

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management**

**Environmental Assessment
DOI-BLM-NV-S010-2012-0057-EA**

N-90819

**RECREATION AND PUBLIC PURPOSE LEASE AND/OR CONVEYANCE
FOR A CITY OF LAS VEGAS FIRE STATION**

APPLICANT

City of Las Vegas, Nevada

GENERAL LOCATION

Northwest Las Vegas: south of Kyle Canyon Road and West of Puli Drive.

PREPARING OFFICE

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Las Vegas Field Office
4701 N Torrey Pines
Las Vegas, Nevada 89130
702-515-5000



Introduction

Identifying Information:

Title, EA number, and type of project:

Title: Recreation and Public Purpose (R&PP) Lease and/or Conveyance for Construction of a City of Las Vegas Fire Station on Public Lands.

EA Number: DOI-BLM-NV-S010-2012-0057-EA

Type: R&PP Lease and/or Conveyance

Location of Proposed Action:

Located in the northwest Las Vegas area south of Kyle Canyon Road and west of Puli Drive.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Mount Diablo Meridian, Nevada, T. 19 S., R. 59 E., sec. 2, SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SE $\frac{1}{4}$ SW $\frac{1}{4}$.

Name and Location of Preparing Office:

Lead Office - Bureau of Land Management, Las Vegas Field Office, Las Vegas, Nevada 89130.

Office Number: LLNVS005600

Identify the subject function code, lease, serial, or case file number:

Case File Number: N-90819-01

Applicant Name:

City of Las Vegas, Nevada

Purpose and Need for Action:

As the City of Las Vegas (City) continues to grow, increased demands are placed upon the City to provide fire response and emergency medical services for existing and future residents. It is imperative for the City to plan, acquire and develop emergency services facilities in a timely manner and to ensure that these services will be available when needed.

While current growth indicators for this particular area are somewhat stagnant, it is important for the City to plan for future growth. The growth expected in this area is for residential housing, light commercial and recreational use. Analyzing the number of emergency calls for service with regard to the existing and proposed future population indicates future needs for a fire station in this location.

If a fire station is not built at this location, it could lead to a failure in the City's attempt to meet response time requirements for EMS and Fire calls that will potentially be occurring in the area. The City's "Standard for Response Coverage" (response time requirements) is based on industry (medical and fire) standards and is a critical component in both Certified Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) accreditation and Insurance Services Office (ISO) ratings. The City's formal goals are to arrive to a citizen's request for emergency services within six minutes 90% of the time. Not meeting this goal directly relates to fire loss and patient survivability. Not meeting these ratings also has an affect on insurance ratings in the valley.

Scoping, Public Involvement and Issues:

The proposed R&PP lease and/or conveyance will allow the City of Las Vegas to plan for current and future growth to meet the needs for fire response and emergency medical services.

Stipulations will be attached to the lease which will include conservation and protection of the natural resources, T&E Species, and the environment.

This proposal has been reviewed by Bureau of Land Management (BLM) resource team members. Their comments and evaluations are included in this environmental assessment.

The proposed lease and/or conveyance is in concurrence with the Las Vegas Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (RMP) approved October 5, 1998. The land described in this proposal is within a designated disposal boundary.

A summary of this R&PP proposal and the draft EA will be made available for review by the public on the internet under NEPA number: DOI-BLM-NV-S010-2012-0057-EA; and it will be posted in the local newspaper and in the Federal Register for 45 days for public comment.

Proposed Action and Alternatives

Description of the Proposed Action:

Description: The City of Las Vegas has applied for an R&PP lease and/or conveyance for approximately 2.5 acres of public land to build a new Fire Station “I”. This fire station will meet the needs for current and future growth, providing fire response and emergency medical services. The site will include a 3–bay fire engine garage, living quarters, kitchen facilities, off-site improvements (curb, gutter, sidewalk, streetlighting), landscaping and parking lot. Timing of actual construction depends on funding. The site will be maintained by the City of Las Vegas. This R&PP is located in the northwest part of Las Vegas, south of Kyle Canyon Road and west of Puli Drive.

There is a Recreation and Public Purpose application for a proposed public park located directly north of the fire station application that is also being considered for lease and subsequent conveyance. Cumulative impacts were considered and are discussed in more detail within the Environmental Effects, Cumulative Impacts section.

Description of Other Alternatives Analyzed in Detail:

Under a “no action” alternative, BLM land would not be made available for issuance of the R&PP lease. No action would result in no new development of a fire station on this site. The fire station that would provide much needed services to surrounding future development would not be available.

Alternatives Considered but not Analyzed in Detail

Other alternatives were not analyzed. Placement of the R&PP in other areas was not considered because this location services a specific radial area determined based on locations of other existing and future fire stations.

Conformance

The proposed action is in conformance with the Record of Decision for the Approved Las Vegas Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (RMP), approved October 5, 1998.

- LD-1 in the RMP states that “Approximately 175,314 acres of public lands within the disposal areas identified on Map 2–3 are potentially available for disposal through sale, exchange or Recreation and Public Purpose patent to provide for the orderly expansion and development of southern Nevada.”
- LD-2 “All public lands within the planning area, unless otherwise classified, segregated or withdrawn and with the exception of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and Wilderness Study areas, are available at the discretion of the agency, for land use leases and permits under Section 302 of Federal Land Policy and Management Act.”

The plan has been reviewed and it is determined the proposed action is within a designated disposal boundary in conformance with the above land use plan decision LD-1 and LD-1-d. The proposal is in conformance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), as amended (43 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.); and the public lands are being leased and disposed of in accordance with the Recreation and Public Purposes Act of June 14, 1926, as amended, (43 U.S.C. 869 et seq.).

Affected Environment:

SUPPLEMENTAL AUTHORITIES

| Supplemental Authority | Not Present | Present/Not Affected | Present/May be Affected | Rationale |
|---|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Air Quality | | X | | Ensure dust control permit is obtained through DAQEM for all soil disturbing activity of .25 acres or greater, in the aggregate. Ensure stipulations are in compliance for the duration of the activity. |
| Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) | X | | | The proposed project area is not within an ACEC or any critical desert tortoise habitat. |
| Cultural/Historical | X | | | To comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), the BLM Archaeologist conducted an existing data review of the area of potential effect (APE). The APE was previously inventoried in support of the Valley Disposal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Refer to BLM Cultural Resource report 5-2467. There are no historic properties within the APE; the undertaking as proposed will have no effect to historic properties. |
| Paleontological Resources | X | | | No fossil-bearing strata will be impacted. |
| Environmental Justice | | X | | No minority or low-income communities are present in the project area. No minority or low income group would be disproportionately impacted by health or environmental effects. |
| Farmlands Prime or Unique | X | | | There are no prime or unique farmland designations in the district. |

| Supplemental Authority | Not Present | Present/Not Affected | Present/May be Affected | Rationale |
|---|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Noxious Weeds/Invasive Non-native Species | | X | | Impacts from construction and maintenance may introduce and exacerbate weed populations, with potential spread to adjacent lands. All stipulations and mitigation measures for weed control standard to the Southern Nevada District Office apply. |
| Native American Religious Concerns | X | | | An ethnographic assessment was conducted in support of the Valley Disposal Boundary EIS by the Chambers Group. The Nevada State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) concurred on the adequacy of the report and consultation efforts. No Native American concerns were identified for this portion of the Las Vegas Valley; no further analysis is required. |
| Floodplains | X | | | Project site is located within the Las Vegas Valley and CCRFCD responsible for flood control. Should be located outside of a floodplain and protected according to FEMA standards. |
| Riparian/Wetlands | X | | | Proposed action does not occur in a wetland/riparian zone. Not present. |
| Threatened, Endangered or Candidate Plant Species | X | | | Not present. |
| Threatened, Endangered or Candidate Animal Species. | | | X | See attached Terms and Conditions. Although there is no barrier to prevent relocated tortoises from reentering the project site stated in term and condition 1.a, due to the amount of tortoise sign (live and burrows) in the area, the high quality of the habitat, and the close proximity to secure habitat, <i>desert tortoise clearance surveys will be required.</i> |

| Supplemental Authority | Not Present | Present/Not Affected | Present/May be Affected | Rationale |
|-------------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------|--|
| | | | | This notice will serve as the Section 7 Determination and no additional paperwork will be provided (Sec 7 Log # NV-052-12-087). |
| Migratory Birds | | | X | <p>Migratory birds, including the BLM sensitive species the western burrowing owl (<i>Athene cunicularia</i>), may be present on the project site. Depending on the time of year for construction, there is the potential to disturb nesting birds within or immediately adjacent to the proposed action. The proponent will be required to adhere to the following mitigation measures:</p> <p>1) To prevent undue harm, habitat-altering projects or portions of projects should be scheduled outside bird breeding season. In upland desert habitats and ephemeral washes containing upland species, the season generally occurs between March 1st and August 1st.</p> <p>2) If a project that may alter any breeding habitat has to occur during the breeding season, then a qualified biologist must survey the area for nests prior to commencement of construction activities. This shall include burrowing and ground nesting species in addition to those nesting in vegetation. If any active nests (containing eggs or young) are found, an appropriately-sized buffer area must be avoided until the young birds fledge.</p> |
| Waste - Hazardous/Solid | X | | | Include standard hazmat stipulations. |

| Supplemental Authority | Not Present | Present/Not Affected | Present/May be Affected | Rationale |
|------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Water Quality | | X | | The disturbance associated with the site may increase erosion on site, thereby increasing sediment loads in surface runoff. Ensure applicant utilizes BMPs to reduce impacts to water quality. |
| Wild & Scenic Rivers | X | | | Not present in this area. |
| Wilderness (Study Area) | X | | | The proposed action is not located within or adjacent to designated Wilderness, WSA's or ISA's. |
| Forests and Rangelands (HFRA only) | | X | | <p>The proposed project is in an area known to contain <u>high</u> densities of cactus and yucca. High numbers of cactus and yucca may be present within the project impact area. Cactus and yucca are considered government property and are regulated under the Nevada BLM forestry program. If unable to be avoided, all cactus and yucca within permanent and temporary impact areas must be salvaged and replanted in temporary impact areas, undisturbed portions of the project area or used in the landscape design of the fire station once developed. Alternatively, the BLM may be able to hold a salvage sale on site prior to construction activities commencing, depending on staff availability. Potential salvage sale must be coordinated with BLM Botanist.</p> <p>Unless otherwise directed by the BLM botanist, all replanted cactus and yucca must be watered and otherwise maintained for a period of one year. To ensure successful salvage and transplant, all cactus and yucca must be salvaged using a contractor (or other approved by the BLM botanist) with at least three</p> |

| Supplemental Authority | Not Present | Present/Not Affected | Present/May be Affected | Rationale |
|------------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---|
| | | | | years' experience salvaging and maintaining plant materials in the Mojave or Sonoran Deserts. |

Other resources of the human environment that have been considered for this environmental assessment (EA) are listed in the table below. Elements that may be affected are further described in the EA. Rationale for those elements that would not be affected by the proposed action and alternative is listed in the table below.

| Other Resources | Not Present | Present/Not Affected | Present/May be Affected | Rationale |
|--|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Fish and Wildlife Excluding Federally Listed Species | | X | | Wildlife species in the general area include small mammals, rodents, birds and reptiles. Additionally, the BLM sensitive species western burrowing owl, chuckwalla, banded gila monster, Mojave shovel-nosed snake, desert glossy snake, Mojave Desert sidewinder may be present in the general area. These species would be displaced as lands are disturbed within the project area. The primary direct impacts of the proposed action on wildlife would be killing or maiming of ground dwelling animals and less mobile species (such as reptiles) during construction, displacement of individuals, the loss and fragmentation of habitat. Additional impacts associated with the mortality from vehicular traffic may also occur. Wildlife species in the general area are common and widely distributed throughout the area and the loss of some individuals and/or their habitat would have a negligible impact on populations of the species throughout the region. Impacts to BLM Sensitive Species are not anticipated to lead to further decline of the species range wide as |

| Other Resources | Not Present | Present/Not Affected | Present/May be Affected | Rationale |
|--|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------|--|
| | | | | the total disturbance for this project is relatively small. |
| BLM Natural Areas | X | | | There are no such designations within the Field Office. |
| Rangeland Health Standards | | X | | The proposed action includes only minimal surface disturbance; therefore, there will be no impacts to rangeland health. |
| Grazing Management | | X | | The proposed project is not located in an authorized grazing allotment. |
| Green House Gas Emissions (Climate Change) | | X | | Currently there are no emission limits for suspected Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, and no technically defensible methodology for predicting potential climate changes from GHG emissions. However, there are, and will continue to be, several efforts to address GHG emissions from federal activities, including BLM authorized uses. |
| Minerals | | X | | No mining claims or mining operations present. Any mineral materials produced within the ROW must be used within the ROW or stockpiled within the ROW for disposal through the BLM in accordance with the regulations found at 43 CFR 3600. If mineral materials are to be stockpiled on site for disposal or removed from the ROW at the time of construction, the disposal of the mineral materials must be analyzed in this NEPA document and a contract will be necessary before the stockpiled mineral materials can leave the ROW. |
| Socio-Economic Values | | X | | This project will not disproportionately impact social or economic values. |

| Other Resources | Not Present | Present/Not Affected | Present/May be Affected | Rationale |
|------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Soils/Hydrology | | X | | <p>Even though the proposed action will cause some disturbance, these disturbances should not cause significant negative impacts to soils.</p> <p>Area is located within the Las Vegas Valley. No additional impacts to local hydrologic conditions.</p> |
| Vegetation | | X | | <p>There are no known occurrences of BLM Sensitive plant species within the project area, however the following species is known to occur in the general area surrounding the project: yellow two toned beardtongue (<i>Penstemon bicolor</i> spp <i>bicolor</i>). Due to the minimal amount of disturbance, if BLM sensitive plant species are present, potential impacts would be negligible.</p> |
| Visual Resources | | X | | <p>The proposed action is in VRM Class III, which aims to partially retain the existing character of the landscape. Levels of change to the landscape can be moderate, but should not dominate the view of the casual observer. Since the proposed action is adjacent to existing developments, it is not expected to dominate the view of the casual observer. Please ensure that change repeats the basic elements of form, line, color, and texture found in the natural landscape to the extent practical. No issues.</p> |
| Recreation | X | | | <p>This project is not expected to impact recreation use in this area.</p> |

| Other Resources | Not Present | Present/Not Affected | Present/May be Affected | Rationale |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Fuels/Fire Management | | X | | Fire restrictions are generally enacted between May 15 and October 1. Compliance with fire restrictions is mandatory while fire restrictions are in place. Specific activities may be waived on a case by case basis by a line officer after review and approval by the Fire Management Officer. |
| Lands Access | | X | | As long as access is through an already existing road, there are no issues. If access is through another lease area, be sure to obtain concurrence for access to the proposed project. |
| Lands with Wilderness Characteristics | X | | | The proposed action is located in areas which underwent an initial wilderness inventory and were determined not to meet the elements of wilderness characteristics. This area was not nominated for wilderness characteristics as part of the Las Vegas RMP Revision and therefore the BLM did not consider a re-inventory in this area. The proposed action is in conformance with the existing LUP per FLPMA as it relates to management of LWCs. |
| Wild Horse and Burros | | X | | The proposed project is located near the Wheeler Pass Herd Management Area. Individuals would be informed to not harass (feed, pet, chase, etc.) wild horses and burros if encountered on or near the project areas. If they do see any wild horses and burros, they should keep a safe distance, they are wild animals and can be unpredictable, especially during foaling and breeding season. There should be no impacts to wild horses or burros. |

Migratory Birds:

Under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 (MBTA) and subsequent amendments (16 U.S.C. 703-711), it is unlawful to take, kill, or possess migratory birds. A list of the protected bird species can be found in 50 C.F.R. §10.13. The list of birds protected under this regulation is extensive and the project site has potential to support many of these species, including the BLM sensitive species the western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*). Typically, the breeding season is when these species are most sensitive to disturbance, which generally occurs from March 15 through July 30.

Threatened, Endangered or Candidate (T&E) Animal Species:

Threatened and endangered species are placed on a federal list by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and receive protection under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended. The only T&E species known to occur in the vicinity of the project area is the threatened desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*).

In the Mojave region, the desert tortoise occurs primarily on flats and bajadas with soils ranging from sand to sandy-gravel characterized by scattered shrubs and abundant inter-shrub space for herbaceous plant growth. They are also found on rocky terrain and slopes.

This project lies within the Las Vegas Valley programmatic area and is adjacent to undisturbed desert tortoise habitat. Desert tortoise survey data conducted for the preparation of the Disposal Boundary EIS indicates there are live tortoise and tortoise burrows located within less and a quarter mile of the proposed project site.

Environmental Effects:

Migratory Birds:

Migratory birds, including the BLM sensitive species the western burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), may be present on the project site. The proponent will be required to adhere to the following mitigation measures:

- 1) To prevent undue harm, habitat-altering projects or portions of projects should be scheduled outside bird breeding season. In upland desert habitats and ephemeral washes containing upland species, the season generally occurs between March 15th - July 30th.
- 2) If a project that may alter any breeding habitat has to occur during the breeding season, then a qualified biologist must survey the area for nests prior to commencement of construction activities. This shall include burrowing and ground nesting species in addition to those nesting in vegetation. If any active nests (containing eggs or young) are found, an appropriately-sized buffer area must be avoided until the young birds fledge.

Threatened, Endangered or Candidate (T&E) Species:

This project will disturb a total of 2.5 acres of tortoise habitat. Since tortoise sign has been found in the vicinity and undisturbed habitat exists in the area, there is potential for tortoises to wander into the project area. If not noticed and avoided during construction, desert tortoises could be either injured or killed (by crushing) or harassed (by being moved out of harm's way). Section 7 Consultation for this project is covered under the Las Vegas Valley Biological Opinion (1-5-96-F-23R.3) contingent on compliance with the attached terms and conditions.

Although there is no barrier to prevent relocated tortoises from reentering the project site stated in term and condition 1.a, due to the amount of tortoise sign (live and burrows) in the area, the high quality of the habitat, and the close proximity to secure habitat, desert tortoise clearance surveys will be required.

The proponent is required to have an authorized biologist survey the alignments and work areas and relocate any tortoises found on the project site. If tortoises are encountered that must be moved out of harm's way, the biologist will contact the BLM wildlife staff at (702) 515-5000 to identify the relocation site or whether the animal will be transferred to the Clark County Tortoise Pick-up Service.

Minimization measures in the above mentioned biological opinion contain measures to reduce potential impacts to desert tortoise.

Cumulative Impacts:

The proposed action will likely provide limited cumulative impacts. The fire station will be built as development increases in the area which will likely surround this site. There will be some noise increase due to the fire engine traffic and sirens. The PM10 air quality dust accumulation may increase during construction, however, the proponent is responsible for acquiring all required dust control permits through Clark County Department of Air Quality and Environmental Management.

It is noted that the proposed park directly north of this site will also be built as development increases and surrounds the site. The acreage of the proposed park is larger so it may initiate changes in sediment transport, alteration of discharge and retention rates of water and potential

changes in velocity of water moving through the system. However, these impacts are considered to be limited.

There should be no significant cumulative effects anticipated as a result of the proposed action. Cumulative impacts associated with this action were previously evaluated on pages 4-58 through 4-66 of the Las Vegas Valley Disposal Boundary Environmental Impact Statement, signed March 2005.

Tribes, Individuals, Organizations, or Agencies Consulted:

Table 1. List of Persons, Agencies and Organizations Consulted

| Name | Purpose & Authorities for Consultation or Coordination | Findings & Conclusions |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| Rebecca L. Rury, Applicant Representative | Applicant | Consent to lease |

List of Preparers

Table 2. List of Preparers:

| Name | Title | Responsible for the Following Section(s) of this Document |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Rebecca L. Rury | Volunteer Realty Specialist | NEPA Creator/ Author |
| Lisa Christianson | Environmental Protection Specialist | Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions |
| Jessica Stegmeier | Wildlife Biologist/Botanist | Botanist, Forest Initiative, Healthy (Cactus/Yucca), Plants/Threatened, Endangered or Candidate (Plant Species), Vegetation Excluding Listed Species |
| Susanne Rowe | Archaeologist | Cultural Resources, Native American Religious Concerns, Paleontology, |
| Boris Poff | Hydrologist | Floodplains, Hydrologic Conditions, Riparian/Wetlands, Soils, Water Resources/Quality (Drinking/Surface/Ground), Wetlands/Riparian Zones, Wild & Scenic Rivers |
| Jessica Stegmeier | Wildlife Biologist | Fish & Wildlife, Migratory Birds, Threatened, Endangered or Candidate (Animal Species) |
| Lorrie Dee Dukes | Geologist | Geology/Mineral Resources/Energy Production, |
| Lucas J. Rhea | Natural Resource Specialist | Invasive Species/ Noxious Weeds |
| Hillierie Patton | Public Affairs Specialist | Public Affairs |
| Kerri-Ann Thorpe | Realty Specialist | Visual Resources |
| Greg Marfil | Fire Management Spec. | Fuels/Fire |
| Katie Kleinick | Threatened/Endangered Species | Wildlife Biologist |
| John Evans | Environmental Specialist | Environmental Justice |
| Krystal Johnson | WH&Burro Specialist | WH&Burro, Farmlands, Livestock |
| Marilyn Peterson | Recreation Specialist | Recreation |
| Sendi Kalcic | Wilderness Planner | Areas with Wilderness Characteristics |