
3.12 Recreation

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the 1999 Congressional land withdrawal of 201,933 acres from public domain (Public Law 106-65) would expire on November 5, 2021, and military training activities requiring the use of these public lands would cease. Expiration of the land withdrawal would terminate the Navy's authority to use nearly all of the Fallon Range Training Complex's (FRTC's) bombing ranges, affecting nearly 62 percent of the land area currently available for military aviation and ground training activities in the FRTC.

Alternative 1 – Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex

Under Alternative 1, the Navy would request Congressional renewal of the 1999 Public Land Withdrawal of 202,864 acres, which is scheduled to expire in November 2021. The Navy would request that Congress withdraw and reserve for military use approximately 618,727 acres of additional Federal land and acquire approximately 65,157 acres of non-federal land. Range infrastructure would be constructed to support modernization, including new target areas, and expand and reconfigured existing Special Use Airspace (SUA) to accommodate the expanded bombing ranges. Implementation of Alternative 1 would potentially require the reroute of State Route 839 and the relocation of a portion of the Paiute Pipeline. Public access to B-16, B-17, and B-20 would be restricted for security and to safeguard against potential hazards associated with military activities. The Navy would not allow mining or geothermal development within the proposed bombing ranges or the Dixie Valley Training Area (DVTA). Under Alternative 1, the Navy would use the modernized FRTC to conduct aviation and ground training of the same general types and at the same tempos as analyzed in Alternative 2 of the *2015 Military Readiness Activities at Fallon Range Training Complex, Nevada, Final Environmental Impact Statement* (EIS). The Navy is not proposing to increase the number of training activities under this or any of the alternatives in this EIS.

Alternative 2 – Modernization of Fallon Range Training Complex with Managed Access

Alternative 2 would have the same withdrawals, acquisitions, and SUA changes as proposed in Alternative 1. Alternative 2 would continue to allow certain public uses within specified areas of B-16, B-17, and B-20 (ceremonial, cultural, or academic research visits, land management activities) when the ranges are not operational and compatible with military training activities (typically weekends, holidays, and when closed for maintenance). Alternative 2 would also continue to allow grazing, hunting, off-highway vehicle (OHV) usage, camping, hiking, site and ceremonial visits, and large event off-road races at the DVTA. Additionally under Alternative 2, hunting would be conditionally allowed on designated portions of B-17, and geothermal and salable mineral exploration would be conditionally allowed on the DVTA. Large event off-road races would be allowable on all ranges subject to coordination with the Navy and compatible with military training activities.

Alternative 3 – Bravo-17 Shift and Managed Access (Preferred Alternative)

Alternative 3 differs from Alternative 1 and 2 with respect to the orientation, size, and location of B-16, B-17, B-20 and the DVTA, and is similar to Alternative 2 in terms of managed access. Alternative 3 places the proposed B-17 farther to the southeast and rotates it slightly counter-clockwise. In conjunction with shifting B-17 in this manner, the expanded range would leave State Route 839 in its current configuration along the western boundary of B-17 and would expand eastward across State Route 361 potentially requiring the reroute of State Route 361. The Navy proposes designation of the area south of U.S. Route 50 as a Special Land Management Overlay rather than proposing it for withdrawal as the DVTA. This Special Land Management Overlay would define two areas, one east and one west of the existing B-17 range. These two areas, which are currently public lands under the jurisdiction of BLM, would not be withdrawn by the Navy and would not directly be used for land-based military training or managed by the Navy.

Environmental Impact Statement

Fallon Range Training Complex Modernization

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3.12 Recreation

The public engages in a variety of recreational activities within the region of influence. For purposes of this section, “recreational activities” refers to outdoor activities such as hunting, fishing, hiking, popular racing events, camping, wildlife viewing, rock/fossil collecting, horseback riding, operating off-highway vehicles (OHVs), sightseeing, and visiting historic sites. The term “Recreation Area” includes federal, state, or local designated parks, playgrounds, recreation management areas, and wildlife refuges as well as other discernable areas where the public regularly recreates.

3.12.1 Methodology

This analysis focuses on the implementation of the Proposed Action and the potential for significant impacts on recreation. In addition, this analysis focuses on potential impacts on recreation arising from movement of training activities, changes to public access to withdrawn or acquired land, and construction. Recreation is an interdisciplinary issue, and its aspects intertwine with other environmental topics. Section 3.2 (Land Use) considers the impacts on use of lands with the implementation of the Proposed Action. Section 3.5 (Transportation) discusses impacts on transportation on the ground, including paved roads, trails, and public transit such as trains. Section 3.7 (Noise) addresses human impacts and community noise levels resulting from training noise. The impacts of airspace activities in Special Use Airspace (SUA) on biological recreation resources such as mule deer, bighorn sheep, and pronghorn antelope are discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources). Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) are also discussed in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources). Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics) addresses the financial impacts of the Proposed Action in the surrounding areas. Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety and Protection of Children) addresses impacts of the Proposed Action on public health and safety as a result of the implementation of the Proposed Action.

3.12.1.1 Region of Influence

The region of influence for recreation includes the land requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition and land underlying SUA as well as any nearby recreation area that the alternatives could directly or indirectly affect. This includes all areas below existing and proposed Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) SUA. The region of influence includes land managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) (including WSAs), United States (U.S.) Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), U.S. Forest Service, and Bureau of Reclamation, as well as private and Indian Tribal lands.

The U.S. Department of the Navy (Navy) currently allows public recreation on small areas of the Bravo (B)-19 range. There are no changes proposed for the requested land withdrawal, training activities, public access, or construction on B-19. Therefore, B-19 is not discussed further and would be maintained as discussed in the 2015 *Military Readiness Activities at Fallon Range Training Complex, Nevada Final Environmental Impact Statement* (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015).

3.12.1.2 Regulatory Framework

State and local ordinances and zoning regulations govern recreation on non-federal lands, which the landowners usually conduct at their discretion. Federal land management agencies oversee recreation on federal lands within the region of influence, in accordance with the following rules and regulations as applicable:

- Federal Land Policy Management Act (43 United States Code [U.S.C.] section 1701 et seq.)
- National Wildlife Refuge System Administrative Act (16 U.S.C. sections 668dd–668ee)

- National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act (Public Law 105-57)
- Wilderness Act (16 U.S.C. section 1131 et seq.)
- National Trail Systems Act (16 U.S.C. section 1241 et seq.)
- Land and Water Conservation Fund Act (54 U.S.C. section 200301 et seq.)
- Military reservation and facilities - hunting, fishing and trapping (10 U.S.C. section 2671)
- Migratory Bird Treaty Act (16 U.S.C. sections 703–712)
- Nevada Revised Statutes (NRS) 501 Administration and Enforcement (Title 45 Wildlife)
- NRS 502 Wildlife: Licenses, Tags and Permits
- NRS 503 Hunting, Fishing and Trapping; Miscellaneous Protective Measures
- NRS 504 Management and Propagation
- NRS 505 Fur Dealers
- NRS 506 Wildlife Violator Compact

The following instruction and manual provide additional guidance and recommendations for flying over noise-sensitive areas, such as public recreation areas, and were used in identifying potential land use incompatibilities:

- Chief of Naval Operations Instruction (OPNAVINST) 3710.7v, *Naval Air Training and Operating Procedures Standardization Program, and Commander, Naval Air Force (CNAF) Manual 3710.7* (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2016)
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Aeronautical Information Manual (Federal Aviation Administration, 2017)

3.12.1.3 Approach to Analysis

The Navy analyzed impacts on recreation from the implementation of the Proposed Alternatives to public recreational activities and designated recreation areas. The following factors help determine whether impacts on recreation would be significant:

- Whether the action would cause a long-term, permanent, or substantial impairment to a recreational activity that plays an important or vital role within the local or regional community, as identified during public scoping.
- Whether the action would be inconsistent with applicable federal, state, or local recreation regulations and recreation plans.
- Whether the action would stop (or prevent) the public from accessing federal, state, or locally designated recreational areas, rendering these areas unusable or effectively unusable for recreational purposes.
- Whether potential noise or safety zones would be incompatible with existing recreational activities or recreation areas as suggested by Navy policy.

These factors help determine significance but are not thresholds for significance. For example, inconsistency with state or local plans by itself would not automatically result in a significant impact (Federal Aviation Administration, 2015). Rather, the Navy analyzes impacts on recreation resources in the context of these factors.

A review of available literature and public scoping comments submitted on this Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) identified recreational activities and recreation areas within the region of influence. The Navy also worked with affected land management agencies to identify existing and proposed recreational activities and recreation areas on federal lands. The Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) provided the Navy with detailed information regarding game species within the region of influence (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a). The Navy has also prepared noise modeling (see Supporting Study: Noise Study, available at <https://frtcmodernization.com>) and transportation studies (see Supporting Study: Transportation/Traffic Study for the Fallon Range Training Complex, available at <https://frtcmodernization.com>), which pertain directly to the analysis of impacts on public recreation.

3.12.1.4 Public Concerns

One of the public's primary concerns was that the requested land withdrawal and proposed land acquisition would result in a loss of access to federal and non-federal lands currently used for recreational activities. Public comments received during public scoping and the public comment period on the Draft EIS for recreation were largely concerned with potential impacts on OHV activities, races (e.g., the Vegas to Reno, the Valley Off Road Racing Association, Fallon Night Vision 250, the High Desert Classic Endurance Ride, and other popular racing events), hunting of large- (e.g., mule deer, bighorn sheep, and pronghorn antelope) and small-game (e.g., chukar partridge), general aviation, gliders, and other recreation activities (e.g., hiking, camping, and rockhounding). Many public comments were received regarding the potential loss of OHV routes around B-17 and Gabbs, as well as a perceived loss of access to the Berlin Ichthyosaur State Park due to the potential change in routing of a portion of State Route 361. Other commenters, such as the Blue Ribbon Coalition, expressed concerns about access to and maintenance of trails such as the Pony Express National Historic Trail. The Wilderness Society expressed concerns about impacts that the Proposed Action could have on hunting and proposed recreation areas, particularly around B-16 and B-17 (with regard to WSAs).

The Office of the Governor of Nevada listed concerns about closing public access to the Sand Springs Range, Fairview Peak, Slate Mountain, Bell Flat, and the Monte Cristo Range as well as to portions of Simpson Road and State Route 839. Churchill County expressed the same concerns as the Governor's Office, along with concern for closure or restricted public access to Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, East County Road, Pole Line Road (including the West Humboldt Range), Sand Canyon Road (including the Dead Camel Mountains), and local roads (including areas in B-17 such as Slate Mountain and Monte Cristo Range). A private owner also expressed concern for the loss of Wedell Hot Springs, which is located on approximately 80 acres of land within the area requested for withdrawal and proposed for acquisition that would make up B-17 under Alternative 3.

For further information regarding comments received during the public scoping and commenting process, please refer to Appendix E (Public Participation) and Appendix F (Public Comments and Responses).

3.12.2 Affected Environment

This section describes recreational activities within the region of influence. This section provides an overview of recreation within the State of Nevada, which includes additional information on OHV use, hunting, trapping, and fishing within the region of influence, prior to identifying particular recreational activities and recreation areas within the lands requested for withdrawal and proposed for acquisition.

Nevada is one of the largest states (in area) in the U.S., but it ranks 32nd in population (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2011; World Population Review, 2019). The vast expanses of undeveloped public lands within the region of influence support a variety of outdoor recreational activities for Nevada residents and visitors (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2011). A recent study by the Congressional Research Service estimated that five federal land agencies administer 79.6 percent of Nevada land (55,928,507 acres of 70,246,320 acres) (see Section 3.2, Land Use) (Vincent et al., 2017). Nevada is also the driest and most mountainous state in the United States, offering unique areas for recreation (Nevada Division of State Parks, 2016).

3.12.2.1 Off-Highway Vehicles

All OHV operators must comply with Nevada laws and regulations when operating on public lands. Generally, public land managers may designate areas as open, limited, or closed to OHV use. Open areas are areas where the operator has freedom to travel on or off-road. Limited or restricted areas are areas where OHV use may be restricted in some manner. Closed areas are areas that typically do not permit or allow OHV use. Pursuant to 43 Code of Federal Regulations part 420.2, “Reclamation lands are closed to off-road vehicle use, except for an area or trail specifically opened to use of off-road vehicles in accordance with section 420.21.” For BLM lands, “The operation of off-road vehicles is permitted on those areas and trails designated as open to off-road vehicle use,” pursuant to 43 Code of Federal Regulations subpart 8341 section 8341.1a. OHV use restrictions vary on USFWS lands from area to area.

Within the FRTC, the Navy only allows OHVs in areas that are jointly managed by the BLM (e.g., the Dixie Valley Training Area [DVTA]) (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2014a). Although BLM public lands are largely open for OHV use in the region of influence, the BLM Carson City District wrote a *Draft Resource Management Plan* that proposes limits on OHV use. Alternative E of the Draft Resource Management Plan would limit OHV use on most of the land within the region’s existing routes. As discussed in greater detail of the *Carson City District Draft Resource Management Plan*, Section 5.0 (Cumulative Impacts), the BLM proposed to open (i.e., un-restrict) OHV use in the proposed Sand Mountain and proposed Dead Camel Mountains Special Recreation Management Areas, as well as on a playa north of the DVTA, with smaller areas closed to motorized travel near Sand Mountain (Bureau of Land Management, 2014). This proposal was in response to several comments during public scoping for the *Draft Resource Management Plan* discussed the need for designated trail systems in this area (Bureau of Land Management, 2012).

3.12.2.2 Hunting, Trapping, and Fishing

Hunting in Nevada includes hunting for big-game wildlife (e.g., bighorn sheep and pronghorn), waterfowl, small-game wildlife (e.g., desert cottontail), upland game birds (e.g., chukar partridge), furbearers (e.g., beaver, mink, otter), and unprotected species (e.g., raccoons, black-tailed jackrabbits). The NDOW regulates and administers hunting, trapping, and fishing in Nevada. The distribution of

Off-highway vehicles include off-road vehicles, all-terrain vehicles, utility terrain vehicles (also known as “side by side” or recreation off-highway vehicles), off-highway motorcycles, rock crawlers, and off-road motorcycles as well as mountain bikes.

Off-road vehicles are a type of vehicle that can be driven on or off paved roads. Off-road vehicles include four-by-four vehicles, such as trucks, jeeps, and sport utility vehicles.

All-terrain vehicles are a subset of off-road vehicles and include a wide variety of vehicles that can be driven on and off road but are not typically street legal.

Utility terrain vehicles are similar to all-terrain vehicles but are typically larger.

wildlife populations may vary annually depending on season, precipitation, vegetation growth, and other factors. Big game hunting is generally limited to the period from 30 minutes before sunrise to sunset, and typically occurs in the fall (August through December) (Commissioner Report 15-09, Amendment 2). A hunting license is required for anyone over the age of 12 to hunt game birds and mammals. Hunters may hunt coyote (*Canis latrans*), black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*), and other unprotected species without a hunting license, but if trapping these species, a trapping license is required. A trapping license is also required to trap certain furbearing animals (e.g., beaver, mink, otter, bobcat, and certain fox species).

Big game species within the region of influence include mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) (Figure 3.12-1), desert bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*) (Figure 3.12-2), pronghorn antelope (*Antilocapra americana*) (Figure 3.12-3), and elk (*Cervus canadensis*).

Big-game hunting seasons vary by species, hunting unit, and weapon. Based on species populations and habitat conditions, NDOW sets the number of tags issued annually. For the State of Nevada, the 10-year average (2007–2017) by species for hunting tags issued and species harvested is shown in Table 3.12-1.

Table 3.12-1: Nevada 10-Year Average (2007–2017) by Species of Hunting Tags Issued and Species Harvested

Species	Hunting Tags Issued	Species Harvested
Mule Deer	19,133	7,945
Bighorn Sheep	260	232
Pronghorn	3,612	2,294

Source: (Cox et al., 2017)

The number of deer tags issued decreased in the 1990s but has remained relatively stable since then. Desert bighorn sheep tags were relatively static from the mid-1980s until the late 2000s, when they had an increasing trend. The State of Nevada had a high of 334 desert bighorn sheep tags in 2017. Meanwhile, pronghorn tags have gradually increased since at least the mid-1980s. In 2017, 16,069 hunting tags were issued for deer and 7,300 were harvested; 4,463 hunting tags were issued for pronghorn and 3,302 were harvested; 334 hunting tags were issued for bighorn sheep and 302 were harvested (Cox et al., 2017).

The NDOW Migratory Bird Harvest Information Program requires that any person who plans to hunt migratory birds obtain a Harvest Information Program validation number prior to entering the field. Popular upland game bird species in Nevada include chukar partridge (*Alectoris chukar*), California quail (*Callipepla californica*), Gambel's quail (*Callipepla gambelii*), ruffed grouse (*Bonasa umbellus*), blue grouse (*Dendragapus obscurus*), the Himalayan snowcock (*Tetraogallus himalayensis*), and several species of dove (Columbidae) (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017b). Hunters may also hunt waterfowl (e.g., ducks, geese) within the region of influence (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017b). Nevada is home to over 200 lakes and 600 streams and rivers (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017c). Popular fishing destinations within the region of influence include the Lahontan Reservoir, west of B-16; Liberty Pond, north of Naval Air Station (NAS) Fallon; and the Humboldt River, near Lovelock (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017c). The majority of the waterbodies within the lands requested for withdrawal and proposed for acquisition are ephemeral washes. Popular fishing species in Nevada vary depending on geography but may include several species of cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii*). As with hunting, a license is required to fish in Nevada if you are over the age of 12 (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2014).

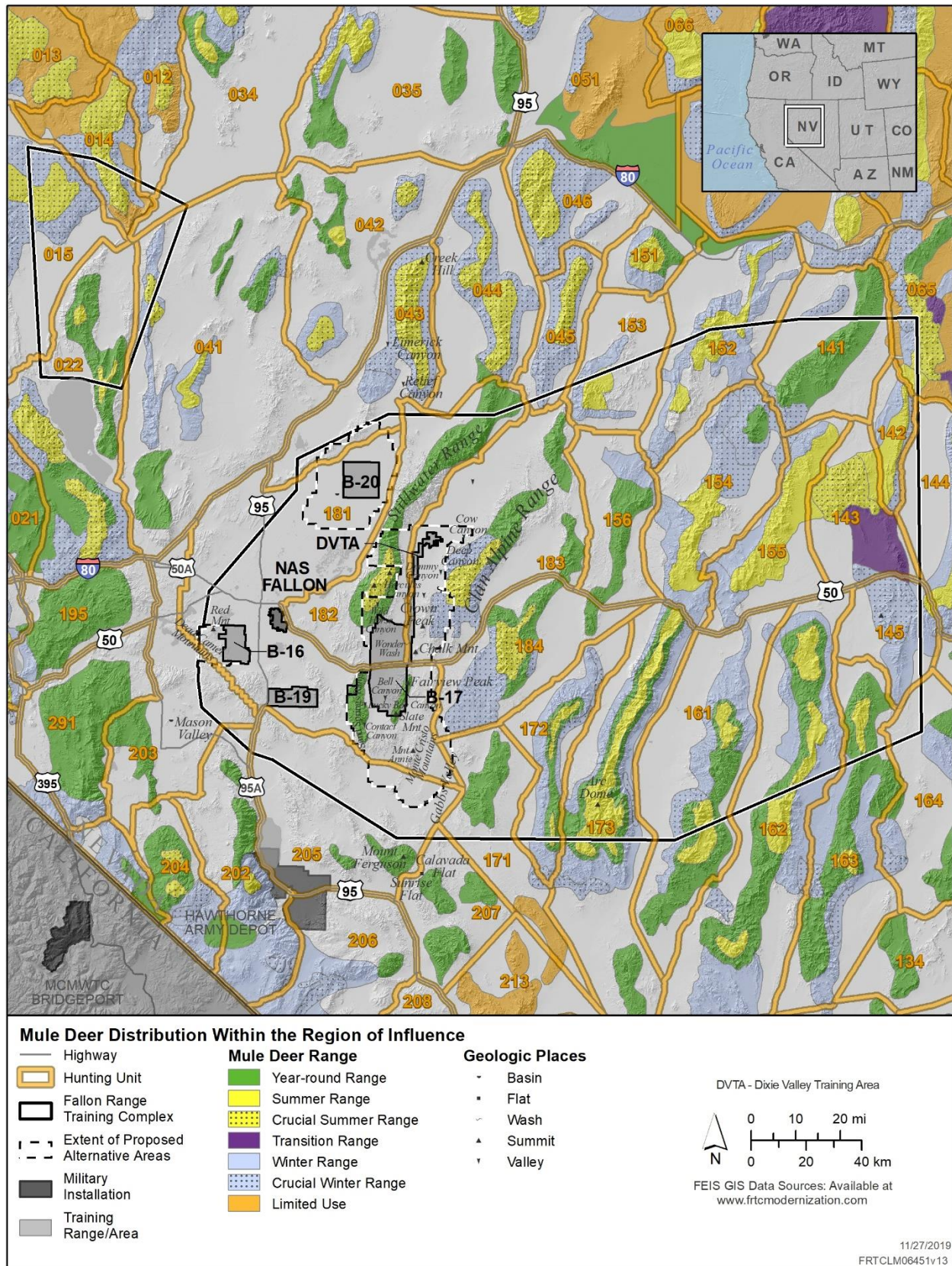


Figure 3.12-1: Mule Deer Distribution within the Region of Influence

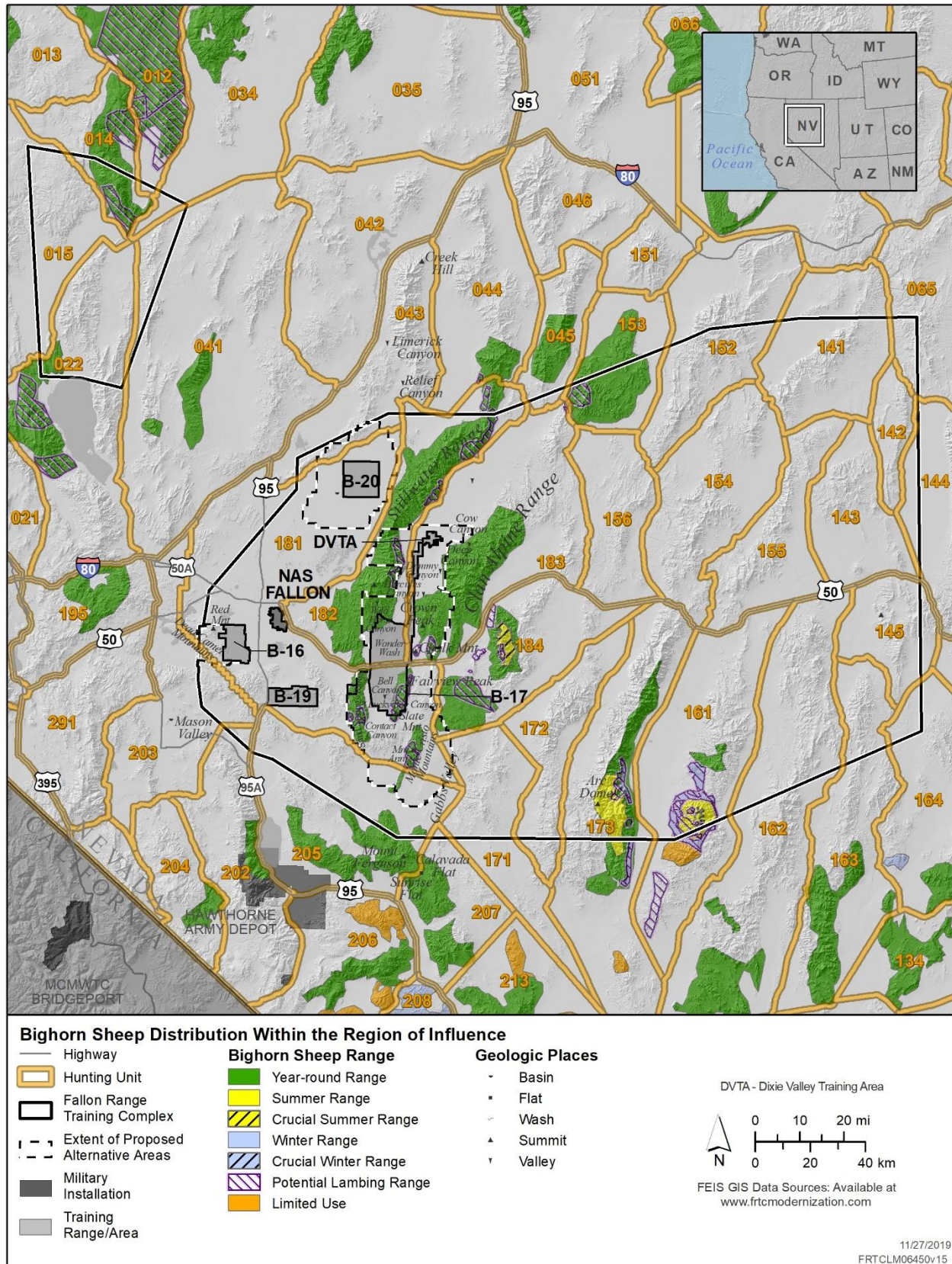


Figure 3.12-2: Bighorn Sheep Distribution within the Region of Influence

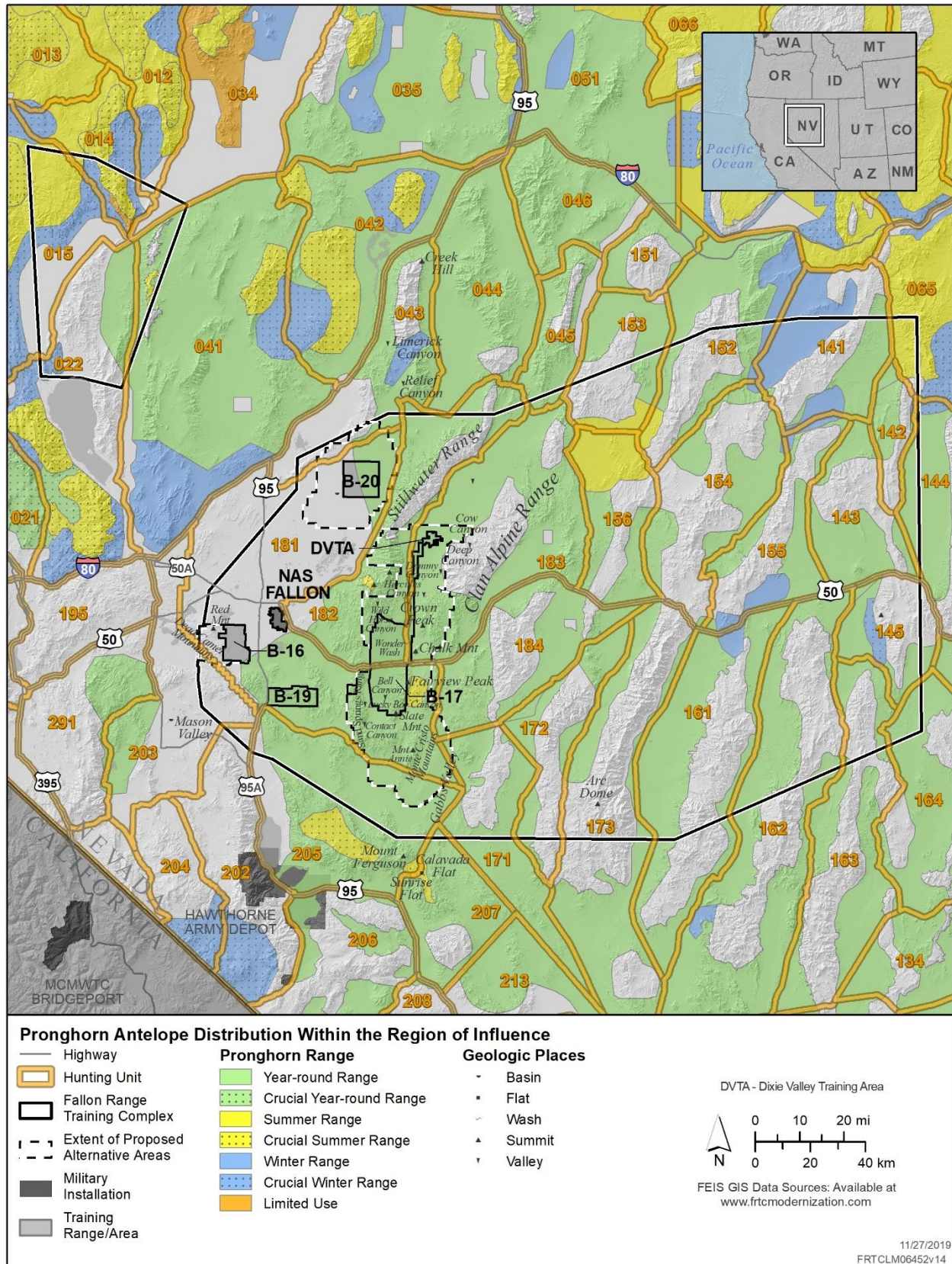


Figure 3.12-3: Pronghorn Antelope Distribution within the Region of Influence

3.12.2.3 Other Recreation Resources

Recreation resources other than those discussed previously include designated recreation areas (e.g., WSAs), notable recreation resources (e.g., off-road races), mining districts, target shooting areas, and trail use (e.g., running, hiking, horseback riding, rock collection, fossil hunting, swimming in hot springs, and sightseeing). Notable “other” recreation resources that are discussed in this section include the Raptor Off-Road Community Festival, the Pony Express National Historic Trail, the American Discovery Trail network, the tarantula migration, Fairview Peak, Fallon National Wildlife Refuge, Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge, Stillwater Range WSA, the High Desert Classic Endurance Ride, the Stillwater Mountains Range, ghost towns, the Clan Alpine Mountains WSA, Job Peak WSA, Sand Mountain Recreation Area, Stillwater Range WSA, the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest and campgrounds such as Groves Lake, Kingston Canyon, San Juan Canyon, Big Creek Canyon, Bob Scott Campground and others. The Navy discusses impacts on geologic sites in Section 3.1 (Geological Resources), impacts on water in Section 3.9 (Water Resources), impacts on biologic sites in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), and impacts on cultural sites and areas in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources).

3.12.2.4 Bravo-16

The existing B-16 is located southwest of NAS Fallon and west of U.S. Route 95 near the border of Churchill and Lyon Counties. Navy safety policy prohibits the public from engaging in recreational activities on active bombing ranges. The land requested for withdrawal is composed largely of BLM-administered land and Bureau of Reclamation land.

3.12.2.4.1 Off-Highway Vehicles

The majority of the existing B-16 is closed to the public; however, currently, the northern portion of B-16, approximately 4,576 acres, is open to the public and provides access to areas north and west of B-16. Bureau of Reclamation lands are closed to off-road vehicle use.

Public land around B-16 is currently undesignated relative to OHV use, which means that this land is managed as open areas with unrestricted vehicle use (Bureau of Land Management, 2014).

BLM-administered lands west of B-16 and along the southern border of B-16 are popular destinations for OHV use (Figure 3.12-4 and Figure 3.12-5). These lands are primarily used for motorcycle races, rock crawling, and casual use due to their close proximity and easy access from the city of Fallon. Portions of the General Tire “Vegas to Reno” Race are located south of B-16. At approximately 550 miles, this race is the longest off-road race in the United States. This annual, televised event occurs in August and is the flagship event for the Best in the Desert Racing Association (Best in the Desert Racing Association, 2017a). Over 330 race teams participated in this race in 2017 (Best in the Desert Racing Association, 2017b).

The Navy conducted OHV counts near B-16 on land requested for withdrawal. The OHV data collection took counts from 11 locations on roads and trails on the land requested for withdrawal near B-16, over the course of two seasons (August 2017 to January 2018). The maximum count for all locations on the land requested for withdrawal was 165 on Saturday, October 14, 2017 (this date coincides with the start of upland species hunting season in Nevada). Overall, the count data was sporadic with counts of zero on multiple days during the count period at most locations (see Supporting Study: Transportation/Traffic Study for the Fallon Range Training Complex, available at <https://frtcmodernization.com>, for details).

3.12.2.4.2 Hunting, Trapping, and Fishing

B-16 is located within NDOW Hunting Unit 181. Pronghorn antelope are the only big-game species with habitat within B-16 (see Figure 3.12-3); however, there is mule deer habitat north and east of B-16 within Hunting Unit 181 (see Figure 3.12-1). For mule deer and pronghorn hunts, Hunting Unit 181 is typically managed collectively with Hunting Units 182, 183, and 184. The pronghorn population within these units has steadily increased since 2003. The NDOW estimated this population to be around 660 pronghorn in 2017 (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a). The NDOW estimated a herd size of approximately 1,230 mule deer in 2017 for Hunting Units 181 through 184, which is a slight decrease from prior years (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a). Hunting Unit 203 is south and west of B-16. Big-game species within Hunting Unit 203 are not known to occur within the region of influence. Mule deer may be found within agricultural and riparian areas within this hunting unit, and may occasionally be found in the adjacent mountains; however, these areas are outside of the region of influence (Figure 3.12-1). Small game hunting and trapping may occur within the region of influence, particularly for chukar, partridge, and upland bird species. The Lahontan Reservoir, which is a popular destination for fishing, hunting (in designated areas) and other water-related recreational activities, is west of B-16 in Lyon County. Although this area is outside of the region of influence, the public is known to use the dirt and primitive roads around B-16 to access this area.

3.12.2.4.3 Other Recreation Resources

Although the public uses the open areas of B-16 for a variety of recreational activities, there are no designated recreation areas or notable recreation resources within the existing B-16 or in the lands requested for withdrawal and proposed for acquisition. The BLM is currently proposing to create a recreation area for OHVs west of B-16 in the lands requested for withdrawal and proposed for acquisition, called Dead Camel Mountain, in order to protect recreation opportunities, values, and experiences, while promoting regional economic development (Figure 3.12-4 and Figure 3.12-5) (Bureau of Land Management, 2014). In addition, events like the Raptor Off-Road Community Festival have occurred in this area. Additional recreational activities around B-16 include trail running, hiking, and horseback riding as well as rock collecting and fossil hunting. The Salt Caves are located west of B-16 (see Figure 3.12-4). The caves contain rock art and are discussed further in Section 3.11.2.3.3 (Traditional Cultural Properties and Tribal Resources). The caves are accessed currently via Sand Canyon road and other OHV trails in the lands requested for withdrawal and proposed for acquisition.

Within the region of influence, the Pony Express National Historic Trail is located south of B-16 (Figure 3.12-4 and Figure 3.12-5). This trail is historic and traverses eight states from Missouri to California. A number of recreational activities exist along the approximately 1,800-mile long trail, including sightseeing, hiking, biking, and horseback riding. An annual trail ride along the Pony Express National Historic Trail takes place in June. The National Park Service manages the trail. Since the trail traverses land owned by multiple public and private entities, the landowner or land manager has the ability to limit recreational activities on the trail. Portions of the Pony Express National Historic Trail are also part of the American Discovery Trail, a coast-to-coast hiking trail that is currently not part of the National Trails System and therefore is not federally managed. The American Discovery Trail is a nationwide non-profit organization that administers the affairs of the American Discovery Trail network and coordinates the efforts of many local trail organizations. The Navy discusses impacts on geologic sites in Section 3.1 (Geological Resources), impacts on water in Section 3.9 (Water Resources), impacts on biologic sites in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), and impacts on cultural sites and areas in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources).

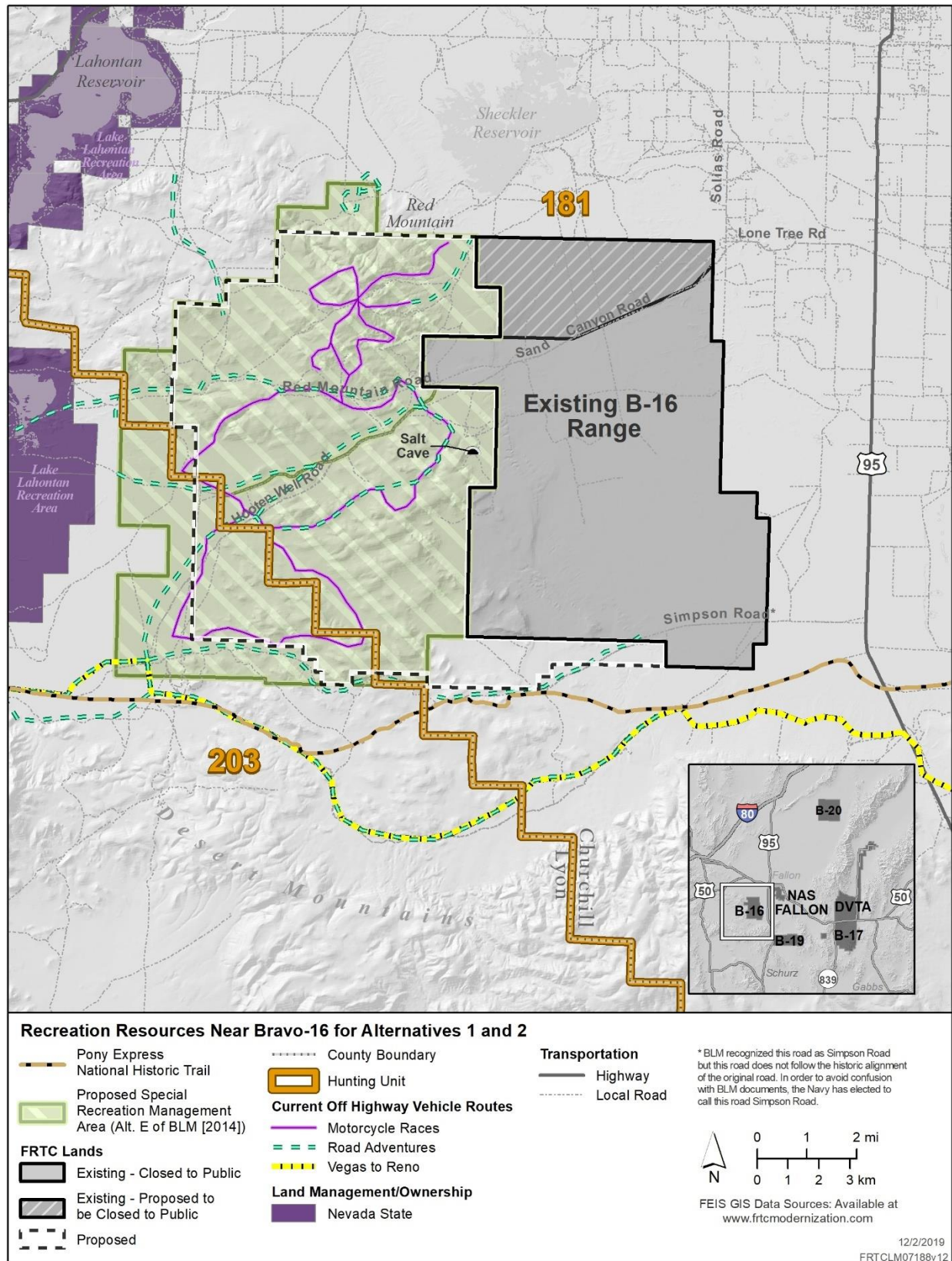


Figure 3.12-4: Recreation Resources Near Bravo-16 for Alternatives 1 and 2

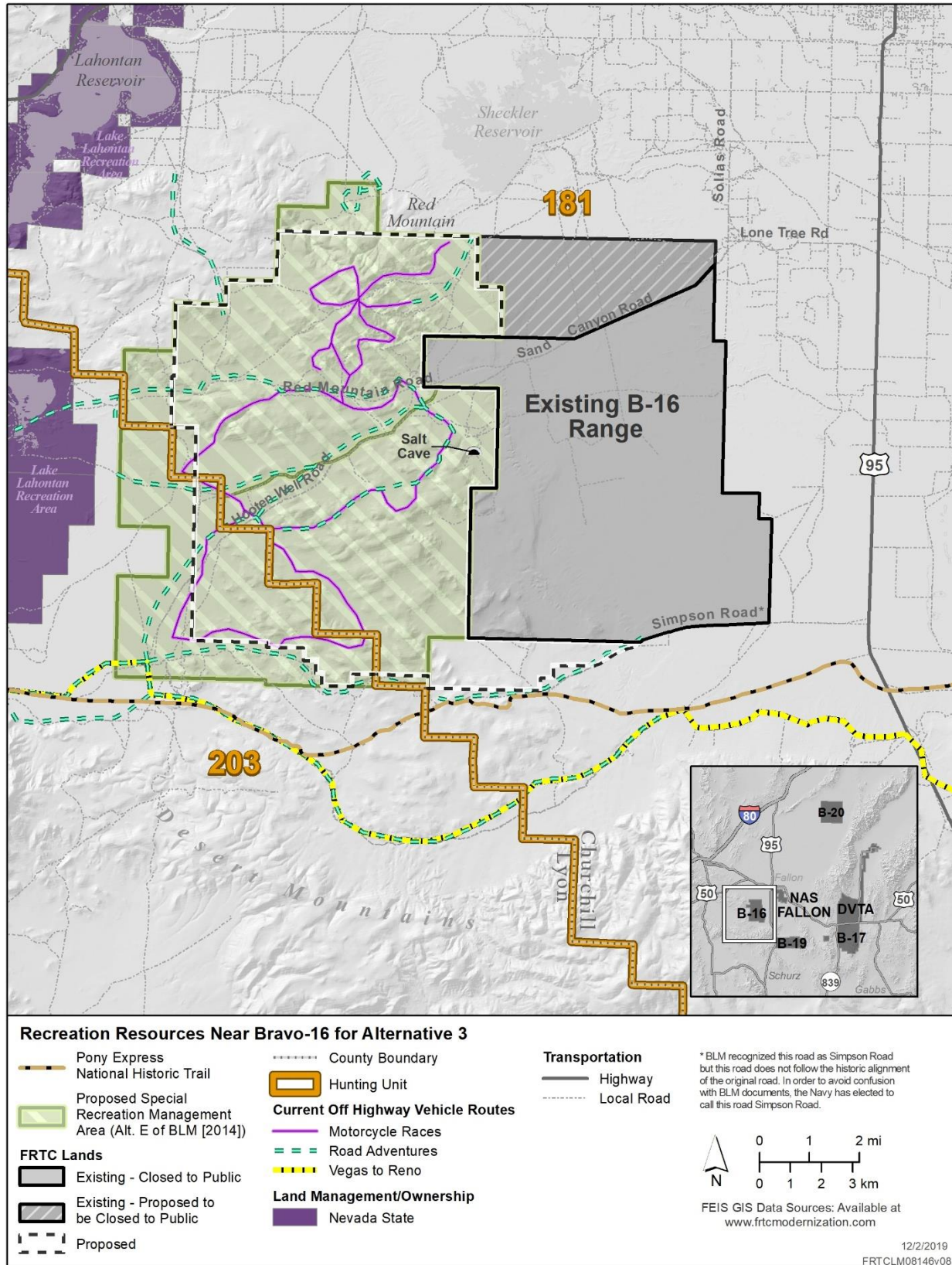


Figure 3.12-5: Recreation Resources Near Bravo-16 for Alternative 3

3.12.2.5 Bravo-17

B-17 is located east of NAS Fallon and south of U.S. Route 50. The area around B-17 is composed primarily of BLM-administered land with a few private parcels. B-17 is wholly located within Churchill County. Mineral and Nye Counties are south of B-17, and the Walker River Indian Reservation is southwest of B-17.

Navy safety policy prohibits the public from engaging in recreational activities on active bombing ranges. Except for an annual bighorn sheep hunt, which occurs when the range is inactive, the public is not allowed to access B-17 for recreation (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015).

3.12.2.5.1 Off-Highway Vehicles

The public is prohibited from using OHVs within the boundaries of B-17 for purposes of recreation. The public is known to use OHVs on BLM-administered land around B-17, including land requested for withdrawal particularly near the community of Middlegate.

Federal land around B-17 is currently undesignated, which means that this land is managed as open area with unrestricted vehicle use (Bureau of Land Management, 2014). Several popular racing events regularly occur south and west of B-17, including the Vegas to Reno Race, which is described in Section 3.12.2.4.1 (Off-Highway Vehicles), and the Valley Off Road Racing Association Night Vision Fallon 250 (as shown in Figure 3.12-6 and Figure 3.12-7). Both of these races use routes south of B-17 in Gabbs Valley. The Valley Off Road Racing Association Night Vision Fallon 250 is an annual 225-mile desert race that typically occurs in September (Valley Off Road Racing LLC, n.d.). This race, which is west of B-17, also overlaps with the open portions of B-19 and the Navy's Shoal Site.

The Navy conducted OHV counts near B-17 on land requested for withdrawal between August 2017 and January 2018. The maximum count for all locations on land requested for withdrawal was 119 on October 6, 2017. Counts on B-17 were more uniform and consistent throughout the count period than on B-16, and the combined total for B-17 was more than three times the combined total for B-16. There were locations near B-17 that saw regular use by OHVs during the count period, which suggested recurring vehicle traffic at these locations (see Supporting Study: Transportation/Traffic Study for the Fallon Range Training Complex, available at <https://frtcmodernization.com>, for details).

3.12.2.5.2 Hunting, Trapping, and Fishing

With the exception of an annual bighorn sheep hunt, hunting, fishing, and trapping is prohibited on B-17. B-17 is located within Hunting Unit 181; Hunting Unit 184 is located east of B-17 (east of State Route 839), and a portion of the Hunting Unit is in the area requested for withdrawal and proposed for acquisition under Alternative 3. NDOW manages Hunting Units 181 and 184 collectively with Hunting Units 182 and 183 for mule deer and pronghorn but as separate hunting units for bighorn sheep. Mule deer generally inhabit the three major mountain ranges within Hunting Units 181 through 184. This includes the Sand Spring Range (west of B-17) and a portion of the Slate/Fairview mountains (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a). This population ranged from a high of 1,465 deer in 1985 to a low of approximately 750 deer in 1994 (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a). The current population appears to be relatively stable and is estimated to be 1,230 deer, which is slightly above average (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2016, 2017a).

Bighorn sheep live in mountainous areas within Hunting Unit 181. Bighorn sheep are distributed throughout the Sand Springs Mountain Range, Fairview Mountain, Slate Mountain, and the Monte Cristo Mountains (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a).

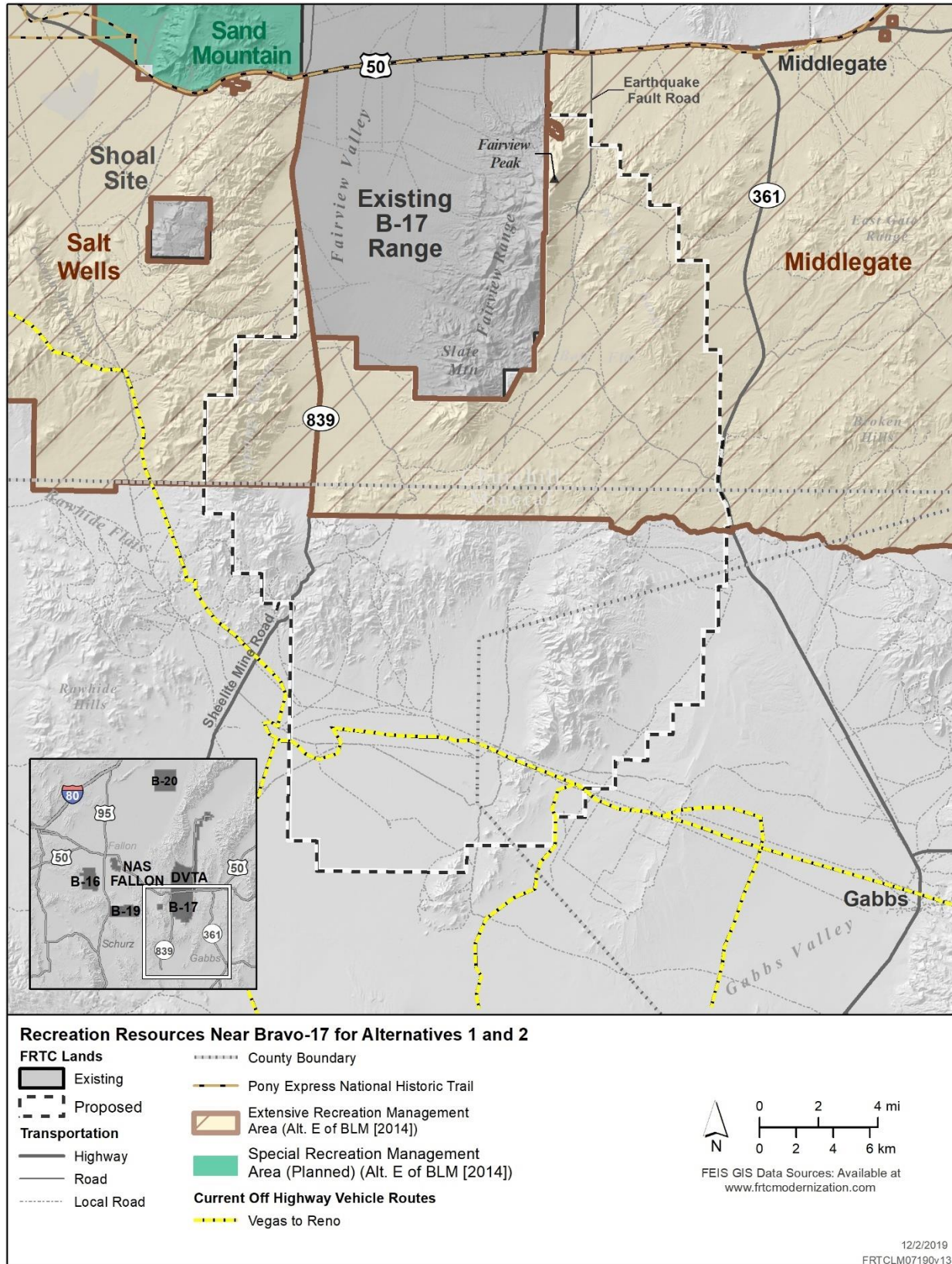


Figure 3.12-6: Recreation Resources Near Bravo-17 for Alternatives 1 and 2

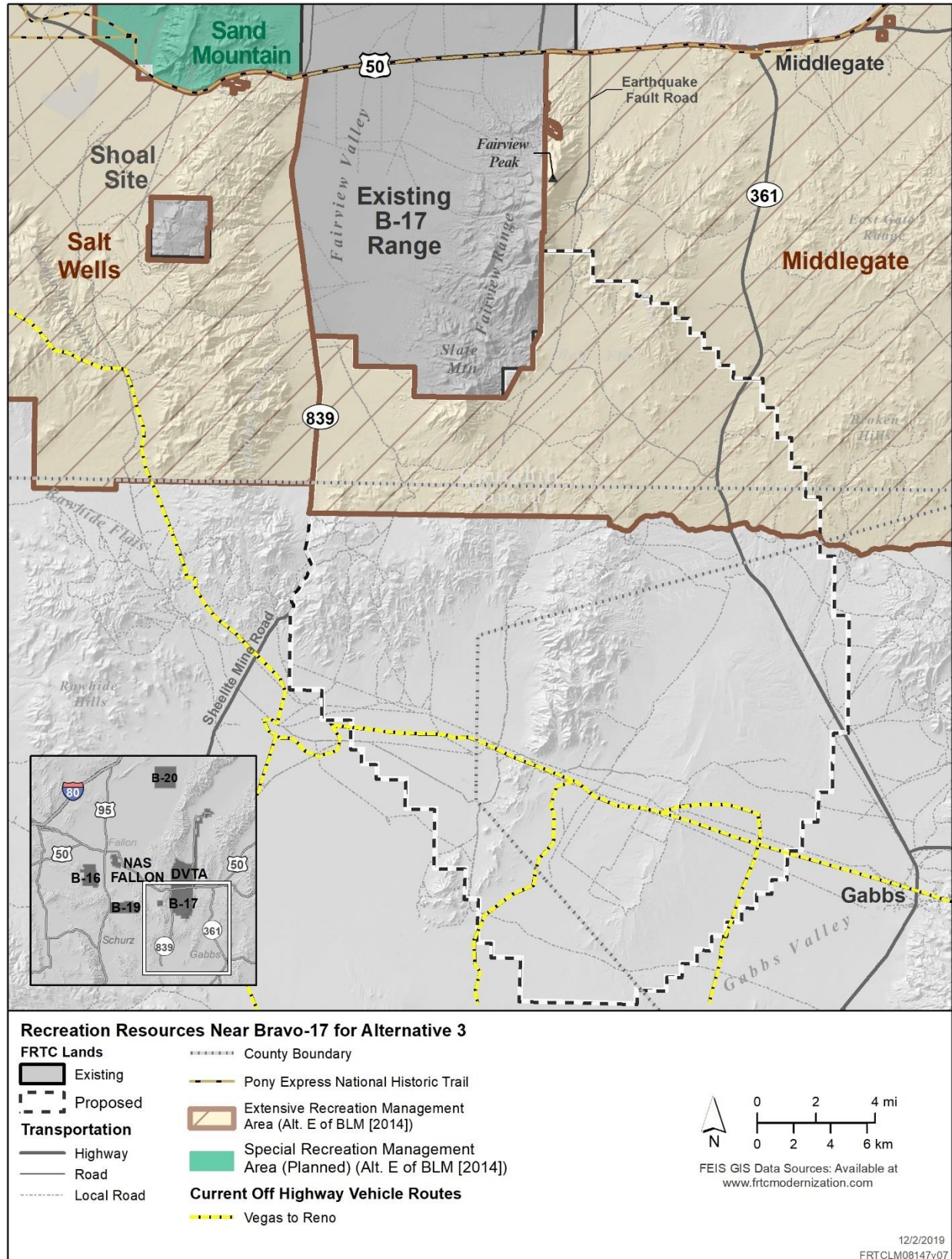


Figure 3.12-7: Recreation Resources Near Bravo-17 for Alternative 3

The NDOW estimated a population of 380 bighorn sheep in Unit 181 in 2016 (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2016) and 425 individuals in 2017 (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a). Unit 181 includes large portions of occupied habitat for bighorn sheep, and the entire distribution area is classified as year-round habitat for the species.

The Navy allows access onto portions of B-17 during the NDOW-managed bighorn sheep hunting season. Typically, 20–30 bighorn sheep hunt tags are issued for Unit 181. The bighorn sheep hunting season extends from November through December. For the bighorn sheep hunt, the Navy requires that hunters complete a hunting safety briefing prior to hunting within B-17.

NDOW manages Hunting Units 181 through 184 as a single hunting unit for pronghorn antelope. NDOW population modeling shows steady growth of pronghorn populations within Units 181 through 184 for the last 15 years. Approximately 25 percent of the Unit 181–184 pronghorn population resides within the current or requested B-17 withdrawal areas. As stated in the Population Summary document, the 2017 pronghorn population estimate was 660 individuals (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a). It is estimated that 25 percent of the pronghorn population in Units 181–184 are found within the requested withdrawal of B-17.

Figure 3.12-8 and Figure 3.12-9 show the wildlife water developments (or “guzzlers”) that are located in and around the B-17 range. These guzzlers include both big game and small game guzzlers. Big game guzzlers are meant to be accessible to larger animals such as mule deer and bighorn sheep and can be troughs of water. Small game guzzlers are meant to only be accessible to small game such as chukars and are not accessible to big game species. New 10,000-gallon guzzlers were installed in the Sand Springs Range on B-17 in 2014, which benefit the bighorn sheep population (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2016). Guzzlers are typically made of metal or fiberglass and include an “apron,” which collects water from snowmelt or rain, and a tank(s), which stores the water. Fences may also be added to keep livestock away from the guzzlers. These water developments are essential in areas where there is not enough water to support wildlife (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017d). Guzzlers were upgraded in 2015 in the Sand Springs Range on B-17, and old water developments around Fairview Peak on B-17 were also recently upgraded (with the Navy’s assistance), including an additional 10,000-gallon water guzzler. The Navy assisted with upgrading water developments around Slate Mountain on B-17 as well.

Hunting Unit 205 is located south of B-17. The NDOW estimated a herd size of 500 mule deer in 2016 for hunting units 202, 205, and 206, which includes an interstate population (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2016). Mule deer habitat within these hunting units is outside of the region of influence (see Figure 3.12-1). There is year-round bighorn sheep habitat in the Monte Cristo Mountains, which are located within Unit 181 and partially within Unit 205. The NDOW estimated the bighorn sheep population for Unit 205 was approximately 650 sheep in 2016, an increase from an estimated 600 bighorn sheep in 2015 (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2016).

Hunting Unit 171 is southeast of the existing B-17 and within the proposed area under Alternative 3. There is year-round mule deer habitat east of the proposed area (see Figure 3.12-1). There is no bighorn sheep habitat within Hunting Unit 171 (see Figure 3.12-2). There is year-round pronghorn habitat within this hunting unit southeast of B-17 (see Figure 3.12-3). The number of pronghorn units in the region of influence varies greatly because of their movement between Nye, Esmeralda, Mineral, and Churchill Counties (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2016).

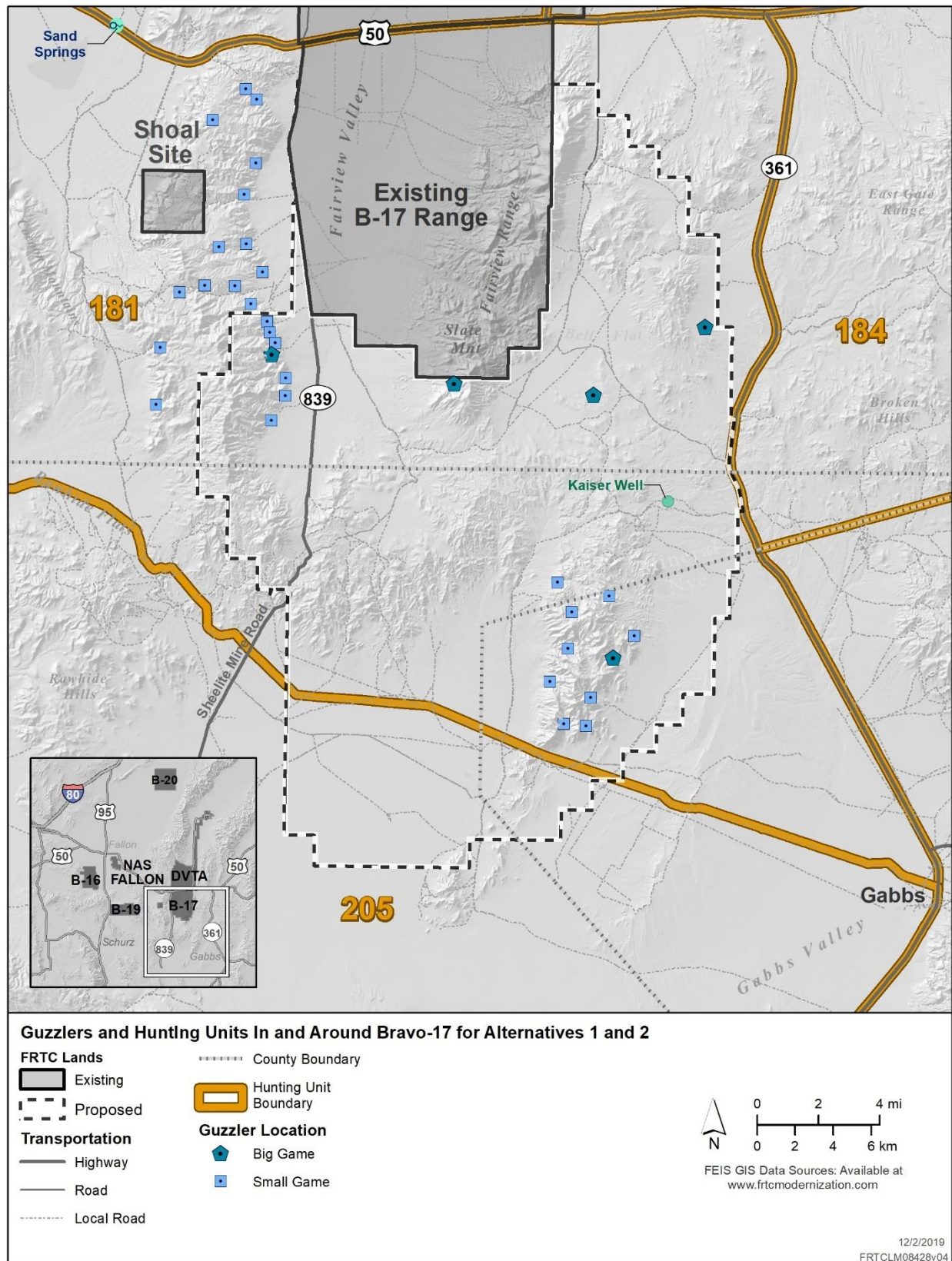


Figure 3.12-8: Guzzlers and Hunting Units in and Around Bravo-17 for Alternatives 1 and 2

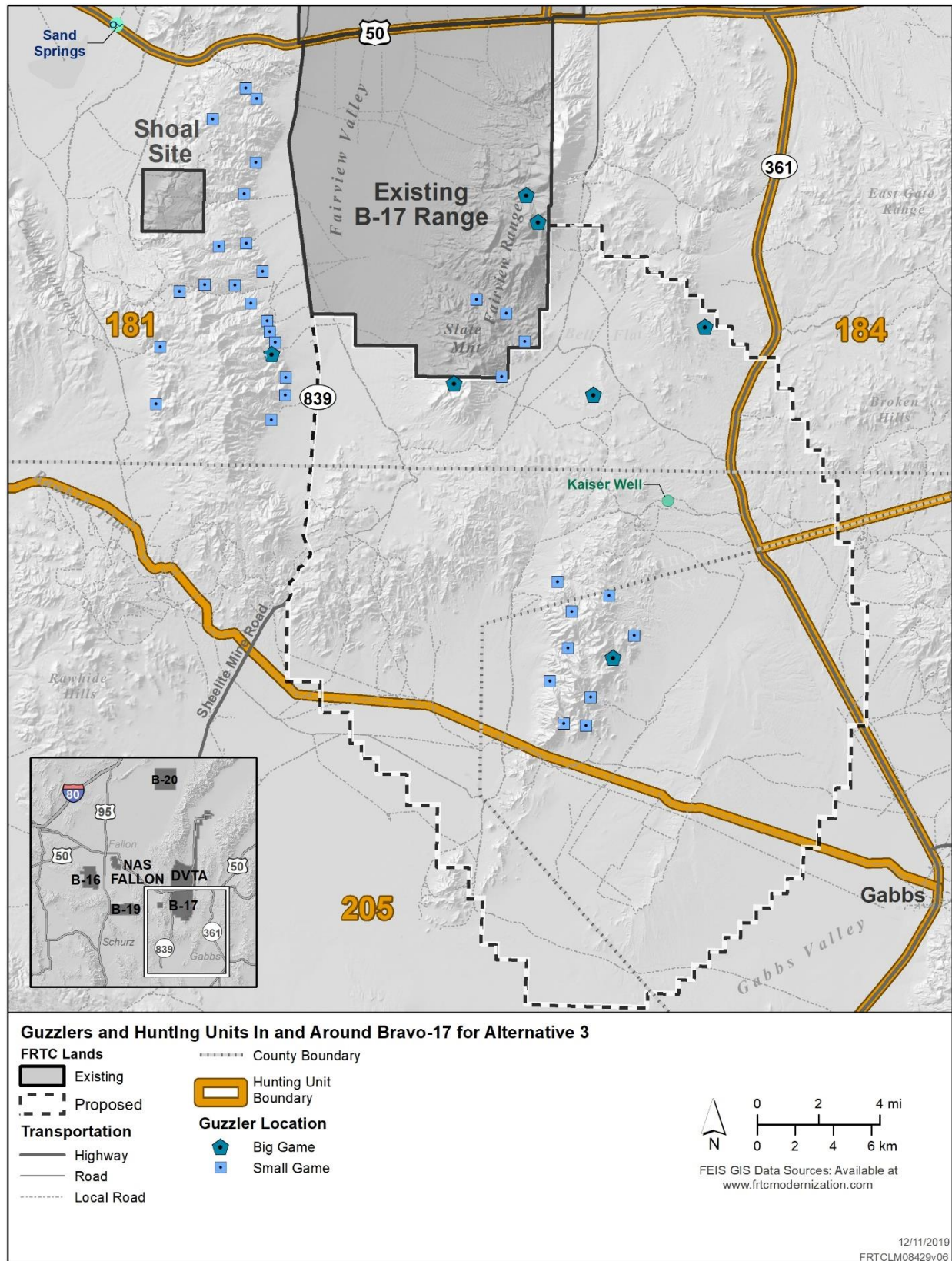


Figure 3.12-9: Guzzlers and Hunting Units in and Around Bravo-17 for Alternative 3

3.12.2.5.3 Other Recreation Resources

There are no additional recreation areas or resources within the existing B-17 (see Figure 3.12-6 and Figure 3.12-7). The BLM is currently proposing to create recreation areas for OHVs around B-17 in the land requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition (Bureau of Land Management, 2014). State Route 839 is west of B-17, while Earthquake Road and State Route 361 are east of B-17. Outdoor recreationalists are known to frequent these roads. In addition, according to DesertUSA, the best place to see the tarantula migration is in Gabbs, Nevada, which is approximately 16 miles southeast of the existing B-17 range (DesertUSA, 2010).

The Pony Express National Historic Trail is located north of B-17 (see Figure 3.12-6 and Figure 3.12-7). This trail runs parallel to U.S. Route 50 between the DVTA and B-17. A historic Pony Express Station is located nearby in the town of Middlegate.

Fairview Peak is a mountain peak east of B-17. In 1954, a catastrophic earthquake struck Dixie Valley and, since then, public access to Fairview Peak has been provided to observe fault scars via Earthquake Fault Road, off U.S. Route 50 near Fairview Peak. The peak is also an area that the public uses for stargazing; however, it is not classified as a “dark sky” place. A communication site, which includes fenced buildings that are closed to the public, is also on top of this peak. The Navy discusses impacts on geologic sites in Section 3.1 (Geological Resources), impacts on water in Section 3.9 (Water Resources), impacts on biologic sites in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), and impacts on cultural sites and areas in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources).

3.12.2.6 Bravo-20

B-20 is located north of Fallon, Nevada, within the Carson Sink. The surrounding land is laid out largely in a checkerboard pattern of federal and non-federal undeveloped land with wildlife refuges to the south (Figure 3.12-10 and Figure 3.12-11). B-20 is within the northern portion of Churchill County south of Pershing County. The Stillwater Mountain Range is east of B-20, and the Humboldt Mountain Range is to the northwest. Navy safety policy prohibits the public from engaging in recreational activities on active bombing ranges. The public is not allowed to access B-20 for recreation (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2015).

3.12.2.6.1 Off-Highway Vehicles

Given the type of soil and the depth to the water table within the Carson Sink, this area does not typically attract OHV operators, nor are there any other known popular racing events that occur within the Carson Sink. However, there is some recreational use of nearby roads off of the alkali flat.

3.12.2.6.2 Hunting, Trapping, and Fishing

B-20 is located in Hunting Unit 181. Even with the pronghorn habitat inside the eastern portion of B-20, hunting, fishing, and trapping is prohibited on B-20, and the surrounding area is not known to be a popular destination for hunters. Although the Navy is currently the only authorized user of the B-20 Access Road (known locally as Pole Line Road), hunters may use it and East County Road to access nearby hunting areas in the Humboldt and Stillwater Mountain Ranges, respectively. Hunting Unit 043 is north of B-20. Although there is mule deer habitat within Hunting Unit 043, this habitat is not within the region of influence. In addition, bighorn sheep are not known to occur in this hunting unit. Hunting Unit 043 does include year-round pronghorn habitat.

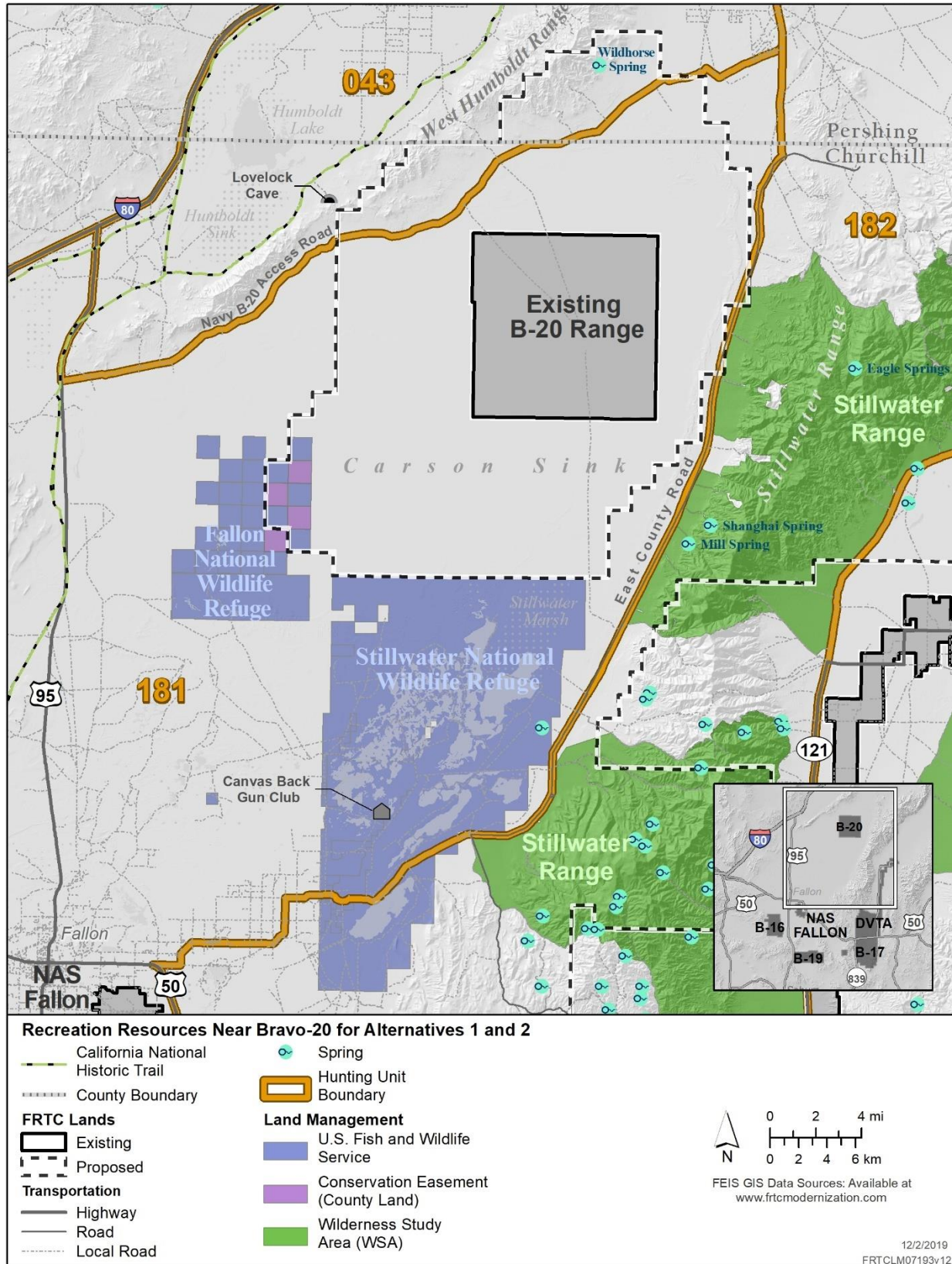


Figure 3.12-10: Recreation Resources Near Bravo-20 for Alternatives 1 and 2

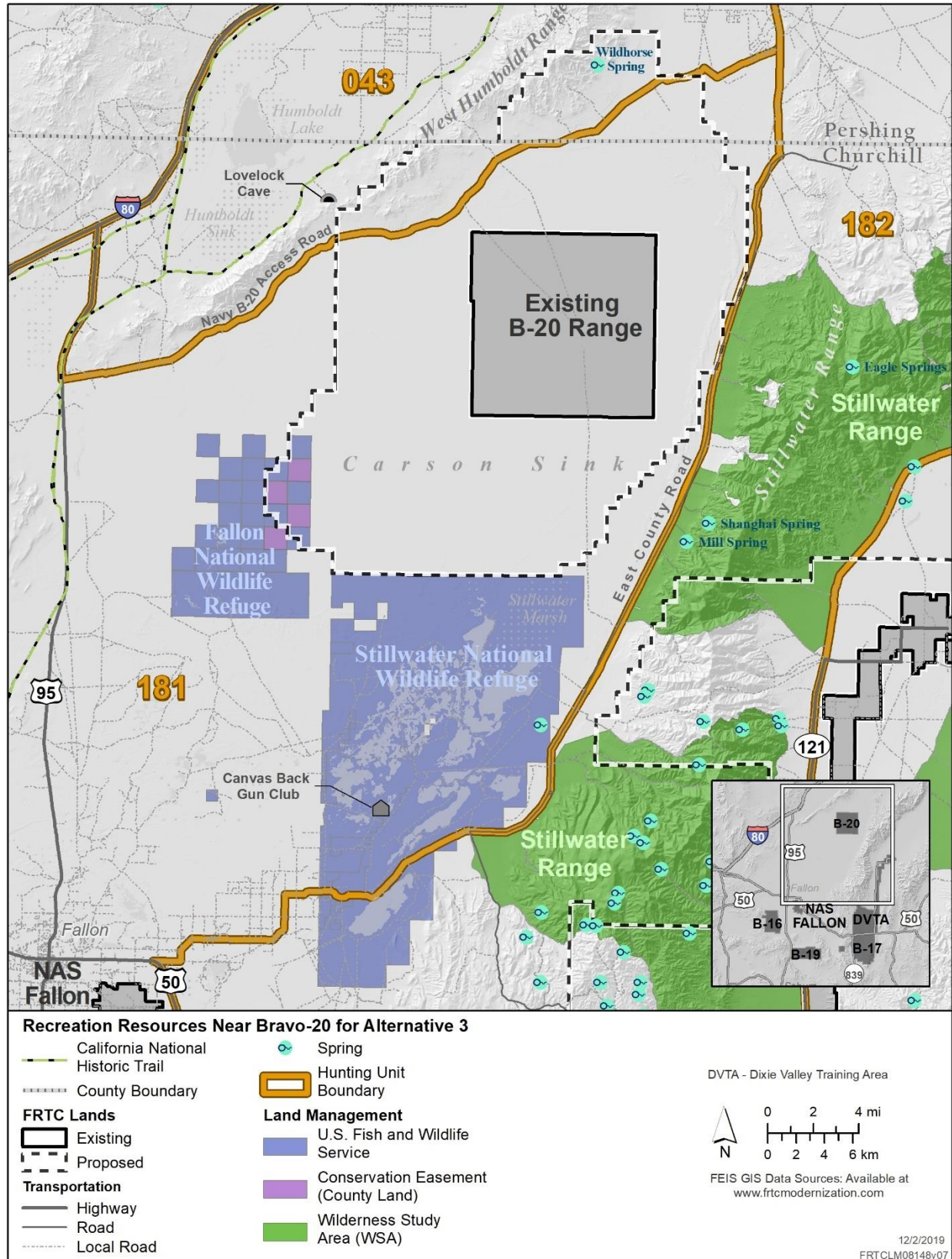


Figure 3.12-11: Recreation Resources Near Bravo-20 for Alternative 3

Pronghorn typically winter in large groups and are generally located in the valleys within Units 043–046. The NDOW estimated a herd size of roughly 600 pronghorn within these units in 2016, which is an increase from an estimated 450 pronghorn in 2015 (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2016). There are fishable streams within this unit, and chukar populations are widespread.

Fallon National Wildlife Refuge and Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge: These refuges are open to the public for general recreation; however, recreational activities are limited to wildlife-related activities. Allowed activities generally include hunting, environmental education, and observing and photographing wildlife. Hunters are required to follow state- and federally approved hunting seasons within the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. The Refuge restricts the use of toxic ammunition (e.g., lead) and only allows non-toxic shots or slugs (e.g., steel) during hunting. Boating is allowed within the Refuge during waterfowl hunting seasons (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2016a). The Refuge does not currently allow fishing.

Private Hunting Clubs: The Canvas Back Gun Club, shown in Figure 3.12-11, is one of several private hunting clubs in and around the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge. Another private club in the area is the Greenhead Hunting Club. These clubs provide recreational opportunity and invest in wildlife habitat to benefit waterfowl, shorebirds, and other migratory birds in the Lahontan Valley.

3.12.2.6.3 Other Recreation Resources

Other recreation in the area includes, but is not limited to, visiting cultural, geologic, biological, and water resources. Examples include the Ocala Indian Cave, the Lovelock Indian Cave, Lone Rock, the California Trail, the nearby mercury mines, and various mining camps. There are no recreation areas or resources within the existing B-20. However, the following recreation resources are located near B-20, as shown in Figure 3.12-10 and Figure 3.12-11.

The Navy discusses impacts on geologic sites in Section 3.1 (Geological Resources), impacts on water in Section 3.9 (Water Resources), impacts on biologic sites in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), and impacts on cultural sites and areas in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources).

Fallon National Wildlife Refuge: The Fallon National Wildlife Refuge is located southwest of the existing B-20 range. The Fallon National Wildlife Refuge is within the Carson Sink and is northwest of Fallon, Nevada. The USFWS manages the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge as part of the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex. The FRTC directs pilots to maintain an altitude of no lower than 3,000 feet above ground level (AGL) when flying over the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2011). The Fallon National Wildlife Refuge is open to the public; however, recreational activities are limited to wildlife-related activities. Allowed activities generally include hunting, environmental education, observing, and photographing wildlife. Fishing is not allowed within the refuge. There are no cell phone services or public use facilities at the Refuge, and access to the Refuge is limited to a dirt track. Off-road vehicles that are not street legal cannot be used within the refuge (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2016b).

Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge: The Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is located south of B-20 in the Lahontan Valley, near the community of Fallon. The USFWS manages the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge as part of the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge Complex, which also includes the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge and Anaho Island National Wildlife Refuge. The FRTC directs pilots to maintain an altitude of no lower than 3,000 feet AGL when overflying the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2011).

The Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge, also known as the “Oasis in the Desert,” is open to the public for general recreation. However, recreational activities are generally limited to wildlife-related activities that help protect or understand wildlife. Wildlife recreational activities on the Refuge include observing and photographing wildlife, hunting, and environmental education.

The Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge is a popular destination for migratory birds (Neel & Henry, 1996). The Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network designated the Lahontan Valley as a site of hemispheric importance in 1988. This valley hosts more than 250,000 shorebirds annually and is a popular destination for birders (Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, 2018).

Stillwater Range WSA: The Stillwater Range WSA (NV-030-104) is located east of B-20 and west of the DVTA. Making up roughly the center third of the Stillwater Mountain Range, this WSA is 94,607 acres of BLM-administered lands and 619.78 acres of non-federal land. None of the Stillwater Range WSA is considered suitable for wilderness designation (Bureau of Land Management, 2013).

Dixie Valley Training Area: The DVTA is located east of NAS Fallon and north of U.S. Route 50 between the Stillwater and Clan Alpine mountain ranges. The Navy allows access to its “fee owned” lands in the DVTA. The Navy has allowed access to and casual uses on these lands (areas along the Settlement Area including Settlement Road and Horse Creek for activities such as camping, hunting, and fishing in ponds) and would continue to do so into the future. The Navy and the BLM manage the rest of the DVTA jointly; it is open to the public for activities such as hunting, camping, hiking, OHV use, site visits, and grazing. This includes OHV use within joint BLM-managed areas. Both air and ground training activities on the DVTA are restricted due to public safety and environmental concerns. Implementation of the following policies and procedures helps avoid conflict with non-Navy users on open lands:

- Military personnel must submit ground training requests to the NAWDC Range Office 45 days in advance.
- Military personnel should anticipate contact with civilians. Open Navy lands are joint-use with the public. The military has no authority to ask civilians to exit or leave open land areas.
- All personnel shall adhere to posted speed limits. Dirt and gravel road speed limits must be commensurate with road conditions and should not exceed 45 miles per hour.
- Only blank ammunition, smoke, and flares are allowed on any of the open training areas. Flares and other pyrotechnics may be restricted during fire season. Military personnel may not use lasers on open lands.
- Helicopter landings on open lands may occur as long as the landing area avoids disturbing the public (if present).

3.12.2.6.4 Off-Highway Vehicles and Racing

OHV use is allowed under joint BLM management in the DVTA (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2014a). Public land around the DVTA is largely undesignated, which means that this land is managed as open area with unrestricted vehicle use (Bureau of Land Management, 2014). However, motorized travel is restricted to existing routes within the adjacent WSAs.

3.12.2.6.5 Hunting, Trapping, and Fishing

The DVTA is within Hunting Units 182 and 183. NDOW manages Hunting Units 181 through 184 as a single hunting unit for mule deer. Although very little of the existing DVTA overlaps mule deer habitat, there is crucial winter and crucial summer habitat east of the DVTA in the Clan Alpine Mountains (see

Figure 3.12-1). There is also year-round habitat in the Stillwater Mountains and crucial summer habitat around Fox Peak and Table Mountain (see Figure 3.12-1). Although population data is not available for the proposed expansion area, the current population for these hunting units is 1,230 deer (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a).

Bighorn sheep are known to occur in both the Clan Alpine and the Stillwater Mountain Ranges, as shown in Figure 3.12-2. These areas provide year-round habitat for the species. Bighorn sheep are distributed through the south and west sides of the Clan Alpine Range, and there is a large portion of occupied habitat within the proposed expansion area. Reintroduced in 1986, the Clan Alpine population was estimated to be 440 bighorn sheep in 2017 (an all-time high). The following areas are highly used by bighorn sheep within this area (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a):

- from Contact Canyon north to Lucky Boy Canyon in the Sand Springs Range,
- the west side of Slate Mountain,
- from Bell Canyon north to the south end of Fairview peak, on the west side of the mountain, and
- from Mount Anna south to Mount Annie in the Monte Cristo Mountains.

Desert bighorn sheep were re-introduced into the Stillwater Mountains in 1981, and population modeling results are presented from 1981 to 2017. The 2017 population estimate for bighorn sheep in the Stillwater Mountains and East Range is at an all-time high of approximately 430 sheep (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a).

NDOW manages Hunting Units 181 through 184 as a single hunting unit for pronghorn. Pronghorn habitat occurs throughout the DVTA. The NDOW has identified crucial summer habitat for the pronghorn around Fox Peak. This population has steadily increased since 2003 and is currently at 660 pronghorn within these hunting units (Nevada Department of Wildlife, 2017a).

3.12.2.6.6 Other Recreation Resources

There are no additional recreation areas or resources within the existing DVTA. The BLM is currently proposing to create a recreation area for OHVs in the lands around B-17 (Bureau of Land Management, 2014). The Pony Express National Historic Trail is south of the DVTA, along U.S. Route 50. The annual High Desert Classic Endurance Ride occurs within the Stillwater Mountain Range. In May 2017, 80 participants raced.

Additional recreation resources near the DVTA include two ghost towns (Frenchman and Wonder) and the following resources, as shown in Figure 3.12-12 and Figure 3.12-13. The Navy discusses impacts on geologic sites in Section 3.1 (Geological Resources), impacts on water in Section 3.9 (Water Resources), impacts on biologic sites in Section 3.10 (Biological Resources), and impacts on cultural sites and areas in Section 3.11 (Cultural Resources).

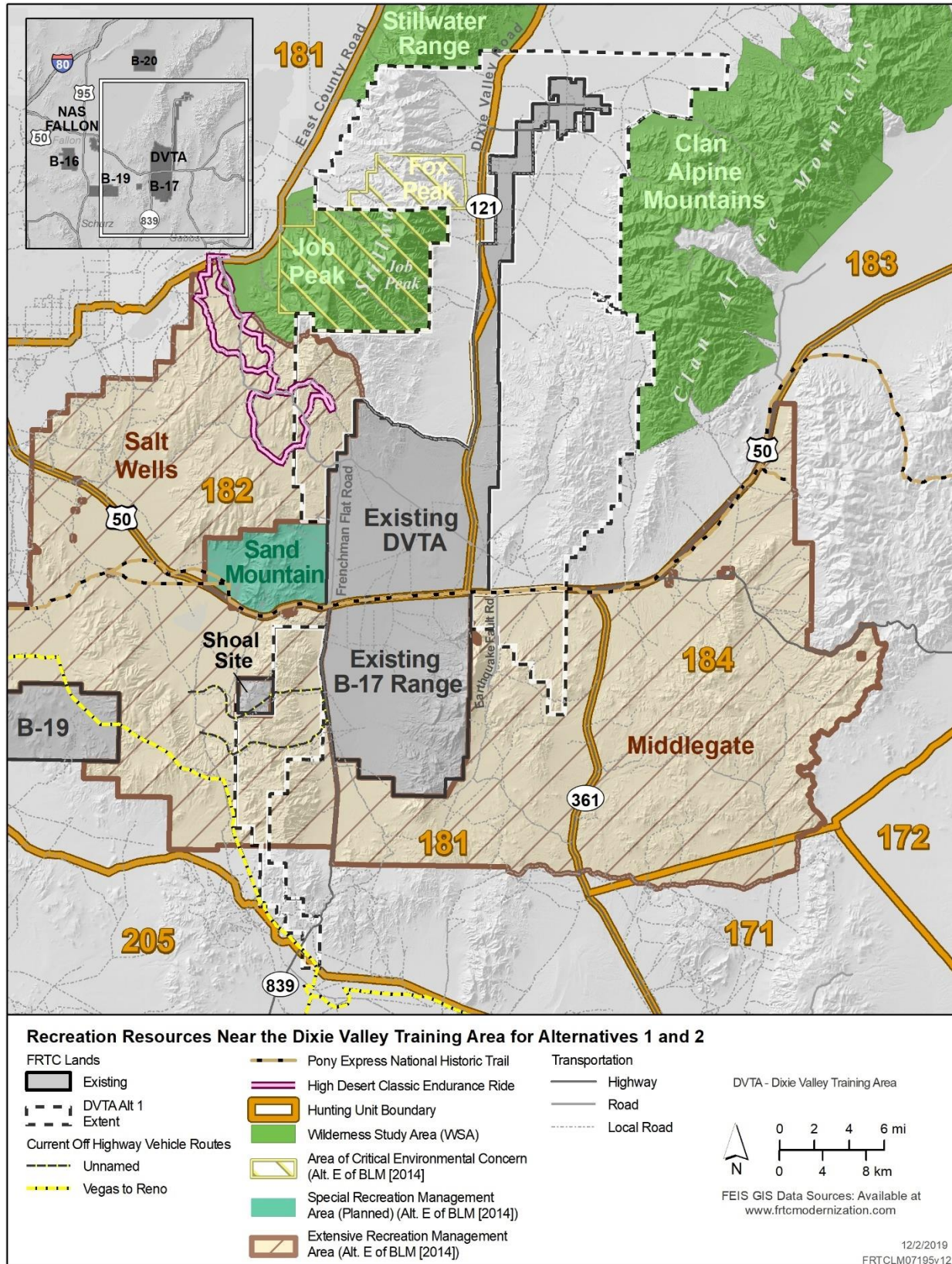


Figure 3.12-12: Recreation Resources Near the Dixie Valley Training Area for Alternatives 1 and 2

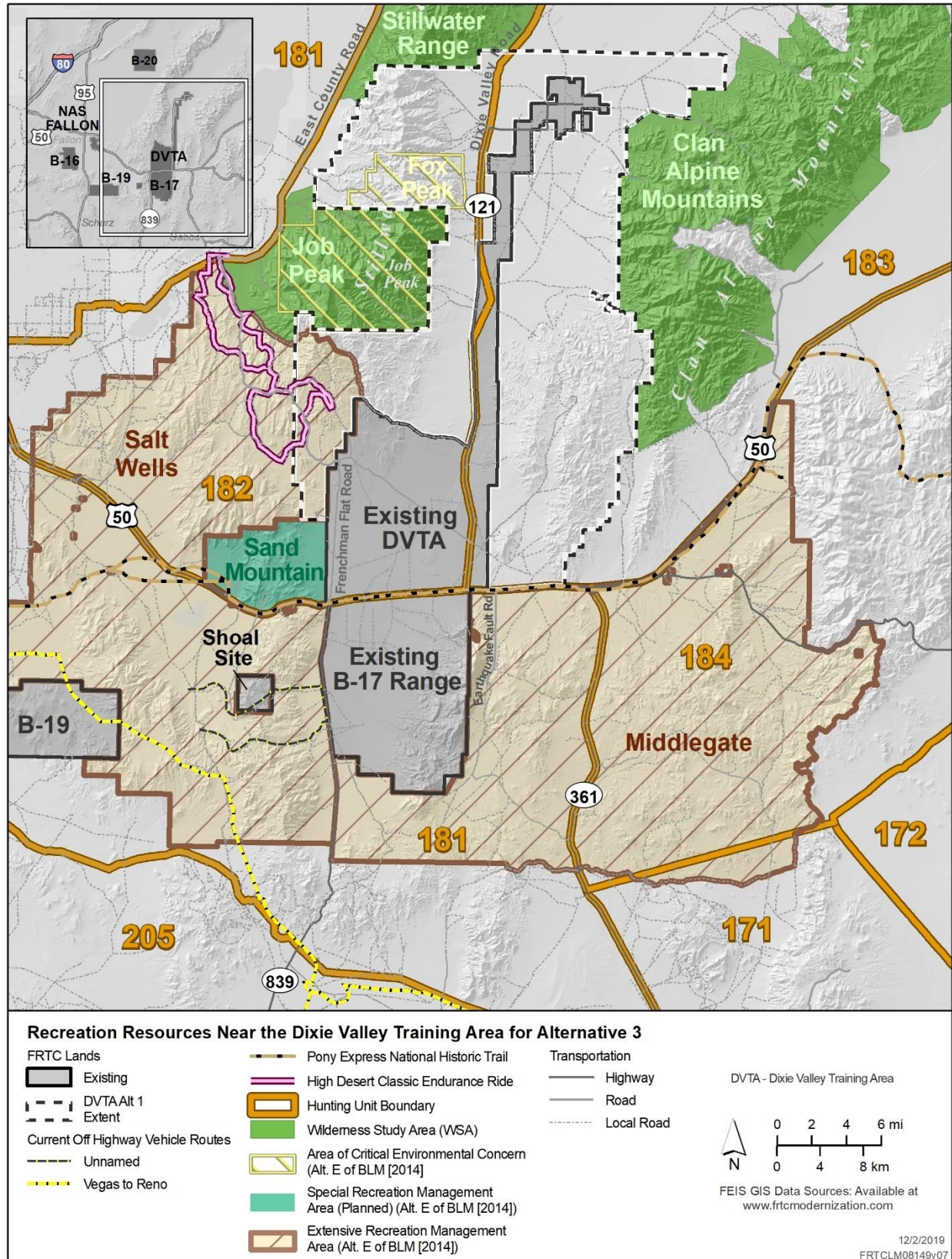


Figure 3.12-13: Recreation Resources Near the Dixie Valley Training Area for Alternative 3

Clan Alpine Mountains WSA: The Clan Alpine Mountains WSA (NVN-030-102) is located east of the DVTA. This WSA is composed of 196,128 acres of BLM-administered lands. Although there are private lands around the periphery of the WSA, there are no non-federal lands within the WSA. The BLM currently recommends the consideration of approximately 68,458 acres of this WSA for wilderness because of its extreme ruggedness, lack of major intrusions, and absence of non-federal inholdings or known mineral reserves. The BLM does not recommend the northern half of the WSA and around the periphery of the WSA to be designated as wilderness habitat (Bureau of Land Management, 2013).

Job Peak WSA: The Job Peak WSA (NV-030-127) is located in Churchill County, north and west of the DVTA. This WSA includes Fox Peak, which is the highest peak in the Stillwater Range. Including roughly the southern third of the Stillwater Mountain Range, this WSA is composed of 90,209 acres of BLM-administered lands. There are no non-federal lands within the WSA. None of the land within the WSA is recommended as suitable for wilderness designation (Bureau of Land Management, 2013).

Sand Mountain Recreation Area: The BLM designated the Sand Mountain Recreation Area almost 20 years ago for OHV use. This area is located 25 miles east of Fallon, north of U.S. Route 50, and west of the DVTA. The recreation area consists of 4,795 acres of BLM-administered land. With its large sand dunes, the recreation area is a popular destination for OHV operators, hikers, and sand boarders (Bureau of Land Management, 2014). Annual visitation at the Sand Mountain Recreation Area currently numbers between 50,000 and 70,000 visitors per year (Bureau of Land Management, 2017). Visitors to the Recreation Area also visit nearby sites, including portions of the Pony Express National Historic Trail, the 1860s Pony Express Station, and the Sand Springs Desert Study Area (Churchill County, 2010).

Since 2007, vehicles have been restricted to approved routes when within vegetated areas of the recreation area (72 Federal Register 12187). These restrictions reduce the route system within the recreation area from an estimated 200 miles to 21.5 miles. The BLM implemented these emergency restrictions to protect the Sand Mountain blue butterfly (*Euphilotes pallescens arenamontana*) and its habitat (76 Federal Register 47123–47133). In its Draft Resource Management Plan, the BLM proposes to increase the Sand Mountain Recreation Area to 19,700 acres, which would include the following BLM resource management zones: dune, desert habitat, trail riding, and mining districts (Bureau of Land Management, 2014).

Stillwater Range WSA: The Stillwater Range WSA (NV-030-104) is located east of B-20 and west of the DVTA. Making up roughly the center third of the Stillwater Mountain Range, this WSA is 94,607 acres of BLM-administered lands and 619.78 acres of non-federal land. None of the Stillwater Range WSA is considered suitable for wilderness designation (Bureau of Land Management, 2013).

3.12.2.7 Special Use Airspace

Recreation occurs on federal and non-federal lands beneath FRTC SUA as shown in Figure 3.12-14. FRTC SUA overlies approximately 10.4 million acres of land, including large portions of Churchill, Lander, and Eureka Counties as well as portions of Pershing, Nye, Mineral, Lyon, and Washoe Counties. The BLM manages the majority of the area under SUA, but it also includes portions of the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, USFWS land, Bureau of Reclamation land, and non-federal land. The Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest offers a wide variety of outdoor recreational activities, portions of which are open to the public for OHV use and hunting. The area is known for the Toiyabe Crest trail and campgrounds such as Groves Lake, Kingston Canyon, San Juan Canyon, Big Creek Canyon, and Bob Scott campground.

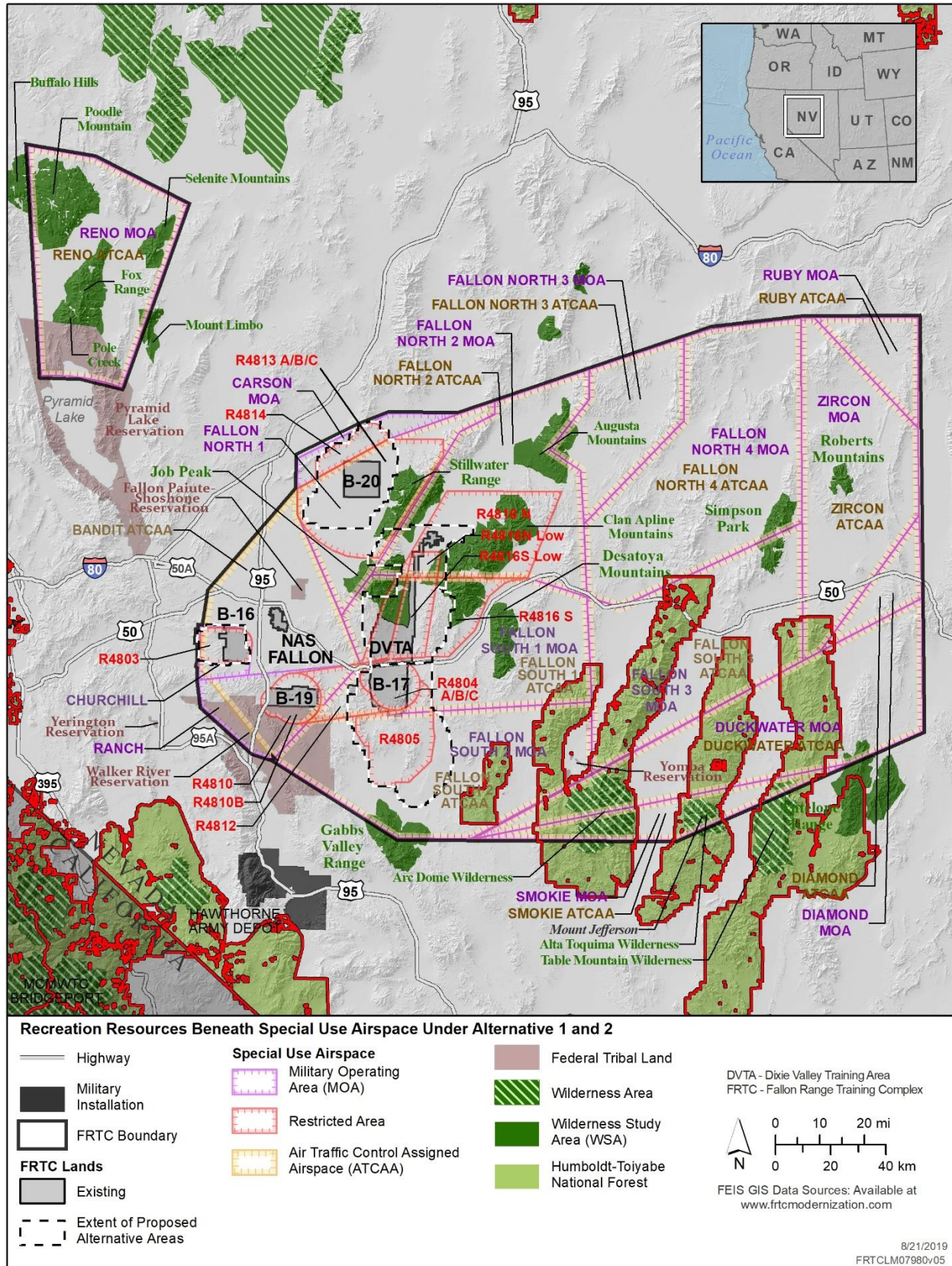


Figure 3.12-14: Recreation Resources Beneath Special Use Airspace Under Alternative 1 and 2

The Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest includes 23 wilderness areas. FRTC SUA exists over portions of the Arc Dome Wilderness Area (120,556 acres), which is Nevada's largest Wilderness Area, and the Alta Toquima Wilderness Area (35,860 acres), which includes Mount Jefferson, the tallest peak in Nevada, and the Table Mountain Wilderness Area (92,485 acres).

The BLM manages WSAs as wilderness unless there is congressional action to change the designation of these lands. There are 15 WSAs beneath the FRTC current and proposed airspace. They are the Antelope Range, Augusta Mountains, Buffalo Hills, Clan Alpine Mountains, Desatoya Mountains, Fox Range, Gabbs Valley Range, Job Peak, Mount Limbo, Pole Creek, Poodle Mountain, Roberts Mountains, Selenite Mountains, Simpson Park, and Stillwater Range WSAs. FRTC airspace also overlaps portions of the following Indian reservations: Walker River Paiute Indian Reservation, Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Reservation, Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation, Duckwater Reservation, and Yomba Indian Reservation.

3.12.3 Environmental Consequences

This analysis focuses on potential impacts on recreation arising from movement of training activities, changes of access to withdrawn or acquired land, and construction. Recreation is an interdisciplinary issue, and its aspects intertwine with other environmental topics. Section 3.2 (Land Use) considers the impacts on use of lands with the implementation of the Proposed Action. Section 3.5 (Transportation) discusses impacts on transportation on the ground, including paved roads, trails, and public transit such as trains. Section 3.7 (Noise) addresses human impacts and community noise levels resulting from training noise. Section 3.13 (Socioeconomics) addresses the financial impacts of the Proposed Action in the FRTC and surrounding areas. Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety and Protection of Children) addresses impacts of the Proposed Action on public health and safety as a result of the implementation of the Proposed Action. These sections inform the Navy's analysis of recreation-related impacts. This section evaluates each proposed alternative's potential effect on recreation within the B-16, B-17, and B-20 ranges, as well as the DVTA. The following provides an analysis of environmental effects of the No Action Alternative and Alternatives 1 through 3 against the environmental baseline as described in Section 2.4 (Environmental Baseline [Current Training Activities]). A summary of the potential impacts with implementation of the No Action Alternative or any of the three action alternatives (Alternatives 1, 2, and 3) is provided at the end of this section (see Section 3.12.3.6, Summary of Effects and Conclusions).

3.12.3.1 No Action Alternative

Based on the information presented below, there would be a significant impact on recreation under the No Action Alternative. Under the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Action would not occur, and the current land withdrawal would expire on November 5, 2021. Release of the FRTC lands to another Department of Defense agency, the BLM, or the State of Nevada would likely open currently restricted lands to public use. Prior to potential relinquishment to the BLM or other transfer or disposal, the Navy would identify areas for post-range planning and clean up. Recreational activities would not occur at these ranges during the decontamination process. Assuming the Navy could render these lands safe, meaning the lands requiring cleanup, then those areas could potentially become available to the public for recreational activities (e.g., hiking, camping, birding, hunting, OHV, and other recreation-based activities), following the decontamination process. Land that the Navy cannot render safe for public access would remain off limits to the public. As such, the No Action Alternative could potentially improve access to federal lands and increase outdoor recreation opportunities within the region of

influence in the long-term. Therefore, implementation of the No Action Alternative would have a significant impact on recreation.

3.12.3.2 Alternative 1: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex

Based on the information presented below, there would be a significant impact on recreation under Alternative 1. Under Alternative 1, the Navy requests renewal by Congress of the current public land withdrawal at the FRTC. Under Alternative 1, the Navy would request additional lands for withdrawal and propose to acquire additional non-federal land to be reserved for military use. Meanwhile, although the DVTA would expand under Alternative 1, recreational activities within the expanded DVTA would be similar to existing baseline conditions. However, Congressional withdrawal legislation would remove the WSA designation for portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Stillwater Range, and Job Peak and would decrease existing restrictions on recreation in those areas (e.g., restrictions on OHV use), potentially opening them to additional recreational activities in the DVTA.

3.12.3.2.1 Bravo-16

Based on the information presented below, there would be a significant impact on recreation for B-16 under Alternative 1.

Land Withdrawal and Acquisition

Under Alternative 1, the B-16 range would expand to the west by virtue of the Navy withdrawing approximately 32,201 acres of BLM-administered land (see Table 2-1), increasing the range's total area to approximately 59,560 acres. These new lands would be fenced in accordance with all applicable regulations and would restrict all recreational activities from the additional 32,201 acres within the expanded B-16 boundary. The Navy would expand their fence line patrol and maintenance procedures to include fences that are on withdrawn lands. The Navy proposes to establish two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers at NAS Fallon. Part of the duties of these officers would include patrolling of the added fence line for trespass issues and reporting to the Navy any broken or downed fences for maintenance repair. Therefore, there would be a significant impact on recreation because of the withdrawal under Alternative 1.

Training Activities

All training activities would be located within the proposed boundary of B-16. Recreational activities are not compatible within an active weapons danger zone (WDZ) or surface danger zone. The surface danger zone at B-16 would be wholly located within the proposed B-16 boundary. The noise contours from aircraft, munitions, and support vehicles would not extend off range at levels higher than 55 A-weighted decibels (dBA). This operational noise would be commensurate to existing conditions (see Section 3.7, Noise). Visual inspection of aerial maps of the areas within regions where the Day Night Level (DNL) indicates 55 dBA contour reveals no sensitive receptors (e.g., parks, camping areas, wilderness areas) or inconsistency with current land use. Training activities would not change in type or tempo under Alternative 1. Therefore, training activities at B-16 would not significantly impact recreation.

Public Accessibility

Alternative 1 would close and restrict an additional 32,201 acres within the expanded B-16 range from public use except for Navy-authorized activities (e.g., ceremonial visits; cultural site visits; research/academic pursuits; or regulatory or management activities, such as BLM or NDOW activities). The Navy would not allow recreational activities and would install fencing and signage warning the public of the closure within the proposed closed areas of B-16.

If implementation of Alternative 1 occurred, all current and proposed OHV use would stop in the proposed B-16 range. Although the OHV data collection found a maximum count for all locations in the requested B-16 withdrawal area to be 165 vehicles, count data was sporadic, with counts of zero collected on multiple days at most locations. Counts increased during upland species hunting season in Nevada (see Supporting Study: Transportation/Traffic Study for the Fallon Range Training Complex, available at <https://frtcmodernization.com>). Implementing Alternative 1 would prevent access to areas west of B-16, which have historically been used by OHVs and for off-road racing, events, and hunting. Therefore, expanding B-16 would significantly impact public access to the area west of the existing B-16 for OHV racing and hunting.

Implementing Alternative 1 would also close the northern portion of B-16 that is currently withdrawn but open to the public for recreation, which would include closing Sand Canyon Road within B-16 (see Figure 3.12-4). The public uses Sand Canyon Road to access the proposed Dead Camel Mountains Special Recreation Management Areas and the Lahontan Reservoir. Closing Sand Canyon Road would not prevent access to open areas within the proposed Dead Camel Mountains Special Recreation Management Areas or to the Lahontan Reservoir, because these areas would still be accessible by other roads. Alternative 1 would also close the Salt Caves from public access except for ceremonial visits, cultural site visits, or research/academic purposes. The land requested for withdrawal would not overlap or affect public access to the Pony Express National Historic Trail, which would remain open south of B-16.

The area that the Navy would withdraw for B-16 is not known to be a popular hunting area. Public exclusion would likely have positive and negative impacts on any game species that may occur within this area. Removal of hunting pressure would likely increase numbers of game species. However, hunting activities provide an ecological service, particularly when managed with NDOW tag limits, in facilitating long-term population health. Although perimeter fencing would include a larger area than current baseline conditions, fencing would be designed to allow large game species (e.g., pronghorn, mule deer, bighorn sheep) to jump over or crawl under the fence and smaller game species (e.g., chukar, rabbits) to fit between or below the wires. The Navy would also incrementally remove the existing interior fencing within the withdrawal area, which would decrease the fragmentation of habitat. Although this would decrease the impact of habitat fragmentation to hunting on adjacent lands, the expanded land in the B-16 withdrawal area would still be lost to hunting activities. Therefore, expanding B-16 would significantly impact hunting.

Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 1

Proposed Dead Camel Mountains Special Recreation Management Areas

Alternative 1 includes the planning for alternative routes to provide public access to the proposed Dead Camel Mountains Special Recreation Management Areas. The BLM and Navy would continue to coordinate on recreation opportunities that may be impacted and conduct alternative route planning and follow-on, site-specific National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) would be conducted.

Construction

The Navy analyzed existing fencing in the *Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Addition of Training Activities and Range Enhancements at NAS Fallon on Training Range Bravo-16, Churchill County, Nevada*, September 2014 (U.S. Department of the Navy, 2014b). BLM-approved four-strand fencing would be installed under this alternative and join with existing fencing and other new proposed fencing around the withdrawn or acquired lands. Since the proposed construction activities would occur within the B-16 range, where public access would be restricted, these activities would not significantly impact recreation. Any proposed fencing and maintenance roads would be evaluated further in follow-on NEPA documentation after any ultimate Congressional decision is made.

3.12.3.2.2 Bravo-17

Based on the information presented below, there would be a significant impact on recreation for B-17 under Alternative 1.

Land Withdrawal and Acquisition

Under Alternative 1, approximately 178,013 acres (176,977 acres of BLM-administered lands and 1,036 acres of non-federally owned land) would be withdrawn or acquired to expand the B-17 range to the south (see Table 2-1), increasing its total area to approximately 232,799 acres. These new lands would be fenced in accordance with all applicable regulations and would remove recreational activities from B-17. The Navy would expand their fence line patrol and maintenance procedures to include fences that are on withdrawn lands. The Navy proposes to establish two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers at NAS Fallon. Part of the duties of these officers would include patrolling of the added fence line for trespass issues and reporting to the Navy any broken or downed fences for maintenance repair. Therefore, there would be a significant impact on recreation because of the withdrawal and acquisition under Alternative 1.

Training Activities

All training activities would be located within the proposed boundary of B-17 (with the exception of aircraft passing over the range), and the public would not be able to access B-17. The public may observe and hear aircraft, munitions, and support vehicles from adjacent areas during training activities. However, these activities are currently occurring within B-17 and would not increase in frequency under Alternative 1. Noise from training exercises could startle or disturb recreationists and game species in the area, however, noise from training activities would be largely contained within the proposed boundary of B-17, with noise contours of 55 dBA DNL extending south from the proposed boundary at the noise contours' furthest point in Nye County (see Section 3.7, Noise). Therefore, training activities at B-17 would not significantly impact recreation.

Public Accessibility

Under Alternative 1, the entire B-17 range would be closed and restricted from public use, except for Navy-authorized activities such as ceremonial or cultural site visits, and management activities. The Navy would not allow recreational activities within the proposed boundary of B-17, which would be fenced and closed for public safety with signage installed to warn the public of the closure. Navy policy does not allow anyone within a WDZ when a range is in active use. The Navy also does not allow members of the public in a non-operational WDZ without prior clearance and coordination.

Implementing Alternative 1 would prevent public access to Fairview Peak and Sand Springs Range, which would no longer be accessible by the public for recreational purposes. This would affect wildlife hunters, hikers, OHV operators, rock collectors, and other recreationists who visit the area. The OHV data collection found a maximum count for all locations at B-17 of 119 vehicles. The counts on B-17 were more regular than at other locations during the count period, which suggests recurring vehicle traffic near B-17. Counts increased during upland species hunting season in Nevada (see Supporting Study: Transportation/Traffic Study for the Fallon Range Training Complex, available at <https://frtcmodernization.com>). As such, closing access to Fairview Peak and portions of the Sand Springs Range would be a significant impact on recreation and OHV users.

The Pony Express National Historic Trail parallels U.S. Route 50 through B-17. Alternative 1 would not affect public access to this trail system. All improvements at B-17 would be south of this trail system. Therefore, the Pony Express National Historic Trail would not be affected by the expansion of B-17.

Alternative 1 would prevent access to trail systems historically used by the Vegas to Reno Race and the Valley Off-Road Racing Association Fallon circuits. Expanding B-17 under Alternative 1 would significantly impact these popular races. Race operators would be required to select alternate paths that avoid B-17.

The requested withdrawal area includes habitat for bighorn sheep, mule deer, and pronghorn. This includes 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. Road closures east of Fairview Peak and Slate Mountain would have a long-term effect on the public's ability to access these areas for wildlife-related activities (e.g., hunting and viewing). The Navy would no longer allow hunting within B-17, which includes cancelling the Navy's annual bighorn sheep hunt. Therefore, expanding B-17 under Alternative 1 would significantly impact hunting.

The NDOW would continue maintaining wildlife guzzlers with the coordination of the Navy within range or training areas. In addition, although perimeter fencing would include a larger area than current baseline conditions, fencing would be designed to allow large game species (e.g., pronghorn, mule deer, bighorn sheep) to jump over or crawl under the fence and smaller game species (e.g., chukar, rabbits) to fit between or below the wires. The Navy would also incrementally remove the existing interior fencing within the withdrawal area, which would decrease the fragmentation of habitat.

Indirectly, this alternative could also affect other recreation areas within the region, due to the closing of portions of the Salt Wells and Middlegate Recreation areas, as the public shifts activities to those areas. This may lead to an increase in recreationists at those areas, including at the Sand Mountain recreation area or at nearby hunting grounds. Annual visitation at the Sand Mountain recreation area currently numbers between 50,000 and 70,000 visitors per year (Bureau of Land Management, 2017).

Construction

Since the proposed construction activities would occur within the B-17 range where public access is restricted, these activities would not significantly impact public recreation. Any proposed fencing and maintenance roads would be evaluated further in follow-on NEPA documentation after any ultimate Congressional decision is made.

Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 1

State Route 839

Alternative 1 includes the potential relocation of State Route 839. State Route 839 has an average count of 40 vehicles per day as of 2015. The Navy, which uses State Route 839 to access B-17, is the primary user of this road (see Supporting Study: Transportation/Traffic Study for the Fallon Range Training Complex, available at <https://frtcmodernization.com>). In addition to providing access to the Rawhide-Denton Mine, State Route 839 also allows hunters and other recreationists to access the eastern slope of the Sand Springs Range. Using funding provided by the Navy, the Federal Highway Administration, in cooperation with the Nevada Department of Transportation, would be responsible for planning, designing, permitting, and constructing any realignment of State Route 839. The Navy has submitted 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. NDOT would ensure that construction of any new route is complete before closing any portion of the existing State Route 839, and the Navy would not utilize any portion of an expanded B-17 range (if implemented) that would overlap the existing State Route 839 unless and until any such new route has been completed and made available to the public.

Paiute Pipeline

Alternative 1 includes the potential relocation of a segment of the Paiute Pipeline outside of the B-17 WDZ. The Navy would purchase the impacted portion of the Paiute Pipeline and then would pay for relocation of the existing Paiute Pipeline south of the proposed B-17 range. 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. 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.

3.12.3.2.3 Bravo-20

Based on the information presented below, there would be a significant impact on recreation for B-20 under Alternative 1.

Land Withdrawal and Acquisition

B-20 would expand in all directions, growing by approximately 180,329 acres (see Table 2-1) and increasing in total size to approximately 221,334 acres. This expansion includes approximately 3,200 acres of land currently withdrawn by the USFWS as a portion of the 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 and the USFWS would close the withdrawn refuge lands to the public. The USFWS would continue to manage the land under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Navy once terms of the MOU were reached. However, the USFWS would undergo a public planning process 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 U.S.C. 668dd–668ee).

The new lands requested for withdrawal and proposed for acquisition would be fenced in accordance with all applicable regulations and would remove recreational activities from B-20. The Navy would expand their fence line patrol and maintenance procedures to include fences that are on withdrawn lands. The Navy proposes to establish two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers at NAS Fallon. Part of the duties of these officers would include patrolling of the added fence line for trespass issues and reporting to the Navy any broken or downed fences for maintenance repair. Therefore, there would be a significant impact on recreation because of the withdrawal or acquisition under Alternative 1.

Training Activities

All training activities would be located within the proposed boundary of B-20, and the public would not be able to access the training areas. Under Alternative 1, the peak noise levels from air gunnery operations would not extend past the proposed expanded B-20 boundaries. Noise from training operations at B-20 including noise contours of 65 dB DNL and below would extend northeast and south west of the range for air activities. Noise from training exercises could startle or disturb recreationists and game species in the area. The public may observe and hear aircraft, munitions, and support vehicles from adjacent areas during training activities. However, these activities are currently occurring within B-20, and these activities would not increase in frequency under Alternative 1. Therefore, training activities at the expanded B-20 would not significantly impact recreational activities adjacent to the range because they would be intermittent and of low intensity.

Public Accessibility

Under Alternative 1, the B-20 withdrawn or acquired lands would be closed and restricted from public use, except for Navy-authorized activities such as ceremonial or cultural site visits, or regulatory or management activities (e.g., BLM, NDOW, or USFWS activities). The Navy would not allow recreational activities within the proposed closed portions of B-20, which would be fenced and closed for public safety. Navy policy does not allow anyone within a WDZ when a range is in active use. The Navy also does not allow members of the public into a non-operational WDZ without prior clearance and coordination. This area would also include fencing and signage warning the public it cannot enter this area.

Implementing Alternative 1 would prevent public access to the northeast portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. For purposes of public safety, the perimeter of B-20 would be fenced off within the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge. The B-20 boundary would expand south to the northern perimeter of the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge, and it would include 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge (18 percent) as well as adjoining Lyon County Conservation Easements (1,920 acres). The Navy and the USFWS would prepare an MOU for the management of those portions of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge that would be within B-20; however, the land would still be maintained as it currently is under the refuge. The area being fenced off within the Refuge has little recreation opportunity currently because it is a remote area that is not readily accessible by the public. Under Alternative 1, public access to the West Humboldt Range would be restricted to access from the west and north of the range, which could impact recreation for users that normally would access the area from the east or south for recreation or cultural visits. Hunters wouldn't be able to access the east slope of the West Humboldt Range, including Wild Horse Pass and Wild Horse Spring.

East County Road overlaps portions of the proposed eastern boundary of B-20. East County Road and the area east of East County Road that overlaps B-20 would remain open. Therefore, the requested withdrawal would not affect the public's ability to access the Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge or the western slope of the Stillwater Mountains. Therefore, expanding B-20 would not significantly impact public access for recreation.

Alternative 1 would place gates across the Navy's access road to B-20 (locally known as "Pole Line Road"), effectively closing this road to the public. This east/west unpaved road passes to the north of the existing B-20 in northern Churchill County and provides access for B-20 maintenance. Although this road is occasionally used by hunters and other recreationists (see Supporting Study: Transportation/Traffic Study for the Fallon Range Training Complex, available at <https://frtcmodernization.com>), the Navy is the only authorized user of this road. Installation of gates would prevent any further incidental use of this road by the public.

Public exclusion would likely have positive and negative impacts on any game species that may occur within this area. Removal of hunting pressure would likely increase numbers of game species. However, hunting activities provide an ecological service, particularly when managed with NDOW tag limits, in facilitating long-term population health. Although perimeter fencing would include a larger area than current baseline conditions, fencing would be designed to allow large game species (e.g., pronghorn, mule deer, bighorn sheep) to jump over or crawl under the fence and smaller game species (e.g., chukar, rabbits) to fit between or below the wires. Hunters could also access the area that the Navy's access road to B-20 led to via the East County road and OHVs on the east side of B-20. Therefore, expanding B-20 would not significantly impact hunting.

Construction

Since the proposed construction activities would occur within the expanded B-20 range where public access is restricted, these activities would not significantly impact public recreation. Any proposed fencing and maintenance roads would be evaluated further in follow-on NEPA documentation after any ultimate Congressional decision is made.

3.12.3.2.4 Dixie Valley Training Area

Based on the information presented below, there would not be a significant impact on recreation in the DVTA under Alternative 1. With regard to natural resources management and recreation, including hunting, the BLM and the Navy would jointly manage the DVTA via the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan, per the Sikes Act, and OPNAVINST 5090.

Land Withdrawal and Acquisition

Under Alternative 1, the DVTA would expand in all directions by approximately 293,343 acres (see Table 2-1), increasing its total size to approximately 370,903 acres. The proposed expansion overlaps portions of the Clan Alpine Mountain WSA, the Job Peak WSA, the Stillwater Range WSA, and the BLM-proposed Fox Peak Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) (proposed under Alternative E of the *Carson City District Draft Resource Management Plan*). Under Alternative 1, Congressional withdrawal legislation would remove the WSA designation from those portions of the WSAs that would be withdrawn as the DVTA: 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]) within the DVTA.

Alternative 1 recommends removing a portion of the proposed Fox Peak ACEC designation described in the *Carson City Draft Resource Management Plan 2014* (Preferred Alternative E) within the DVTA. The BLM would continue managing the remaining portions of the WSAs. In an evaluation of the Stillwater Range WSA, the BLM determined that the Stillwater Range WSA no longer contains wilderness characteristics. A change to the WSA designation would presumably be accomplished through any ultimate Congressional withdrawal legislation. Lands that are acquired through Congressional Decision in the DVTA would be open for public use in the same manner as the rest of the DVTA area. Therefore, there would be no significant impact on recreation because of the withdrawal or acquisition under Alternative 1.

Training Activities

Training activities would expand within the proposed DVTA boundary into areas where they have not previously occurred. The public may observe and hear aircraft and support vehicles during training activities within this area. Noise from training exercises could startle or disturb recreationists and game species in the area. Noise from training operations in the DVTA would not change significantly from the baseline contours in the training area. These contours are from airspace use only and the highest-level contour in the DVTA would be at 65 dBA DNL in the northeastern corner of the DVTA (see Section 3.7, Noise). The BLM would manage public recreation activities within the DVTA.

The Navy would minimize impacts of training on the public by following Navy policies and procedures that restrict training activities on the DVTA because of public safety and environmental concerns. For example, the Navy's safety measures include standard operating procedures designed to avoid or minimize civilian exposure to training activities within the DVTA (which are not live fire). If the public enters a training area within the open land areas of the DVTA while a training event is underway, the training would temporarily cease or move elsewhere while the public is in or transits the training area. In addition, removing the designation of the withdrawn portions of the WSAs would open up the areas for ground training activities in the DVTA.

Public Accessibility

Allowable public uses of the DVTA would not change from current conditions under Alternative 1 except within the de-designated withdrawn portions of the WSAs, and mineral resource exploration and development. A change to the WSA designation would presumably be accomplished through any ultimate Congressional decision withdrawal legislation. The Navy, through the BLM, would allow existing recreational activities to continue within the DVTA. Alternative 1 does not include installing perimeter fencing around the DVTA; however, fencing would be installed around the perimeter of the three proposed electronic warfare sites (up to 15 acres total) (see Figure 2-5), which would prevent the public from entering these areas. The 11-Mile Canyon Electronic Warfare Site would be located in the Stillwater Mountains south of the Jobs Peak WSA. The Fairview Low Electronic Warfare Site would be located east of the Fairview Mountains and Earthquake Road. Meanwhile, the North Job Peak Electronic Warfare Site would be located at Fox Peak. The public would continue to have access to the remainder of the DVTA for public recreation, including hunting, camping, hiking, and OHV use. In addition, removing the designation of the withdrawn portions of the WSAs could potentially open up recreation restrictions on approximately 74,955 acres. Under this alternative, mineral resource exploration or development would not be allowed within the DVTA, which may benefit public recreation because these activities are generally incompatible with outdoor recreation. Therefore, expanding the DVTA would not significantly impact public access for recreation in the DVTA.

Construction

Under Alternative 1, construction activities at the DVTA would include constructing three Electronic Warfare sites: North Job Peak, 11-Mile Canyon, and Fairview Low (see Figure 2-1). Each site would be located on a small (up to five acres) flat parcel of land to minimize soil disturbance and grading activities. The Navy would fence each Electronic Warfare site with 8-foot chain link fencing and a 16-foot swing gate. A mobile emitter would be placed at each site to minimize the amount of construction necessary (see Figure 2-6). The Navy would use existing trails and roads to transport construction materials to the new Electronic Warfare sites and provide service access. These activities would be intermittent and temporary, therefore, any impact on recreation from construction would be less than significant.

3.12.3.2.5 Special Use Airspace

Based on the information presented below, there would not be a significant impact on recreation in or under SUA under Alternative 1. Restricted airspace (R-) that would change to surface levels include R-4805A, R-4816S (Low), and R-4816N (Low) (see Figure 3.6-1 for locations of restricted airspace). Other restricted areas that are already to the surface include R-4810, R-4812 and R-4813A (see Figure 3.6-1). These areas overlap with recreational resources such as the Stillwater Range WSA, the Clan Alpine Mountains WSA, and the special land management overlay over the Sand Springs Range. The Navy has been performing aircraft maneuvers in the region of influence for over 70 years. Under Alternative 1, the Navy proposes to expand its existing SUA and reconfigure existing airspace to address current training constraints (see Figure 3.12-14). Alternative 1 would not increase military operations within the region; however, it would reconfigure WDZs and SUA over the proposed bombing ranges within the FRTC. The WDZs for the FRTC Bravo ranges would be wholly located within their respective expanded range boundaries or respective new range boundaries.

FAA and Navy policy requires that the Navy control the land under restricted SUA (i.e., area of armed overflight). Existing restricted SUA would be reconfigured over the proposed expanded ranges. The Navy would not allow recreational activities within the SUA over bombing ranges under this alternative. There would be no change to the restricted airspace over B-19 or between B-17 and B-19. NAS Fallon and the Walker River Paiute Tribe under SUA between B-17 and B-19 recently signed a Memorandum of Agreement regarding operational changes to reduce the risk of off-range ordnance and to provide access for the Navy to the reservation lands to conduct sweeps.

Military Operations Areas provide the minimum SUA for the safe maneuvering of aircraft on the FRTC. The Navy would avoid population centers and noise-sensitive areas by 3,000 feet AGL, as per current Navy and FAA regulations. The Navy recommendation regarding land compatibility uses and noise, is that noise levels above 65 dBA DNL are generally incompatible with recreational activities. Section 3.7 (Noise) shows the areas on the noise maps where noise contours are greater than 65 dBA DNL. These areas are generally contained on all of the ranges.

The 65 dBA contour extends past the range boundaries on the northeast, and on the southwest sides of B-20. Lands to the northeast and southwest of B-20 are a mixture of privately-owned parcels, or BLM-managed lands, none of which are currently developed. The Stillwater Range WSA is immediately to the east of B-20, but the 65-dBA contour does not extend to the WSA boundary. In addition, although Military Operations Areas (MOAs) would be changed, and in some cases lowered, over other existing WSAs and national wildlife refuges (see Figure 3.12-14), the FAA requests that pilots maintain a minimum of 3,000 feet AGL above wilderness areas and national wildlife refuges (Federal Aviation Administration, 2017). OPNAVINST 3710.7 (series) says that these areas “shall be avoided when at

altitudes of less than 3,000 feet AGL except when in compliance with an approved: (1) traffic or approach pattern, (2) VR or IR, (3) SUA.” This policy further states, “Noise sensitive areas shall be avoided in the development of instrument routes and visual routes and additional SUA unless the 3,000-foot criteria can be observed.”

Under the Reno MOA and Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspace, which overlap with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation and the northern part of Pyramid Lake, the noise levels are projected to be less than 35 dBA, which is lower than the 65-dBA recommendation. Therefore, recreational activities would not be impacted under the military training route over Pyramid Lake, and visitation to the lake should not change (see Tables 3.7-7, 3.7-9, and 3.7-10). In other areas under airspace, the noise data show a slight increase for some sensitive receptors during daytime events where a recreationist may experience outdoor speech interference. But the most notable interference would be near the town of Gabbs and in the eastern portions of the FRTC SUA (see Section 3.7.3.2.9, Effects on Recreation).

Wildfires could potentially affect recreation activities under FRTC airspace. However, as described in in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety and Protection of Children), there would be no change to the current use of chaff and flares within SUA. The Navy would continue to use minimum flare release heights that rise to 2,000 feet AGL during the annual fire season (typically between May and October of each year) to prevent wildfire occurrence, and the Navy is also actively developing a new Wildland Fire Management Plan, as discussed further in Section 3.14 (Public Health and Safety and Protection of Children), to manage any changes to the FRTC.

3.12.3.2.6 Summary of Effects and Conclusions

Under Alternative 1, the Navy would expand B-16, B-17, B-20, and the DVTA, and the public would have either no access or limited access to approximately 477,551 acres of existing open federal land. This land withdrawal would impact 0.51 percent of the lands administered by the BLM Humboldt River Field Office, 0.11 percent of the lands administered by the BLM Sierra Front Field Office, and 11.7 percent of the lands administered by the BLM Stillwater Field Office. Of note, the lands impacted by the withdrawal would not all be closed to the public as they would be part of the DVTA, which would remain open for public recreation. Alternative 1 includes areas that would be closed and restricted from public use except for Navy-authorized activities (e.g., ceremonial visits; cultural site visits; research/academic pursuits; or regulatory or management activities, such as BLM or NDOW activities). All closed areas would be fenced and include signage to discourage public access. Alternative 1 also includes Congress removing the designation of WSAs in withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]), Job Peak (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Stillwater Range (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]) WSAs, potentially opening these areas found in the DVTA to new types of recreational activities (e.g., OHV use [which is already allowed on established trails]). A change to the WSA designation would presumably be accomplished through any ultimate Congressional decision withdrawal legislation. Alternative 1 would close public access to 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge and 1,920 acres of adjacent Lyon County Conservation Easements. This alternative would also require the partial relocation of popular racing events, including the Vegas to Reno, to avoid the range areas. In addition, the public would no longer have access to popular hunting areas within Sand Springs and around Fairview Peak under this alternative. Therefore, implementation of Alternative 1 would have significant impacts on recreation.

3.12.3.3 Alternative 2: Modernization of the Fallon Range Training Complex and Managed Access

Based on the information presented below, there would be a significant impact on recreation under Alternative 2. Under Alternative 2, the Navy would renew its current public land withdrawal at the FRTC. The Navy would also withdraw or acquire additional land to be reserved for military use, as described under Alternative 1. Alternative 2 would close public access to 513,693 acres for the expansion of B-16, B-17, and B-20 but would allow certain uses when the ranges are not in operation, with prior coordination (see Table 2-5). Meanwhile, recreational activities within the DVTA would be similar to existing baseline conditions. However, Congressional legislation would remove the designation of withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Stillwater Range, and Job Peak WSAs, with the expansion of the DVTA, and this change would decrease existing restrictions on recreation in those areas (e.g., OHV use [which is already allowed on established trails]). A change to the WSA designation would presumably be accomplished through any ultimate Congressional decision withdrawal legislation.

3.12.3.3.1 Bravo-16

Based on the information presented below, there would be a significant impact on recreation for B-16 under Alternative 2.

Land Withdrawal and Acquisition

Alternative 2 would have the same withdrawals as proposed in Alternative 1. Therefore, as discussed under Alternative 1, there would be a significant impact on recreation because of the withdrawal under Alternative 2.

Training Activities

Under Alternative 2, there would be no change to tempo or type of training activities at B-16, but training activities would occur in new areas. Therefore, as discussed under Alternative 1, there would be no significant impact on recreation as a result of training activities under Alternative 2.

Public Accessibility

Expanding B-16 under Alternative 2 would have similar impacts on recreation as those of Alternative 1 (Section 3.12.3.2.1). As discussed under Alternative 1, hunting would not be allowed in the expanded B-16 range area. Implementing Alternative 2 would prevent access to areas west of B-16, which have historically been used by OHVs and for off-road racing, events, and hunting. Therefore, expanding B-16 would significantly impact public access to the area west of B-16 for OHV racing and hunting.

With the exception of Simpson Road and that portion of B-16 south of Simpson Road, the perimeter of B-16 would be fenced in its entirety and closed for public safety. The Navy would install the same perimeter fence as proposed under Alternative 1 to prevent public access to the bombing range. However, the Navy would permit certain race events (i.e., Reno to Vegas) to continue within B-16 under this alternative. The Navy and the BLM would coordinate the permitting and scheduling of these events. The Navy and either the BLM or the State of Nevada would jointly manage these races in accordance with an MOU. The Navy would clear race routes of potential safety hazards prior to these events. A range sweep would be conducted prior to the race or event, using government-provided ground transportation. After all race participants have exited the restricted area on Navy property, the Navy would conduct a final sweep with the designated race or event officials. As such, this alternative would reduce impacts on the racing community that uses B-16 compared to Alternative 1. Impacts from proposed construction and training activities within B-16 under this alternative would be the same as

under Alternative 1 (Section 3.12.3.2.1). Racing events would occur only when the range is not operational. Therefore, expanding B-16 would significantly impact public access for recreation on B-16, under Alternative 2.

Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 2

Proposed Dead Camel Mountains Special Recreation Management Areas

Like Alternative 1, Alternative 2 includes the planning for alternative routes to provide public access to the proposed Dead Camel Mountains Special Recreation Management Areas. The BLM and Navy would continue to coordinate on recreation opportunities that may be impacted and conduct alternative route planning and follow-on, site-specific NEPA would be conducted.

Construction

Construction activities proposed under Alternative 2 would be the same as those proposed under Alternative 1. Therefore, as discussed under Alternative 1, there would be no significant impact on recreation as a result of construction under Alternative 2.

3.12.3.3.2 Bravo-17

Based on the information presented below, there would be a significant impact on recreation for B-17 under Alternative 2.

Land Withdrawal and Acquisition

Alternative 2 would have the same withdrawals or acquisitions as requested and proposed in Alternative 1. Therefore, as discussed under Alternative 1, there would be a significant impact on recreation because of the withdrawal and acquisition under Alternative 2.

Training Activities

Under Alternative 2, there would be no change to tempo or type of training activities at B-17, but training activities would occur in new areas. Therefore, there would be no significant impact on recreation as a result of training activities under Alternative 2.

Public Accessibility

As with Alternative 1, the Navy would install a perimeter fence that would prevent public access to the expanded bombing range. Although the Navy would prohibit OHV use, it would continue to allow certain races, including the Vegas to Reno Race, which would occur in the southern portion of B-17. The Navy and the BLM would coordinate the permitting and scheduling of these events. The Navy and either the BLM or the State of Nevada would jointly manage these races in accordance with an MOU. The Navy would clear race routes of unexploded ordnance and other potential safety hazards prior to these events. A range sweep would be conducted prior to the race or event, using government-provided ground transportation. After all race participants have exited the restricted area on Navy property, the Navy would conduct a final sweep with the designated race or event officials. As such, this alternative reduces impacts on the racing community that currently uses B-17 compared to Alternative 1.

The Governor's Alternative, discussed in Section 2.5.7 (Governor's Alternative ["Nevada Alternative"]), and other scoping comments were considered during the creation of Alternative 2 to allow more access to the ranges. Portions of the Fairview Peak, Slate Mountain are currently within the B-17 withdrawal. The Sand Springs Range, the Monte Cristo Mountains, the rest of the Fairview Peak, and Slate Mountain

areas outside of the current B-17 withdrawal are popular hunting areas. Alternative 2 reduces impacts on hunting by allowing limited hunting on B-17.

The proposed hunt program would be limited to hunting bighorn sheep because of projected mission constraints on access and safety concerns. Bighorn sheep hunting would be compatible with operations on designated portions of B-17 due to bighorn sheep use of remote habitat, low tag number, and the fall/winter hunting season. Hunting seasons on B-17 would operate on a not-to-interfere basis with operational training requirements. The Navy proposes to allow bighorn sheep hunting in the B-17 range to the maximum extent practicable, aiming to accommodate 15 consecutive days during the bighorn sheep hunting season, which occurs from November to January. Safety considerations include unexploded ordnance sweeps, road blocks, signage for avoidance areas, and range operations control. The Navy and NDOW would manage the hunting program through a Memorandum of Agreement. Access and safety would be handled by the Navy, while all other hunt management (e.g., number of tags, hunt seasons) would remain under NDOW control.

As discussed in Section 2.3.5.2.2 (Hunting Activities) and in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans), proposed program requirements for hunting activities on B-17 may include the policies listed below. These policies would be reviewed annually as they would be part of the annual Hunt Program Work Plan and would need to be flexible enough to meet the mission requirements while allowing the maximum access possible for hunting on the FRTC.

- Hunting program for bighorn sheep managed jointly by the Navy and NDOW in accordance with NDOW policies and reviewed annually. The review of the hunting program would occur for continued evaluation of compatible hunting opportunities and adaptive management of the hunting program; additional hunts and feasibility for opportunistic hunt access would be evaluated.
- Hunting activities remain compatible with mission training activities and operate on a not-to-interfere basis.
- Range access managed by a Controlled Access Program, with stipulations.
- Hunters must complete ground safety training and sign an MOU for the hunting program.
- Hunters must sign a waiver agreement releasing the Navy of any liability for injury to or death of hunters or hunting party members, or for damage to vehicles or equipment or other property of such persons.
- Hunting party is limited to five persons, including the tag holder, on FRTC at any one time, with no member of the hunting party under 18 years of age.
- Bombing range access procedures would be in accordance with Navy range policies.
- A face-to-face Hunter Safety ground access brief would be required.
- Prior scheduling would be required. Check-in and Check-out with Range Control would be mandatory for any access to the B-17 range.
- Hunters must remain clear of B-17 designated avoidance areas, as marked on maps to be provided to hunters during annual safety training. These areas would be determined annually based on range conditions and reviewed and updated annually by range operations and safety department. In general, avoidance areas would include targets and areas of known unexploded ordnance.
- No pets, to include hunting dogs, would be allowed on B-17.

The Navy would make all reasonable accommodations through adaptive management to maintain the quality of the experience during the bighorn sheep hunting program. The proposed implementation of the bighorn sheep hunt would include opening access to the B-17 range for a minimum of 15 consecutive days between November and January, when compatible with military training activities. The Navy would take steps to incorporate a process and designate areas that are suitable for hunters to camp on the range while hunting. The Navy would conduct an annual review of the Hunt Program Work Plan. NDOW would notify tag holders each year indicating the course/training requirements, dates of training sessions, seasonal hunting date opportunities, and any other pertinent information.

The Navy is committed to continuing a bighorn sheep hunting program on the FRTC's B-17 and would annually evaluate and review the hunting program scope. The review of the annual Hunt Program Work Plan would occur for continued evaluation of compatible hunting opportunities and adaptive management of the hunting program; additional hunts and feasibility for opportunistic hunt access would also be evaluated. Hunting would occur within B-17 in accordance with NDOW rules and regulations, including designated hunting seasons. NAS Fallon would create a Controlled Access Program to manage hunting at B-17. The Navy and NDOW would jointly manage the hunting program. Access and safety would be handled by the Navy, while all other hunt management (e.g., number of tags, hunt seasons) would remain under NDOW control. Hunters would be required to comply with the requirements found in Section 2.3.5.2.2 (Hunting Activities).

Although impacts on hunters would be reduced under Alternative 2, a reduction in hunting in the B-17 range would still be anticipated because of access restrictions when compared to baseline conditions. Hunting of pronghorn, mule deer, chukar, waterfowl, and small game is not currently proposed to be permitted on B-17 under Alternative 2. This would result in a negative impact on hunting activities on the proposed expansion land. NDOW would be able to access existing water developments (e.g., guzzlers) on the range for maintenance and repair. The Navy would also reduce impacts on hunters by coordinating with NDOW and installing water developments outside of the range with the aim of moving herds of pronghorn off range and increasing hunting quality outside of the expanded B-17 range. In addition, although perimeter fencing would include a larger area than current baseline conditions, fencing would be designed to allow large game species (e.g., pronghorn, mule deer, bighorn sheep) to jump over or crawl under the fence and smaller game species (e.g., chukar, rabbits) to fit between or below the wires. The Navy would incrementally remove existing interior fencing within the withdrawal area.

Indirectly, this alternative could also affect other recreation areas within the region as the public shifts activities to those areas. Under Alternative 2, the bighorn sheep hunting program and installation of water developments for movement of pronghorn off-range would reduce impacts on hunters. Coordinated racing events would occur when the range is not operational. The range would not be open for OHV use. Therefore, expanding B-17 and changes to public access would significantly impact recreation.

Construction

Construction activities proposed under Alternative 2 would be the same as those proposed under Alternative 1. Construction activities would increase noise and fugitive dust; however, the recreationalists would not be permitted in the areas of B-17 where construction would be occurring. Therefore, as discussed under Alternative 1, there would be a significant impact on recreation under Alternative 2.

Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 2

The additional infrastructure improvements that would potentially occur after the implementation of Alternative 2 would be the same as those described under Alternative 1. Site-specific environmental analysis and NEPA planning would be required before any potential relocation of the portion of State Route 839 or the pipeline could occur. In addition, the Navy would not utilize any portion of an expanded B-17 range (if implemented) that would overlap the existing State Route 839 or the pipeline unless and until any such re-routing of the State Route or pipeline has been completed and made available to the public or the pipeline owner. The Navy has submitted 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. NDOT would ensure that construction of any new route is complete before closing any portion of the existing State Route 839, and the Navy would not utilize any portion of an expanded B-17 range (if implemented) that would overlap the existing State Route 839 unless and until any such new route has been completed and made available to the public. The BLM would have decision authority with respect to any proposed final routing subsequent to completion of site-specific environmental analysis of the pipeline.

3.12.3.3.3 Bravo-20

Based on the information presented below, there would be a significant impact to recreation for B-20 under Alternative 2.

Land Withdrawal and Acquisition

Alternative 2 would have the same withdrawals and acquisitions as requested and proposed in Alternative 1. Therefore, as discussed under Alternative 1, there would be a significant impact on recreation because of the withdrawal and acquisition under Alternative 2.

Training Activities

Under Alternative 2, there would be no change in tempo or type of training activities at B-20, but training activities would occur in new areas. Therefore, as discussed under Alternative 1, there would be no significant impact on recreation as a result of training activities under Alternative 2.

Public Accessibility

Expanding B-20 under Alternative 2 would have similar impacts on recreation as those of Alternative 1 (Section 3.12.3.2.3). As with Alternative 1, the Navy would install a perimeter fence that would prevent public access to the bombing range. The public would not be able to access portions of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge and Lyon County Conservation Easements. Alternative 2 would allow race events to occur within B-20, however, this area is not known to be a popular destination for OHVs or racing. The Navy and the BLM would coordinate the permitting and scheduling of these events. The Navy and either the BLM or the State of Nevada would jointly manage these races in accordance with an MOU. The Navy would clear race routes of potential safety hazards prior to these events. A range sweep would be conducted prior to the race or event, using government-provided ground transportation. After all race participants have exited the restricted area on Navy property, the Navy would conduct a final sweep with the designated race or event officials. Therefore, expanding B-20 would not significantly impact public access for recreation at B-20, under Alternative 2.

Construction

Construction activities proposed under Alternative 2 would be the same as those proposed under Alternative 1. Therefore, as discussed under Alternative 1, there would be no significant impact on recreation as a result of construction under Alternative 2.

3.12.3.3.4 Dixie Valley Training Area

Based on the information presented below, there would not be a significant impact on recreation for the DVTA under Alternative 2. With regard to natural resources management and recreation, including hunting, the BLM and the Navy would jointly manage the DVTA via the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan, per the Sikes Act, and OPNAVINST 5090.

Land Withdrawal and Acquisition

Alternative 2 would have the same withdrawals and acquisitions as requested and proposed in Alternative 1. Therefore, as discussed under Alternative 1, there would be no significant impact on recreation because of the withdrawal and acquisition under Alternative 2.

Training Activities

Under Alternative 2, there would be no change to training activities at the DVTA. Therefore, as discussed under Alternative 1, there would be no significant impact on recreation as a result of training activities under Alternative 2.

Public Accessibility

Changes to the DVTA under Alternative 2 would have similar impacts on recreation as Alternative 1 (Section 3.12.3.2.4). This would include Congressional legislation to remove the designation of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Job Peak, and Stillwater Range WSAs in the same manner as Alternative 1. A change to the WSA designation would presumably be accomplished through any ultimate Congressional decision withdrawal legislation. Allowing geothermal (as managed under the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 where compatible) and salable mineral resource development activities could potentially interfere with recreation within the DVTA; however, these activities (particularly geothermal) are currently occurring within the Dixie Valley (see Section 3.3, Mining and Mineral Resources) and would have minimal impacts on recreation. The Navy would no longer allow locatable mineral mining within the DVTA under this alternative, potentially offsetting, at least in part, any adverse impacts on recreation from leasable and salable mineral resource development compared to baseline conditions. Therefore, expanding the DVTA would not significantly impact recreation.

Construction

Construction activities proposed under Alternative 2 would be the same as those proposed under Alternative 1. Therefore, as discussed under Alternative 1, there would be no significant impact on recreation as a result of construction under Alternative 2.

3.12.3.3.5 Special Use Airspace

Based on the information presented below, there would not be a significant impact on recreation for SUA under Alternative 2. Changes to FRTC SUA under Alternative 2 would have the same impacts on recreation as Alternative 1 (Section 3.12.3.2.5). Recreationalists outside of ranges and under SUA may experience visual and auditory impacts from aircraft overflights. This alternative includes areas that would be closed and restricted from public use such as the Bravo ranges, except for Navy-authorized

activities (e.g., ceremonial visits; cultural site visits; research/academic pursuits; or regulatory or management activities, such as BLM or NDOW activities). Therefore, as discussed under Alternative 1, changes to FRTC SUA would have no significant impact on recreation under Alternative 2.

3.12.3.3.6 Summary of Effects and Conclusions

Under Alternative 2, the Navy would expand B-16, B-17, B-20, and the DVTA. This alternative would have the same land and airspace configurations as Alternative 1. Alternative 2 would close public access to 513,693 acres for expansion of the Bravo ranges; but, unlike Alternative 1, Alternative 2 would allow certain uses of the land when the ranges are not in operation, with prior coordination. The Navy would fence all closed areas and would also include signage, warning the public that they cannot enter these areas. Alternative 2 also includes Congressional legislation to remove the WSA designation of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]), Job Peak (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Stillwater Range (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]) WSAs, potentially opening these areas up to additional types of recreation activities. Any change to the WSA designation would presumably be accomplished through any ultimate Congressional decision withdrawal legislation. Alternative 2 would also close public access to 3,200 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge (approximately 18 percent) and 1,920 acres of adjoining lands under Lyon County Conservation Easements. Alternative 2 would allow access for racing events, like the Vegas to Reno, on B-16, B-17, and B-20, and the popular bighorn sheep hunting areas on B-17 (e.g., Sand Springs and Fairview Peak) except for those areas that would be closed for public safety (i.e., target areas). Hunting would occur on B-17 in accordance with the requirements in Section 2.3.5.2.2 (Hunting Activities). Though Alternative 2 modifies public access in relation to Alternative 1, implementation of Alternative 2 would have significant impacts on recreation.

3.12.3.4 Alternative 3: Bravo-17 Shift and Managed Access (Preferred Alternative)

Based on the information presented below, there would be a significant impact on recreation under Alternative 3. The main difference between Alternatives 1 and 2, and Alternative 3 is that the B-17 range would be shifted and situated farther south and east under Alternative 3. Unlike Alternative 1, the Navy would not withdraw land south of U.S. Route 50 as DVTA. Rather, the Navy proposes that Congress categorizes this area as a Special Land Management Overlay (see Figure 2-12). This Special Land Management Overlay would 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, would not be withdrawn by the Navy, and would not directly be used for land-based military training or managed by the Navy. Otherwise, these two areas would remain open to public access and would be available for all appropriate uses, including recreation and 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. BLM and the Navy would also enter into an MOU to administer the details of the consultation and approval process.

Alternative 3 would implement the same managed access programs as Alternative 2. Recreational activities within the DVTA would be similar to existing baseline conditions, and Congressional legislation to remove the WSA designation of the withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains, Stillwater Range, and Job Peak WSAs may decrease existing restrictions on recreation in those areas (e.g., allowing OHV use and hunting) under Alternative 3. Any change to the WSA designation would presumably be accomplished through any ultimate Congressional decision withdrawal legislation.

3.12.3.4.1 Bravo-16

Based on the information presented below, there would be a significant impact on recreation for B-16 under Alternative 3.

Land Withdrawal and Acquisition

Under Alternative 3, the B-16 range would expand to the west by approximately 31,875 acres (see Figure 2-15), increasing the total area to approximately 59,234 acres. Unlike Alternatives 1 and 2, the lands south of Simpson Road (and Simpson Road itself) would not be withdrawn, and since they are currently withdrawn lands, they would be relinquished by the Navy back to the BLM. Although these lands south of Simpson Road represent lands that are being relinquished by the Navy to the BLM for public use, they are already open to the public, and therefore would not represent a significant change from current conditions. Therefore, as discussed under Alternatives 1 and 2, there would be a significant impact on recreation because of the withdrawal and acquisition of new land under Alternative 3.

Training Activities

Under Alternative 3, there would be no change to training activities at B-16. Therefore, there would be no significant impact on recreation as a result of training activities under Alternative 3.

Public Accessibility

Visits requiring access to the Bravo ranges would be coordinated with the Navy and allowed if compatible with Navy training activities and range safety. The proposed expansion areas, construction activities, and training activities for B-16 under Alternative 3 would be the same as that described for Alternatives 1 and 2 (see Sections 3.12.3.2.1 and 3.12.3.3.1). Alternative 3 would have the same access restrictions on B-16 as Alternative 2. Therefore, as discussed under Alternative 2, expanding B-16 under Alternative 3 would have a significant impact on recreation on B-16.

Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 3

Proposed Dead Camel Mountains Special Recreation Management Areas

Like Alternative 1 and 2, Alternative 3 includes the planning for alternative routes to provide public access to the proposed Dead Camel Mountains Special Recreation Management Areas. The BLM and Navy would continue to coordinate on recreation opportunities that may be impacted, conduct alternative route planning, and conduct follow-on, site-specific NEPA.

Construction

Construction activities proposed under Alternative 3 would be the same as those proposed under Alternatives 1 and 2. Therefore, as discussed under Alternatives 1 and 2, there would be no significant impact on recreation as a result of construction under Alternative 3.

3.12.3.4.2 Bravo-17

Based on the information presented below, there would be a significant impact on recreation for B-17 under Alternative 3.

Land Withdrawal and Acquisition

The Governor's Alternative, discussed in Section 2.5.7 (Governor's Alternative ["Nevada Alternative"]), and other scoping comments were considered during the creation of Alternative 3 to allow more access to areas of concern requested for withdrawal or proposed for acquisition under Alternatives 1 and 2.

Under Alternative 3, B-17 would expand by approximately 212,016 acres and be rotated counterclockwise (see Figure 2-16). The requested withdrawal would eliminate the overlap with Fairview Peak, Sand Spring Range (a popular hunting and recreation area), and of State Route 839 (under Alternatives 1 and 2). These new lands would be fenced in accordance with all applicable regulations and would remove recreational activities from B-17. The Navy would expand their fence line patrol and maintenance procedures to include fences that are on withdrawn lands. The Navy proposes to establish two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers at NAS Fallon. Part of the duties of these officers would include patrolling of the added fence line for trespass issues and reporting to the Navy any broken or downed fences for maintenance repair. Therefore, there would be a significant impact on recreation because of the withdrawal and acquisition under Alternative 3.

Training Activities

All training activities would be located within the proposed boundary of B-17. Public access to B-17 would be restricted based on managed access agreements at all times. As with Alternative 1, the public may observe and hear aircraft, munitions, and support vehicles during training activities. However, these activities are currently occurring within B-17 and would not increase in frequency under Alternative 3.

Noise contours of 65 dB DNL would be mostly contained on the B-17 range under Alternative 3, with the exception of a 65 dB DNL contour that extends north of the B-17 boundary over the Special Land Management Overlay to the east and west of B-17 (see Section 3.7, Noise). This is not expected to significantly impact recreation, as it is not above the 65-dBA threshold for noise impacts on sensitive receptors, and the contour is from airspace activities and does not change from baseline extension in the northeast portion of overlap.

Public Accessibility

Visits requiring access to the Bravo ranges would be coordinated with the Navy and allowed if compatible with Navy training activities and range safety. Under Alternative 3, the public accessibility within the proposed boundary of B-17 would be the same as described under Alternative 2. This range would be fenced and closed for public safety. Navy policy does not allow anyone within a WDW when a range is in active use. The Navy also does not allow members of the public in a non-operational WDW without prior clearance/coordination. This area would also include signage warning the public it cannot enter this area.

Expanding B-17 under Alternative 3 would have similar impacts on recreation access as those under Alternative 2. Implementing Alternative 3 would prevent public access to several 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.

The Pony Express National Historic Trail parallels U.S. Route 50 through B-17. Alternative 3 would not affect public access to this trail system. All improvements at B-17 would be south of this trail system. Although the Navy would prohibit OHV use by the public, it would continue to allow certain races, including the Vegas to Reno Race, which would occur in the southern portion of B-17. The Navy and the BLM would coordinate the permitting and scheduling of these events in accordance with the requirements listed in Section 2.3.5.2.9 (Large Event Race Activities). Indirectly, this alternative could also affect other recreation areas within the region as the public shifts activities to those areas, which

would include Sand Mountain Recreation Area. Annual visitation at Sand Mountain Recreation Area currently numbers between 50,000 and 70,000 visitors per year (Bureau of Land Management, 2017).

The proposed B-17 range includes habitat for bighorn sheep, mule deer, and pronghorn. This habitat 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. This alternative reduces impact on hunters by allowing access to Fairview Peak (via Earthquake Fault Road) and the eastern slope of the Sand Springs Mountains (via State Route 839) in the Special Land Management Overlay areas.

Alternative 3 also reduces impacts on hunting by permitting a bighorn sheep hunting program in B-17. Hunting would occur within B-17 in accordance with NDOW rules and regulations, including designated hunting seasons. NAS Fallon would create a Hunt Program Work Plan to manage hunting at B-17 as described under Alternative 2. The Navy would manage this program jointly with NDOW. Hunters would be required to comply with the requirements found in Section 2.3.5.2.2 (Hunting Activities) and outlined above in Section 3.12.3.3.2 (Bravo-17). In addition, although perimeter fencing would include a larger area than current baseline conditions, fencing would be designed to allow large game species (e.g., pronghorn, mule deer, bighorn sheep) to jump over or crawl under the fence and smaller game species (e.g., chukar, rabbits) to fit between or below the wires. The Navy may also remove existing interior fencing within the withdrawal area, which would decrease the fragmentation of habitat.

Construction

Since the proposed construction activities would occur within the expanded B-17 range and access to areas under construction would be restricted, these activities would not significantly impact public recreation.

Road and Infrastructure Improvements to Support Alternative 3

State Route 361

Alternative 3 includes the potential relocation of State Route 361. Approximately 12 miles of State Route 361 would be proposed to be relocated after the implementation of Alternative 3, because this portion of the road would fall within the proposed eastern portion of B-17. This route connects the community of Gabbs to U.S. Route 50. Using funding provided by the Navy, the Federal Highway Administration, in cooperation with the Nevada Department of Transportation, would be responsible for planning, designing, permitting, and constructing any realignment of State Route 361. The Navy has submitted 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. NDOT would ensure that construction of any new route is complete before closing any portion of the existing State Route 361, and the Navy would not utilize any portion of an expanded B-17 range (if implemented) that would overlap the existing State Route 361 unless and until any such new route has been completed and made available to the public.

Paiute Pipeline

As with Alternatives 1 and 2, Alternative 3 also includes the potential relocation of a segment of the Paiute Pipeline outside the B-17 WDZ. The Navy would purchase the impacted portion of the Paiute Pipeline and then would pay for relocation of the existing Paiute Pipeline south of the proposed B-17 range. 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. 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.

3.12.3.4.3 Bravo-20

Based on the information presented below, there would be a significant impact on recreation for B-20 under Alternative 3.

Land Withdrawal and Acquisition

Under Alternative 3, B-20 would expand in all directions, growing by approximately 177,114 acres (see Table 2-7) and increasing in total size to approximately 218,119 acres. This expansion includes approximately 2,720 acres of land currently withdrawn by the USFWS as a portion of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge and 1,920 acres of Lyon County Conservation Easements. As discussed under Alternative 1, the Navy is not proposing to develop targets in the refuge. Unlike Alternatives 1 and 2, the Navy would not request for withdrawal the lands east of East County Road and the road itself. The Navy would leave the areas east of East County Road and the Road itself open under Alternatives 1 and 2; therefore, the impacts on recreation under Alternative 3 are the same as discussed under Alternatives 1 and 2. Therefore, there would be a significant impact on recreation because of the withdrawal and acquisition of land under Alternative 3.

Training Activities

Under Alternative 3, there would be no change to training activities at B-20. Therefore, there would be no significant impact on recreation as a result of training activities under Alternative 3.

Public Accessibility

Visits requiring access to the Bravo ranges would be coordinated with the Navy and allowed if compatible with Navy training activities and range safety. Alternative 3 would have the same access restrictions on B-20 as Alternative 2. Therefore, as discussed under Alternative 2, expanding B-20 under Alternative 3 would have the same impacts on recreation as Alternative 2.

Construction

Construction activities proposed under Alternative 3 would be the same as those proposed under Alternatives 1 and 2. Therefore, as discussed under Alternatives 1 and 2, there would be no significant impact on recreation as a result of construction under Alternative 3.

3.12.3.4.4 Dixie Valley Training Area

Based on the information presented below, there would not be a significant impact on recreation for the DVTA under Alternative 3. With regard to natural resources management and recreation, including hunting, the BLM and the Navy would jointly manage the DVTA via the Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan, per the Sikes Act, and OPNAVINST 5090.

Land Withdrawal and Acquisition

Under Alternative 3, the land requested for withdrawal would decrease by 77,010 acres with the creation of the Special Land Management Overlay when compared to Alternatives 1 and 2. With the shift of B-17, the BLM would create a Special Land Management Overlay along the western side of State Route 839 south of U.S. Route 50 and around Earthquake Fault Road. The requested withdrawal and proposed acquisition would total approximately 247,762 acres (see Figure 2-12) for the DVTA and would increase the total training area size to 325,322 acres. Alternative 3 would have the same impacts on WSAs as Alternatives 1 and 2. Under Alternative 3, 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. In an evaluation of the Stillwater Range WSA, the BLM determined that the Stillwater Range WSA no longer contains wilderness characteristics. A change to the WSA designation would presumably be accomplished through any ultimate Congressional withdrawal legislation.

Training Activities

Training activities would expand within the proposed DVTA into areas where they have not previously occurred. The public may observe and hear aircraft and support vehicles during training activities within these areas. Noise from training exercises could startle or disturb recreationists and game species in the area. However, noise contours over the DVTA would not change significantly from the baseline contours in the training area. These contours are from airspace use only and the highest-level contour in the DVTA would be at 65 dBA DNL in the northeastern corner of the DVTA. Training activities are currently occurring within the DVTA and would not increase in frequency under Alternative 3.

De-designating the WSAs would allow the Navy to conduct ground training throughout the DVTA. A change to the WSA designation would presumably be accomplished through any ultimate Congressional decision withdrawal legislation. The BLM would manage recreational activities within the DVTA. The Navy would minimize impacts on the public by following the policies and procedures that restrict training activities on the DVTA because of public safety and environmental concerns. For example, the Navy's safety measures include standard operating procedures designed to avoid or minimize civilian exposure to training activities within the DVTA. The military has no authority to ask civilians to exit or leave open land areas within the DVTA. If the public enters a training area within the DVTA while a training event is underway, the training would temporarily cease or move elsewhere while the public transits the training area. Therefore, training activities at the DVTA would not significantly impact recreation under Alternative 3.

Public Accessibility

Under Alternative 3, the existing recreational activities would be allowed to continue within the DVTA. Alternative 3 would not install perimeter fencing around the DVTA but would install perimeter fencing around three proposed electronic warfare sites (up to 15 acres total), which would prevent the public from entering these areas. The 11-Mile Canyon Electronic Warfare Site would be located in the Stillwater Mountains south of the Jobs Peak WSA. The Fairview Low Electronic Warfare Site would be located east of the Fairview Mountains and Earthquake Fault Road, within the BLM's proposed Middlegate Extensive Recreation Management Area. Meanwhile, the North Job Peak Electronic Warfare Site would be located near Job Peak. The public would continue to be able to access the remainder of

the DVTA for public recreation, including hunting, camping, hiking, and OHV use. In addition, de-designating WSAs could potentially remove recreation restrictions on approximately 74,955 acres. A change to the WSA designation would presumably be accomplished through any ultimate Congressional decision withdrawal legislation.

The primary difference between Alternative 3 and Alternative 2 is that State Route 839 and the area west of State Route 839 (between Highway 50 and the existing Paiute Pipeline) would remain open to the public as shown in Figure 2-12. The BLM Special Land Management Overlay would be open to the public and allow for public uses through the BLM. 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. 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. Further, prior to issuing approval for installation or use of mobile or stationary equipment used to transmit and receive electromagnetic signals in the two special use zones as part of any federal action, BLM would be required to obtain permission for NAS Fallon for use of this equipment. This requirement to obtain Navy permission for the use of this equipment would afford the Navy an opportunity to ensure military and civilian use of the electromagnetic spectrum does not interfere with their respective activities. BLM and the Navy would also enter into an MOU to administer the details of the consultation and approval process. Alternative 3 would also continue to allow access to Fairview Peak via Earthquake Road.

Construction

Under Alternative 3, construction activities at the DVTA would include constructing three electronic warfare sites. Construction activities would temporarily increase noise, vibrations, exhaust, and fugitive dust at these locations, which could startle or disturb nearby recreationists or wildlife, and any impact on recreation from construction would be less than significant. These activities would be intermittent, temporary, and phased to minimize impacts on the public.

3.12.3.4.5 Special Use Airspace

Based on the information presented below, there would not be a significant impact on recreation for SUA under Alternative 3. Under Alternative 3, the Navy proposes to expand its existing SUA and reconfigure existing airspace to address current training constraints (Figure 3.12-15). Alternative 3 would not increase military operations within the region; however, it would reconfigure WDZs and SUA over the proposed bombing range expansions within the FRTC. The WDZs for the FRTC Bravo ranges would be wholly located within their respective expanded range boundaries or respective new range boundaries.

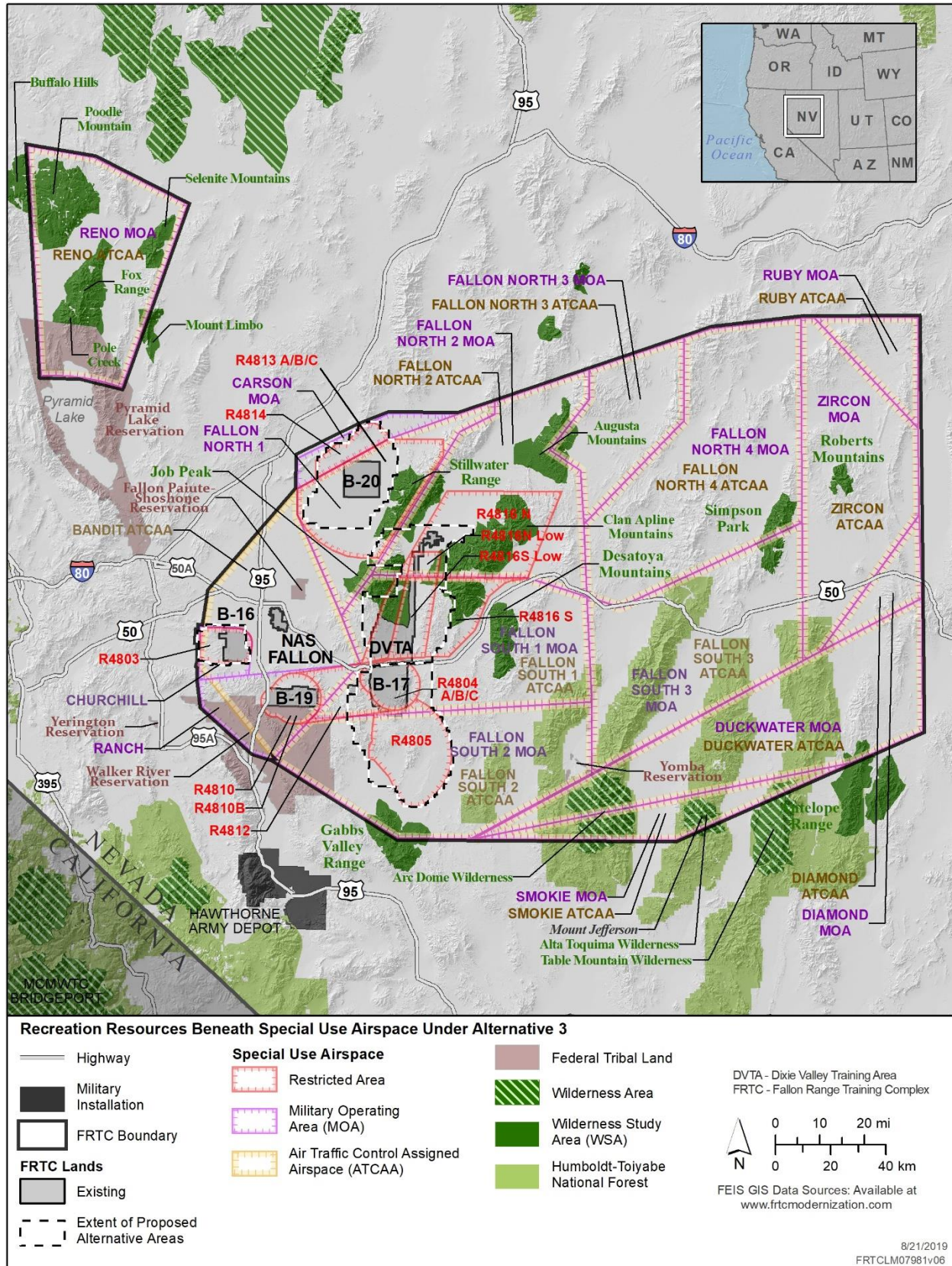


Figure 3.12-15: Recreation Resources Beneath Special Use Airspace Under Alternative 3

Under the Reno MOA and Air Traffic Control Assigned Airspace, which overlap with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation and the northern part of Pyramid Lake, the noise levels are projected to be less than 35 dBA, which is lower than the 65 dBA recommendation. Therefore, recreational activities would not be impacted under the military training route over Pyramid Lake, and visitation to the lake should not change (see Tables 3.7-11 and 3.7-13). In other areas under airspace, the noise data show a slight increase for some sensitive receptors during daytime events where a recreationist may experience outdoor speech interference. But the most notable interference would be near the town of Gabbs and in the eastern portions of the FRTC SUA (see Section 3.7.3.4.10, Effects on Recreation). Changes to the FRTC SUA under Alternative 3 would have the same impacts on recreation as discussed under Alternative 1, and 2. The same avoidance areas as discussed under Alternatives 1 and 2 would apply for the population centers, noise-sensitive areas, WSAs, and wilderness areas as described under Alternative 1. Training activities and types would continue as described under Alternative 1.

3.12.3.4.6 Summary of Effects and Conclusions

Under Alternative 3, the Navy would expand B-16, B-17, B-20, and the DVTA. Alternative 3 would close public access to approximately 418,553 acres for expanding the Bravo ranges but would allow certain uses when the ranges are not in operation, with prior coordination. Alternative 3 includes areas that would be closed and restricted from public use except for Navy-authorized activities (e.g., ceremonial visits; cultural site visits; research/academic pursuits; or regulatory or management activities, such as BLM or NDOW activities). These areas would also include signage warning the public it cannot enter. Alternative 3 also includes Congressional legislation to remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains (approximately 22,324 acres [11 percent]), Job Peak (approximately 41,680 acres [47 percent]), and Stillwater Range (approximately 10,951 acres [12 percent]) WSAs, potentially opening these areas up to new types of recreation activities. Any change to the WSA designation would presumably be accomplished through any ultimate Congressional decision withdrawal legislation. Alternative 3 would close public access to 2,720 acres of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge (approximately 18 percent) and 1,920 acres of adjoining Lyon County Conservation Easements. This land withdrawal would impact 0.5 percent of the lands administered by the BLM Humboldt River Field Office, 0.11 percent of the lands administered by the BLM Sierra Front Field Office, and 11.39 percent of the lands administered by the BLM Stillwater Field Office. Of note, the lands impacted by the withdrawal would not all be closed to the public as they would be part of the DVTA, which would remain open for public recreation. Alternative 3 would allow access for racing events, like the Vegas to Reno, on B-16, B-17, and B-20. This alternative also would reduce impacts by shifting the proposed expansion of B-17 off popular hunting areas within the Sand Springs Mountain Range and around Fairview Peak.

Alternative 3 would allow limited public access to designated portions of B-17 for bighorn sheep hunting tag holders and their hunting parties, except for those areas that the Navy would close for public safety (e.g., target areas). Hunting would be permitted on B-17 in accordance with the requirements in Section 2.3.5.2.2 (Hunting Activities). Therefore, although impacts have been lessened with the shift of B-17 and the managed access programs, implementation of Alternative 3 would still have significant impacts on public recreation.

3.12.3.5 Proposed Management Practices, Monitoring, and Mitigation

3.12.3.5.1 Proposed Management Practices

Management practices were found to be warranted for recreation based on the analysis presented in Section 3.12.3 (Environmental Consequences) and are listed below:

- The Navy is working with NDOW on a MOA for bighorn sheep hunting on the B-17 range, a draft of which will be included in Appendix D (Memoranda, Agreements, and Plans), and the Navy would update the existing managed access MOU from 2000 with a MOA regarding access for management activities at the FRTC.
- The Navy currently supports the NDOW actions to install/maintain guzzlers for wildlife and will continue this partnership with the NDOW within range or training areas.
- Allow the BLM or NDOW to continue to access and maintain existing water developments. The Navy would also work with the NDOW to determine if moving certain guzzlers would be applicable within range or training areas.
- Install wildlife friendly fence design for any new fences and removal of all existing fences not required for safety/security purposes within the withdrawal area.
- The Navy would expand their fence line patrol and maintenance procedures to include fences that are on withdrawn lands. The Navy proposes to establish two Conservation Law Enforcement Officers at NAS Fallon. Part of the duties of these officers would include patrolling of the added fence line for trespass issues and reporting to the Navy any broken or downed fences for maintenance repair.
- The USFWS would continue to manage the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge under an MOU with the Navy once terms of the MOU were reached.

3.12.3.5.2 Proposed Monitoring

No monitoring measures would be warranted for recreation based on the analysis presented in Section 3.12.3 (Environmental Consequences).

3.12.3.5.3 Proposed Mitigation

Mitigation measures were found to be warranted for recreation based on the analysis presented in Section 3.12.3 (Environmental Consequences) and are listed below:

- Install big game and small game water developments outside of closed Navy lands to support populations outside of the ranges in order to mitigate against impacts on hunting. Numbers and locations of water developments are to be determined cooperatively with NDOW.
- Conduct annual review of the Hunt Program Work Plan to determine if additional hunts are feasible and compatible with mission requirements on the FRTC.

3.12.3.6 Summary of Effects and Conclusions

Table 3.12-2 summarizes the effects of the alternatives on recreation.

Table 3.12-2: Summary of Effects and Conclusions for Recreation

Summary of Effects and National Environmental Policy Act Determinations	
No Action Alternative	
Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land within the FRTC could be converted to recreational use following clean up. Land that the Navy cannot render safe for public access would remain off limits to the public.
Impact Conclusion	The No Action Alternative would result in significant impacts on recreation.
Alternative 1	
Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The public would no longer be able to access approximately 327,742 acres of federal land due to the modernization of B-16, B-17, and B-20. The public would be allowed access to the DVTA for recreational activities. Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains (approximately 11 percent), Job Peak (approximately 47 percent), and Stillwater Mountains (approximately 12 percent) WSAs, potentially opening these areas up to new types of recreation. Any change to the WSA designation would presumably be accomplished through any ultimate Congressional decision withdrawal legislation. The public would not be able to access approximately 18 percent of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge for recreation. Large racing events that currently occur near the existing B-16 and B-17 ranges would have to be relocated outside of the boundaries of the proposed Bravo ranges. Public access would be eliminated or significantly reduced to the Dead Camel Mountains, Sand Springs Range, Slate Mountain, Monte Cristo Mountains, Fairview Peak, and the West Humboldt Range. Other opportunities for hiking, camping, and wildlife watching would be lost. The public would not be able to access hunting areas on any of the closed bombing ranges. Hunting would not be impacted in the DVTA. This Alternative includes areas that would be closed and restricted from public use except for Navy-authorized activities (e.g., ceremonial visits; cultural site visits; research/academic pursuits; or regulatory or management activities, such as BLM or NDOW activities).
Impact Conclusion	Alternative 1 would result in significant impacts on recreation.

Table 3.12-2: Summary of Effects and Conclusions for Recreation (continued)

Summary of Effects and National Environmental Policy Act Determinations	
Alternative 2	
Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The public would no longer be able to access approximately 327,442 acres of public land due to the modernization of B-16, B-17, and B-20; but, unlike Alternative 1, Alternative 2 would allow certain uses of the land when the ranges are not in operation with prior coordination. • The public would be allowed access to the DVTA for recreational activities. Congressional legislation would remove WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains (approximately 11 percent), Job Peak (approximately 47 percent), and Stillwater Mountains (approximately 12 percent) WSAs, potentially opening these areas up to new types of recreation. A change to the WSA designation would presumably be accomplished through any ultimate Congressional decision withdrawal legislation. • The public would not be able to access approximately 18 percent of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge for recreation. • Large racing events that currently occur near B-16 and B-17 would continue on B-16 and B-17 in accordance with the requirements listed in Section 2.3.5.2.9 (Large Event Race Activities). • Public access would be eliminated or significantly reduced to the Dead Camel Mountains, Sand Springs Range, Slate Mountain, Monte Cristo Mountains, Fairview Peak, and the West Humboldt Range. • Opportunities for other popular hiking, camping, and wildlife watching would be lost. • The public would not be able to access hunting areas on any of the closed bombing ranges. Hunting would not be impacted in the DVTA. • The Navy would allow hunting of bighorn sheep on B-17 in accordance with the requirements listed in Section 2.3.5.2.2 (Hunting Activities).
Impact Conclusion	Alternative 2 would result in significant impacts on recreation; however, these impacts would be reduced by allowing bighorn sheep hunting within B-17 and popular racing events to continue on B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20.

Table 3.12-2: Summary of Effects and Conclusions for Recreation (continued)

Summary of Effects and National Environmental Policy Act Determinations	
Alternative 3	
Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The public would no longer be able to access approximately 356,788 acres of federal land due to the modernization of B-16, B-17, and B-20. • The public would be allowed access to the DVTA for recreational activities. Congressional legislation would remove the WSA designation of withdrawn portions of the Clan Alpine Mountains (approximately 11 percent), Job Peak (approximately 47 percent), and Stillwater Mountains (approximately 12 percent), potentially opening these areas up to new types of recreation. Any change to the WSA designation would presumably be accomplished through any ultimate Congressional decision withdrawal legislation. • The public would not be able to access approximately 18 percent of the Fallon National Wildlife Refuge for recreation. • Large racing events that currently occur near B-16, B-17, and B-19 would continue on B-16, B-17, and B-19 in accordance with the requirements listed in Section 2.3.5.2.9 (Large Event Race Activities). • Public access would be eliminated or significantly reduced to the Dead Camel Mountains, Slate Mountain, Monte Cristo Mountains, and the West Humboldt Range. • Opportunities for other popular hiking, camping, and wildlife watching would be lost. • The public would not be able to access hunting areas on any of the closed bombing ranges. Hunting would not be impacted in the DVTA. • The Navy would allow bighorn sheep hunting only on B-17 in accordance with the requirements listed in Section 2.3.5.2.2 (Hunting Activities).
Impact Conclusion	<p>Alternative 3 would result in significant impacts on recreation; however, these impacts would be reduced by allowing bighorn sheep hunting within B-17 and popular racing events to continue on B-16, B-17, B-19, and B-20. In addition, B-17 would be shifted off the Sand Springs Range and Fairview Peak, which would be part of the publicly accessible Special Land Management Overlay.</p>

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