

Title

Final EIS: Proposed Public Land Withdrawal: Nellis Air Force Bombing Range: Nye, Clark & Lincoln Counties, NV.

Author

US Dept. of the Interior



101271

Document Date

7/27/79

ERC Index number

05.09.315

Document Type

Report

Box Number

1712-1

Recipients

General Public

1744. B
TFR

C. 2

LAS VEGAS LIBRARY

*Return for checked
reference*

DOE/NV Library copy

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

FINAL
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

PROPOSED PUBLIC LAND WITHDRAWAL

NELLIS AIR FORCE BOMBING RANGE

NYE, CLARK, AND LINCOLN COUNTIES, NEVADA

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

AND

DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

Ed Hunter

Acting Director, Bureau of Land Management

Department of Housing and Urban Development

Environmental Protection Agency

Department of Transportation

Federal Aviation Administration

Department of Health, Education, and Welfare

Department of Energy

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

b. State of Nevada

Clearinghouse

Bureau of Mines

Historic Preservation Office

Fish and Game

c. Counties:

Clark

Nye

Lincoln

d. Municipal:

City of Las Vegas

City of North Las Vegas

Town of Tonopah

Town of Beatty

e. Private and Public Interest Groups - See Chapter IX
for the complete list.

DATE DRAFT STATEMENT MADE AVAILABLE TO EPA AND THE PUBLIC:

27 July 1979

Continued foreclosure of recreation resources on the Nellis AF Range affects 6 percent of the public lands in Nevada and is considered not to be a significant impact. The Nevada Division of Parks has an agreement with the Air Force to allow them to inventory the Nellis AF Range for recreational potential and sites in order to complete their state wide survey.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

Livestock grazing rights were purchased by the Air Force in _____

geological, geochemical, and geophysical investigations would be
applied to more accurately delineate the nature and extent of

[REDACTED]

AGRICULTURE

There are no farming operations on the Nellis AF Range. Due to the soil structure and sparsity of rainfall, the Range possibly would not yield a very productive crop if it were open for agricultural use unless some irrigation was done. Potential agricultural sites on the Range have been identified by BLM and are located at Cactus Flats, Kawich Valley, Emigrant Valley, and the lower lake of Three Finger Lake on the South Range (Range 63) [12].

Irrigation in the area of the North Range would require water to be pumped from the Ash Meadows and Pahute Mesa groundwater systems. These two systems discharge annually about 17,000 acre-feet and 10,000 acre-feet respectively. The discharge presently is transpired by plants or evaporated from soils and playas in the Amargosa Desert. Heavy pumping of the groundwater systems could alter the characteristics of the desert area.

MINERAL RESOURCES

A Stage One Minerals Inventory has been conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey and Bureau of Mines for the Nellis AF Range and immediate area [15]. The following summarizes this report.

Mining activity in the study area, Nellis AF Range and adjacent lands, began in the mid-1860's; with most of the gold-silver deposits being located during the early 1900's. Although interest in the area's mineral deposits waned shortly after their discovery, activity at some sites continued sporadically through the 1920's and 30's. Total mineral production in the area is not known, but, over half the properties listed in table 2-7 are reported to have had some output. Figures 2-9 shows the geographical location of the mining districts in the study area.

Little or no mineral exploration or related activity has occurred in the withdrawn area for nearly a half century because the Range has been withdrawn from operation of the mining laws. Nonetheless, geologic evidence and records of past mining activity support a premise that portions of the area could be a future source of selected mineral commodities to meet national requirements.

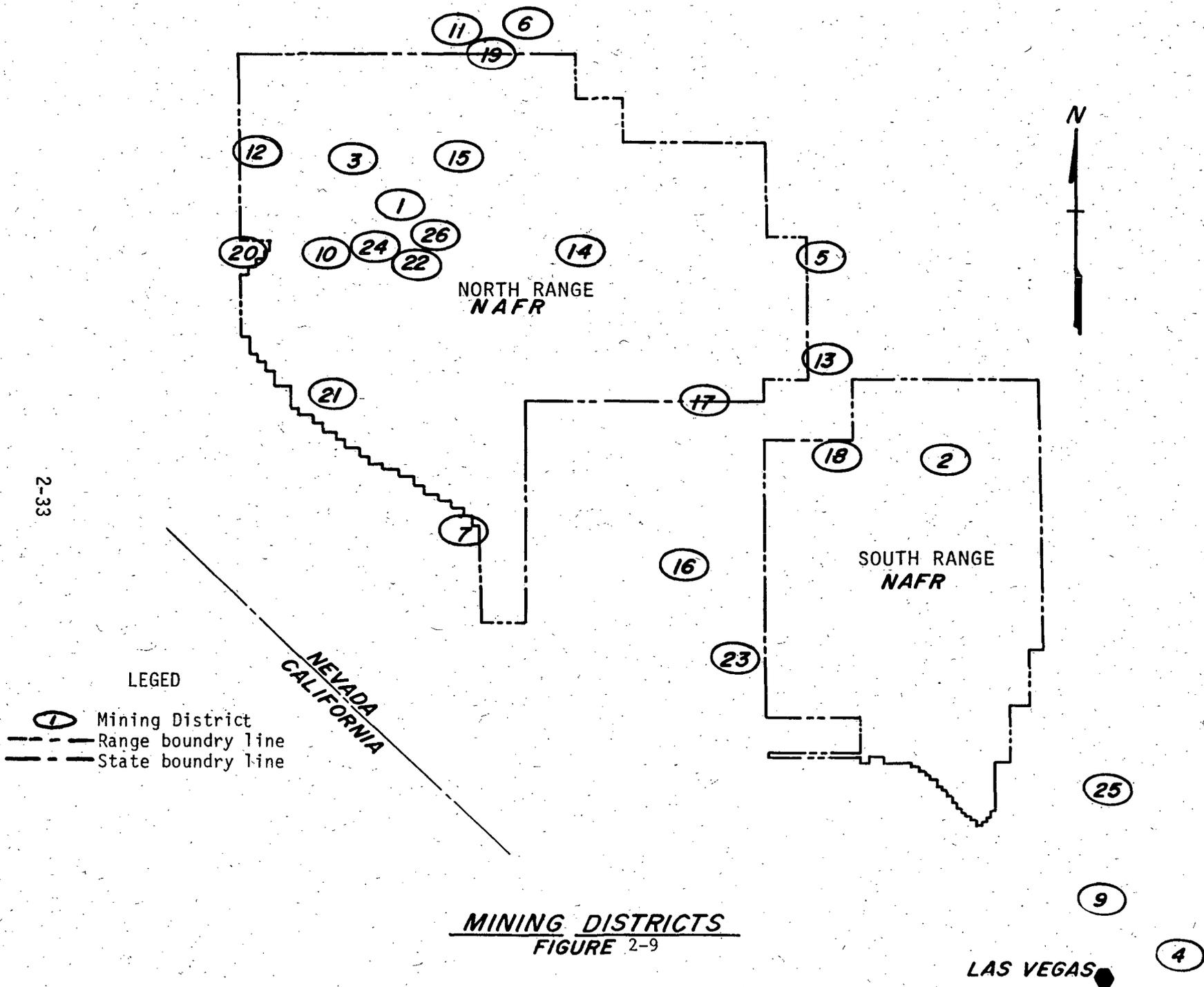
Mineral commodities found in the Nellis AF Range area are gold, silver, copper, lead, zinc, mercury, tungsten, turquoise, sand, gravel, and limestone. Some of the area within the Nellis AF Range is prospectively valuable for sodium, potassium, alunite, and potash. Approximately the eastern half of the state of Nevada is prospectively valuable for oil and gas. Much of the North Range and a small portion of the South Range falls within this

TABLE 2-7

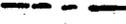
MINES ON AND ADJACENT TO NELLIS AF RANGE

<u>MINING DISTRICT</u>	<u>COMMODITY</u>	<u>NO. OF MINES</u>
1. Antelope Springs	Gold & Silver	3
2. Arrowhead	Copper, Lead, & Silver	1
3. Cactus Springs	Gold, Silver, Turquoise	3
4. Dike	Limestone & Lead	2
5. Dan Dale	Mercury, Lead, Silver, Copper, & Zinc	3
6. Eden	Silver, Gold	4
7. Fluorine	Fluorspar, Gold	2
8. Frenchman Mountain	Gypsum	7
9. Gass Peak	Zinc, Silver, Lead, Gold, Building Stone	3
10. Gold Crater	Lead, Gold, Silver	1
11. Golden Arrow	Silver, Gold	3
12. Goldfield	Gold	1
13. Groom	Lead, Zinc, Silver, Gold, Copper, Limestone	5
14. Kawich	Mercury, Gold, Manganese	6
15. Mellan Mountain	Gold	1
16. Mine Mountain	Lead, Mercury, Silver	1
17. Oak Springs	Tungsten, Gold, Silver, Lead, Magnesite	9
18. Papoose	Silver, Gold, Lead	1
19. Silverbow	Silver, Gold	4
20. Stonewall	Silver	1
21. Tolicha	Gold, Silver	5
22. Trappmans	Gold, Silver	1
23. Wahmonie	Gold, Silver, Copper, Travertine	4
24. Wellington	Gold, Silver, Copper	4
25. White Caps	Lead	1
26. Wilson	Silver, Gold	2

SOURCE: Reference 15.



LEGED

-  Mining District
-  Range boundary line
-  State boundary line

NEVADA
CALIFORNIA

MINING DISTRICTS
FIGURE 2-9

LAS VEGAS ●

zone. Gypsum and limestone are probably the most valuable commodities produced in the vicinity of, but not in, the Nellis AF Range. The average annual gypsum and limestone output for the early 1960's was estimated at 1,000,000 and 500,000 tons, respectively. Significant amounts of lead, silver, copper, and zinc have been recovered from the Groom mine about 3 miles east of the Range. (See Mining District No. 13 on figure 2-9.)

Within the study area most of the metalliferous mineral deposits consist of gold-silver minerals, occurring as fissure fillings and replacements in shear zones. Some deposits also contain lead, zinc, and copper. Several occurrences of tungsten and molybdenite have been found in one district.

Areas having the highest geologic potential for mineral resources include the north end of the North Range, east of Goldfield, which may contain significant gold-silver deposits. The Oak Spring district (No. 17 on figure 2-9) at the north end of Yucca Flat has potential for new discoveries for tungsten-molybdenum and lead-silver deposits. Also, inasmuch as uranium mineral a few miles west of the Nellis AF Range and elsewhere in the Great Basin typically are found in Tertiary volcanic rocks and ~~buff-colored sedimentary rocks of siliceous composition particularly~~