



# **FALLON RANGE TRAINING COMPLEX MODERNIZATION:**

## **EXPANSION OF LAND RANGES, AIRSPACE MODIFICATIONS, AND PUBLIC LAND WITHDRAWAL RENEWAL**



**Environmental Impact Statement**

*Public Scoping Phase*

[www.FRTCModernization.com](http://www.FRTCModernization.com)

**August 2016**







The Navy's mission for the Fallon Ranges is to provide the most realistic combat training environment possible for naval aviators and special operations forces.

### Importance of the Fallon Range Training Complex

The Fallon Range Training Complex is the Navy's premier aviation training range, supporting air and ground units in a variety of warfare mission areas. The ranges and airspace of the Fallon Range Training Complex are extensively used by the Navy and other military services to conduct aviation and ground training, including live-fire training activities. The Fallon Ranges are an ideal training environment due to their location, land area, and military airspace. Their unique characteristics include suitable weather for year-round training and designated airspace for supersonic training.

The Fallon Range Training Complex is the only location available to the Navy where an entire carrier air wing, consisting of more than 60 aircraft and associated support crews, can work together and train in advanced integrated strike warfare, electronic warfare, and air warfare training. In fact, every Navy carrier air wing trains at the Fallon Ranges prior to deployment.

Other specialized training activities occur at the Fallon Range Training Complex, including naval special warfare. Personnel who complete tactical courses at Fallon are known throughout the Navy as experts in the latest and most effective tactics.

**The Fallon Ranges provide the Navy with a safe environment where personnel can learn and practice the skills they need to be successful in real-world situations.**

### Readiness activities conducted at the Fallon Ranges include:

- ▶ Air Warfare
- ▶ Strike Warfare
- ▶ Electronic Warfare
- ▶ Naval Special Warfare
- ▶ Joint forces training
- ▶ Expeditionary Warfare
- ▶ Tactics and weapons courses, such as TOPGUN

The Navy uses simulators to provide early skill repetition and enhance teamwork through classroom learning and computer training, however there is no substitute for live training in a realistic environment.

### Fallon Range Training Complex Economic Contributions

In Fiscal Year 2015, Naval Air Station Fallon generated \$517.4 million in total economic benefit for Churchill, Lyon, and Washoe counties. Key economic benefits include:

- ▶ **4,586 jobs**, including 1,411 military and civilian personnel and 3,175 additional jobs related to operations, payroll, and other spending
- ▶ **\$432.7 million** in industry output: \$60.5 million from payroll, \$348 million from operations and contracts, and \$24.2 million from visitor spending
- ▶ **\$84.6 million** in direct annual payroll of personnel
- ▶ **\$22 million** in state and local tax revenues: \$4.4 million from payroll, \$14.9 million from operations, and \$2.6 million from visitor spending
- ▶ **\$2.44 million** in funds paid to local landowners for agricultural easements
- ▶ **\$608,360** spent in Federal Impact Aid to support local schools





# PROPOSED ACTION

## Proposed Action

**The Proposed Action is to modernize the Fallon Range Training Complex.**

**Modernization would include: 1) renewal of the Navy's current public land withdrawal, 2) the expansion of land ranges through the additional withdrawal of public lands and the acquisition of non-federal land, and 3) airspace modifications.**

**Specifically, the Navy proposes to:**

- ▶ Renew current public land withdrawal of 202,859 acres expiring in November 2021
- ▶ Withdraw and reserve for military use approximately 604,789 acres of additional public land
- ▶ Acquire approximately 65,160 acres of non-federal land
- ▶ Expand associated special use airspace and reconfigure existing airspace
- ▶ Use the entire modernized Fallon Range Training Complex 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
- ▶ Upgrade range infrastructure to support modernization

## Evaluating Alternatives

The National Environmental Policy Act requires federal agencies to evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives to achieve the purpose of and need for the Proposed Action. In the Draft EIS, the Navy will evaluate action alternatives and a No Action Alternative. **Public comments submitted during the scoping process will be used in the development of action alternatives.**

### No Action Alternative

- ▶ Land range expansion and airspace changes associated with the proposed modernization would not occur
- ▶ The Navy would reassess the military mission of Naval Air Station Fallon and consider disestablishing and ceasing use of the Fallon Range Training Complex, as the Congressional authorization for most of the withdrawn public land expires in November 2021 and would not be renewed
- ▶ The Navy would work with the Bureau of Land Management to prioritize and address any environmental remediation needed on lands relinquished back to them

The Navy's Proposed Action would provide the realistic training capabilities needed to meet changing aviation and ground training requirements, while maintaining and enhancing the safety and security of local communities.



The Fallon Range Training Complex must be able to support how the Navy fights today so personnel are prepared for the conflicts of tomorrow.

# AIRSPACE AT THE FALLON RANGE TRAINING COMPLEX

## Airspace Improvements

The capabilities of newer generation aircraft and weapons systems have outpaced the current size and configuration of the Fallon Ranges. Current training is hindered by insufficient land ranges and special use airspace to accommodate realistic training, leaving aircrews unable to fully train, and compromising their safety and success in combat.

The Navy proposes to expand special use airspace and reconfigure existing airspace (see Figure 2) to address current training constraints. Proposed airspace modifications would not (with one exception) increase the horizontal size of the Fallon Ranges, but would enhance training capabilities by expanding current airspace areas vertically.

The airspace proposal includes requests for:

- ▶ Expanding restricted airspace associated with the expanded bombing ranges for Bravo-16, Bravo-17, and Bravo-20
- ▶ Additional air traffic control assigned airspace (ATCAA)
- ▶ Additional military operations area (MOA) airspace under current ATCAAs
- ▶ Vertical increase in airspace associated with the Reno MOA/ATCAA

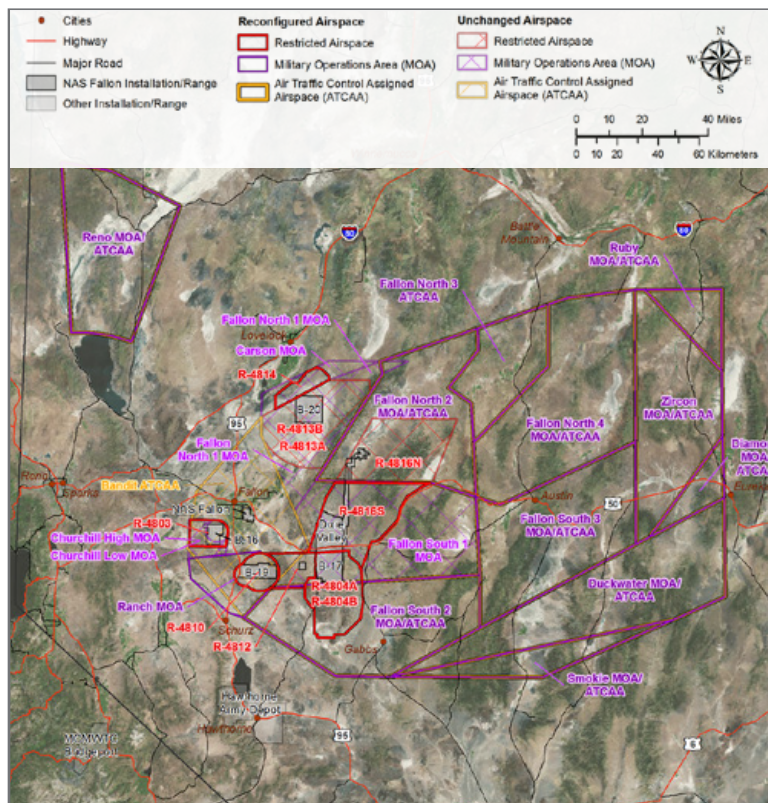


Figure 2: Proposed Changes to Special Use Airspace

*“The Fallon Range Training Complex is the only place we can come together as an air wing and learn to fight together. If we can’t do that, we’re not going to be prepared to conduct the missions our nation calls upon us to do.”*

*– Lieutenant Commander David Elias (pilot),  
Naval Air Station Fallon*

## NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT PROCESS

### The National Environmental Policy Act

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is a U.S. federal law that requires federal agencies to identify and analyze the potential environmental impacts on the environment before making a decision on a proposal. The law also encourages and facilitates

public involvement in decisions which affect the quality of the environment. In compliance with NEPA, the Navy is preparing an EIS to analyze potential environmental impacts associated with the Navy’s proposal for modernization.

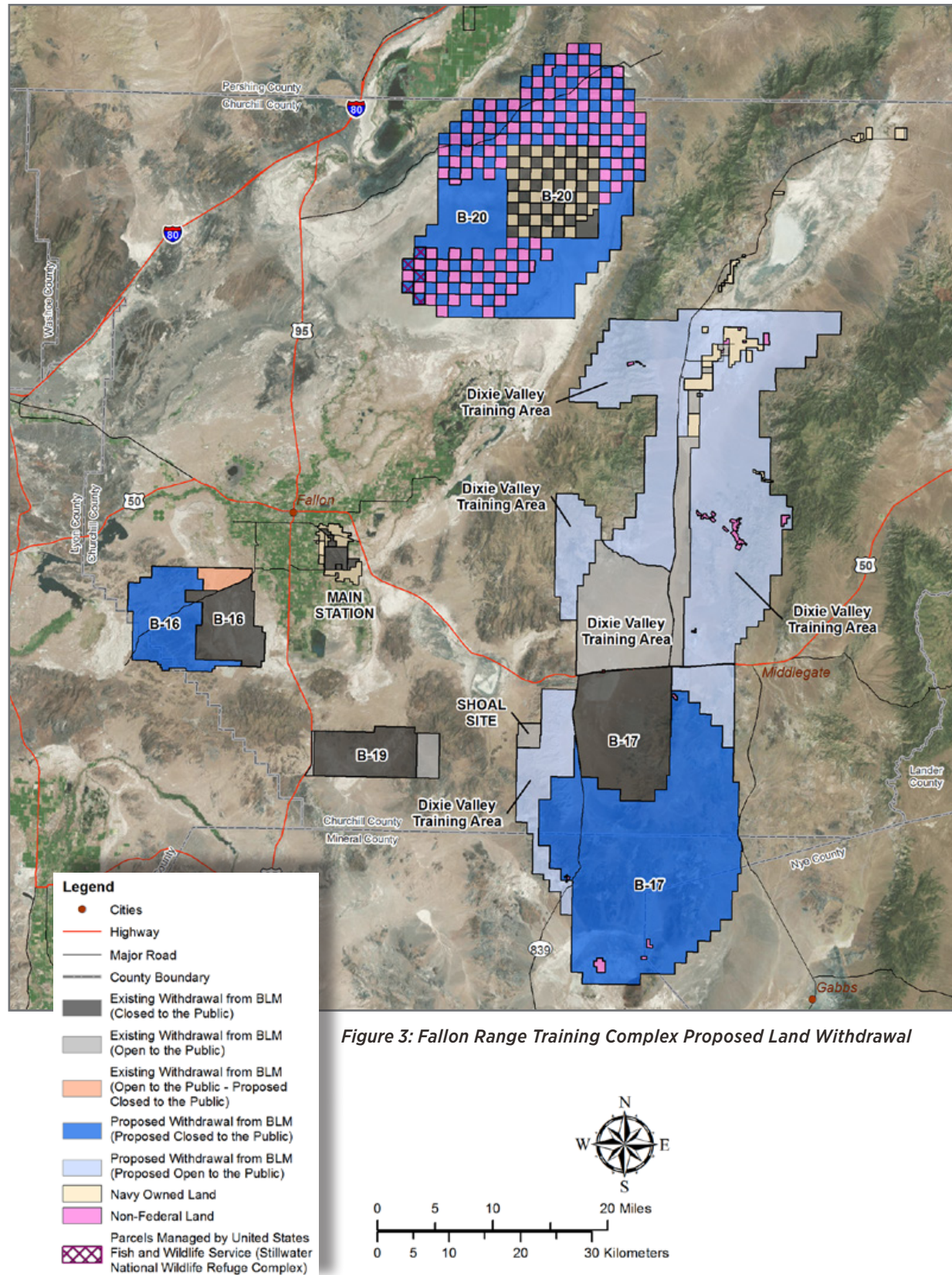


# PROPOSED RANGE EXPANSION



The Fallon Range Training Complex encompasses the Dixie Valley Training Area and four land bombing ranges. The bombing ranges Bravo-16, Bravo-17, Bravo-19, and Bravo-20 are used for air-to-ground munitions delivery, close air support, tactical ground mobility, and live-fire training. These bombing ranges have not substantially changed in size or configuration since the 1990s, or earlier in many cases.

Warfare technology, including improvements to weapons, aircraft sensors, threat systems, and strike tactics, and the accuracy of applications that produce and manage safety footprints for air-to-ground weapons training, have continued to evolve, requiring the proposed range and airspace modifications (see Figures 3-6) to meet current and future training requirements.





## BRAVO-16 RANGE PROPOSAL:

- Range expansion to the west of approximately 32,200 acres
- Bravo-16 would be closed and restricted from public use

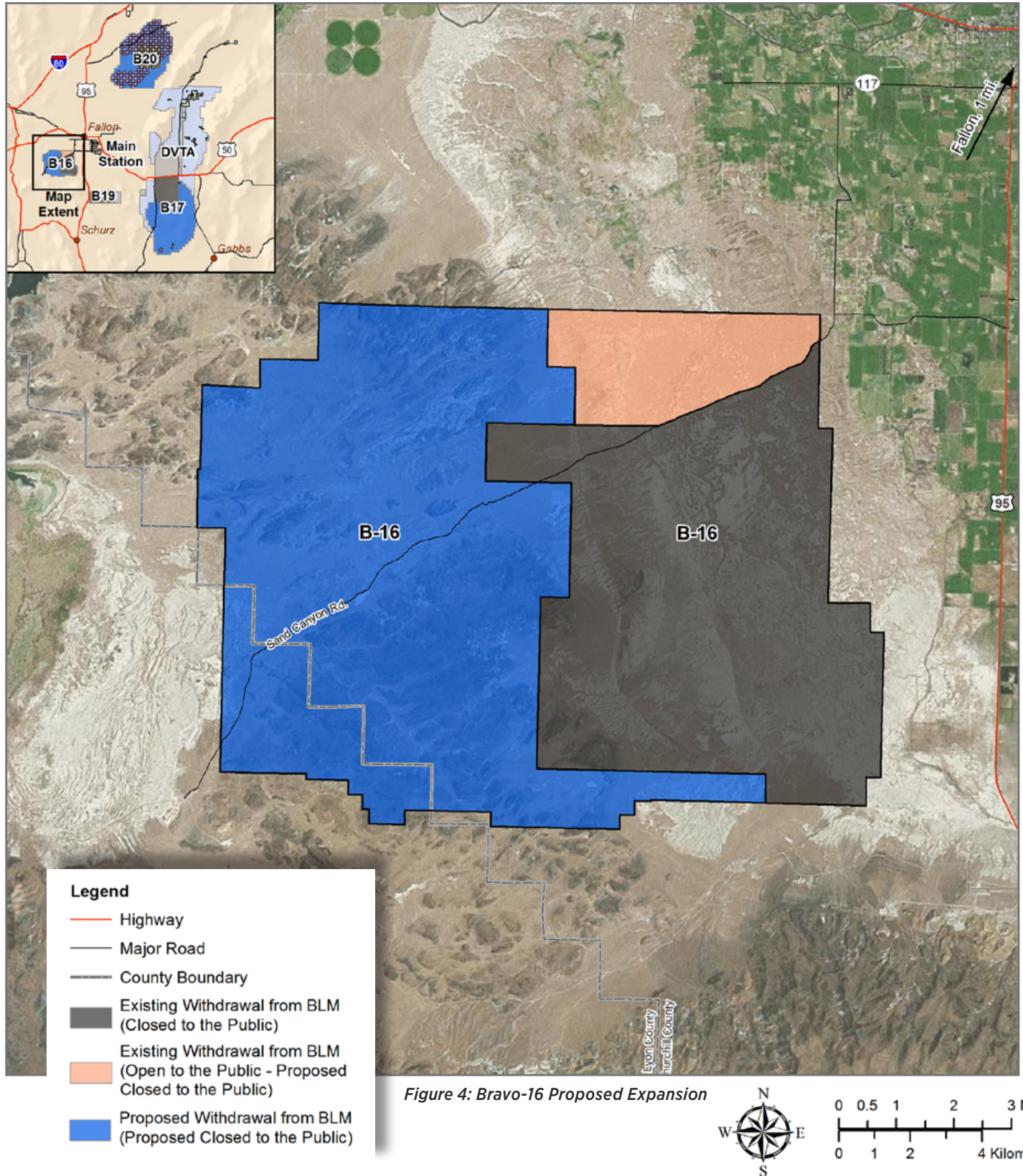
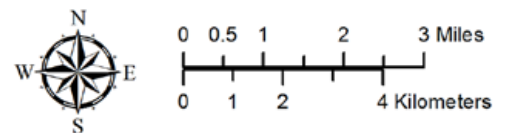
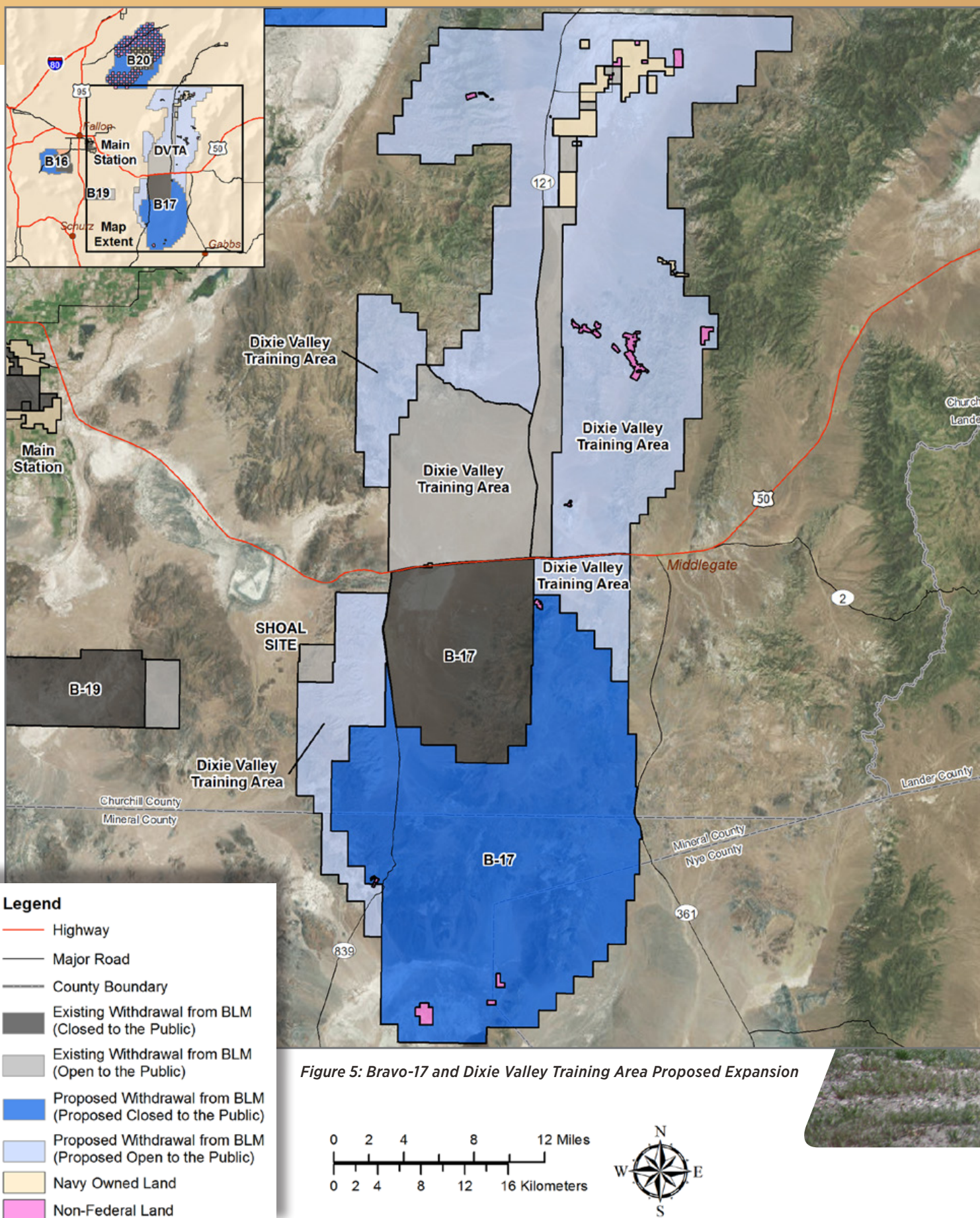


Figure 4: Bravo-16 Proposed Expansion









### **BRAVO-17 RANGE PROPOSAL:**

- Range expansion primarily to the south of approximately 178,015 acres
- Bravo-17 would be closed and restricted from public use

The Dixie Valley Training Area is used for search and rescue, land navigation, tactical ground mobility, convoy escort, and electronic warfare training. It is a non-ordnance training area.

### **PROPOSED EXPANSION FOR THE DIXIE VALLEY TRAINING AREA:**

- Expansion in all directions totaling approximately 279,400 acres
- Ground training activities would be conducted on existing roads and trails
- Both new land proposed for withdrawal and the currently withdrawn land would be open to certain land uses, such as recreation or cattle grazing
- No land closures are proposed for the Dixie Valley Training Area



Bravo-19 includes 29,012 acres of the total acres proposed for land withdrawal renewal. No changes are proposed for Bravo-19.





## BRAVO-20 RANGE PROPOSAL:

- Expansion in all directions totaling approximately 180,330 acres
- Bravo-20 would be closed and restricted from public use

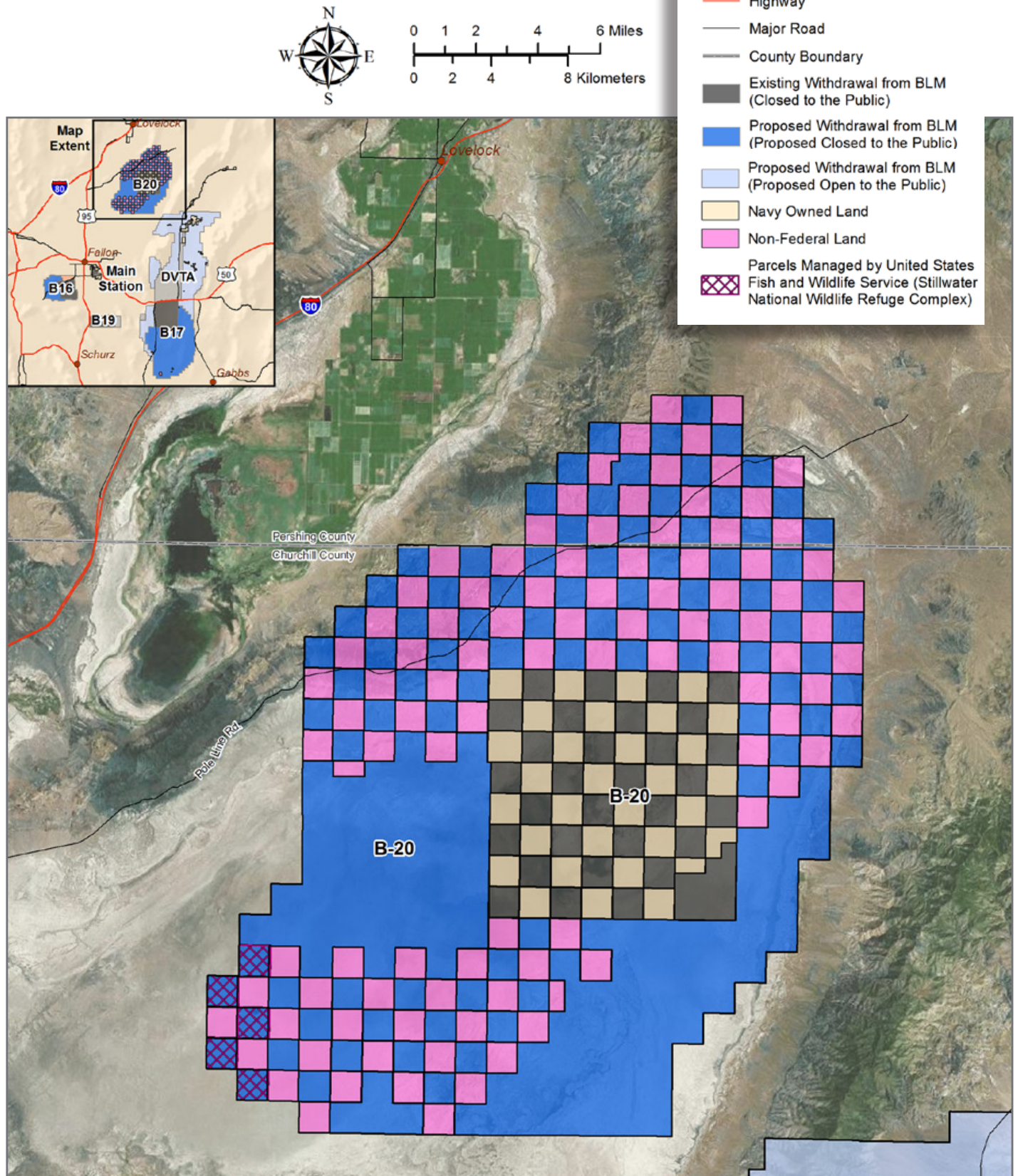


Figure 6: Bravo-20 Proposed Expansion





## Public Safety

The safety of the public and military personnel is of utmost importance to the Navy. The Navy uses sophisticated computer software and standard operating procedures to ensure training is safe.

Navy safety planning includes:

- ▶ Restricting public access from hazardous ordnance activities (fencing off the bombing ranges)
- ▶ Ensuring target areas are unoccupied prior to ordnance activities; ranges used for these activities would be closed and restricted from public use
- ▶ Conducting routine clean up and environmental stewardship of the training ranges
- ▶ Working with local communities on compatible land use development

These measures are intended to ensure public safety during Navy training activities, and along with the cooperation of the public, enable safe training.

**The Navy strives to maintain access to public areas whenever possible, but some access restrictions are necessary for public safety.**





# ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

## Natural Resource Management

The Fallon Range Training Complex provides important habitat for many species and the Navy manages these natural resources on more than 241,000 acres of land, including Naval Air Station Fallon. The Navy actively seeks to avoid or minimize impacts on the environment, and implements numerous programs to ensure compliance with applicable environmental laws and regulations. Maintaining the health of habitats and wildlife ensures the preservation of native landscapes and allows for military training in a realistic setting.

### Natural Resources Plans, Surveys, and Agreements

The Navy develops and implements various natural resources plans, surveys, and agreements. Some of these activities include:

- ▶ Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan:
  - » Goals:
    - Sustainability of species and habitat
    - Balance between natural resources management and military training
    - No net loss of military capabilities
- ▶ Agricultural Outlease Land Management Plan
- ▶ Grazing, Vegetation, and Water Resource Management Plan for the Dixie Valley Settlement Area
- ▶ Ongoing ecological surveys
- ▶ Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Naval Air Station Fallon and Bureau of Land Management Carson City District Office for the Management of Natural Resources on Navy Administered and Withdrawn Public Lands
- ▶ MOU between the Department of Defense, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies for Cooperative Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan on Military Installations

**The Navy partners with the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Nevada Department of Wildlife to protect natural resources.**

## Cultural Resource Management

Cultural resources include landscapes, places, archaeological sites, objects, historical buildings and structures that are generally more than 50 years old and are of significance in history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, or culture. As of June 2016, 1,069 archaeological sites have been identified within the Fallon Range Training Complex. To date, 91 of the sites, and 14 Navy-managed buildings, are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Cultural resources are managed in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations.

### Cultural Resources Plans, Surveys, and Agreements

The Navy develops and implements various cultural resources plans, surveys, and agreements and works closely with local tribes on mutual interests. Some of these activities include:

- ▶ Integrated Cultural Resources Management Plan
- ▶ Programmatic Agreement with the Nevada State Historic Preservation Office, Bureau of Land Management, and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
- ▶ Ongoing archaeological, historic building, and landscape surveys

**The Navy protects cultural and natural resources at the Fallon Range Training Complex and partners with federal, state, and local agencies and tribes to manage sensitive resources in the Fallon Ranges.**





## ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Environmental protection efforts have been a part of Navy activities for decades, and the Navy is proud of its successful stewardship programs. The Navy incorporates measures that are protective of the environment into all of its activities. The Navy is committed to protecting the environment while training.

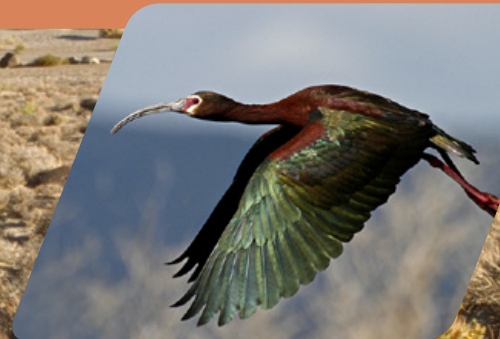
To reduce the potential environmental impacts of training activities on natural and cultural resources, protective measures include best management practices, standard operating procedures, and conservation measures.

## COLLABORATING AND PARTNERING TO PRESERVE THE ENVIRONMENT

The Fallon Ranges cover a vast area of land and airspace within the jurisdiction of multiple federal and state agencies. The Federal Aviation Administration manages the airspace, and the Bureau of Land Management manages most of the land underlying this airspace. Other major landholders and management agencies include the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Native American tribes. The Navy partners with these agencies and other entities to proactively identify potential impacts from training activities and takes steps to minimize those impacts on the environment.

### Environmental Awards Received

- > Chief of Naval Operations Award for Natural Resource Management, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2013
- > Chief of Naval Operations Award for Cultural Resource Management, 2010, 2012, 2015
- > Secretary of the Navy Award for Cultural Resource Management, 2010 and 2015
- > Secretary of Defense Meritorious Citation for Cultural Resource Management, 2010





# RESOURCES TO BE ANALYZED IN THE EIS

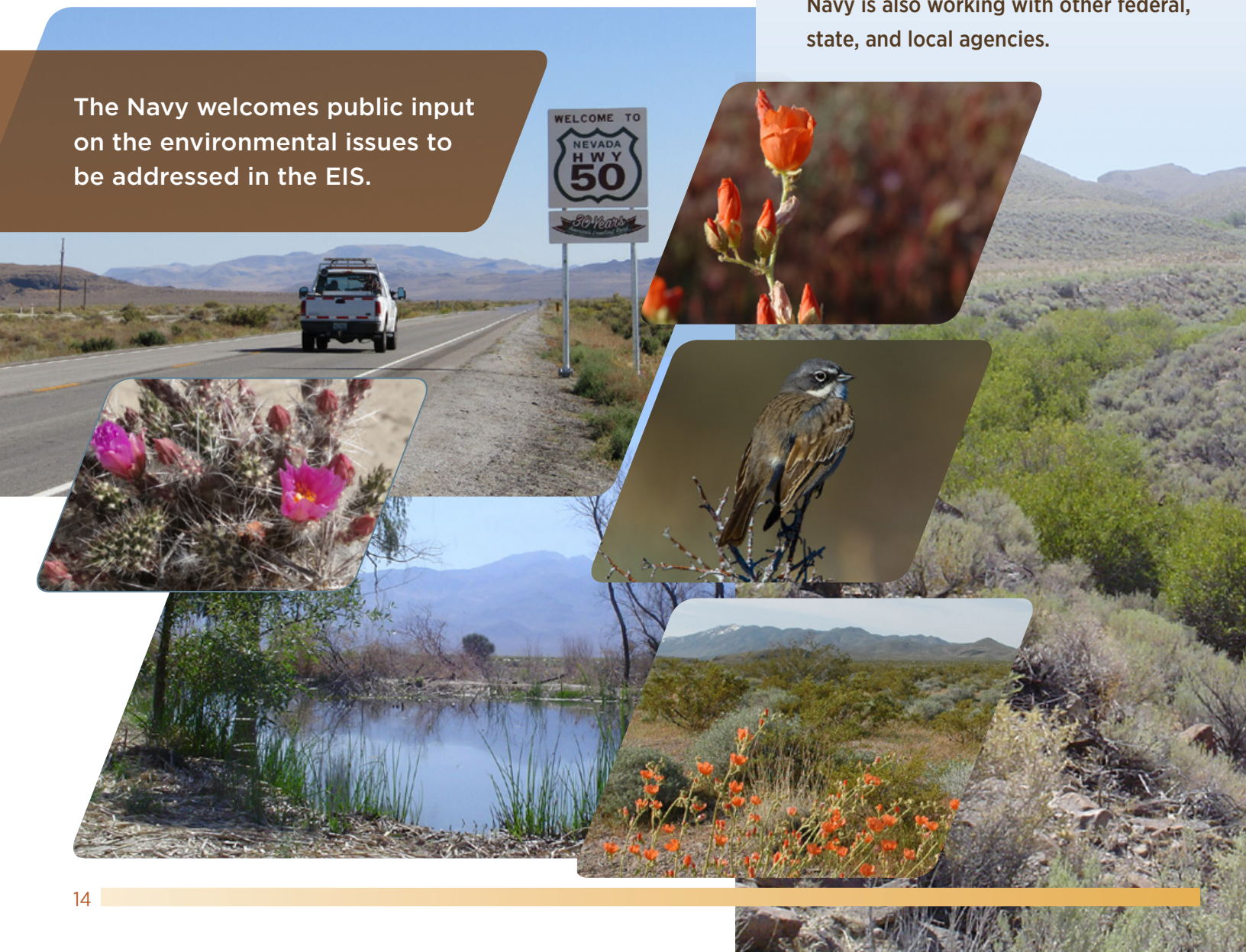
## The Navy will analyze the potential impacts on these resource areas:

- ▶ Air quality/climate
- ▶ Airborne noise
- ▶ Biological resources
- ▶ Cultural resources, including Native American traditional resources
- ▶ Grazing
- ▶ Land use and recreation, including off-highway vehicles
- ▶ Minerals and mining
- ▶ Public health and safety
- ▶ Socioeconomics and environmental justice
- ▶ Soils
- ▶ Transportation
- ▶ Water resources and quality

The public is encouraged to provide input on these or other resource areas for consideration in the Draft EIS.

Due to the nature and scope of the Proposed Action, the Bureau of Land Management, Federal Aviation Administration, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are cooperating agencies for the EIS and will provide early review of the Proposed Action and analysis. A cooperating agency is any agency, other than the lead agency, which has jurisdiction by law or special expertise concerning an environmental impact involved in a proposal. The Navy is also working with other federal, state, and local agencies.

The Navy welcomes public input on the environmental issues to be addressed in the EIS.

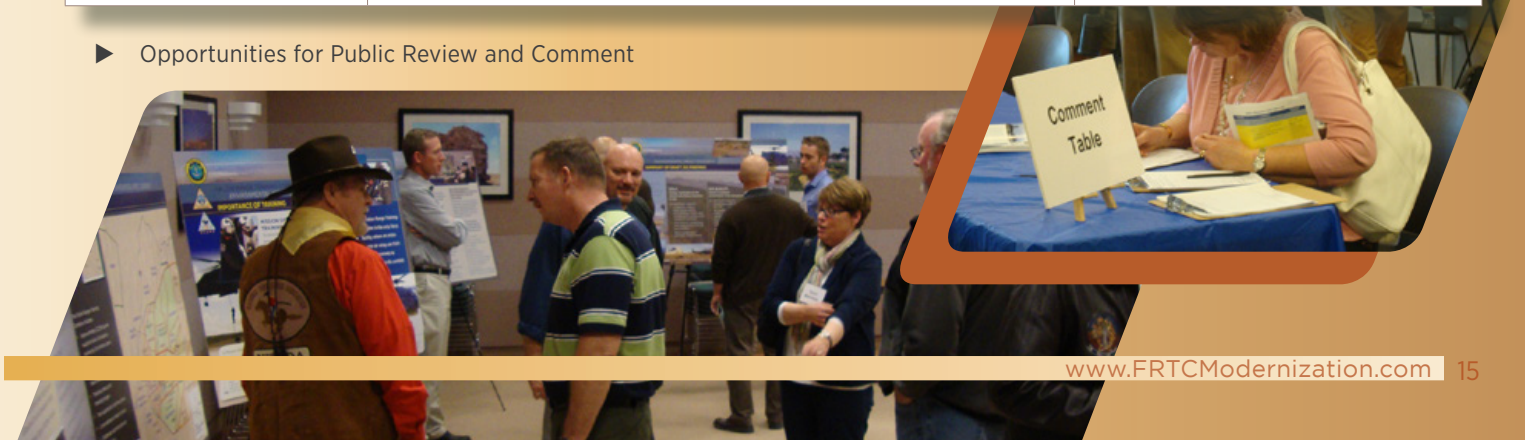




# NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT PROCESS AND TIMELINE

MILESTONE	DESCRIPTION	CURRENT SCHEDULE
<b>Notice of Intent to Prepare an EIS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starts the public involvement phase of the NEPA process</li> </ul>	Aug. 26, 2016
► Scoping Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides 90 days for an early and open public process for identifying environmental issues and potential viable alternatives to be evaluated in the EIS</li> <li>Includes scoping meetings and other opportunities to learn more and submit comments</li> </ul>	<b>Comment Period:</b> Aug. 26, 2016 - Nov. 25, 2016  <b>Scoping Meetings:</b> Fallon, NV: Oct. 3, 2016 Lovelock, NV: Oct. 4, 2016 Reno, NV: Oct. 4, 2016 Austin, NV: Oct. 5, 2016 Eureka, NV: Oct. 6, 2016 Hawthorne, NV: Oct. 7, 2016 Gabbs, NV: Oct. 7, 2016
<b>Draft EIS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Presents analysis of potential environmental impacts for each identified alternative</li> </ul>	Winter 2018
► Draft EIS Public Review and Comment Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides 90 days for the public to comment on the analysis presented in the Draft EIS</li> <li>Includes public meetings</li> </ul>	<b>Public Meetings:</b> Winter 2018
<b>Final EIS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes updates to the Draft EIS and responses to public comments received during the Draft EIS comment period</li> </ul>	Fall 2019
► Final EIS Public Review and Wait Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a 30-day wait period after the Final EIS is published before the Navy may take final action</li> </ul>	Fall 2019
<b>Record of Decision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Follows the Final EIS public review and wait period, which includes consideration of public comments</li> <li>Includes selection of an alternative by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Energy, Installations, and Environment)</li> <li>After the Navy issues the Record of Decision, receives Congressional Approval, and based upon the availability of funding, the Navy would begin implementing the selected alternative</li> </ul>	Winter 2020

## ► Opportunities for Public Review and Comment





# COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Navy is committed to facilitating public and agency input to develop the best possible environmental analysis.

## Community Involvement

Community involvement is an important part of the NEPA process, and there are a number of opportunities for the public to participate throughout the development of the EIS. In October 2016, the Navy is holding a series of public scoping meetings to inform the public about the Proposed Action and to receive public comments on environmental resources and issue areas to be studied in the EIS.

Public and agency input allows decision makers to benefit from local knowledge and consider local issues and concerns. The public participates in the NEPA process during the following stages by:

- ▶ **Scoping Period:** Helping to identify environmental issues and potential alternatives
- ▶ **Draft EIS Public Review and Comment Period:** Evaluating and commenting on the draft environmental analysis of the Proposed Action and alternatives
- ▶ **Final EIS Public Review and Wait Period:** Reviewing the Final EIS and Navy responses to public comments received on the Draft EIS

## How to Submit Comments on the EIS

The Navy encourages the public, government agencies, and tribes to participate and comment in any of the following ways:

- ▶ Submit oral comments to a stenographer or written comments at the public scoping meetings
- ▶ Submit comments via the project website at:  
**[www.FRTCModernization.com](http://www.FRTCModernization.com)**
- ▶ Mail comments to:  
Naval Facilities Engineering  
Command Southwest  
Code EV21.AK  
1220 Pacific Highway  
Building 1, 5th Floor  
San Diego, CA 92132

Comments must be postmarked or received online by **Nov. 25, 2016**, for consideration in the Draft EIS.

For more information about the EIS and how to submit comments, visit **[www.FRTCModernization.com](http://www.FRTCModernization.com)** or one of the libraries listed below:

- ▶ Austin Branch Library
- ▶ Carson City Library
- ▶ Churchill County Library
- ▶ Crescent Valley Branch Library
- ▶ Downtown Reno Library
- ▶ Eureka Branch Library
- ▶ Gabbs Community Library
- ▶ Mineral County Library
- ▶ Pershing County Library

Scoping is an early and open process for developing the scope of issues to be addressed in an EIS and for identifying significant issues related to a Proposed Action. During the scoping phase, the public helps identify potential viable alternatives for consideration in the analysis.

The Navy welcomes and appreciates your comments.

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