



BRIAN SANDOVAL
Governor

STATE OF NEVADA
DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE

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March 4, 2014

Gary Cottle
Natural Resources Manager
NAS Fallon
4755 Pasture Rd. Bldg 307
Fallon, Nevada 89496

Re: Cotton Peak Communication Site

Dear Mr. Cottle:

I am responding to your request for information from the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) on the known or potential occurrence of wildlife resources in the vicinity of the Cotton Peak Communication Site located in Churchill County, Nevada. In order to fulfill your request an analysis was performed using the best available data from the NDOW's wildlife occurrences, raptor nest sites and ranges, greater sage-grouse leks and habitat, and big game distributions databases. No warranty is made by the NDOW as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of the data for individual use or aggregate use with other data. These data should be considered **sensitive** and may contain information regarding the location of sensitive wildlife species or resources. All appropriate measures should be taken to ensure that the use of this data is strictly limited to serve the needs of the project described on your GIS Data Request Form. Abuse of this information has the potential to adversely affect the existing ecological status of Nevada's wildlife resources and could be cause for the denial of future data requests.

To adequately provide wildlife resource information in the vicinity of the proposed project the NDOW delineated an area of interest that included a four-mile buffer around the project area provided by you (email, February 28, 2014). Wildlife resource data was queried from the NDOW databases based on this area of interest. The results of this analysis are summarized below.

Big Game – Occupied bighorn sheep and mule deer distributions exist throughout the entire project area and portions of the four-mile buffer area. Occupied pronghorn antelope distribution exists within portions of the project area and four-mile buffer area. No known occupied elk distribution exists in the vicinity of the project area. Please refer to the attached maps for details regarding big game distributions relative to the proposed project area.

Greater Sage-Grouse – Greater sage-grouse habitat in the vicinity of the project area is primarily categorized as Unsuitable Habitat. Low Value Habitat/Transitional Range also exists in the vicinity of the project area. Please refer to the attached maps for details regarding greater sage-grouse habitat relative to the proposed project area. There are no known greater sage-grouse lek sites in the vicinity of the project area.

Raptors – Various species of raptors, which use diverse habitat types, may reside in the vicinity of the project area. American kestrel, bald eagle, barn owl, burrowing owl, Cooper's hawk, ferruginous hawk, golden eagle, great horned owl, long-eared owl, merlin, northern goshawk, northern harrier, northern saw-whet owl, osprey, peregrine falcon, red-tailed hawk, rough-legged hawk, sharp-shinned hawk, short-eared owl, Swainson's hawk, turkey vulture, and western screech owl have distribution ranges that include the project area and four-mile buffer area.

Raptor species are protected by State and Federal laws. In addition, bald eagle, burrowing owl, California spotted owl, ferruginous hawk, flammulated owl, golden eagle, northern goshawk, peregrine falcon,

prairie falcon, and short-eared owl are NDOW species of special concern and are target species for conservation as outlined by the Nevada Wildlife Action Plan. Per the *Interim Golden Eagle Technical Guidance: Inventory and Monitoring Protocols; and Other Recommendations in Support of Golden Eagle Management and Permit Issuance* (United States Fish and Wildlife Service 2010) we have queried our raptor nest database to include raptor nest sites within ten miles of the proposed project area. There are three known raptor nest sites within ten miles of the project area:

Probable Use	Last Check	Last Active	Township/Range/Section
Eagle	1/1/1977		21 0230N 0340E 011
Eagle	1/1/1977		21 0240N 0350E 009
Eagle	7/19/2011		21 0240N 0360E 019

Other Wildlife Resources

The following species have also been observed in the vicinity of the project area:

Common Name	ESA	State	SWAP_SoCP
desert horned lizard			Yes
Great Basin collared lizard			Yes
long-nosed leopard lizard			Yes
mountain lion			
western fence lizard			
zebra-tailed lizard			

ESA: Endangered Species Act Status
 State: State of Nevada Special Status
 SWAP_SoCP: Nevada State Wildlife Action Plan (2012) Species of Conservation Priority

The above information is based on data stored at our Reno Headquarters Office, and does not necessarily incorporate the most up to date wildlife resource information collected in the field. Please contact the Habitat Division Supervising Biologist at our Western Region Reno Office (775.688.1500) to discuss the current environmental conditions for your project area and the interpretation of our analysis. Furthermore, it should be noted that the information detailed above is preliminary in nature and not necessarily an identification of every wildlife resource concern associated with the proposed project. Consultation with the Supervising Habitat biologist will facilitate the development of appropriate survey protocols and avoidance or mitigation measures that may be required to address potential impacts to wildlife resources.

Mark Freese - Western Region Supervising Habitat Biologist (775.688.1145)

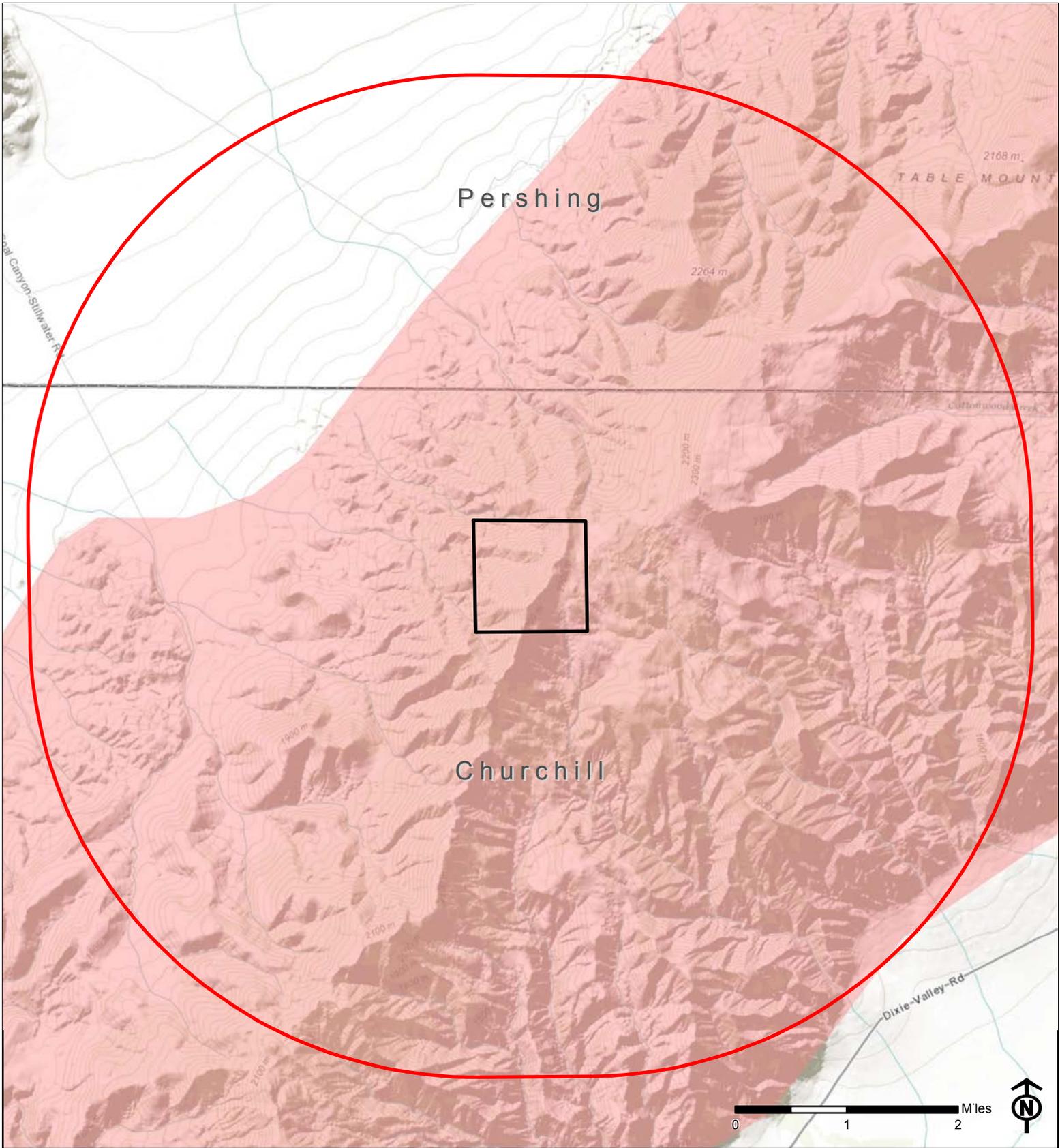
Federally listed Threatened and Endangered species are also under the jurisdiction of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. Please contact them for more information regarding these species.

If you have any questions regarding the results or methodology of this analysis please do not hesitate to contact our GIS office at (775) 688-1565.

Sincerely,



Timothy M. Herrick
 Biologist



-  Project Area
-  Four Mile Buffer Area Boundary
-  Bighorn Sheep Distribution
-  County Boundary



Cotton Peak Communication Site Bighorn Sheep Distribution

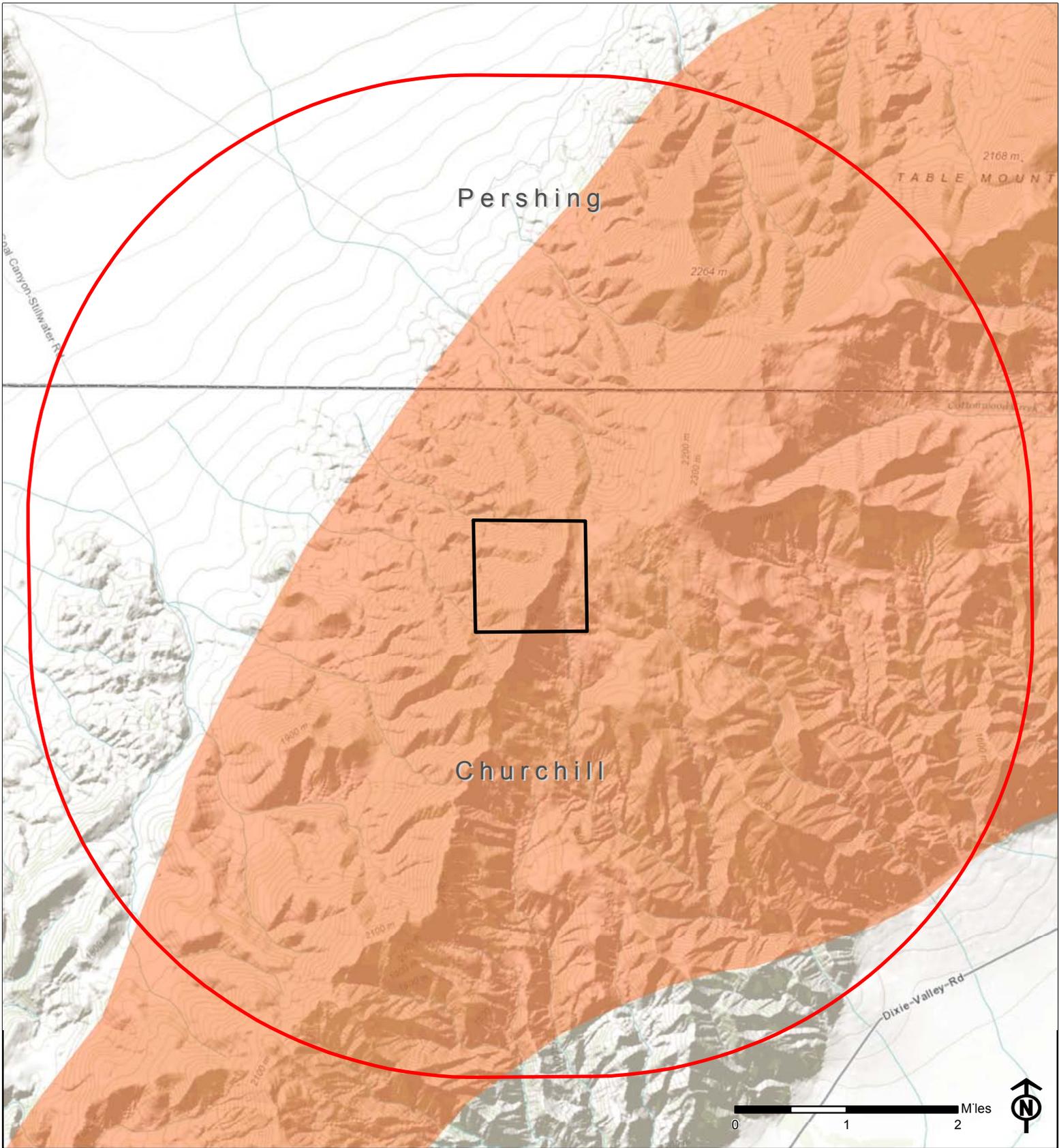


March 04, 2014

Projection: UTM Zone 11 North, NAD83

No warranty is made by the Nevada Department of Wildlife as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of the data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.





-  Project Area
-  Four Mile Buffer Area Boundary
-  Mule Deer Distribution
-  County Boundary



Cotton Peak Communication Site Mule Deer Distribution

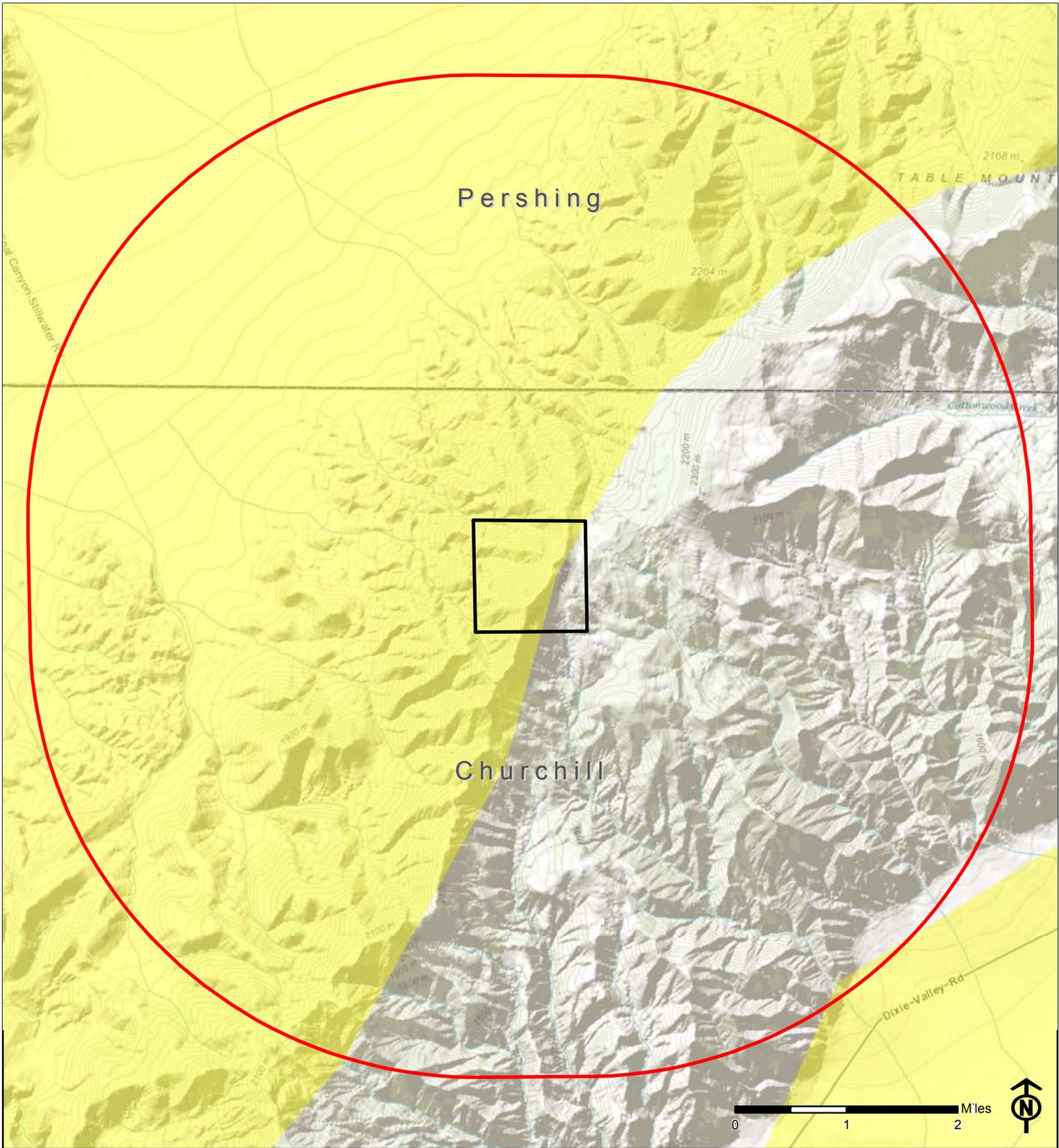


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-  Project Area
-  Four Mile Buffer Area Boundary
-  Pronghorn Antelope Distribution
-  County Boundary



Cotton Peak Communication Site Pronghorn Antelope Distribution

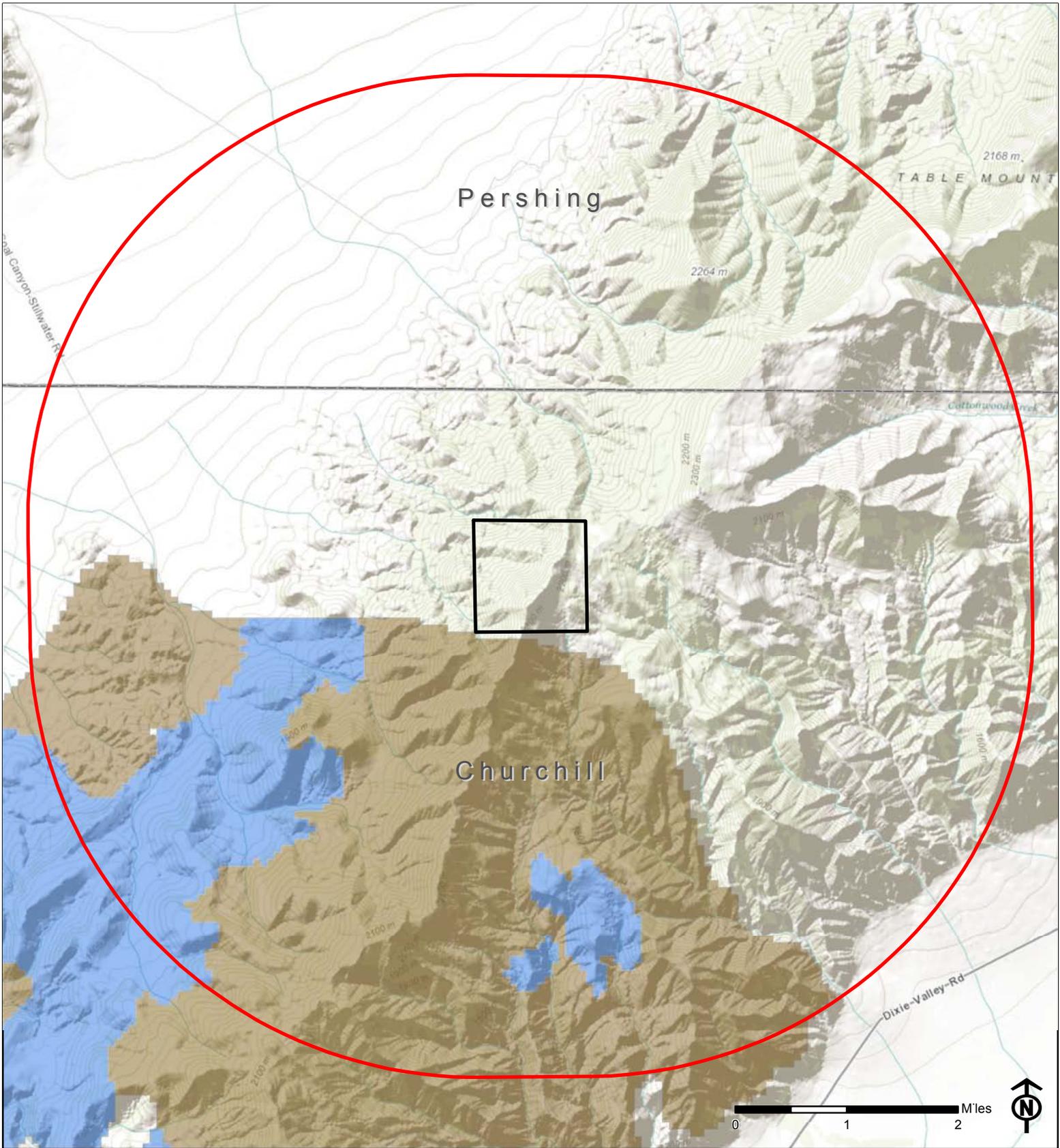


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-  Project Area
-  Four Mile Buffer Area Boundary
-  County Boundary

Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat

- | | |
|--|--|
|  1 - Essential/Irreplaceable Habitat |  4 - Low Value Habitat/Transitional Range |
|  2 - Important Habitat |  5 - Unsuitable Habitat |
|  3 - Habitat of Moderate Importance |  Pending Completion |



Cotton Peak Communication Site Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat



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