local and Regional Airports).</p> <p>The Navy would continue proactive outreach to civil and commercial aviation to ensure safe and efficient transit across the FRTC via the VFR Corridor, as well as the safe and efficient managed access and civil flight profiles within the FRTC SUA. There would be no impact on the extended VFR corridor or commercial and general aviation's use of the FRTC airspace. Federal Aviation Administration Registered Airfields Under or Near the Fallon Range Training Complex Special Use Airspace were considered in the analysis and are listed in the Final EIS.</p>

F.7.3.338 Stell, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Suzanne	Stell	<p>This proposal is environmentally irresponsible. This land belongs to the American people, and this American person could not object to its destruction any more vehemently.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate.</p> <p>As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p>

F.7.3.339 Stevanovich, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Linda	Stevanovich	<p>I strongly oppose the expansion of</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>the training/ bombing range in Nevada! You are endangering wildlife and our natural environment! Ther is no reason to expand! Keep blowing up the same property you have already destroyed.</p>	<p>train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.</p> <p>Viable populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.340 Stevenson, F.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Fredda	Stevenson	<p>This massive land grab will be the death of our business and all we have come to love about Nevada, no longer will we sing wide open spaces and recreation galore, only the Navy will enjoy this status, comments made to them have had no effect in fact they keep revising the grab to include even more of our land, this includes the offroad areas and the wilderness areas, plus highway 361 Gabbs, this will cut us off from any activities, and though they have not offered to buy us out and close us they will essentially starve us out, Middlegate is a national Treasure and one of the few places left with this history, to lose it would be one more nail in the coffin of the struggling tourest industry. Please do not take our land, let us life free as God intended!</p>	<p>Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Regarding comments related to recreation, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas, as well as in the Special Land Management Overlay. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			<p>species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Middlegate station would remain open under the Proposed Action.</p> <p>Regarding to comments pertaining to the potential reroute of a portion of State Route (SR) 361, as discussed in Section 3.5 (Transportation), under Alternative 3, the WDW would extend over a portion of SR 361. That segment would be closed and rerouted outside of the WDW due to mission and public safety requirements.</p> <p>The potential closure and rerouting of SR 361 associated with the expansion of B-17 would only occur if Congress were to select Alternative 3. However, the affected segment of State Route 361 would not be closed unless and until a suitable replacement route is established. Relocation of State Route 361 would not cut off access to Gabbs or Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park. The notional relocation corridor for the potential re-routing of State Route 361 can be found in Section 3.5.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p> <p>Any proposed rerouting is still conceptual in nature and would be evaluated prior to closure of the route. Follow-on NEPA analysis would be conducted for the potential relocation of State Route 361 if Alternative 3 were to be selected. See Chapter 2, specifically Section 2.3.4.2.4 (Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 3) for further details. If Alternative 3 were to be selected, the Navy would transfer any funds appropriated for relocating the road to the Federal Highway Administration, which in turn would make these funds available to NDOT for planning, design, NEPA-documentation, permitting, and construction of the replacement road to meet state standards.</p>

F.7.3.341 Stevenson, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Russell	Stevenson	We would like the takeover to be put on hold until all involved and effected could further	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. A notice of availability was published in the Federal Register (FR) by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on November 16th, 2018 (83 FR 57726) for the Navy's Draft

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>study the plan, since most of us in rural Nevada were never invited to meetings or consulted, this is not OK</p> <p>We are hosting a meeting at Middlegate Station on March 30th to discuss this and options, you are invited so please attend</p>	<p>FRTC Modernization EIS at Naval Air Station Fallon, NV. Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The comment period was extended to February 14, 2019 as a result of these public comments. A notice of availability was published in the Federal Register (FR) by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency on November 16th, 2018 (83 FR 57726) for the Navy's Draft FRTC Modernization EIS at Naval Air Station Fallon, NV. The public review period was set to end on January 15, 2019. On December 27, 2018, the Department of the Navy published a 30-day comment extension in the Federal Register (83 FR 66685), which extended the commenting period to February 14, 2019. The next opportunity for comment has been following the publishing of the Final EIS.</p>

F.7.3.342 Stevenson, F.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Fredda	Stevenson	<p>In fear of being branded a communist or anti American I have been reluctant to post comments regarding the range expansion, this has happened before when we protested the ongoing sonic booms that blew out our windows and damaged our property, but we can no longer ignore the long range effects this will have on our business and culture, our love of Nevada and the wide open ranges to explore is to us a national treasure.</p> <p>We were never informed of the meetings or contacted as to what this would mean to us as a historical site and thriving business, a business that like most of Nevada depends on the tourist industry, to turn our open trails, historic mines, and so much of what brings tourist and local alike to view and enjoy is a plan so bereft of any thought to this that it is beyond belief, also that we were not shown the courtesy of an invitation or even a phone call to ask our input or inform us of meeting is wrong on so many levels, how hard could it have been to do this?</p> <p>So much of land has already been withdrawn for training, a large portion south of us, why cannot the Navy also use this? Is it a competition to see which branch of the military can have the most? Is it not our military, all of it? the plan should be to use what you have expanded your must lands not in use or containing historical sites and much used trails. This plan threatens the town of Gabbs and it is on the brink of desertion now, only the mine keeps it alive, this will be the nail in the coffin and as it goes so will we as much of our revenue comes from this town,.</p> <p>Please work with us and not against us to find an amiable solution, we need our land more than you!</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable. The Navy acknowledges noise sensitive areas and has established Noise Sensitive Areas (such as around wildlife refuges, incorporated areas, and certain tribal areas) in the past. Additionally, the Navy is requesting that the FAA create Airspace Exclusion Zones (3 nautical-mile radius, surface to 1,500 feet AGL) for the Gabbs and Eureka airports. Current range procedures identify the town of Crescent Valley and the Gabbs Airfield as noise sensitive areas that shall be avoided by 3,000 feet AGL or 5 nautical miles. The airspace exclusion zones would be avoided, unless the airport is specifically being utilized for take-offs and landings associated with military training activities. The EIS includes several figures (Figure 3.7-32 and Figure 3.7-40) that depict where</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			changes to noise would occur using existing and proposed noise contour data.

F.7.3.343 Strickland, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Rose	Strickland	PDF file attached The comments are also for Dennis Ghiglieri, same contact info.	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

February 8, 2019

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Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

electronic: www.FRTCModerization.com

Re: Comments on the Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) Modernization Draft Environmental Impact Statement (draft EIS)

Dear Navy officials,

We are submitting comments on the draft EIS on the proposed expansion of the Naval Air Station Fallon (NASF). We have attended Navy public meetings on its expansion proposal and read the draft EIS. While we appreciate the Navy's efforts to explain the purpose of the proposed expansion, we have concerns about the enormous impacts to people, wildlife, land uses and public access to public lands. Our review revealed that the Navy does not comply with NEPA requirements, especially in its failure to consider alternatives, to properly analyze significant negative environmental impacts of the proposal, and to provide mitigation for unavoidable impacts. We are especially concerned about the enormous loss of public access to public lands, the lack of any measurable Navy commitment to the management of biological resources in the 600,000 plus acres in the proposed expansion area (including also impacts from expanded air operations), and the almost total lack of mitigation or compensation for eliminating public access and water rights in the expansion area.

We have lived near and recreated in the Navy's proposed land and air expansion areas for most of our lives. We've camped and hiked there with generations of our family and friends, traveling the backroads, and climbing the high peaks in the Stillwater, Clan Alpine, Toiyabe, Toquima and Monitor Ranges. Duck hunting trips with Dennis's father and uncles to Lahontan Valley wetlands are fond memories. Wildlife and wildflower expeditions, photography, petroglyph trips, rides in small aircraft, service trips to restore public lands damaged by wildfires or to improve wildlife habitat, visits to State Parks and wildlife management areas on the wide-open public lands are some of the major reasons why we and many others make Nevada our home. Over the years, we've also read many EISs on proposed actions and developments and management plans for these public lands, but we've rarely encounter an EIS without a No Action alternative and without a full range of alternatives, so that the public can compare the impacts of each of the alternatives, instead of the dEIS's small tweaks to the Navy expansion proposal.

Alternatives: The No Action Alternative is not "no action" or continuing the status quo and providing the baseline for comparing other alternatives, as required by NEPA. The current dEIS No Action Alternative of Congress not re-authorizing the Fallon Air Naval Station after investing billions of dollars over the years in its establishment and annual operations and considering its importance to the

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training of nearly every pilot in the United States and overseas (according to the commander) is not credible. Of course, it is possible and should have been one of the reasonable range of alternatives considered in the draft EIS.

Unfortunately, there is also no reasonable range of alternatives in the draft EIS either. NEPA requires alternatives which vary from very little proposed "development" to maximum development, reflecting very little environmental impacts to huge impacts. Alternative Navy proposals with little variation and also no alternatives which propose to minimize adverse environmental impacts in the draft EIS fail to meet this requirement.

Impacts analysis: We were stunned to read in the dEIS that the Navy finds almost zero negative impacts of cutting off public access to over 600,000 acres of public lands in central Nevada. This area has been used for millennia by native Americans and hundreds of years by farmers, ranchers, recreationalists, miners, hunters, and even anglers which have depended on its rich ecosystem of plants and animals, fish and waters. In fact, the Navy analysis found few significant impacts to any public use or resource in the expansion area. When we tried to locate information in the draft EIS how the Navy would manage an additional 600,000 acres of public lands, we found references to an Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan. Unfortunately, it appears to be significantly out of date. There was a reference that the Navy "may consider" extending the Plan to the expansion areas, but no commitment. There is zero information on what resources the Navy has committed to implementing the existing plan, much less expanding it to include the additional acres, including: what is the annual budget for implementing the INRMP? Will this increase due to the additional acreage in the NASF? What is the current staffing level for administering and implementing the INRMP? How many additional staff will be needed for the expansion acreage? What are the roles of the current land and resource managers, the Bureau of Land Management, the Nevada Department of Wildlife and others? How will the existing federal and state land and resource management plans continue to be enforced on the expanded NASF?

Wildfires and Cheatgrass: This is a critical omission, since our Great Basin Desert ecosystems are being ravaged by wildfires and invasive species, leading to extensive losses of habitat for wildlife including the Greater Sage Grouse. The draft EIS states that the Navy will "develop" a Fire Management Plan sometime in the future. It does disclose that current Navy operations result in multiple fires on the NASF, but does not discuss how these impacts will increase in the expansion area nor how the Navy or whoever will fight fires and conduct fire rehabilitation. Perhaps the navy is not concerned about leaving fire-scarred landscapes in bombing areas and in new areas subject to flares, but we do not accept this bleak result of the proposed NASF expansion.

Military Operations Area expansion Impacts: The draft EIS fails to consider the noise impacts of sonic booms to sensitive wildlife habitat, including Big Horn Sheep lambing areas and sage-grouse leks, apparently using some kind of military noise calculation instead of the standard noise system used by federal and state agencies. In addition, the tiny corridor for small plane flights from Fallon to Austin along the Hwy. 50 corridor unreasonably restricts small plane aviation through north central Nevada. The entire center of our south central State is non-navigable due to airspace restrictions by the USAF.

Mitigation: The draft EIS also fails to meet NEPA requirements to mitigate environmental and other damages from the proposed expansion. Grazing permits are eliminated. Mining exploration and development is prohibited. Except for a token annual Big Horn Sheep hunt and an annual off-road

vehicle race, public access is prohibited (except for some undefined access in Dixie Valley). Several thousand acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge and adjacent conservation easements will be taken. Biological resource management will either cease due to lack of Navy staff and financial resources and other federal and state resource management agencies will not be able to carry out their responsibilities and implement resource plans due to access closures or restrictions. Native American tribes will lose free access to sacred sites, including on Job Peak, unless the Navy "approves" access. While the draft EIS states that some access will be allowed for cultural and resource management purposes, past agency experiences with access limitations and the lack of any specifics in the draft EIS on access contradicts any assurances that future access on the NASF will actually occur. A Navy promise of a future fire management plan in the draft EIS is unacceptable. This plan is crucial for the health of Great Basin ecosystems and should be a part of the EIS process, subject to public scrutiny and comments.

In conclusion, we must oppose the NASF expansion proposal because the Navy has failed to properly develop alternatives, including alternatives with fewer acres closed to public access, evaluate environmental impacts, and mitigate unavoidable impacts to hundreds of thousands of acres of land and military operations areas in its proposed expansion. We urge the Navy to correct these deficiencies before finalizing this flawed EIS.

Sincerely,

Rose Strickland /s/

Rose Strickland

Dennis Ghiglieri /s/

Dennis Ghiglieri

F.7.3.343.1 Response

Thank you for your comment and participation in the NEPA process. Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives that were considered (including alternatives brought up in public comments). The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for specific alternatives considered but not carried forward for full analysis. Those alternatives and associated actions were carried forward for analysis and if necessary, based on the level of impacts, additional management practices, mitigation, or other impact avoidance/minimization measures were included to further avoid, minimize, or mitigate impacts. The approach to analysis, including significance criteria for potential impacts, are presented in the Final EIS for each resource section. The approach to analysis and significance criteria varies but was developed based on applicable laws, regulations, and policies for each resource area. In addition, context, intensity, and relevant thresholds were considered when determining significance.

The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative, also known as the “status quo” alternative, would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

Under the No Action Alternative, current and proposed training at FRTC would need to be accommodated elsewhere. This would result in the potential loss of the integrated nature of training, as well as the fragmentation and total loss of essential training functions. At this time, identifying where and how those training needs could be accommodated—and what the ultimate consequences of such a scenario would be—would involve a complex planning, budgeting, and acquisition program that is speculative and beyond the scope of this EIS.

With regards to land management, any current management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes. The Navy has and would continue to implement operational and administrative controls to reduce wildfires. The Navy is developing a Wildland Fire Management Plan and, where possible, proposed plan elements and goals are included in the Final EIS. For further information on wildfire and wildfire mitigation, see Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), specifically Section 3.14.2.1.2 (Wildfire Management). The Navy is coordinated and worked with Cooperating Agencies and other parties in the development of the Wildland Fire Management Plan.

As discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), the response to sonic booms or other sudden disturbance is similar among many wildlife species. Sudden and unfamiliar sounds usually act as an

alarm and trigger a “flight” response; however, reaction to a given noise can vary widely depending on factors such as time of day, physical condition of the animal, physical environment, or whether other physical stressors are present. Although the startle effect of a sonic boom can be stressful to an animal, it is difficult to generalize animal responses to noise disturbances across species. Recent literature suggests a startle is a common response across a variety of species and ultimately leads to habituation. It has been reported that the intensities and durations of the startle response decrease as the number and frequency of exposures increase, suggesting no long-term adverse effects. It is recognized that short term impacts to individual animals may occur from sonic booms, however, overall no long-term adverse effects to populations are expected.

Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would allow limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowed in the DVTA. Grazing would continue to be allowed in the DVTA. Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access. However, the Navy would allow certain activities, such as wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheep hunting, and events that are coordinated with the Navy in advance. Mitigation for loss of access generally was determined to be either not possible because of mission requirements or not warranted because many of the affected activities (grazing, mining, recreation, etc.) could be conducted in adjacent or nearby areas (see Section 3.4 [Livestock Grazing], Section 3.3 [Mining and Mineral Resources], and Section 3.12 [Recreation]).

F.7.3.344 Surber, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jeff	Surber	<p>I am a native Nevadan and have been utilizing the entire area proposed for expansion since the 1960's. I have traveled to the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge but have not utilized it extensively. I lived in Fallon in the 1980's and utilized the area extensively. I now live in Carson City but traveled to Dixie Valley 2 weeks ago on a chukar hunting trip. I am heading to the Sand Springs Range for another hunting trip tomorrow. I commonly use these areas and am concerned about losing recreational access. As a user of the land proposed for withdrawal I feel a sense of responsibility to comment.</p> <p>I understand the need for a strong military and am not particularly opposed to some expansion but I am particularly interested in maintaining full public access to most of Dixie Valley and the Sand Springs Range. The guzzlers in the Sand Springs Range provide water to both small and big game as acknowledged in the EIS. These water developments have been in place for a considerable period of time and were financed through federal, state, and sportsman's funding. I am against closing the land to use by the public after improvements have been made and animals have become dependent on the water. I saw no indications in the EIS the Navy would be maintaining small game watering devices if the land were closed to the public. If the maintenance of these structures were discontinued, small game would likely die. Naval financial, logistics, and personnel support to NDOW for water development and maintenance is crucial in any of the proposed alternatives.</p> <p>Although NEPA provides/allows/requires a "no action" alternative we all know that is not going to really be seriously considered...nor should it be. The "No action" alternative really just sets the stage for what might occur if no action was taken rather than really being an "alternative". It appears Alternative 3, the preferred alternative, is the alternative that minimizes the detrimental effects to the public while still providing the Navy the necessary space within which to operate both physically and electronically. I therefore support Alternative 3.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Alternative 3 is the Navy's Preferred Alternative. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.</p> <p>Under Alternative 2 and 3, the Navy would provide access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency that would set any quotas and distribute any permits, as well as maintenance of wildlife habitat. The Navy has developed a draft MOA in conjunction with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for this hunting program (further details are provided in Section 3.12, Recreation, and Appendix D, Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans, of the Final EIS). The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission. The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC.</p>

F.7.3.345 Sutton, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Lewis	Sutton	I now live in Spokane, Washington, but grew up in Gabbs, Nevada. I agree with the necessity of expanding the modernization of the Fallon ranges. I think it is vital to the security of our Nation.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.346 Taflin, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Tom	Taflin	Please do not take our public lands from the hard working tax payers! Myself and my family and friends enjoy going to Middlegate to recreate and stay. The navy has plenty of land to do their training on.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.347 Tanttila, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Margaret	Tanttila	<p>Greetings,</p> <p>I am concerned about the area of expansion of the B20 bombing range. I have four concerns.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I don't believe the expansion should expand into the National Wildlife Refuge, but should border it. 2. Loss of the road along the east side of the West Humboldt Range is unacceptable as it is used for recreation and as an access to the whole east side of the mountain range. 3. There is a lot of privately owned land in the expansion and acquiring that will cause hardship to people who purchased the land with plans for homes or recreation AND it will take money from the county tax roll. 4. A man spoke at the public comment in Lovelock. He mentioned the loss of air space south of the Lovelock Airport. He felt the expansion could endanger pilots with bigger planes if they had to make the decision to abandon a landing at the last minute. I don't remember the terminology he used, but he showed me his map of air space and it sure seemed like a valid concern. 	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. This proposed expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater NWR. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).</p> <p>The Navy prepared a Transportation Study that analyzed on-road and off-road vehicle use within affected areas as part of this EIS effort (see Supporting Study: Transportation Study [available at http://frtcmodernization.com]). The EIS has been modified to present loss of access to non-traditional roads (those routes that underlie areas proposed for acquisition or withdrawal). However, the Navy is not anticipating relocating any of the non-traditional roads in the area.</p> <p>For any acquisition of privately-owned property, private landowners would receive just compensation for loss of any privately-owned land acquired by the United States due to the proposed expansion. Just compensation would be determined by calculating the fair market value of parcels in accordance with federal appraisal rules codified in the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		Margaret Tanttila	As discussed in 3.6.2.2.3 (Civilian Air Traffic) and 3.14.2.1.1 (Emergency Services), all emergency flights, both helicopter and fixed-wing, are given priority transit through the FRTC at all times. Fallon Air Traffic Control (Desert Control), the range coordinator for airspace, ensures that real-time adjustments to airspace occur to expedite emergency aircraft and deconflict all Navy training events along the required routes or in the vicinity of fire suppression activities. Emergency aircraft are permitted to pass through restricted airspace when necessary.

F.7.3.348 Tattersall, E.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Elizabeth	Tattersall	As a general aviation pilot flying a Piper Cherokee based at Minden (MEV), who periodically flies East to Ely & Utah , I have concerns about the creation of R4805. It will necessitate a significant detour to the South when flying East from Western Nevada. The existing Restricted areas in NV and UT already cause a small GA pilot to fly around them when headed for destinations to the East, and the addition of R4805 would require a significant additional detour. I have no objection to the suggested new MOAs.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).

F.7.3.349 Tayloe, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Caron	Tayloe	Hello - I have great respect for the Navy as I have had relatives who served in the Navy and related agencies during 3 wars. My family is very concerned about the status of wildlife habitat and the welfare of wildlife in an area where the Navy is planning expansion in Northern Nevada. The Stillwater Refuge is an important area for wildlife; wildlife that belongs to all of us and is our heritage in Nevada. It is unclear as to why the Navy needs the proposed expansion and it is certainly unacceptable that it needs	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species. This expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The USFWS

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>the level of proposed expansion at the expense of wildlife, wildlife habitat and the public trust.</p> <p>Thank you - Caron Tayloe</p>	<p>would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).</p> <p>Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action) of the Final EIS provides the rationale of the Proposed Action and Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis) describe the numerous alternatives the Navy evaluated to determine which alternatives were the most reasonable and were consistent with the screening factors developed for this EIS.</p>

F.7.3.350 Terry, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Susan	Terry	<p>I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution</p>

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		permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station. If you want to expand, bomb Yucca Mt.	data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

F.7.3.351 Thabit, N.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Nick	Thabit	<p>To Whom it May Concern:</p> <p>I strongly oppose the acquisition of land ceded to the Western Shoshone and Paiute peoples for the purpose of building a new bombing range. The land would be acquired illegally and forcefully, thereby setting all pretense of respect for the law, and for indigenous rights to side.</p> <p>Existing bombing sites can be upgraded and leveled out for new use, there is no need to acquire new land.</p> <p>The testing of bombs should be severely curtailed on ecological and public</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Regarding the need to acquire new land, as discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, range, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operations ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities. The Navy would like to clarify that it does not “test” bombs in the FRTC. Regarding radioactive dust, or depleted uranium, the Navy is not proposing to use nuclear weaponry under this Proposed Action. They have been used in the past for training, however, they are not used currently.</p> <p>Regarding other issues brought up in this comment, the Proposed Action does not include the topic of your comment. Please see Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) of the EIS for a definition of the scope of the project.</p> <p>Regarding “tons of toxins,” as discussed in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety), the Navy has implemented a strict Hazardous Material Control and Management Program and a Hazardous Waste Minimization Program for all activities. The Navy continuously monitors its operations to find ways to minimize the use of hazardous materials and to reduce the generation of hazardous wastes. Any spills would be managed and cleaned up in accordance with applicable state and federal regulatory requirements. If any such spill were to exceed reportable quantities as defined by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for regulated material, the event would be immediately reported to the NAS Fallon Environmental Division for appropriate action per the Integrated Contingency Plan (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2009).</p>

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		<p>health grounds, and many tons of toxins are released into the environment. DU ordinance release radioactive dust which will remain lethal for millenia.</p> <p>Respectfully yours, Nick Thabit</p>	<p>Additionally, the DoD created the Installation Restoration Program to identify, evaluate, and clean up contamination from past operations on military bases. The program was designed to ensure DoD compliance with federal and state environmental laws and regulations.</p> <p>Lastly, Chief of Naval Operations Instruction 3571.4, Operational Range Clearance Policy for Navy Ranges, establishes the policy and requirements for performing operational range clearance on Navy ranges.</p> <p>The Navy is not requesting land ceded to the Western Shoshone and Paiute peoples as a part of the Proposed Action. However, the following Indian reservations are either fully or partially below FRTC SUA: Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Reservation and Colony (Bandit ATCAA), Pyramid Lake Reservation (Reno MOA), Walker River Paiute Reservation (Churchill MOA, Ranch (High) MOA, Ranch (Low) MOA, Fallon South 2 MOA, R-4810, R-4812), and Yomba Reservation (Fallon South 2 MOA, Fallon South 3 MOA, and Duckwater ATCAA). The Bureau of Indian Affairs administers these reservations.</p>

F.7.3.352 Thomas, H.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Harry	Thomas	<p>The military is proposing to move Highway 361 to Gabbs to the east of its current location, taking a safe, relatively flat highway through the valley and pushing it up into the mountains creating a very expensive and potentially more dangerous highway for truck and passenger travel. That seems unnecessary and a big expense to the taxpayers. Additionally, highway construction will negatively impact wildlife habitat.</p> <p>I am opposed to the plan.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 3.5 (Transportation), under Alternative 3, the WDZ would extend over a portion of SR 361, and that segment would need to be closed and re-routed outside of the WDZ due to mission and public safety requirements. The potential closure and rerouting of SR 361 associated with the expansion of B-17 would only occur if Congress chose Alternative 3. However, the affected segment of SR 361 would not be closed unless and until a suitable replacement route is established. Relocation of SR 361 would not cut off access to Gabbs or Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park. The notional relocation corridor for the potential re-routing of SR 361 can be found in Section 3.5.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p> <p>Any proposed rerouting is still conceptual in nature and would be evaluated prior to closure of the route. Follow-on NEPA efforts would need to be conducted for the potential relocation of SR 361 if Alternative 3 were to be selected. See Chapter 2, specifically Section 2.3.4.2.4 (Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 3) for further details. If Alternative 3 were chosen, the Navy would transfer any funds appropriated for relocating the road to the Federal Highway Administration, who in turn would make these funds available to NDOT for planning, design and construction of the replacement road to State standards.</p>

F.7.3.353 Thomas, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Ralph	Thomas	<p>As 8 year residents of NV, outdoor enthusiasts, and supporters of our military. We strongly support any increase of operations out of Fallon. Without the blanket of freedom our military provides, we would not have a state of Nevada. We are battle born and support you.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.</p>

F.7.3.354 Thomasson, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Robert	Thomasson	<p>Combined with the planned Air Force training area expansion, the total Air Force and Navy land in the state of Nevada will be nearly the size of the entire nation of Israel. Israel, with a much smaller training area has the best air force in the world. A large training area does not mean better training, it only supports inefficiency. In the recent wars we have been involved in being aware of and staying within the air space of the involved countries is hugely important and is reinforced in training by not having unlimited training areas. We will fight like we train.</p> <p>Perhaps there needs to be a partnership between the Navy and Air Force. They could share the 2,949,603 acres at Nellis Air Force base and NTTR that is already available for military purposes. This would save taxpayers billions of dollars. Mutual collaboration by the Navy and the Air Force will benefit all.</p> <p>I have to also ask why do we need 3 separate air forces? The Marines need theirs due to their specialized close air support requirements but were it not for the ego-driven inter-service rivalry, the USAF could work closely with the Navy and Navy ships could carry USAF planes. This is an out of the box solution but it would be very good for both the Navy and Air Force if they were forced to cooperate and work together. The transition would be painful but if we replaced the Navy's unnecessary air force with the USAF it would release billions of dollars for other important defense related requirements. It would also free up invaluable public land for its intended purpose.</p> <p>The system we have now is incredibly wasteful, all due to unnecessary politics and childish military turf wars at taxpayers expense.</p> <p>The future of aerial warfare is drones. The latest fighters are already obsolete. We do not need massive land areas for drone training.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training. While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p> <p>From past experience, the Navy has concluded that the public hearing format used during the public hearings is the most conducive to effective dialogue. Speakers were initially allotted 3 minutes to make sure everyone had the opportunity to speak. Additional time for each speaker would not have allowed every speaker an opportunity to speak/share comments before the end of the meeting.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>The public land proposed to be taken is now used by our fellow ranchers, miners, farmers, hunters, recreationists and wildlife. Within these multiple land users, revenue and employment is generated by geothermal energy projects, grazing allotments, mining claims, oil and gas leases for citizens, counties, state and federal governments. Politicians and military people love to toss the words “liberty” and “freedom” around but it is our own politicians and military that are limiting our precious liberty and destroying our way of life.</p> <p>The Navy held very superficial public meetings. The meetings were an effrontery to the dignity and livelihood of those directly affected by the Navy’s proposal. Many of these stakeholders are trying to produce and earn livings for their families, and do not have the time, staff, money or resources to combat the egregious public land grab by the military and the endless attacks on our Nevadan way of life.</p> <p>The Navy’s proposal is in direct conflict with President Trump’s Executive Order on Critical Minerals. There are at least eight critical minerals (vanadium, tungsten, fluorspar, barite, antimony, arsenic, titanium and manganese) within the proposed expansion area along with the economically valuable minerals-gold and silver.</p> <p>A large increase in the aerial warfare training area is inevitably going to result in increased risk of accidents, including civilian injuries and deaths. The accident potential is exacerbated by our present climate of political correctness taking precedence over military effectiveness.</p> <p>The Navy does not need this extra land.</p>	<p>However, those who wanted to speak again were given another 3 minutes while time permitted at the meeting.</p> <p>In the EIS, when a mineral resource potential is classified as either moderate or high, a lost exploration opportunity would represent a significant impact on that mineral resources. The resource potential classification considers occurrences, geologic relationship, and historic production for each mineral resource. As discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), Federal land withdrawn from mineral entry would no longer be open to new mining claims, and the lands would be prohibited from future mineral exploration and development. Implementation of any of the action alternatives would result in potential significant impacts on exploration and development of locatable, leasable, and salable mineral resources.</p> <p>Most aircraft mishaps occur on or near the runway, with mishaps diminishing in likelihood with distance. Based on studies of historical mishaps, the Navy and other services have identified Accident Potential Zones (APZs). While APZs do not predict the likelihood of an aircraft mishap, they do predict the most likely location of an aircraft accident, if one were to occur.</p> <p>The Navy is not altering flight operations or paths from the arrival, departure, or pattern flight tracks, and therefore would not need to create new APZs.</p>

F.7.3.355 Ting, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Mary	Ting	<p>I am a concerned citizen writing to express my opposition to such a massive land expansion by the military. This would triple the current size and would take 1.1million acres from the Desert National Wildlife Refuge. These lands are critical habitat for our native wildlife. At a time when we are seeing huge</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, the Desert National Wildlife Refuge is not impacted by the Proposed Action at the FRTC. The Navy has reviewed</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>loss of biodiversity and habitat destruction - this is an outrageous aggressive land take over by the U.S. Navy. The US is lauded for its open spaces and protection of its land. To do bomb testing in what was once a wildlife "refuge" is a travesty in the 21st Century. It is a terrible statement to the world of our lack of awareness and respect for our own National Wildlife Refuge.</p> <p>I strongly oppose and hope the US Navy backs off this attack on our wildlife and wild places.</p> <p>Sincerely, Mary Ting</p>	<p>and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS.</p>

F.7.3.356 Tippens, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Rebecca	Tippens	<p>Your slick video does not begin to justify the confiscation of lands that are a province of the wildlife that, by mandate of our Creator, have equal rights to thrive as humans. You say that you are protecting the reserve in your quest to take it over but the noise affects, the license to do whatever you want in the future, the myopic focus on needing to expand military offenses when actually, we do not need to do so. What we need to do is to de-escalate the militarization of the planet and it should start with the US as our country has already the biggest military in the world.</p> <p>More armaments do not provide more security. Period. And to say that they do at the expense of endangering nature and her habitants is an outrage!</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.</p>

F.7.3.357 Townsend, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Sophie	Townsend	<p>Outrageous! Not only do these land areas are sensitive ecosystems and set aside for nature but for no reasons do the already bloated</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		military budget should be spent on bombing exercises. We dont have any wars on schedual! Go bomb a salt flat or something	existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.358 Tregilus, B.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Bob	Tregilus	<p>I don't get it: Why does the Navy need more and more space to practice when technologies are suppose to make weapon- and targeting-systems more accurate?</p> <p>I oppose the expansion on environmental, access, and preservation reasons as well.</p> <p>Ergo, I oppose any expansion of the Navel Air Station Fallon ranges.</p> <p>In fact, I think your training ranges should be shrunk in size.</p> <p>//Bob Tregilus</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process as discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>
Bob	Tregilus	<p>I support the No Action Alternative.</p> <p>It makes no sense that with more sophisticated and accurate weapon systems that the Navy would need to triple its testing facilities.</p> <p>Additionally, with a growing population and more pressure on</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. In Ninety Days to Combat (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015b), NAWDC analyzed the land and airspace (see Section 1.5.2, Airspace Training Need versus Current Range Capability, for discussion of airspace requirement) needed to meet combat training requirements for modern aircraft and weapon systems. When comparing older aircraft and mission profiles with modern aircraft and weapons systems, NAWDC noted the following differences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older aircraft flew at lower altitudes, approached targets at closer distances (4–5 miles) before dropping munitions, and because of this close-range release, required a smaller safety area surrounding the target area during training.

First	Last	Comment	Response
		public land resources we need to preserve as much public land as possible for future generations to use and enjoy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modern aircraft fly at higher altitudes, release munitions at targets from 10–12 miles away, and require a larger safety area surrounding the target area during training. <p>Though munitions can reach targets at greater distances than ever before, current range boundaries (which do not accommodate modern weapons safety requirements) limit this type of training. Even if actual target areas were to remain the same, if release distances are increased, the safety area that is required during training in case of weapons failure also increases.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.359 Trierweiler, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Stefanie	Trierweiler	I am a life-long Nevadan, having lived and worked in five different counties in the state. I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. I am most concerned over the expansion impact on the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. It is an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.360 Trujillo, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Michael	Trujillo	Recommend the Navy use the largest Military base at White Sands Missile Range to conduct their new training requirements. The Missile Range is fully instrumented with high speed digital cameras, TM, radar, optics etc. Various targets can be constructed to meet the needs of the Navy Seals and create much more realistic scenarios.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described in Chapter 2 as the action alternatives. See Section 2.5 for Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis. In addition, in the Notice of Intent to prepare an EIS and during the subsequent scoping period, the Navy requested suggestions for potential alternatives to the Proposed Action. The Navy examined each proposed alternative scenario (whether generated internally or proposed by members of the public or other commenting parties) to determine if it was feasible and met the purpose of and need for the project to provide required land for military training and the screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors). Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in this section. The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).

F.7.3.361 Tucker, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Duane	Tucker	I adamantly oppose this ill advised land grab	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.362 Twiss, S.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Sara	Twiss	<p>Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest Code EV21.SG 1220 Pacific Highway Building 1, 5th Floor San Diego, CA 92132</p> <p>Sara Twiss Member of the Walker River Paiute Tribe 1045 Harrison Dr. NE Rio Rancho, NM 87144</p> <p>It has come to my attention that the U.S. Navy is proposing to expand the Naval Air Station (NAS) Fallon by roughly 600,000 acres. Although this will serve the NAS Range Training program for our soldiers in armed</p>	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process The Navy has completed cultural resources surveys in locations where there is a reasonable expectation of direct impact from the placement of targets and in construction areas. The Navy is consulting with Indian Tribes on the identification of any additional cultural resources and associated potential indirect impacts from the Proposed Action. The Navy's evaluation includes archaeological and architectural resources, cemeteries, and traditional cultural properties-- particularly those that are historic properties (i.e., those listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places). Archaeological surveys were conducted within the lands requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition (see Supporting Study: Class I Cultural

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>forces well, I concretely and humbly object to the expansion of this project. According to the Programmatic Agreement among the NAS, The Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation regarding the identification, evaluation, and treatment of historic properties on lands managed by the NAS, under Public Participation, it states the following:</p> <p>"During the early planning stages for a project that will require an EA or an EIS and where a public scoping meeting initiates the evaluation of resources and impact, or where subsequent survey or other studies have identified sites of archaeological or traditional cultural value, NAS Fallon will afford Indian tribes and other interested persons, as identified in Stipulation III.A.1, an opportunity to review, comment on, or object to eligibility and effect determinations and to participate in developing treatment plans."</p> <p>Since the open comment period has begun, as a long-time resident and tribal member of the Walker River Paiute Tribe, I have not witnessed any surveys or other studies conducted in the strategic planning sessions by the Fallon NAS. My recommendation is for the Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer to consult and develop a tribal archaeological survey process with members of the cultural committees representing in the following tribes; among the Fallon-Paiute Shoshone Tribe, the Lovelock Paiute Tribe, the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, the Yerington Paiute Tribe, the Te-Moak Tribe of Western Shoshone, the Yomba Shoshone Tribe, the Winnemucca Shoshone Tribe, and the Walker River Paiute Tribe, and submit for Tribal Council input from these tribes. Currently within the Walker River Paiute Tribal Council there is a member who also serves on the Commission for Cultural Centers and Historic Preservation Board for the state of Nevada, and there have been no addresses to the public of how this board is part of the decision-making process.</p> <p>The areas where this project is proposing to expand contains several religious and cultural significance to various Paiute and Shoshone bands. With recent ownership taken by the NAS, it has been impossible for these tribes to have their historians and experts of traditional knowledge to survey these lands and protect them from bombing and missile range testing. This expansion project will also impact the wildlife which migrate through the areas of various tribes, restraining them from hunting, and cultural significance to sustenance. Lastly, it will impact the vegetation</p>	<p>Resources Investigation, available at http://www.frtcmodernization.com).</p> <p>In complying with Section 106, the Navy adheres to the procedures identified in the implementing regulations (36 Code of Federal Regulations Part 800). The responsibility for Section 106 compliance is the Navy's because it is the lead federal agency for the undertaking. As shown in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources), specifically Section 3.11.1.2 (Regulatory Framework), the Navy has established procedures for addressing its responsibilities with regard to historic properties, including consultation. This includes the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), Nevada SHPO, Indian Tribes, local governments and agencies, and other organizations or individuals. The ACHP will be given the opportunity to comment in accordance with the procedures identified in 36 CFR 800. 5-7 should it be necessary. This process does not preclude the Navy from preemptive planning in order to assess the potential effects of the FRTC Modernization on Historic Properties for the purposes of this EIS.</p> <p>In accordance with Executive Order 13175, <i>Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments</i>; DoD policies; the National Historic Preservation Act; and Navy instructions, the Navy engaged in Tribal consultations during scoping, during the public comment period for the Draft EIS, and following release of the Draft EIS. The Navy invited culturally affiliated Tribes to take part in the NEPA process as Tribal Participants for this EIS (see Appendix C, Tribal Correspondence). The Navy invited these Tribes to (1) participate in project meetings, (2) provide additional information related to cultural resources, and (3) provide internal document review (e.g., of the Class III Cultural Resources Inventory Report) during the development of this Draft EIS.</p> <p>The Navy invited and engaged in Government-to-Government consultations with the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada and the</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>which could provide future sustenance and cultural attributes for the Paiute and Shoshone tribes for generations to come. It is also stated in the Programmatic Agreement that:</p> <p>"At least once each year, or whenever projects arise that might have the potential to affect properties of religious and cultural significance, NAS Fallon will meet with affected Indian Tribes to present proposed undertakings and solicit their concerns regarding traditional/cultural sites. NAS Fallon will ensure that identified Indian tribes and other interested persons are informed of their option to object to the Council regarding any effect determination and will not authorize the undertaking until such objections have been considered."</p> <p>The Fallon NAS Cultural Resource Program Manager should take public comments seriously and humbly respect the surrounding Indigenous communities who have inhabited the lands among what is currently the NAS Range Training areas since time immemorial. It is my final suggestion that the Programmatic Agreement continues to be reviewed yearly with cultural and tribal historians of the Walker River Paiute Tribe, and other tribes as listed above. This will ensure cultural significance identified and tribal sovereignty respected on a nation to nation agreement. Thank you for your time.</p> <p>Respectfully,</p> <p>Sara Twiss stwiss90@gmail.com (775)750-4622</p>	<p>following federally recognized Tribes: the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Fort McDermitt Paiute and Shoshone Tribes, Lovelock Paiute Tribe, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Summit Lake Paiute Tribe, Te-Moak Tribe of Western Shoshone Indians of Nevada (consisting of the Battle Mountain Band, Elko Band, South Fork Band, and Wells Band), Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California, Walker River Paiute Tribe, Winnemucca Paiute Tribe, Yerington Paiute Tribe, and Yomba Shoshone Tribe. Appendix C (Tribal Correspondence) of the Final EIS was updated to include a summary of all outreach performed by the Navy and copies of official correspondence.</p> <p>Under the withdrawal and acquisition, the Navy acknowledges that it would be restricting access to cultural resources to a considerable extent. Consistent with Executive Order 13007, <i>Indian Sacred Sites</i>, the Navy will continue to work with Indian Tribes to develop protocols for access to cultural resources where compatible with mission requirements through the creation of an MOU.</p> <p>The Navy will continue to engage with all interested Tribes. This engagement will continue past the ROD, as the modernization would be implemented over the coming years. The Navy will avoid and/or minimize impacts on cultural resources wherever possible and follow Section 106 requirements. The Navy is committed to providing access to Tribes to the closed ranges and pushing for funding to conduct surveys in range "buffer" areas. The Navy will work with the tribes to prioritize survey areas. The Navy is working with the Nevada SHPO and ACHP to amend the current 2011 PA they are under for withdrawn lands. The Navy would complete Section 106 consultation on impacts due to loss of access for Tribes prior to the fencing of the newly withdrawn and acquired lands after any ultimate Congressional decision.</p> <p>The Final EIS was updated with information, in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources) regarding Navy Section 106 consultation</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
			with the Nevada SHPO, ACHP and Indian Tribes, including the proposed amendment of the 2011 Programmatic Agreement establishing protocols for the future management of historic properties and any MOUs with Indian Tribes in association with the Proposed Action.

F.7.3.363 Ure, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Therese	Ure	Please see attached correspondence, titled "SLO to Naval Facilities re FRTC DEIS Comments."	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.
Therese	Ure	Please see attached correspondence, titled "SLO to Naval Facilities re FRTC DEIS."	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

Laura A. Schroeder
Oregon, Idaho,
Nevada, Washington & Utah

Therese A. Ure
Oregon & Nevada

Sarah R. Liljefelt
Oregon,
California & Utah

William F. Schroeder
(1928 - 2015)



Lindsay M. Thane
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Of Counsel
Oregon & Washington

James Browitt
Of Counsel
Idaho & Washington

February 13, 2019

VIA EMAIL and US MAIL

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Attn: Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

RE: FRTC Modernization DRAFT EIS Comments

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing to submit comments to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS") for the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization on behalf of Damonte Ranch.

Damonte Ranch hold grazing and water interests within and adjacent to areas under consideration for public land withdrawal, renewal and expansion. Our office provides comment in the interest of protecting Damonte Ranch's grazing and water rights as well as range improvements within the affected Department of Interior ("DOI"), Bureau of Land Management ("BLM") Grazing Allotment, Horse Mountain.

Please place Damonte Ranch and our office on your list to receive notice and correspondence on all future NEPA documents related to the FRTC Modernization. While information to our office can be sent to our Reno address listed below, please direct information to Damonte Ranch at:

Damonte Ranch
P.O. Box 18346
Reno, NV 89511

Comment 1:

The EIS should analyze and consider the effects of public land withdrawal and expansion on range land resources, grazing practices, pasture boundaries, access to stock watering sources and reduced forage, with a plan to ensure that any change from the status quo include a means to make the livestock grazer whole.

1915 NE Cesar E. Chavez Boulevard, Portland, Oregon 97212 (503) 281-4100

10615 Double R Boulevard, Suite 100, Reno, Nevada 89521 (775) 786-8800

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(P0425024; 1012.01 TAU)

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The Horse Mountain Allotment is being impacted by the B-16 Range Expansion proposal. As to the alternatives presented in the DEIS, Damonte Ranch prefers Alternative 3 so that access to the Horse Mountain Allotment along Simpson Road will not be closed. Alternative 3 also appears to take less grazing pasture area in Horse Mountain than Alternative 1 and 2.

Comment 2:

The impacts on the Horse Mountain Allotment are of particular concern, being that the proposed B-16 Range Expansion encroaches onto the allotment's northwest portion in the amount of 2,411 acres being a reduction in 2% to 5% AUMs. The DEIS does not consider alternatives to ensure that Damonte Ranch is made whole and no loss in AUMs are attributed to the allotment. The economic impact in any loss of AUMs will substantially affect grazing operations, and should be considered.

Comment 3:

The DEIS did not adequately consider range improvements, and the effect of the expansion on range improvements within the affected Grazing Allotments. In cooperation with BLM, Damonte Ranch has made substantial investments into range improvements — including development of wells, corrals, and construction/maintenance of fence lines. Damonte Ranch spends a lot of time and money for construction, repair, and maintenance to these range improvements, thus any change to these improvements should include a provision to make Damonte Ranch whole.

Comment 4:

Damonte Ranch is the holder of permitted water rights that are integral to its grazing operations. Any withdrawal or reduction in water rights as outlined in the DEIS will cause a significant impact on grazing. Every effort should be made to make Damonte Ranch whole, especially where there will be a loss of any water source. If a water source is taken, the Navy should expend every effort to replace that source. Water sources in livestock grazing operations are critical for forage utilization and cattle disbursement on the range. The DEIS does not consider replacement water sources.

Given that the location of the proposed fence line in Alternative 3 is right on a location of, at least, one Damonte Ranch water righted stockwater wells, the DEIS should have considered the ability of the Navy to work with the Nevada Division of Water Resources ("NDWR") to move this well, re-drill a new well, including paying the expense of the new well, and undergoing the permitting processes with NDWR to move the point of diversion and place of use. Water rights are property rights and must be protected, and not taken without just compensation.

Comment 5:

Damonte Ranch has a corral in the north portion of their allotment. The DEIS fails to consider whether or not this corral is within the area that is proposed to be removed for the B-16 Range

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Expansion, and if so, provide for moving the corral so that it can continued to be used by Damonte Ranch. The expansion should ensure that Damonte Ranch is made whole with no impact caused by the B-16 expansion.

Comment 6:

In addition to the comments listed above, Damonte Ranch specifically adopts the comments made by the Nevada Farm Bureau and the Nevada Cattlemen's Association.

We thank you for considering the foregoing Damonte Ranch comments during the DEIS review process. Please contact our office at (775) 786-8800 if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,
SCHROEDER LAW OFFICES, P.C.



Therese A. Ure

TAU:lmk

cc: Client – *via email only*

F.7.3.363.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

Regarding comment 1, the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives.

The following information has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.

Payment for Losses

The Navy would first consider costs associated with obtaining replacement forage and otherwise restoring/maintaining a permittee's existing operational capacity. Working with BLM and the permittee, the Navy would determine the costs necessary to replace the area/capacity removed from a grazing permit. These costs could include, but would not be limited to, preparing new allotment applications; complying with BLM environmental requirements and water rights studies; procuring private market replacement forage; shipping or transporting forage, cattle and/or ranch personnel and their horses and equipment; one-time relocation expenses associated with any full or partial transferring of operations to any new location(s); any reasonably anticipated lost profits arising as a result of operational downtime while restoring and/or relocating operations; and any other costs identified, which would be properly payable under 43 U.S.C. section 315q.

Should a permit holder decide not to seek replacement forage in conjunction with restoring operational capacity, or when restoring such capacity is not practicable, the Navy would make a good faith estimate of the financial impact the loss of that individual's permit would be expected to have on his or her ranching operation. The Navy would ask each permit holder to provide recent business operating expenses associated with the permit, their total operating expenses, an estimate of that portion of income believed to be directly related to utilization of the permit, and total income and taxes. This information would be used to determine a payment amount to compensate for losses resulting from permit cancellation, including reasonably anticipated lost profits for what would otherwise have been the duration of the permit. If a permit holder does not wish to share their financial information, or if the information shared is incomplete, the Navy would make an estimate of the value of the losses based on existing information from other sources.

It is possible that a payment amount would be based both on replacement forage along with other operational restoration-related costs, and on the financial impact the loss of a permit would be

expected to have on a ranching operation (i.e., part of the payment would be based on obtaining replacement forage to the extent practicable and the rest based on payment for losses to the extent obtaining replacement forage is not practicable). In those instances, the costs to restore operational capacity would first be determined, and the remaining payment amount would then be determined in accordance with the paragraph above discussing permits holders who may elect not to seek replacement forage capacity.

Payment for Allotment Improvements

Improvements such as corrals, fencing, wells, and other appurtenances that cannot be relocated are considered real property, similar to a building. The Navy would appraise the value of all real property owned by a permit holder and would offer fair market value for the purchase of any such real property. Equipment, such as relocatable water tanks, is not considered real property, and the permit holder would be afforded an opportunity to remove their equipment prior to cancellation of a permit.

Timing of Permit Cancellation

The Navy anticipates issuing its Record of Decision with respect to FRTC modernization in January 2020. However, any Congressional withdrawal of the area currently supporting grazing permits would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Similarly, any Congressional appropriation for implementing the FRTC Modernization action, which would include funds for making payments to grazing permit holders, would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Accordingly, the earliest the Navy would request that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) cancel any permit would be October 1, 2020.

If the Congressional withdrawal is enacted, and if Congress appropriates funds to implement the FRTC Modernization effort, the Navy would ask BLM to contact each affected permit holder. BLM would coordinate with the Navy on any action to initiate cancellation of a permit. Under 43 CFR Part 4100 Subpart 4110.4-2 (Decrease in Land Acreages), BLM would be required to provide two years advance notice of any permit cancellation. Once a given notification is made, the Navy, with assistance from BLM, would begin discussions with affected permit holders to determine payment amounts in accordance with the processes described herein.

The Navy recognizes the potential impact of the loss of water rights on the community. The Navy would purchase private water rights as real property. Additionally, acquisition of water rights would be factored into the processes for valuing grazing and mining-related just compensation or other authorized payments as appropriate. As discussed in Section 3.9 (Water Resources), the Navy does not have the authority to assist water rights holders with other water rights actions (i.e. change applications).

The Navy does not plan to use water rights purchased (via negotiated sale or pursuant to eminent domain) for stock water but would instead request to modify the beneficial use, as appropriate, relative to mission requirements. In the Dixie Valley Training Area (DVTA), the Navy would not seek to acquire existing water rights. Section 3.9 (Water Resources), specifically Section 3.9.3 (Environmental Consequences) of the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion of the evaluation of water rights. For a detailed analysis of water rights on existing FRTC lands and lands requested for withdrawal or

proposed for acquisition, please see the supporting study, NAS Fallon Water Rights Research and Inventory, on the FRTC Modernization website at <https://frtcmodernization.com>.

The following specific grazing mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Policies and procedures in the NAS Fallon INRMP would continue to be implemented to avoid conflicts with livestock grazing. This includes routine monitoring of fence lines surrounding potentially hazardous areas to ensure that the fence is secure and cannot be crossed by people or animals; the monitoring area would be increased to include new perimeter fences on lands proposed for withdrawal. The Navy proposes to establish two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers at NAS Fallon. Part of the duties of these officers would include monitoring of the added fence line. The Standard Operating Procedures for handling cattle on the FRTC training ranges would be revised and implemented. Livestock friendly erosion controls would be used when performing construction activities on or adjacent to grazing land that is actively being used. The Navy would also engage in one-to-one discussions with affected ranchers to seek to identify further opportunities for impact minimization, including but not limited to potential payments under 43 U.S.C. Sec. 315q. Such discussions would be on a case-by-case basis and thus would need to occur only after any ultimate implementation of the action.

Regarding comment 2, the Navy has added the process with which it would evaluate impacts and payments to grazers to the EIS as described above.

Regarding comment 3, the Navy has added range improvements to all figures in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing) and they are part of the valuation process.

Regarding comment 4, the Navy recognizes the potential impact of the loss of water rights on the community. The Navy would purchase private water rights as real property. Additionally, acquisition of water rights would be factored into the processes for valuing grazing and mining-related just compensation or other authorized payments as appropriate. As discussed in Section 3.9 (Water Resources), the Navy does not have the authority to assist water rights holders with other water rights actions (i.e. change applications).

The Final EIS, Section 3.9 (Water Resources), has been updated to reflect that the Navy is not proposing any changes to the existing access in this area nor any changes to the water rights and well. The Navy is exploring options, including relinquishing the well and access road so that BLM could incorporate the property back into the public domain, and; renewal of this existing withdrawal and fencing the well and access so that unimpeded access from NV Route 839 could continue. Regardless of method of accommodation, the Navy intends to allow continued access to the well by the owner of the water right. Regarding comment 5, the corral should now be shown in the figure for B-16 in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing).

Regarding comment 6, please see the Nevada Farm Bureau and the Nevada Cattlemen's Association comments for the Navy's responses to these comments.

Laura A. Schroeder
Oregon, Idaho,
Nevada, Washington & Utah

Therese A. Ure
Oregon & Nevada

Sarah R. Liljefelt
Oregon,
California & Utah

William F. Schroeder
(1928 - 2015)



Lindsay M. Thane
Oregon, Washington & Montana

Jakob S. Wiley
Oregon

Wyatt E. Rolfe
Of Counsel
Oregon & Washington

James Browitt
Of Counsel
Idaho & Washington

February 11, 2019

VIA EMAIL and US MAIL

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Attn: Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway
Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132

RE: FRTC Modernization DRAFT EIS Comments

To Whom It May Concern:

We are writing to submit comments to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS") for the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization on behalf of David F. Stix.

Mr. Stix and his family hold grazing and water interests within and adjacent to areas under consideration for public land withdrawal, renewal and expansion. Our office provides comment in the interest of protecting Mr. Stix's grazing and water rights as well as range improvements that he has made within two of the affected Department of Interior ("DOI"), Bureau of Land Management ("BLM") Grazing Allotments, Bucky O'Neill and Bass Flat.

Please place Mr. Stix and our office on your list to receive notice and correspondence on all future NEPA documents related to the FRTC Modernization. While information to our office can be sent to our Reno address listed below, please direct information to Mr. Stix to:

David F. Stix
4830 Farm District Road
Fernley, NV 89408

Comment 1:

The EIS should analyze and consider the effects of public land withdrawal and expansion on range land resources, grazing practices, pasture boundaries, access to stock watering sources and reduced forage, with a plan to ensure that any change from the status quo include a means to make the livestock grazer whole.

1915 NE Cesar E. Chavez Boulevard, Portland, Oregon 97212 (503) 281-4100

10615 Double R Boulevard, Suite 100, Reno, Nevada 89521 (775) 786-8800

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(P0424925, 0251.27 TAU)

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
February 11, 2019
Page 2 of 2

As to the alternatives presented in the DEIS, Mr. Stix prefers an alternative wherein there would be no change to Mr. Stix's public land grazing neighbors on the allotment to the east. Alternative 3 would allow Mr. Stix to remain adjacent to graziers on the east side, and this supports the working relationship Mr. Stix has built with his grazing neighbors. The impacts on the Bucky O'Neill Allotment are of particular concern, being that the proposed range expansion of the Dixie Valley Training Area encroaches onto the allotment's southeastern portion.

Comment 2

The DEIS did not adequately consider range improvements, and the effect of the expansion on range improvements within the affected Grazing Allotments. In cooperation with BLM, Mr. Stix has made substantial investments into range improvements — including development of wells and construction of fence lines. Many public land graziers spend a lot of time and money for construction, repair and maintenance to these range improvements, thus any change to these improvements should include a provision to make the grazer whole.

Comment 3:

Mr. Stix is the holder of permitted water rights that are integral to his grazing operations. Any withdrawal or reduction in water rights as outlined in the DEIS will cause a significant impact on public land graziers. Every effort should be made to make graziers whole, especially those subject to a loss of any water source. If a water source is taken, the Navy should expend every effort to replace that source. Water sources in livestock grazing operations are critical for forage utilization and cattle disbursement on the range. The DEIS does not consider replacement water sources.

In addition to the comments listed above, Mr. Stix specifically adopts the comments made by the Nevada Farm Bureau and the Nevada Cattlemen's Association. We thank you for considering Mr. Stix's comments during the DEIS review process.

Please contact our office at (775) 786-8800 if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,
SCHROEDER LAW OFFICES, P.C.



Therese A. Ure

TAU:lmk

cc: Client – *via email only*

F.7.3.363.2 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

Regarding comment 1, the Taylor Grazing Act of 1934 (43 U.S.C. sections 315q) provides the Navy with the authority to make payments for certain grazing-related losses. The Navy would work with grazing permittees on a case-by-case basis to try to minimize losses resulting from the cancellation of a grazing permit. The Final EIS further describes the valuation process by which the Navy would determine payment amounts to holders of grazing permits that would be affected. This process allows for the valuation of the cost of providing replacement forage and/or losses resulting from an inability to provide replacement forage. The process also determines the value of improvements made by permit holders (e.g., value of wells, corrals, fencing, and other real property). The Navy would use this process to determine payments to individuals who may experience losses resulting from the cancellation of grazing permits or other disruption of their livestock grazing operations as a result of implementation of any of the action alternatives.

The following information has been included in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing), specifically Section 3.4.3.2 (Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex), and also applies to Alternatives 2 and 3 in the Final EIS.

Payment for Losses

The Navy would first consider costs associated with obtaining replacement forage and otherwise restoring/maintaining a permittee's existing operational capacity. Working with BLM and the permittee, the Navy would determine the costs necessary to replace the area/capacity removed from a grazing permit. These costs could include, but would not be limited to, preparing new allotment applications; complying with BLM environmental requirements and water rights studies; procuring private market replacement forage; shipping or transporting forage, cattle and/or ranch personnel and their horses and equipment; one-time relocation expenses associated with any full or partial transferring of operations to any new location(s); any reasonably anticipated lost profits arising as a result of operational downtime while restoring and/or relocating operations; and any other costs identified, which would be properly payable under 43 U.S.C. section 315q.

Should a permit holder decide not to seek replacement forage in conjunction with restoring operational capacity, or when restoring such capacity is not practicable, the Navy would make a good faith estimate of the financial impact the loss of that individual's permit would be expected to have on his or her ranching operation. The Navy would ask each permit holder to provide recent business operating expenses associated with the permit, their total operating expenses, an estimate of that portion of income believed to be directly related to utilization of the permit, and total income and taxes. This information would be used to determine a payment amount to compensate for losses resulting from permit cancellation, including reasonably anticipated lost profits for what would otherwise have been the duration of the permit. If a permit holder does not wish to share their financial information, or if the information shared is incomplete, the Navy would make an estimate of the value of the losses based on existing information from other sources.

It is possible that a payment amount would be based both on replacement forage along with other operational restoration-related costs, and on the financial impact the loss of a permit would be

expected to have on a ranching operation (i.e., part of the payment would be based on obtaining replacement forage to the extent practicable and the rest based on payment for losses to the extent obtaining replacement forage is not practicable). In those instances, the costs to restore operational capacity would first be determined, and the remaining payment amount would then be determined in accordance with the paragraph above discussing permits holders who may elect not to seek replacement forage capacity.

Payment for Allotment Improvements

Improvements such as corrals, fencing, wells, and other appurtenances that cannot be relocated are considered real property, similar to a building. The Navy would appraise the value of all real property owned by a permit holder and would offer fair market value for the purchase of any such real property. Equipment, such as relocatable water tanks, is not considered real property, and the permit holder would be afforded an opportunity to remove their equipment prior to cancellation of a permit.

Timing of Permit Cancellation

The Navy anticipates issuing its Record of Decision with respect to FRTC modernization in January 2020. However, any Congressional withdrawal of the area currently supporting grazing permits would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Similarly, any Congressional appropriation for implementing the FRTC Modernization action, which would include funds for making payments to grazing permit holders, would not be expected until September 30, 2020, or later. Accordingly, the earliest the Navy would request that the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) cancel any permit would be October 1, 2020.

If the Congressional withdrawal is enacted, and if Congress appropriates funds to implement the FRTC Modernization effort, the Navy would ask BLM to contact each affected permit holder. BLM would coordinate with the Navy on any action to initiate cancellation of a permit. Under 43 CFR Part 4100 Subpart 4110.4-2 (Decrease in Land Acreages), BLM would be required to provide two years advance notice of any permit cancellation. Once a given notification is made, the Navy, with assistance from BLM, would begin discussions with affected permit holders to determine payment amounts in accordance with the processes described herein.

The Navy recognizes the potential impact of the loss of water rights on the community. The Navy would purchase private water rights as real property. Additionally, acquisition of water rights would be factored into the processes for valuing grazing and mining-related just compensation or other authorized payments as appropriate. As discussed in Section 3.9 (Water Resources), the Navy does not have the authority to assist water rights holders with other water rights actions (i.e. change applications).

The Navy does not plan to use water rights purchased (via negotiated sale or pursuant to eminent domain) for stock water but would instead request to modify the beneficial use, as appropriate, relative to mission requirements. In the Dixie Valley Training Area (DVTA), the Navy would not seek to acquire existing water rights. Section 3.9 (Water Resources), specifically Section 3.9.3 (Environmental Consequences) of the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion of the evaluation of water rights.

The following specific grazing mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Policies and procedures in the NAS Fallon INRMP would continue to be implemented to avoid conflicts with

livestock grazing. This includes routine monitoring of fence lines surrounding potentially hazardous areas to ensure that the fence is secure and cannot be crossed by people or animals; the monitoring area would be increased to include new perimeter fences on lands proposed for withdrawal. The Navy proposes to establish two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers at NAS Fallon. Part of the duties of these officers would include monitoring of the added fence line. The Standard Operating Procedures for handling cattle on the FRTC training ranges would be revised and implemented. Livestock friendly erosion controls would be used when performing construction activities on or adjacent to grazing land that is actively being used. The Navy would also engage in one-to-one discussions with affected ranchers to seek to identify further opportunities for impact minimization, including but not limited to potential payments under 43 U.S.C. Sec. 315q. Such discussions would be on a case-by-case basis and thus would need to occur only after any ultimate implementation of the action.

Regarding comment 2, the Navy has added the process with which it would evaluate impacts and payments to grazers to the EIS as described above.

Regarding comment 3, the Navy has added range improvements to all figures in Section 3.4 (Livestock Grazing) and they are part of the valuation process.

Regarding the final comment, please see the Nevada Farm Bureau and the Nevada Cattlemen's Association comments for the Navy's responses to these comments.

F.7.3.364 Uwins, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jennifer	Uwins	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station. I am from a military family and this public lands issue matters to me.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.365 Van Deusen, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
David	Van Deusen	Ecologist have demonstrated that our ecosphere can be described as a net in which all parts interact and the multitude of parts provide balance and mutual sustenance. The whole system can withstand a degree of disruption, but once a critical degree of disruption occurs local systems break down, and when enough systems become disrupted global collapse occurs via positive feedback loops. This planet is teetering as evidenced by mass extinction that is taking place. One can not predict if any one additional assault will trigger collapse. Now is not the time for an additional bomb site. Now is the time to restore	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy reviewed and considered all comments received and have updated the analysis where appropriate. The Navy is working with impacted parties on a case by case basis to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any impacts if applicable.

F.7.3.366 van Wijk, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Justin	van Wijk	These WSAs are a resource	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat

First	Last	Comment	Response
		to be treasured, not to be excluded from the public.	emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). The Navy also must maintain control of the area as part of the DVTa, and without withdrawing these portions of the WSAs, it would not have the ability to keep these areas open to training in the way that is needed.

F.7.3.367 Vanderhaar, J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Jana	Vanderhaar	<p>As an avid hiker and explorer of our Wilderness areas, I am opposed to the Navy's proposal to eliminate 74,700 acres of high-quality wilderness study areas (WSAs) in Nevada.</p> <p>In particular, I write you to eliminate taking away the entire Stillwater Range, from Highway 50 to the Pershing County line from your proposal. That area has been identified as having extremely important cultural resources, wildlife habitat and recreational value and needs to be protected for its cultural, historic, religious and scenic values important to Native Americans, dating back 10,000 years. The Stillwater Range is also a popular year-round hiking area with amazing vistas and unique habitat, and provides for scenic back-country camping. The interconnectivity of the marshlands and mountain ranges there is a natural resource rich in habitat, cultural and scenic values.</p> <p>Lastly, your proposal will threaten the geologic and archeologic resources from the ancient days of Lake Lahontan dating back to the Pleistocene period by increasing the potential for catastrophic fires. The fragile desert sagebrush steppe and associated wetlands would be wiped out and cultural resources burned, leaving behind nothing but a lost legacy that future generations will not be able to enjoy.</p> <p>Instead, I recommend that you designate all of the Wilderness Study Areas surrounding their proposed expansions as permanent Wilderness, thereby serving as excellent development buffers while still allowing for protecting wildlife habitat and recreation.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as Wilderness is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process.</p> <p>While proposed for de-designation by Congress, all of the areas, Stillwater Range, Stillwater Marshes, Clan Alpines, and Sand Springs Range, would remain open for recreation under Alternative 3 (the Navy's Preferred Alternative). While proposed for de-designation by Congress, all of the areas, Stillwater Range, Stillwater Marshes, Clan Alpines, and Sand Springs Range, would remain open for recreation under Alternative 3 (the Navy's Preferred Alternative). Additionally, if the public is recreating in the area, the Navy would seek an alternate location to train until the area used by the public is available, as is currently done in the existing DVTa. This expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater NWR. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		Please accept my comments of opposition to eliminate 74,700 acres of high-quality wilderness study areas (WSAs) in Nevada. Thank you	Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee). Although the Navy is requesting lands that are currently WSAs, this should not diminish the Navy’s commitment to support other areas that have been designated as Wilderness areas or WSAs throughout Nevada.

F.7.3.368 VanderMeeden, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Richard	VanderMeeden	I have been visiting this area since 1977 and have enjoyed every minute. I have met all kinds of people from many different walks of life with varied interest as to why they are visiting this area. I also enjoy my time spent at the Middlegate Station. I do believe the impact of closing off this area would have a sever financial impact on this business and many others from Gabbs, Fallon and Reno. Although I live in CA my heart is in NV. I do think the Navy could find a lesser used part of the desert for their training with less impact on an area so appreciated and used by so many. Regards, Rich VanderMeeden	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. Please note that this expansion does not include the Middlegate Station. Implementation of the Proposed Action is not anticipated to result in negative social consequences such as lifestyle disruptions, health risks, or cultural, community, or quality of life impacts, except insofar as it would to some extent reduce opportunities for certain economic activities closely associated with the region. Please see Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics) for more information.

F.7.3.369 VanHavermaat, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Lisa	VanHavermaat	Please keep these lands public. They are beautiful desert lands. The wildlife is worthy of saving and preserving. Thank you	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. With regards to preserving open spaces (and keeping operations as they are today), the Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and individuals recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.370 Vaughn, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Clint	Vaughn	We here in Central Nevada have been encroached upon by not only Liberal Democrats but now the US Navy. This shit isnt right at all. You have all the land you need to conduct your bombing exercise. As a matter of fact this is total jacking off of the public and residents of Lyon and Mineral Counties.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record.

F.7.3.371 Ventura, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Christine	Ventura	Humans are not responsible enough to own or wield weapons, as circumstances over centuries of warfare and terror have shown. We should be learning how to be better communicators, negotiators and how to reduce the need for conflict, not increasing the power of our arsenals. In the meantime we are getting deeper into a climate crisis and a crisis of biodiversity loss. We should be focused on mitigating those crises and preparing for the inevitable fallout from the unavoidable consequences from our inability to react sooner. This includes preserving open space.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. With regards to preserving open spaces (and keeping operations as they are today), the Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and individuals recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.372 Victoria, B.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Betty	Victoria	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less

First	Last	Comment	Response
		important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station. Stillwater Refuge is especially important and should be protected for birds and other animals, not to mention scientists and tourists. The desert ecosystem is a fragile place and does not recover easily. Please do not consider this an option.	than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species. With regards to keeping operations as they are today, the Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and individuals recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.373 Vineski, P.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Patricia	Vineski	It is absolutely outrageous that the Navy would consider such an expansion of their bombing and testing range and nothing more than another attempt to take over OUR public lands. Central Nevada's basin-and-range country are part of what makes the state so spectacular. Congress should not let Trump seize hundreds of thousands of acres of OUR public land so the military can drop bombs on our wildlife and wild places.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.374 Wagner, K.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Kathi	Wagner	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. And Great Basin National Park. You'd obliterate that natural wonder! Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. The Final EIS includes a thorough impact analysis conducted by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species. With regards to keeping operations as they are today, the Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an "Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and individuals recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.375 Wagner, W.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Wendy	Wagner	It is vitally important to protect the wildlife refuges of the Southwest. Destroying them to test bombs is short-sighted and threatens the biodiversity of our country. Biodiversity in itself is one of our most important natural resources-- we must preserve genetic variety in our	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis

First	Last	Comment	Response
		plant and animal species to provide for American science and our future.	presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.

F.7.3.376 Walker, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Robert	Walker	Plain and simple, leave the bombing range as it is.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment has been included in the official project record. The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered But Eliminated” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative, also known as the “status quo” alternative, would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.377 Ward, L.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Lisa	Ward	<p>I am an Oregonian, but a frequent visitor to Nevada. My family and I allocate time every year to explore the incredible landscape and rich cultural history of Nevada. Many of our favorite travel routes would be closed or obstructed by the proposed military expansion. The state of Nevada has sacrificed too much of herself to destructive military activities and deserves a future that realizes the true potential of the state. Arid land is not useless. The proposed "modernization" would deter tourism, destroy unique swaths of habitat, and remove the possibility of future uses that would provide revenue to the state (solar farms, for example).</p> <p>I urge you to support a no action alternative in the final EIS, to protect access to 359,928 acres of highly valued public land. If we unnecessarily sacrifice our land to bombing and violence by our own hands, we have already lost the war.</p> <p>Thank you for considering my comments,</p> <p>Lisa Ward</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.</p>

F.7.3.378 Wayt, K. D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Kevin David	Wayt	<p>I oppose the expansion of military activity in the Great Basin due to my love for flying in it myself! I applaud our military and the proud individuals that make it operate!</p> <p>I feel the military has enough of our beautiful flying and soaring area and any further expansion would hinder our ability to enjoy this vast escape! You see I fly Back Country STOL Aircraft and Sailplanes. I frequently fly/soar 500-600 miles at a time in one flight which I have to maneuver in and around MOAs and up close to many restricted areas now. Any further expansion of MOAs or Restricted areas would jeopardize my ability to complete a large soaring flight and be able to return to my destination. I have been flying in the country for over 40 years and don't want to lose any more of it...thank you for your consideration.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. General aviation aircraft would continue to be allowed to transit through the FRTC outside of active restricted airspace or through the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) corridor, just as they do now. This would apply to any proposed restricted airspace. Typically, restricted airspace is inactive on weekends and holidays, and when ground ranges are closed for maintenance. Therefore, there would be regular opportunities for general aviation aircraft to transit through inactive restricted airspace(s). The proposed changes to airspace would therefore have minimal impact on recreational/general aviation aircraft. Impacts to general aviation for each alternative are discussed in Section 3.6 (Airspace), specifically in Section 3.6.3 (Environmental Consequences).</p>

F.7.3.379 Werning, k.

First	Last	Comment	Response
karla	Werning	<p>As a former Navy reservist, I fully support military preparedness. However, some of the magic of being American is due to living in such a beautiful country. Our open space is precious and magnificent. The wildlife are irreplaceable and precious as well. A large swath of Nevada is already used for military purposes and human habitation; leave the rest wild.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. The Navy reduced the withdrawal and acquisition proposal under Alternative 3 between the Draft EIS and Final EIS. The Navy added a figure in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS that illustrates the proposed withdrawal and requested acquisition lands included in the Draft EIS and highlights additional reductions that have been made to the proposed withdrawal and requested acquisition lands between the Draft and Final EIS under Alternative 3.</p>

F.7.3.380 West, Mr. G.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Mr.G.	West	<p>As quoted in EcoWatch -"It's outrageous that the Trump administration wants to ram another military takeover of public lands down our throats," said Patrick Donnelly, Nevada state director at the Center for Biological Diversity. "The wide-open spaces of central Nevada's basin-and-</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operations ground training activities in order to meet</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>range country are part of what makes our state so spectacular. Congress shouldn't let Trump seize hundreds of thousands of acres of public land so the military can drop bombs on our cherished wildlife and wild places."</p> <p>The proposal would triple the size of Fallon Naval Air Station bombing ranges, seizing land in the iconic Fairview Peak area and the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The plan released Friday follows an earlier proposal to expand the Nevada Test and Training Range in southern Nevada, which would take more than 1.1 million acres of Desert National Wildlife Refuge, currently managed to protect bighorn sheep and other wildlife.</p> <p>Do Not Continue with this absurd plan. Leave our national treasures - our public lands - alone. Thank you.</p>	<p>emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p> <p>This expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (the USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge) or Fairview Peak. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).</p> <p>The Final EIS includes a thorough analysis by qualified wildlife biologists. Potential impacts to wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated with a discussion regarding the potential for impacts to individuals of a species.</p>

F.7.3.381 Wheaton, L. G

First	Last	Comment	Response
Leslie George	Wheaton	<p>Stop the US Navy grabbing land in Nevada? I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the "status quo" alternative as an</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	"Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis" in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.382 Whetstone, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Tanner	Whetstone	As an addition to my previous comment (#3427) on the FRTC Modernization Draft EIS, as an interested party I would like to formally request the Navy to invite the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to be involved with this project, as allowed under NAS Fallon's Programmatic Agreement Stipulation III., Section E. Thanks, Tanner Whetstone	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record.
Tanner	Whetstone	I do not believe the analysis presented in the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS meets the reasonable and good faith standard required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The Navy has failed to determine appropriate Areas of Potential Effect, has failed to identify historic properties that could be affected by their proposal, and has failed to justify their	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. As shown in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources), specifically Section 3.11.1.2 (Regulatory Framework), the Navy has established procedures for addressing its responsibilities with regard to historic properties, including consultation. This includes the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), Nevada SHPO, Indian Tribes, local governments and agencies, and other organizations or individuals. With regards to your comment regarding the Area of Potential Effect, the Navy determined the Area of Potential Effect which includes areas of

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>determination that historic properties would not be adversely affected. The rationale for my assertions are presented in the PDF document attached to this comment. Please read it and contact me with any questions.</p> <p>Thanks, Tanner Whetstone</p>	<p>potential direct effect (e.g., ground disturbance) and indirect effect (activities that could generate noise and vibration from sonic booms). The SHPO concurred with the Navy's determination that this APE accounts for potential direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that may result from this undertaking. These concurrences can be found in Appendix B (Agency Correspondence) of the Final EIS.</p> <p>Further, the Navy revised the Final EIS to discuss the region of influence for cultural resources as Potential Impact Areas (PIAs), a term analogous to the NHPA Section 106 Area of Potential Effect (APE). The present analysis in the Final EIS, however, differs from Section 106 to the degree that it (1) considers a wide array of proposed actions that are not undertakings per 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 800.16, and also (2) considers the impact on a wider range of cultural resources than NRHP-eligible or potentially eligible historic properties alone. Importantly, APEs and assessments of effect to historic properties under Section 106 would be addressed when specific undertakings are proposed and known in detail in the future, consistent with an amended 2011 <i>Programmatic Agreement Among Naval Air Station, Fallon, Nevada, The Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding the Identification, Evaluation and Treatment of Historic Properties on Lands Managed by Naval Air Station, Fallon</i>. The Navy would continue to consult in order to ensure an amended 2011 PA is updated as applicable for the Tribes.</p> <p>The Navy will continue to engage with all interested Tribes. This engagement will continue past the ROD, as the modernization would be implemented over the coming years. The Navy will avoid and/or minimize impacts on cultural resources wherever possible and follow Section 106 requirements. The Navy is committed to providing access to Tribes to the closed ranges and pushing for funding to conduct surveys in range "buffer" areas. The Navy will work with the tribes to prioritize survey areas. The Navy is working with the Nevada SHPO and ACHP to amend the current 2011 PA they are under for withdrawn lands. The Navy would complete Section 106 consultation on impacts due to loss of access for Tribes prior to the fencing of the newly withdrawn and acquired lands after any ultimate Congressional decision.</p> <p>Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.</p>

I do not believe the analysis presented in the Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization Draft EIS meets the reasonable and good faith standard required by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. The Navy has failed to determine appropriate Areas of Potential Effect, has failed to identify historic properties that could be affected by their proposal, and has failed to justify their determination that historic properties would not be adversely affected. The rationale for my assertions are presented below.

The Navy has determined that only the specific bombing ranges themselves constitute a Direct APE, and the Indirect APE is only discussed in terms of noise and vibration from supersonic flight. While the Direct APE determination takes into account the physical effects caused by the use of live ordinance (for instance, at range B20), the Navy fails to take into account the clear evidence that indirect physical impacts are an almost-certain possibility. One only needs to look at aerial imagery of the B20 range compared to the current target areas in use: the area surrounding those targets for up to a mile out are pock-marked with craters from off-target bombs. Considering the current proposal would allow for dropping bombs from farther away, necessitating a larger safety zone, it is reasonable to assume that physical disturbance from off-target bombs will cover an even larger area. Despite this, the agency has decided it is not necessary to consider indirect physical effects to historic properties that could be caused by off-target bombs hitting them, in spite of the fact that the physical destruction associated with explosive ordinance would be an adverse effect to historic properties. By not evaluating all possible indirect effects, the Navy has not met the requirements of Section 106 as stipulated in 36 CFR 800.4 (a) (1) and the Navy's Programmatic Agreement. I believe the Navy may feel it is justified in this course of action based on their Programmatic Agreement that exempts continued use of the B20 range; however, the exact language is "continued use of high explosives at *designated target areas* within the Training Ranges which *have been used historically* for this purpose and are now disturbed, including all of Bravo-20." The FRTC expansion does meet this standard as it was not a designated target area at the time of execution of the Programmatic Agreement, it has not been used historically as a bombing range, and it falls outside of the exception area designated in the Programmatic Agreement. Therefore, the Navy is required to follow its standard procedures as stipulated in the Programmatic Agreement, which as I have already stated they have failed to follow.

The Navy has also not met its legal duty to identify historic properties that could be impacted by its proposal. The EIS specifies 5 cultural resource studies conducted for range B20 - the ICRMP, which is a plan of how to manage cultural resources, not a list of cultural resources; two Class III inventories within the existing bombing range; one Class III inventory within the Direct APE/proposed bombing range; and one Class I inventory that is available on the FRTC modernization website. For range B20, this Class I inventory covers the entire Carson Sink and identified 30 cultural resources, including six that are listed or eligible to the National Register of Historic Places; however, this is not due to a lack of sites but due to a lack of inventory. The Class I report itself states that many locations across the FRTC expansion including the Carson Sink are lacking in inventory and that those areas may require additional study "to further refine the findings in this overview and allow for a more complete understanding of the cultural resources present" (p.128). Additionally, the Class I report states that it "should not be used as a sole source for background information and location or findings of previous studies in any given area, but does provide an informed overview that should be followed up by researchers following normal literature review standards, procedures, and conventions" (p.127). However, because the Navy has failed to properly identify an Indirect APE for physical effects that would adversely affect historic properties, they did not continue to gather information on historic properties as required by 36 CFR 800.4 (b) (1). This regulation states that in determining the level of effort necessary to identify historic properties (e.g. a literature review of an Indirect APE vs. a Class II or Class III inventory) "The agency

official shall take into account past planning, research and studies, the magnitude and nature of the undertaking and the degree of Federal involvement, the nature and extent of potential effects on historic properties, and the likely nature and location of historic properties within the area of potential effects." Given that the nature of this undertaking is large and likely to cause severe adverse effects to historic properties, the Navy did not make a reasonable and good faith effort to identify historic properties outside of the proposed target areas that could be affected.

The Navy states in the EIS that no adverse impacts would occur to cultural sites. This however is based on a flawed analysis of the undertaking, its area of potential effects, and a lack of knowledge of the historic properties within it. They argue that remediation of the range would cause more impact to cultural resources than opening up a larger area to explosive devices that can and will go off-target sometimes and cause major physical damage if not complete destruction. The Navy wishes to have its cake and eat it too by saying that a large damage zone is necessary, but that no damage will occur to anything within it.

This attitude is echoed in Section 3.11.3.2.5 where the probabilities of damage to caves, rockshelters, rock art, and other susceptible cultural resources are measured in days, when the reality is that the activities will likely continue for decades if not in perpetuity. Daily probabilities give the appearance of insignificance, but approval of the proposed action exposes many previously-exposed as well as many previously-unexposed cultural resources to that probability every day. A 0.1% daily probability of damage correlates to a ~30% annual probability (the probability of not being damaged is $(1-0.001)^{365}$, which is ~70%), and correlates to a ~99% probability of damage in 12 years. This is not a negligible or minor impact and the Navy should not brush it off as such.

It is okay to approve the FRTC modernization, but it is not okay to abdicate legal responsibility to do it. The Navy has the capability and the means to conduct a reasonable and good faith effort in meeting their Section 106 responsibilities, including mitigation of adverse effects to historic properties that are obviously going to occur. The Navy should complete its legal requirements under Section 106 of the NHPA by establishing an Indirect APE for physical effects, conducting pedestrian inventory to identify historic properties within it, reassessing the effects of their undertaking on historic properties, and mitigating those effects. Currently, I do not believe they have met the letter nor the spirit of the law.

-Tanner Whetstone

F.7.3.382.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. As shown in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources), specifically Section 3.11.1.2 (Regulatory Framework), the Navy has established procedures for addressing its responsibilities with regard to historic properties, including consultation. This includes inviting the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), Nevada SHPO, Indian Tribes, local governments and agencies, and other organizations or individuals to participate in this NEPA process.

With regards to your comment regarding the Area of Potential Effect, the Navy determined the Area of Potential Effect which includes areas of potential direct effect (e.g., ground disturbance) and indirect effect (activities that could generate noise and vibration from sonic booms). The SHPO concurred with the Navy's determination that this APE accounts for potential direct, indirect, and cumulative effects

that may result from this undertaking. These concurrences can be found in Appendix B (Agency Correspondence) of the Final EIS.

Further, the Navy revised the Final EIS to discuss the region of influence for cultural resources as Potential Impact Areas (PIAs), a term analogous to the NHPA Section 106 Area of Potential Effect (APE). The present analysis in the Final EIS, however, differs from Section 106 to the degree that it (1) considers a wide array of proposed actions that are not undertakings per 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 800.16, and also (2) considers the impact on a wider range of cultural resources than NRHP-eligible or potentially eligible historic properties alone. Importantly, APEs and assessments of effect to historic properties under Section 106 would be addressed when specific undertakings are proposed and known in detail in the future, consistent with an amended 2011 *Programmatic Agreement Among Naval Air Station, Fallon, Nevada, The Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Regarding the Identification, Evaluation and Treatment of Historic Properties on Lands Managed by Naval Air Station, Fallon*. The Navy would continue to consult in order to ensure an amended 2011 PA is updated as applicable for the Tribes.

The Navy has completed cultural resources surveys in B-16, 17, and B-20 where there is a reasonable expectation of direct impact from the placement of targets and in construction areas. Additionally, the Navy conducted cultural resource inventories in potential target areas on B-16 and B-17 to provide some latitude for the placement of targets should there be a conflict between targets and eligible cultural properties. This included surveying “buffer areas” around potential target areas, where vibrational impacts could occur, thus addressing the immediate vibratory indirect impact. The Navy is consulting with Indian Tribes on the identification of any additional known cultural resources and associated potential direct and indirect impacts from the Proposed Action.

The Navy abides by stipulations found within the current 2011 Programmatic Agreement between Nevada SHPO, BLM, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation with respect to withdrawn lands. Currently, existing withdrawn lands are managed under the prescriptions of the 2011 Programmatic Agreement. The Navy is required to consult with the signatories of the 2011 Programmatic Agreement (ACHP, SHPO & BLM) for approval of an amendment which adds the newly withdrawn lands. As part of this action, the Navy proposed to amend the 2011 Programmatic Agreement for consultation and completion by 2021 (when the 2011 Programmatic Agreement expires). This proposed amended 2011 Programmatic Agreement would stipulate requirements for Navy cultural resources management of all Navy-managed lands (withdrawn and purchased). NAS Fallon undertakings within the operational area of NAS Fallon in the State of Nevada will be carried out in accordance with NAS Fallon's Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan. Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources) of the Final EIS was updated regarding the Programmatic Agreement process. If additional surveys are warranted as a part of an amended 2011 Programmatic Agreement, the Navy would determine the level of such surveys in conjunction with Nevada SHPO, BLM, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. Once again, it should be noted that SHPO concurred with the Navy's determination that this APE accounts for potential direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that may result from this undertaking. These concurrences can be found in Appendix B (Agency Correspondence) of the Final EIS.

The Navy will continue to engage with all interested Tribes. This engagement will continue past the ROD, as the modernization would be implemented over the coming years. The Navy will avoid and/or minimize impacts on cultural resources wherever possible and follow Section 106 requirements. The

Navy is committed to providing access to Tribes to the closed ranges and pushing for funding to conduct surveys in range “buffer” areas. The Navy will work with the tribes to prioritize survey areas. The Navy is working with the Nevada SHPO and ACHP to amend the current 2011 PA they are under for withdrawn lands. The Navy would complete Section 106 consultation on impacts due to loss of access for Tribes prior to the fencing of the newly withdrawn and acquired lands after any ultimate Congressional decision.

F.7.3.383 Wicker, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Tom	Wicker	I greatly resent the Navy's attempt to take away more of our public lands. They already have extensive holdings in NV, and also fly through other regions annoying people trying to enjoy some peace and solitude. I, and many people in NV, moved here because of the outdoor recreational activities. I have spent a few days per week hiking, back country skiing, camping, and backpacking for the last 18 years in NV. The Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas are treasures to me. We in NV are very fortunate to have such open spaces to wander, explore, and observe wildlife and natural beauty. But they are under constant attack by individuals and some government entities who want to exclude others and use them for their personal profit or benefit. They are not satisfied using them the same as the rest of us but demand their interests are higher priority. No they are not. LEAVE OUR PUBLIC LANDS ALONE!	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas.

F.7.3.384 Williams, C.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Catherine	Williams	Instead of eliminating 74,400 acres of Wilderness Study Areas as part of their Dixie Valley Training Area, the military should support Wilderness designation for all of the WSAs within, or very close to, this area including; the Clan Alpine Mountain, Job Peak, Stillwater Range, and the Desatoya Mountains WSAs. Wilderness designation will provide a larger and more complete buffer for military actions, allow for continued public access, and be protected in perpetuity. This Wilderness buffer could also include lands with wilderness characteristics that Friends of Nevada Wilderness identified through our inventories (Stillwater additions and South Job Peak).	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. Please note that designating any areas proposed for wilderness as Wilderness is a separate Congressional action outside of the scope of the withdrawal process. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Regarding the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, the Proposed Action would include approximately 2,720 acres of land currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS). The following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the existing

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>The military needs to adjust their boundary proposals in B-20 to exclude the 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The 17,848-acre refuge was established by a Congressional Act in 1931 to "...provide a sanctuary and breeding ground for birds and other wildlife". It should not be part of a bombing area!</p> <p>The military must find a way to allow for more public access in B-17, at least on a seasonal or part-time basis. The military has made some minor allowances for OHV races and bighorn sheep hunting, but access is needed for hiking, photography, rock hounding, and camping? Why should OHVs and the person who happens to draw a bighorn sheep tag get special privileges? This not social justice.</p>	<p>ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes.</p> <p>The Navy cannot allow other recreational uses beyond what is proposed under Alternative 2 and 3 for managed access of OHV races and the Bighorn Sheep hunting program in the B-17 range, as there are too many recreationists and it is difficult to control the number or people that would be allowed on range. Hunters would be issued tags and permits that would only allow a certain number of people to be on the range; these would be issued through the NDOW. The same species that occur in the B-17 range area would also occur in the Dixie Valley area and could be seen there by recreationists. Hunting is a population management tool and is important for the biological processes in the B-17 range. The Navy made it part of the EIS because hunting is part of the mission of NDOW, a cooperating agency of the Navy for the EIS and under the hunting program. The bombing range is not safe for unrestricted numbers of recreationists.</p>

F.7.3.385 Williams, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Reed	Williams	<p>I oppose the expansion of the Fallon Range Training Complex. It will be a substantial new withdrawal of public land from public use, increasing the federal control of Nevada to nearly 8% of our land area and it will cut off many recreational areas and</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record.</p> <p>With regards to recreation, the Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. Closure of OHV use areas as a result of implementing any action alternative is discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Access impacts on cultural and sacred sites are discussed in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources). While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation. Because these adjacent and nearby lands would remain available for general recreational activities, the Navy is not proposing any mitigations.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		access roads used by the public. It will remove several Wilderness Study Area (WSA) designations by a simple Congressional act and it will prevent solar, wind, and geothermal development on many square miles of current public land. It will also lessen the amount of funds coming to the state and to affected counties from permits and taxes pertaining to recreation, hunting, and fishing on public land and finally, it will impact wildlife and its habitat, with particular impacts at Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge	<p>Please note that removing the designation of WSA's or portions of WSAs is a separate Congressional action, however, the Navy would recommend for portions of the WSAs to be de-designated in order to be withdrawn. The proposed de-designation is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces, along with other non-hazardous training activities (e.g., night vision goggle training, low altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). This Proposed Action and expansion does not include the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The USFWS would continue to manage the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd–668ee).</p> <p>The Navy has made allowances for potential energy development in the DVTa that is compatible with the Navy mission. Additionally, under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative), the Navy reduced the amount of withdrawn land in the DVTa by creating the Special Land Management Overlay areas to allow future energy development pending BLM approval.</p> <p>The analysis in Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics) found that lost hunting opportunities could result in a reduction in funding sources for the State of Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW). The Navy worked with a local Nevada scientist to develop the Economic Impact Analysis Report (available at http://frtcmmodernization.com). The report found that hunting-related (touristic) economic losses would be similar in scale for Mineral, Pershing, and Nye counties based on the percentage of lost revenue compared to total economic activity (refer to Supporting Study: Economic Impact Analysis Report [available at http://frtcmmodernization.com], Table B-1). The Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than the bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.</p> <p>The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and to implement wildlife management across the FRTC. Therefore, the financial impact to communities from the loss of hunting in the area would be somewhat offset by this program, however, overall, lost hunting opportunities could result in a reduction in funding sources for NDOW (as discussed in Section 3.13 [Socioeconomics]).</p>

F.7.3.386 Wilson, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Austin	Wilson	As a former employee of the University of Nevada Seismological Lab I know	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record.

To whom it may concern:

As a former employee of the University of Nevada, Reno Seismological Lab, I know that the Lab operates a seismic monitoring station at the site of the old Kaiser Mine, about 15 miles northwest of Gabbs. The Lab also maintains communications and fire camera equipment on Fairview Peak. Seismic monitoring has been going on at the Kaiser Mine site since the 1960's under contracts with the U.S. Geological Survey to study seismicity and earthquake hazard in the Nevada region. In the beginning the site was selected for monitoring partly due to its proximity to the Fairview Peak earthquake fault. This fault is considered to be active and will surely produce earthquakes in the future.

In looking at the map of the areas to be withdrawn under the 3rd Alternative, it appears to me that the Kaiser site would be well within the area to be withdrawn for the extension of B-17. I'm unclear as to what would become of the site if the withdrawal takes place, but it would surely impact the Lab's ability to study earthquakes in the area.

I'm also concerned about the loss of public access to all the historical, archaeological, geological, and recreational opportunities the area provides, as well as the costs of things such as relocating SR361 and the Paiute pipeline.

Hoping that the Navy can come up with a better alternative, such as use of simulators, instead of this huge withdrawal.

F.7.3.386.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. With regards to your inquiry about the Kaiser Mine site, Kaiser Mine is located within the SDZ for B-17. However, while Bravo ranges would be closed to public use (grazing, hunting, mining, solar/wind, utilities/ROWs, off-highway vehicle use, camping/hiking, and special race events would not be allowed), Navy-authorized activities such as ceremonial or cultural site visits, research/academic pursuits, or regulatory or management activities (e.g., BLM, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), or Nevada Department of Wildlife [NDOW] activities) would be allowed with coordination with the Navy.

Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. Certain types of water development, mining, and geothermal development would be allowable in the DVTA. Grazing would also continue to be allowed in the DVTA. Because of public safety concerns, areas defined as WDZs are not compatible with public access, but the Navy is allowing for wildlife management, cultural visits, bighorn sheep hunting, and events that are pre-coordinated with the Navy.

F.7.3.387 Wilson, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Devin	Wilson	I visit Nevada regularly and spend time in the areas affected by this for photography. This would seriously impact my photography and my enjoyment of Nevada's public lands. The No Action Alternative is the only acceptable alternative. Do your bombing elsewhere.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would presumably result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.

F.7.3.388 Wimmer, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Ryan	Wimmer	I am a user of the areas affected by the preferred alternative for the proposed actions to expand the Fallon Range Training Complex. I have spent numerous days and nights traveling throughout this part of Nevada, specifically the areas that lie East of a straight line drawn between Hawthorne, NV and Fallon, NV. For many years I have hunted, hiked, biked, operated OHV's, rock hounded, camped and photographed areas like the Gabbs Valley, Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge, the Sand Springs Range, and Dixie Valley. My passion for these wild and scenic places contributes to the local, state and national economies when I purchase fuel, hunting licenses, food and beverages, and patronize local businesses. I am concerned that at least two critical resources have not been adequately addressed and mitigated appropriately. The proposed action(s) and the preferred alternative fail to account for recreational benefits of public land owners (taxpayers of the United States of America). There is a gross devaluation of our public land system when access is even slightly limited to public use. The present footprint of military-controlled lands in Nevada and other western states places a burden on our citizens who enjoy a land ethic not seen most anywhere else in the world. To expand upon an already-adequate land base is positively unnecessary.	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).</p> <p>Regarding the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, the Proposed Action would include approximately 3,200 acres of land currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge,</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>Numerous Wilderness Study Areas (WSA), so designated by the federal government (Bureau of Land Management) for their unique characteristics, are destined to be destroyed by an expansion of the training complex. I have been privileged to explore hundreds of thousands of acres of public lands around the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak and Stillwater Range WSA's. To withdraw these lands from public use is a downright travesty. I will continue to insist that my elected representatives give full Wilderness designations to these areas so that they be permanently protected from uses other than public benefit.</p> <p>There has been millions upon millions of taxpayer dollars invested into water developments for wildlife conservation throughout most Nevada mountain ranges. Any expansion of the NAS will have a significant adverse impact to wildlife management practices currently in place. The Monte Cristo Mountain range has no less than 15 water developments called "guzzlers" that were created and currently maintained by revenue generated from taxpayers who purchase hunting licenses. These devices are critical to ensure the health and continued existence of all wildlife species within that area. I volunteer my time to promote these types of wildlife conservation practices. I reap the benefit of these guzzlers each hunting season when I travel from far-away places to hunt in Nevada. The Monte Cristo Mountains are just one example of an area that is slated to be neglected should an expansion of the training complex occur. Other affected areas include the East slopes of the Fairview range, the Sinkavata Hills, the Desatoya's, and the Gabbs Valley (and Range), to name a few more.</p> <p>Finally, what should be absolutely unacceptable and I am astonished it was even considered is the proposed withdrawal of public lands from the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. These are lands that were provided as a sanctuary and breeding grounds for wildlife species like migratory waterfowl and other rare, sensitive, threatened or endangered species. The habitat provided by these refuges is limited in total size and deeply fragmented across the country which puts imperiled wildlife at an even greater disadvantage for survival. As a conservationist, these lands are critical for wildlife populations and hunters/recreational users who</p>	<p>14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>With regards to Stillwater National Wildlife refuge, the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is not a part of the proposed expansion area under the Proposed Action. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd-668ee).</p> <p>When speaking about potential impacts to biological species. the following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes. The Navy would allow access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency and would set quotas and distribute permits, and maintain wildlife habitat. The Navy is developing a Memorandum of Agreement with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for the hunting program. Further details are provided in Section 3.12 (Recreation) and Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans) of the Final EIS.</p> <p>With regards to hunting activities, the Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>fund the existence of Refuges through the purchase of Migratory Bird Conservation Stamps.</p> <p>Please reconsider the preferred alternative, as well as all other potential actions that may occur under your effort to expand the training facility at Fallon NAS. Any further expansion of the existing facilities and land base is likely to cause significant adverse impacts to biological resources, recreation values and the economy at all scales.</p>	<p>The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and manage wildlife.</p> <p>Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. Ground training by the Navy would continue to take place on existing roads and trails, with lands remaining open for certain public uses. Allowable public uses in the DVTAs would include hunting, camping, hiking, fishing, OHV use, site visits, and grazing.</p>
Ryan	Wimmer	<p>I am a user of the areas affected by the preferred alternative for the proposed actions to expand the Fallon Range Training Complex. I have spent numerous days and nights traveling throughout this part of Nevada, specifically the areas that lie East of a straight line drawn between Hawthorne, NV and Fallon, NV. For many years I have hunted, hiked, biked, operated OHV's, rock hounded, camped and photographed areas like the Gabbs Valley, Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge, the Sand Springs Range, and Dixie Valley.</p> <p>My passion for these wild and scenic places contributes to the local, state and national economies when I purchase fuel, hunting licenses, food and beverages, and patronize local businesses.</p> <p>I am concerned that at least two critical resources have not been adequately addressed and mitigated appropriately. The proposed action(s) and the preferred alternative fail to account for recreational benefits of public land owners (taxpayers of the United States of America). There is a gross devaluation of our public land system when access is even slightly limited to public use. The present footprint of military-controlled lands in Nevada and other western states places a burden on our citizens who enjoy a land ethic not seen most anywhere else in the world. To expand upon an already-adequate land base is positively unnecessary.</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, and maneuvering by special operations forces (along with other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights). This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation).</p> <p>Regarding the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, the Proposed Action would include approximately 3,200 acres of land currently withdrawn by USFWS as a portion of the 17,848-acre Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Due to the safety concerns associated with being within a WDZ, the Navy proposes to enter into an agreement (MOU) with the USFWS to allow the portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge within B-20 to be closed to all public access, but to continue to be managed as a wildlife refuge (the rest of the refuge,</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>Numerous Wilderness Study Areas (WSA), so designated by the federal government (Bureau of Land Management) for their unique characteristics, are destined to be destroyed by an expansion of the training complex. I have been privileged to explore hundreds of thousands of acres of public lands around the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak and Stillwater Range WSA's. To withdraw these lands from public use is a downright travesty. I will continue to insist that my elected representatives give full Wilderness designations to these areas so that they be permanently protected from uses other than public benefit.</p> <p>There has been millions upon millions of taxpayer dollars invested into water developments for wildlife conservation throughout most Nevada mountain ranges. Any expansion of the NAS will have a significant adverse impact to wildlife management practices currently in place. The Monte Cristo Mountain range has no less than 15 water developments called "guzzlers" that were created and currently maintained by revenue generated from taxpayers who purchase hunting licenses. These devices are critical to ensure the health and continued existence of all wildlife species within that area. I volunteer my time to promote these types of wildlife conservation practices. I reap the benefit of these guzzlers each hunting season when I travel from far-away places to hunt in Nevada. The Monte Cristo Mountains are just one example of an area that is slated to be neglected should an expansion of the training complex occur. Other affected areas include the East slopes of the Fairview range, the Sinkavata Hills, the Desatoya's, and the Gabbs Valley (and Range), to name a few more.</p> <p>Finally, what should be absolutely unacceptable and I am astonished it was even considered is the proposed withdrawal of public lands from the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. These are lands that were provided as a sanctuary and breeding grounds for wildlife species like migratory waterfowl and other rare, sensitive, threatened or endangered species. The habitat provided by these refuges is limited in total size and deeply fragmented across the country which puts imperiled wildlife at an even greater disadvantage for survival. As a conservationist, these lands are critical for wildlife populations and hunters/recreational users who</p>	<p>14,648 acres would remain open to the public and managed by the USFWS).</p> <p>With regards to Stillwater National Wildlife refuge, the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is not a part of the proposed expansion area under the Proposed Action. In addition, the USFWS would need to undertake any public planning required in order to revise the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex Comprehensive Conservation Plan and associated compatibility determinations, consistent with the National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act, as amended (16 United States Code 668dd-668ee).</p> <p>When speaking about potential impacts to biological species. the following specific biological resources mitigations would be implemented under all action alternatives. Any current management practices that are applied to the existing ranges would continue to be implemented and expanded to the withdrawn lands, including minimizing disturbance, controlling invasive species, and restoring native habitats. The current NAS Fallon INRMP would be revised to include management practices for special-status species, grazing, invasive species control, wildland fire, and other stewardship conservation programs. NAS Fallon has prepared a BASH Plan to identify potential areas of concern and to establish procedures to mitigate the threat of bird and other animal strikes.</p> <p>The Navy would allow access to B-17 for an annual bighorn sheep hunt. NDOW would be the managing agency and would set quotas and distribute permits, and maintain wildlife habitat. The Navy is developing a Memorandum of Agreement with NDOW for managed access to B-17 for the hunting program. Further details are provided in Section 3.12 (Recreation) and Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans) of the Final EIS.</p> <p>With regards to hunting activities, the Navy acknowledges the potential loss of hunting opportunities for species other than bighorn sheep and would conduct an annual review to determine if additional hunts may be feasible and compatible with the Navy mission.</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>fund the existence of Refuges through the purchase of Migratory Bird Conservation Stamps.</p> <p>Please reconsider the preferred alternative, as well as all other potential actions that may occur under your effort to expand the training facility at Fallon NAS. Any further expansion of the existing facilities and land base is likely to cause significant adverse impacts to biological resources, recreation values and the economy at all scales.</p>	<p>The Navy would continue to coordinate with NDOW for access to maintain guzzlers on Bravo ranges and manage wildlife.</p> <p>Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. Ground training by the Navy would continue to take place on existing roads and trails, with lands remaining open for certain public uses. Allowable public uses in the DVTA would include hunting, camping, hiking, fishing, OHV use, site visits, and grazing.</p>

F.7.3.389 Winkleman, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Delynn	Winkleman	<p>I can understand upgrading infrastructure, living/meeting facilities, communications, etc. BUT DONT LAND GRAB! Like the average VOTER, we have to make do with what we have.....or, at minimum, add a room or two by building UP. How much more property do you need since everything today is miniaturized, on line and overall less bulk?</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p>

F.7.3.390 Winn, D. J.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Dr. James	Winn	The Navy does not need this expansion. We already have a military commitment and budget that is bloated in the extreme, cannot stand up to audit, and is, in general, a shame and an embarrassment. Giving them yet more public land is against sense or sensibility.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command. Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.

F.7.3.391 Wolfe, T.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Terri	Wolfe	Dear Involved Decision Makers, We live in Lake Tahoe, NV. We live there to enjoy the peace and serenity of Northern Nevada and all that the area provides. It is currently disruptive to people and wildlife to have the Fallon Test Center in the area but we moved here with it in existence so that is our responsibility. However, any substantial growth in size or activity will impinge further on the disruption to open space enjoyment and the overall environment in which we live. Please do not increase the size or activity to preserve the enjoyment of Northern Nevada. Thank you, Terri Wolfe 573 Rockrose Ct., Incline Village, NV.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. The Navy acknowledges the concerns regarding potential closures of some recreational areas and analyzes potential impacts in Section 3.12 (Recreation). Closure of existing recreational areas would result in the public shifting their recreational activities to other areas. Alternative 3 (the Preferred Alternative) would grant limited public access to the extent compatible with mission training requirements and public safety. While recreational activities such as running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, and sightseeing would not be allowed in the Bravo ranges, these activities could continue to occur in the DVTA and surrounding areas. The recreational setting (i.e., wildlife species, terrain) in surrounding areas is the same or similar to that of the Bravo ranges and these areas would remain fully available for public use and recreation.

F.7.3.392 Wolther, M.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Mary	Wolther	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. What is the real necessity to bomb our own country?? How is this wiping keep us safe?? Stop this policy of bombing our own country. It destroys our heritage and our legacy for some fly boys to have fun. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.393 Worley, D.

First	Last	Comment	Response
David	Worley	I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion support desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. I both work and recreate in the proposed expansion areas, including hiking Fairview Peak and camping in the Clan Alpines. Other Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class	Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. To clarify, air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities would occur. The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any

First	Last	Comment	Response
		treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station.	additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and other members of the public recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

F.7.3.394 Yancy, R.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Richard	Yancey	See the attached file for my comments. MS Word version uploaded in case PDF version did not go through.	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.
Richard	Yancey	See the attached file for my comments.	Thank you for participating in the NEPA process. Please see the Navy's responses to your comments that were attached.

13 February, 2019

Naval Facilities Engineering Command Southwest
Code EV21.SG
1220 Pacific Highway, Building 1, 5th Floor
San Diego, CA 92132-5190
ATTN: Ms. Sara Goodwin, EIS Project Manager

Copies: <http://www.FRTCModernization.com>, John Ellison, Alexis Hansen, Robin Titus, Ira Hansen, Pete Goicoechea, Mark Amodei

RE: Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization, Draft Environmental Impact Statement - comments

Dear Ms. Goodwin:

I have several concerns about the expansion of Naval Air Station Fallon and the Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) Modernization.

To provide a bit of background about myself, I grew up in a military family and spent a number of years living on bases as a dependent. Although I never entered military service myself, I have always been a strong supporter of the United States military. In addition, I am a geologist and have worked in the mineral resource industry for over 30 years. I have a broad understanding of the mining industry and an informal background in other natural resource industries, including ranching and farming. I have lived in Nevada since 2004 and am an avid outdoor recreationalist in the state's deserts and mountains. I respectfully submit the following comments related to the FRTC Modernization, Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS):

A significant number of the United States' strategic and critical minerals are now provided entirely or mainly by foreign sources. This is an increasingly complex and serious issue, from both an economic and national security perspective. Nevada generates approximately 14% of domestically produced minerals. I am very concerned about the proposed alternatives in the DEIS and their impact on Nevada's rural economy, specifically, significant negative impacts to minerals exploration and the mining industry.

- Approximately 86% of Nevada's lands are controlled or managed by agencies of the federal government – more than 61 million acres. This is the highest percentage of any of the 50 states. Much of this federal land,

millions of acres, already prohibits multiple-use activities, such as the exploration and development of locatable minerals, salable minerals, oil and gas, and geothermal energy. The DEIS preferred alternative would increase the number of federal acres in Nevada and withdraw more than 600,000 acres from locatable mineral exploration and development, in addition to hundreds of thousands of acres withdrawn from geothermal energy development, salable minerals, grazing allotments, recreational activities and other uses. This is a major concern and the impact of this massive withdrawal to local rural communities, the state of Nevada and the nation has been grossly understated in the DEIS.

- Nevada has a significant mineral endowment and is the nation's second largest minerals producer in terms of economic value. Mining operations in Nevada produce over 70% of the gold mined in the USA and significant amounts of silver, copper, lithium, vanadium, molybdenum, magnesium, barite, perlite, diatomaceous earth, plus other metals and industrial minerals. For several of these commodities, Nevada has the only domestic production, and all are critical to the United States' economy and the military-industrial complex. The impact of 600,000 acres withdrawn from the highly prospective areas near NAS Fallon, as proposed in the DEIS, are much more significant than the Navy's analysis would indicate. The review of this mineral potential in the DEIS is dated and entirely inadequate for locatable minerals, salable minerals and geothermal resources.
- The DEIS fails to consider the National Materials and Minerals Policy, Research and Development Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-479). The lack of consideration of this important piece of legislation represents a significant shortfall of the DEIS and needs to be addressed.
- The large expansion of the B-20 bombing range includes the acquisition of private lands and withdrawal of thousands of acres of land from all non-military activities. In addition to the significant cost of purchasing private lands, there would be impacts to known mineral deposits and active exploration projects in this area. The potential use of eminent domain to acquire private lands is a grave concern. The entire expansion in B-20 appears ill conceived, with little consideration to the overall impacts to future mineral development, costs to tax payers for private land acquisition, impact to Pershing and Churchill County tax revenues (with the loss of taxable real property) and the loss of grazing acreage on both private and BLM lands. This aspect of the DEIS should be seriously reconsidered and the B-20 expansion removed from the FRTC Modernization plan.
- The massive expansion of the Dixie Valley Training Area (DVTA) is unacceptable. While there are explanations why other existing training areas located elsewhere in the nation would not fulfill the requirements of the Navy, these explanations fall short when the impacts of this land withdrawal are considered. Dixie Valley is one of the highest potential geothermal energy areas in the world. Impacting this long term,

sustainable, clean energy resource is not acceptable, even when considering the DEIS's limited accommodation of geothermal activities for DVTA. In addition, locatable minerals would not be allowed in this area, which has significant exploration potential and a number of existing mineral claims.

- The relocation of State Route 839 and the Paiute Pipeline for the expansion of the B-17 bombing area is ill conceived and a rather onerous use of tax payers funds. Further considerable study should be conducted to find a less costly, workable solution for this area that does not include moving this infrastructure. Frankly, it is wasteful. In addition, the expansion of B-17 impacts highly prospective mineral areas, with a large number of existing mineral claims and currently active exploration programs underway.

Unfortunately, the No Action Alternative is the only option I can endorse at this point. Having been involved with multiple projects during my career, many of which included Environmental Assessments (EA), Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) and a variety of other studies, I find the Navy's DEIS for the FRTC Modernization to fall short on a number of major issues. In addition, I agree with the conclusion of the Nevada Mining Association (NvMA) that there is a serious lack of mitigation to private parties and state and local governments for the current and future economic losses incurred by restrictions to exploration and mining. The DEIS, in its present form, grossly understates the environmental, social and economic impacts to local rural communities and the State of Nevada.

Furthermore, the cost-benefit analysis and socio-economic tradeoffs of purchasing additional lands, relocating a highway and a pipeline, the significant loss of high potential mineral exploration areas, geothermal energy production areas, grazing lands and access to outdoor recreational opportunities are flawed. In its current form, the DEIS does not adequately address a number of significant impacts and the expansion plan appears to be faulty in concept. At a minimum, the DEIS needs major revision. While I understand the Navy is intent on developing a world class training facility, and I support this effort, there needs to be a balance to this plan that more adequately addresses other activities that have social, environmental, economic and national security significance.

Thank you for your consideration.

Richard Yancey
Geologist
Registered Member, Society of Mining, Metallurgy and Exploration (SME)

F.7.3.394.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. In accordance with Navy policy, mining is not compatible within a surface danger zone of an operational range. The Navy would continue to follow existing operating procedures that prohibit the collection of materials from any mining area and prohibit entry to mine shafts and mines. Navy training activities would not impact mining activities outside of the proposed withdrawal boundaries. Therefore, there is the potential for a loss of access to salable and locatable minerals and mines in the land requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition. As discussed in Section 3.3 (Mining and Mineral Resources), Federal land withdrawn from mineral entry would no longer be open to new mining claims, and the lands would be prohibited from future mineral exploration and development. Implementation of any of the action alternatives would result in potential significant impacts on exploration and development of locatable, leasable, and salable mineral resources. Additionally, the Final EIS includes a greater level of detail in regard to the process for valuating mining claims that could be impacted by the Proposed Action and includes details on mines impacted due to an impact to access routes.

With regards to reference or use of policy, the National Materials and Minerals Policy, Research and Development Act of 1980 (Public Law 96-479) is much the same as EO 13817 in terms of being a statement of policy, rather than an enforcement of particular regulation. Also, similarly to the EO, 30 U.S.C. 1601 does not establish any formal requirement to refrain from taking certain actions that might tend to reduce the availability of or access to such materials. This law and the EO have been added to the list of regulations considered in the analysis for this EIS.

With regards to alternatives to range and training area placement, Chapter 2 (Section 2.5.3, Alternate Training Locations) of the EIS discusses various alternatives the Navy considered, including those suggested by the public. The EIS provides screening criteria in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors) and rationale for not carrying specific alternatives forward for further analysis. The Navy has added tables applicable to each resource section discussing suggestions that were considered and reasoning by the Navy for classifying each suggestion as “eliminated” “existing,” “incorporated,” or “under consideration.” If the suggestion was “incorporated” the Navy did not define this as a true mitigation, but rather included it as part of the Proposed Action itself.

Under Alternative 3, repositioning the B-17 and DVTA withdrawal area would potentially allow greater access to areas located west of the B-17 expansion area 3 for mining and geothermal opportunities; however, the socioeconomic impacts would likely be very similar to impacts under Alternative 1. In addition, State Route 839 would not potentially need to be rerouted, which would maintain access to locations off of the existing route (e.g., the Denton-Rawhide mine) as they are currently. Potential losses associated with currently unknown mining and geothermal opportunities as defined under Alternative 1 would be less under Alternative 3 because geothermal opportunities would be allowed in DVTA. However, significant impacts could still occur under Alternative 3 due to such potential lost mining and geothermal opportunities in the expanded B-16, B-17, and B-20. Therefore, while reasonably foreseeable economic impacts associated with lost mining and geothermal opportunities cannot be accurately determined at this time, there is the potential that significant economic impacts could occur due to the potential loss of mining and geothermal opportunities all Alternatives. The Navy has made allowances for potential energy development in the DVTA that is compatible with the Navy mission. Additionally, under Alternative 3 (Preferred Alternative), the Navy reduced the amount of withdrawn

land in the DVTA by creating the Special Land Management Overlay areas to allow future energy development pending BLM approval. Section 3.2.3.4.4, discusses the Special Land Management Overlay and states that these two areas would remain open to public access and would be available for all appropriate uses, including mining for locatable and leasable mineral resources. However, prior to issuing any ultimate decisions on projects, permits, leases, studies, and other land uses within the Special Land Management Overlay, BLM would be required to consult with NAS Fallon. This consultation would inform the Navy of proposed projects, permits, leases, studies, and other land uses and afford the Navy an opportunity to collaborate with BLM to preserve the training environment.

F.7.3.395 Young, A.

First	Last	Comment	Response
Adam	Young	<p>As a native Nevada who grew up exploring the beautiful basins and ranges in and around Fallon, Dixie Valley, and the Stillwater Range. I, like most young boys, enjoyed watching the aerial shows the Navy performed in their routine training missions. The highly skilled fighter pilots, precisely timed exploding ordinances, and the tactical land missions practiced by Navy special operations units have become part of the landscape. I acknowledge that the area provides top quality training grounds for our nation's finest men and women. I do not have a problem with expanded requests for use of airspace. I also do not have a problem with the renewing of usage permits on existing range. However, I strongly oppose the proposed acquisition of wilderness study areas. I understand the need to expand the range to meet the needs of modern military training requirements, but I do not think that acquiring large chunks of the Stillwater Range are necessary for the operations conducted at Fallon NAS. These mountains are beautiful and pristine wilderness. Please consider, in the least, omitting wilderness study areas from the proposed expansion.</p> <p>I am very concerned about the Fallon Range Training Complex proposed expansion and the closure of 427,000 acres of public lands in Nevada. The Navy's preferred alternative would eliminate portions of three of Nevada's finest and most beautiful wilderness study areas and portions of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge and threaten important cultural, historic and scenic values. In addition, the tremendous reach of the military would fence off vast expanses of popular public outdoor recreation lands and turn them into bombing ranges.</p> <p>While I understand the Navy's need to modernize its training facility, the preferred plan is a tremendous overreach and must be scaled back.</p> <p>Together, the landscapes targeted by the military's expansion make up an ecologically rich and vast complex of public lands for wildlife, outdoor recreation and are important for rural economies. The expansion would permanently preclude wilderness designations, shut off public access, and significantly harm wildlife habitat. I urge you to reject the military's current plan. The military needs to come back with a measured proposal that protects national defense while preserving the resources we value in Nevada.</p> <p>Thank you -Adam Young</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. Under the Proposed Action, Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the following WSAs: Stillwater Range WSA (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]), Jobs Peak WSA (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]). The BLM would continue managing the remaining WSA portions of Clan Alpine WSA, Job Peak WSA, and Stillwater Range WSAs as WSAs. While proposed for de-designation by Congress, all of the areas, Stillwater Range, Stillwater Marshes, Clan Alpines, and Sand Springs Range, would remain open for recreation under Alternative 3 (the Navy's Preferred Alternative). Additionally, if the public is recreating in the area, the Navy would seek an alternate location to train until the area used by the public is available, as is currently done in the existing DVTA.</p>

F.7.3.396 Zotter, J.

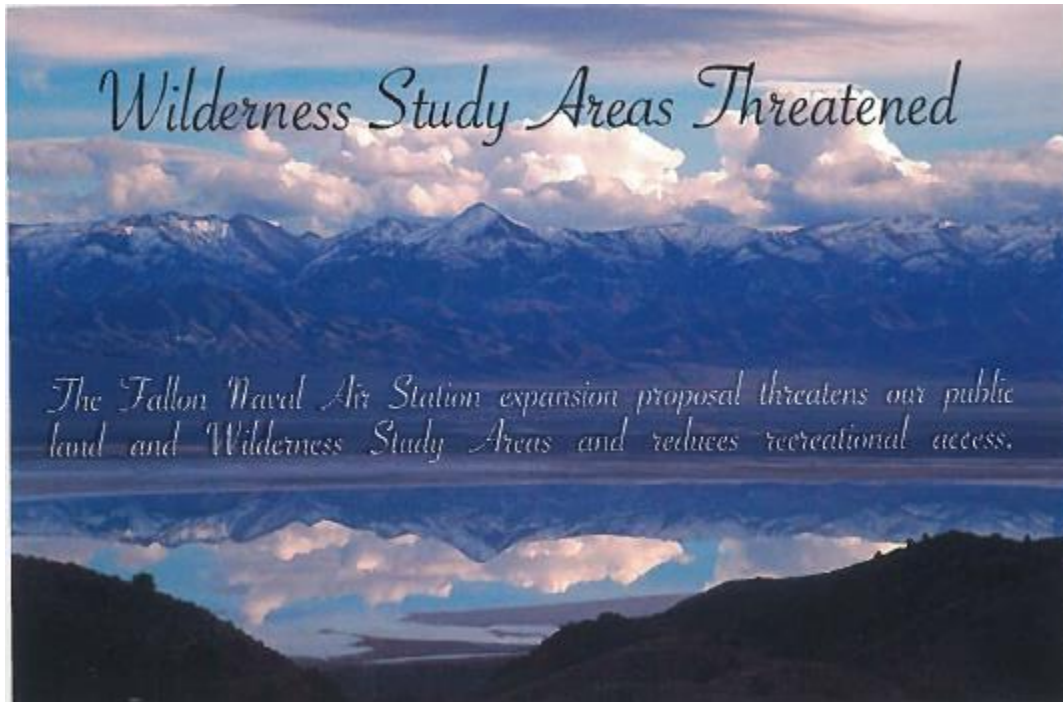
First	Last	Comment	Response
Julianne	Zotter	<p>I understand that weapons and tactics are constantly evolving and the Navy must adapt with them. But does the Navy need to increase its footprint by 400%? This seems like a ludicrous amount to request. I understand the need for expansion but the Proposed Action is beyond reasonable. I trust that the Navy has the resources and wherewithal to reallocate its existing facilities to better suit their needs. Why not expand at a more realistic growth rate? Or expand to the other facilities listed in the alternatives section. Perhaps sharing the expansion among multiple facilities in order to spread out the impact. Breaking down the needs into sections may help organize the needs of the base. If China Lake, for example, could absorb the Electronic Warfare training, Dynamic Targeting, operations, Combat Search and</p>	<p>Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. As discussed in Section 1.4 (Purpose of and Need for the Proposed Action), the overarching purpose of any military force is to be able to successfully conduct combat operations in support of national policy and security objectives. To accomplish this purpose, the military force must train regularly and with sufficient realism. The purpose of the Proposed Action, therefore, is to provide sustainable and modernized airspace, ranges, maneuver areas, training facilities, and range infrastructure and resources. This will support acceptably realistic air warfare training activities as well as special operation ground training activities in order to meet emergent and future threats. These activities are prescribed by NAWDC, and other Naval Warfare authorities, such as the Naval Special Warfare Command.</p> <p>Current range configurations do not support realistic training as identified in Ninety Days to Combat. The Proposed Action is needed because the existing FRTC bombing ranges (B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20) have not changed substantially in size or configuration since the 1990s. As new weapons systems are developed and introduced to the Fleet, and tactics are updated to successfully employ these weapons systems, training requirements also change. Changes to training requirements can, in turn, drive the need to expand or modify training ranges. At the FRTC, new weapons systems have been introduced to the Fleet in recent years (e.g., Joint Direct Attack Munitions) and new systems, including new aircraft (e.g., F-35C, EA-18G), will need to be employed in future training activities.</p> <p>The Navy identified and considered a number of potential alternatives in addition to those described Chapter 2 (Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives) as the action alternatives, including training elsewhere. Input from the public was considered and helped the Navy develop the alternatives carried forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. The alternatives that were considered but not carried forward for detailed analysis in the EIS, and the reason they were not carried forward, are described in Section 2.5 (Alternatives Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis). The alternatives that were not carried forward did not meet the purpose of or need for the project, were determined not to be practical or feasible from a technical and economic standpoint, or would not satisfy the alternative screening factors presented in Section 2.2 (Screening Factors).</p> <p>Naval Air Weapons Station (NAWS) China Lake, in the Mojave Desert near Ridgecrest, California, is the Navy's largest single land range. NAWS China Lake is not presently equipped or configured to support the kind of realistic and integrated training conducted at the FRTC, as its mission is to support Naval Air Systems Command programs by performing research, development, test, and evaluation; logistics; and in-service support for guided missiles, free-fall weapons, targets, support equipment, crew systems, and electronic warfare. NAWS China Lake would not be able to accommodate FRTC training along with its current activities. Converting this range to accommodate such training would not be technically or economically feasible, in light of the extensive difficulties that would be entailed in such a conversion and</p>

First	Last	Comment	Response
		<p>Rescue, Naval Special Warfare, and other training activities, and say Nellis could absorb the need for wide bombing ranges, the Fallon Range would only need to expand by 10-20%. This would be more reasonable use of lands already allocated to naval training. We can't turn ALL of Nevada into a test site. Let's be reasonable here.</p> <p>Thank you for considering my comments and please remember that while Nevada seems very deserted, there are many plants, animals, and humans who love it here. And we want to continue to enjoy our wonderful state.</p>	<p>the tremendous expense that would be involved. The proposed expansion of the FRTC does not require such an extensive "conversion," as the majority of the lands proposed for expansion are for safety purposes. The change in infrastructure on the FRTC is minimal in comparison to the infrastructure already in place and which would continue to be used.</p> <p>Moreover, even if the Navy were to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts that would severely impact tempo requirements, and would cause existing training at NAWS China Lake to be displaced elsewhere or perhaps ultimately cancelled, despite being itself of critical importance to national security. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p> <p>The Nellis Air Force Base Range Complex includes the Nevada Test and Training Range, which is the largest contiguous air and ground space in the United States. Similar to NAWS China Lake, the Nevada Test and Training Range is primarily a testing range and lacks many of the Navy-specific training system capabilities necessary for realistic integrated Navy training, including special warfare training.</p> <p>While developing training systems is possible at the Nevada Test and Training Range, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Air Force-sponsored training use up nearly all of the complex's available training time. Without terminating the Air Force's existing testing and training activities, the range as currently configured would not be able to support the tempo and level of Navy training, or the scheduling priorities required by the Optimized Fleet Response Plan. Converting this range to accommodate Navy training would be technically feasible but not economically feasible. Even if the Navy were hypothetically able to undertake such a conversion, doing so would not eliminate the scheduling conflicts. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in this EIS. This alternative would not meet the realistic training environment and tempo screening factors.</p>

F.8 Form Letters

The Navy received postcards and a form letter via the project website that are shown in this section. The individuals that submitted the postcard or form letter are listed below the depiction of the comments. The Navy response to these submittals can be found below the list of commenters. Commenters are listed alphabetically by first name.

F.8.1 Postcard



Dear Naval Air Station Fallon:

We oppose the proposal to eliminate portions of the Job Peak, Stillwater Range and Clan Alpine Mountains Wilderness Study Areas and excessive closure of access to our public lands.

The following individuals submitted the postcard above, and the Navy response below applies to all comments submitted:

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| • Adam Whatley | • Amanda R. Chascsa | • Annika Odeen |
| • Aimee LeMay | • Amber Bruce | • Anthony Jensen |
| • Albert Brown Jr. | • Amelia Pease | • Aratella Rammon |
| • Alec Latuszek | • Amy Wendt | • Art Lane |
| • Alejandra Griswold | • Anderson Hansen | • Ben Frost |
| • Alex Smith | • Andrea L. Bartunek | • Benjamin Serpa |
| • Alexander Elmerdorf | • Andrew Campbell | • Blake Christiana |
| • Alexander Morgan | • Andrew Hervey | • Bob Tregilus |
| • Allison Morris | • Andrew McCain II | • Brandon Ward |
| • Amanda Nichalson | • Annie Baker | • Bret Hall |

- Brian Beffort
- Brian Fisher
- Brian Wilkerson
- Brianna O'Sullivan
- Brittney Osborn
- Bruce Lumbert
- Carlos Murales
- Carol Duffy
- Carol T. Gadda
- Caron Tayloe
- Cassie Skipper
- Cat Piercy
- Catherine Jensen
- Catherine Schmidt
- Catherine Schmidt
- Charlotte Cox
- Chelsea Saul
- Chip Carroon
- Chris Crotto
- Chris King
- Chris Nichols
- Chris Rosamond
- Christine Cendagorta
- Christopher D. Helton
- Christopher Loyd
- Chuck Thomas
- Claire Carlson
- Clark Watkins
- Clifford Thorson
- Colin Chupik
- Collin Kolodziej
- Conner Egan
- Constance Howard
- Cortney Hulse
- Cynthia Walck
- Daniel McCoy
- Daniel Montero
- Danyelle Rothgeb
- David Gray
- David Jaeger
- Dayton Miller
- Deanna Peters
- Deborah Enos
- Deborah Stevenson
- Dedee Lock
- Delaine Fragnoli
- Delana Pennington
- Diane Ciminero
- Diane Ronslieimer
- Dillon Smith
- Douglas Quinton
- Drake Williams
- Dylan Lusk
- Eithne Barton
- Elaine Andersen
- Elizabeth Loudon
- Emily Erickson
- Eoluardo Medina Rios
- Erik Williams
- Frank Enos
- Galen Stevens
- Garret Sluder
- Gennie Alderson
- George Wendt
- Glenn Barbosa
- Gordon Milldrum
- Greg Beddoes
- Gunnar Moore
- Hadley
- Hanna Piper
- Harry Stokes
- Hayley Meadows
- Heather Kerwin
- Helene Bardinet
- Holly Spahr
- Hope Loudon
- Ingrid Blowers
- Izak Helming
- Jack Sorensen
- Jackson Lantz
- Jacob Abell
- Jacqueline Utter
- Jake Dick
- James Mills
- James Morlok
- James Piercy
- Jana Dunn
- Jana Vanderhaar
- Jane Milldrum
- Janet Carter
- Janice Brown-Silveira
- Janis Knight
- Jason Campau
- Jeff Loch
- Jeff Rocke
- Jennifer Derr
- Jerri Williams
- Jessica Brown
- Jill Ransum
- Joan Pokroy
- Joanna Kardys-Stone
- Jody Dallas
- John Beach
- John Burkavage
- John Hervey
- John Higgins
- John Kiraly
- John M. Matyas
- Jonathan Payne
- Jonathan Pease
- Joseph L. Cendagorta
- Joy Grimsley
- Jude Damm
- Jules Miller
- Julia Butler
- Julia Shotwell
- Julie Dodge
- K. Gearhart
- Kallie Winners
- Karen Boeger
- Karen Hutchins
- Karen Long
- Karinn Kelley-Bateman
- Katherine Cassilagio
- Katherine Christenser
- Kathleen Rodrigues
- Kelly Cassidy
- Ken and Ciny Todd

- Keri Brynan
- Kirk Hastings
- Kristen Millard
- Kurstin Graham
- Kurt Kuznicki
- Kyle Mathison
- Kyle Peltier
- Kyndale Pease
- Kyra Renard
- L. Guado
- Larry Fenwell
- Lauren Walkling
- Liberty Daly
- Lindsey Dukles
- Lisa Kucera
- Logan Dyers
- Lois Snedden
- Lori Bellis
- Lorraine Burke
- Lurana Cancilla
- Lynn Vind
- M. F. Burge
- M.A. Ronald
- Mallory Harris
- Maria Duran
- Mark Vollmer
- Marilyn Scholl
- Marsha Jamison
- Martha Campbell
- Martha O'Niell
- Mary Brooks
- Mary Walker
- Matthew Jackson
- Max McGraw
- Meg Lent
- Meghan Collins
- Melanie Scott
- Melisa Nunn
- Mercedes Burkavage
- Merrily Engelmann
- Michael Dodge
- Michael Okimoto
- Michael Wilkin
- Michelle Haas
- Mike Garcia
- Mike Lavelly
- Mike Matyas
- Monica Palmer
- Nancy Stokes
- Natasha Glendinning
- Nathan Zeltzer
- Nathanael Kuhue
- Nesha Zglinski
- Nick Deitch
- Nicki Hallbrook
- Nicole Paiva
- Nicole Valentine
- Nila Shanley
- Olivia Mooring
- Olivia Piccirilli-Platt
- P. Mousset-Jones
- Pamela McAdoo
- Park Arnold
- Patrick Lock
- Patrika Devereux
- Paula Townsend
- Randy McNatt
- Randy McNatt
- Raymond Lopez
- Rhianna Sansom
- Rhonda Jarrett
- Richard Lampson
- Rick Martin
- Rob Krystoback
- Robbin Palmer
- Robbin Palmer
- Robert Harvey
- Robin Dooun
- Roger Scholl
- Roger Vind
- Ronald Moe
- Roxanna Brooks
- Ruby McElroy
- Russell Reinhart
- Ryan Strauss
- Salvatore Monforte
- Samantha Szachara
- Sandra Beckett
- Sarah Metder
- Scott Catron
- Scott Robert Hudson
- Shane Fyer
- Shanna Strauss
- Shannon Gallimore
- Shannon Higgins
- Sharon Wilcox
- Shawna M. Ramsey
- Sheila Rammon
- Shellie Fisher
- Shevawn Von Tobel
- Sranne Bernard
- Stacey Clark
- Stephanie Crotto
- Stephen Alastuey
- Stephen Alastuey
- Sue Jacox
- Sue Jacox
- Susan Lisasgor
- Susan Wyman
- Suzana Bledsoe
- Taimur Khan
- Tanner Egan
- Taylor Chapman
- Theodore Preston
- Theresa Shrolroy
- Thomas Burke
- Thomas Fusso
- Thomas Gray
- Thomas Wicker
- Tim McFarren
- Timothy Healson
- Todd Echan
- Tori Walters
- Valerie Cohen
- Victor Henney Jr.
- Victoria Stoner
- Wendy Johnson
- Will Boyer
- William Bowers
- William Holford
- William Neidinger
- Zachary Coffman

F.8.1.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. While the Navy generally views Wilderness Study Areas as compatible with aviation training when the designation accommodates low-level military overflights, such designation does not allow any ground use by the military regardless of type. The proposed de-designation of portions of Wilderness Study Areas is necessary to meet certain training requirements, such as installing stationary and mobile electronic threat emitters, landing helicopters, maneuvering by special operations forces, and other non-hazardous training activities, such as night vision goggle training and low-altitude flights. This type of training within Wilderness Study Areas is not currently permitted and any de-designation would require Congressional action, as discussed in Section 3.12 (Recreation). It is important to note that this de-designation would not prohibit the use of these areas by recreationists. Additionally, if the public is recreating in the area, the Navy would seek an alternate location to train until the area being used is available, as is currently done in the existing DVTA.

F.8.2 Website Letter

The website letter that was submitted multiple times, is written as follows,

"I'm opposed to the expansion of Fallon Naval Air Station, and I encourage you to adopt a "status quo" position in your final environmental impact statement — keeping operations as they are today with no expansion into nearby public or private lands. The Great Basin is the wild heart of Nevada. And the areas proposed for expansion are full of desert bighorn sheep, greater sage grouse and other species of concern. Nevadans and visitors alike go to these lands for hiking, wildlife watching, other forms of outdoor recreation and for spiritual renewal. Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a world-class treasure, and it's an important stopover for hundreds of species of migratory birds. Turning these important places into bombing ranges and increasing military operations would dramatically change the Great Basin landscape. The bombs would directly kill birds and animals and destroy their habitat. The increased air traffic would disturb other wildlife, particularly greater sage grouse and migratory birds at Stillwater. And the public experience would also be ruined, as certain lands would be damaged or permanently closed to visitation. Please — keep base operations at status quo and don't expand the Fallon Naval Air Station."

The following individuals submitted the form letter above, and the Navy response below applies to all comments submitted:

- | | | |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| • A.L. McDonald | • Alison Osment | • Andrea Brodtkin |
| • Aaron Macy | • Alyce Callison | • Andrea Corwin |
| • Abby Bernhardt | • Alyson Miller | • Andrea Floyd |
| • Adam Bradley | • Ama Tran | • Andrea Sreiber |
| • Adam Konruff | • Amy Hile | • Andreanna Mozulay |
| • ADRIENNE HALL | • Amy Huang | • Angel Liu |
| • Ahmahd Thomas | • Amy McLaughlin | • Angela Gulliver |
| • Alana Hendrickson | • Amy Pennington | • Angeline Zalben |
| • Alex Rappaport | • Amy Sanders | • Anne Wolfenbarger |
| • Alisa Garrison | • Andre Griffin | • Anne-Marie Boyce |

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| • Annie DeLong | • Cary Farr | • Debra Gagliano |
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F.8.2.1 Response

Thank you for your participation in the NEPA process. Your comment is part of the official project record. To clarify, military air traffic would not increase as a result of the Proposed Action, as the Navy is not proposing to increase activities, but rather to increase the size of the ranges over which activities

would occur. The Navy included the “status quo” alternative as an “Alternative Considered but Not Carried Forward for Detailed Analysis” in Section 2.5.1 (Continue Training at the Fallon Range Training Complex in the Current Configuration). This alternative would renew the existing FRTC land withdrawals as currently configured. The Navy would not withdraw or acquire any additional land, and there would be no changes to existing restricted airspace at the FRTC. In their comments during the scoping period, Churchill County, Eureka County, Nevada Association of Counties, and individuals recommended that the Navy consider this alternative in this EIS. The Navy considered this alternative but did not carry it forward for detailed analysis in the EIS. It would not meet the purpose of and need for the project, nor would it satisfy the realistic training environment and safety screening factors.

Potential impacts on wildlife species, including bighorn sheep and greater sage grouse, as well as their habitat were analyzed by qualified wildlife biologists and are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), specifically Sections 3.10.3.3 (Alternative 1), 3.10.3.4 (Alternative 2), and 3.10.3.5 (Alternative 3) of the Final EIS. Populations of species are distributed throughout current FRTC boundaries. Based on species distribution data, historical coexistence with training activities, and the analysis presented in the Final EIS, populations would not be significantly impacted by proposed training activities. While the analysis indicates a less than significant impact, the Final EIS has been updated to include a discussion of potential impacts on individuals of a species.

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