

Energy Development in Eastern Nevada

With two new and two revived electrical generation and distribution projects, and half again as many wind energy development proposals, eastern Nevada is not lacking for attention from would-be energy developers.

Coal-Fired Electricity

Idaho Power and LS Power have revived the Southwest Intertie Project (SWIP), a 500-kilovolt transmission line extending from Burley, Idaho, to Las Vegas. The Ely Field Office signed the record of decision and land use plan amendment for SWIP in November 1994, issuing the right-of-way (ROW) one month later. A stipulation requiring construction to begin within five years has been extended twice. LS Power is preparing the comprehensive construction, operation and maintenance plan required to begin construction and updating the environmental analysis.

LS Power is also behind the White Pine Energy Station. White Pine Energy Associates, LLC, was established to develop and construct an up to 1,600-megawatt (MW) coal-fired electric power generation plant in Steptoe Valley, 30 miles north of Ely. The plant could be constructed in up to three 530 MW

units. The draft environmental impact statement is scheduled for public review in January 2007.

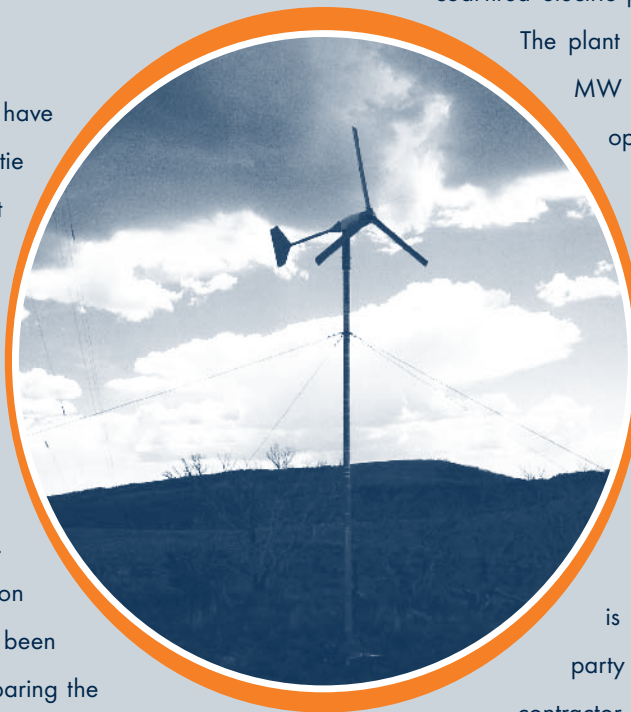
Sierra Pacific/Nevada Power is also looking to construct a coal-fired electric power plant in the Steptoe Valley.

The plant would initially consist of two 750 MW units. The first unit would become operational in 2011. The second would follow inside three years. Nevada Power would construct two 500 MW coal gasification units, once the technology becomes commercially viable. The Sierra Pacific proposal also calls for construction of a 250-mile transmission line to connect to southern Nevada. The BLM is in the process of selecting a third-party environmental impact statement contractor.

The other "resurrected" project is about 12 miles northwest of Mesquite, where

Site Global, LLC, has proposed a 750 MW coal-fired electric power plant at the site of the once-proposed Toquop Energy Plant. The BLM, in December 2003, issued a ROW to Toquop

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Anemometer gathers wind data

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State Director's Column



The transition from summer to fall signals the end of the 2006 wildland fire season.

The arrival of cooler weather was especially welcome this year as Nevada was hard hit by wildfire. Wildfires this last season consumed about 1.3 million acres of rangeland, of which more than 900,000 acres were in the Elko area. The potential damage is a serious situation for the long-term health of the watersheds. The devastation impact all public land users, including ranchers who use public rangelands, as well as habitat for Nevada's wildlife and wild horses.

BLM is working with numerous partners to restore the rangelands to bring back the healthy, productive watersheds that benefit all uses. We are finalizing our rehabilitation plans and starting to plant seeds in order to restore the burned lands to take advantage of winter and spring precipitation. We are also conducting emergency wild horse gathers to keep them from starving.

We are in a fight against a relentlessly invasive enemy—cheatgrass—while contending with a force of nature—dry lightning storms. Dry lightning is the cause of most of Nevada's wildland fires. It is important to be at a fire preparedness level to stop small fires on initial attack. The partnership among fire-fighting agencies and groups is phenomenal in this state. Preparation for the next fire season started the day this fire season ended.

Speaking of hotspots, eastern Nevada is becoming the place to be for the generation of electricity. As the cover story notes, the congruence of location, space and water is creating opportunities for wind and coal-fired power generation. Applications for rights-of-way to monitor wind and proposals to build transmission lines are increasing at the Ely Field Office.

Those projects, along with the water development right-of-way proposals, are raising the profile of an area that was mostly known for its scenic, recreational and cultural resources. These increasing challenges coincide with the hiring of a new field manager for the Ely office, John Ruhs.

Two more new additions to the Nevada management team are Gary Johnson as the deputy state director for minerals and Doran

Sanchez as the chief of communications.

John Ruhs returns to Nevada from Colorado where he was the manager for the Kremmling Field Office. He previously served as the fire management officer and rehabilitation manager for the Winnemucca Field Office and as acting associate field manager at the Battle Mountain Field Office.

Gary Johnson has 25 years experience in mining with BLM and in the private sector. His most recent job was BLM deputy state director of minerals in New Mexico. He will start his new job in early December.

Doran Sanchez comes to Nevada from the BLM's California Desert District where he was a public affairs specialist since 1990. His professional experience includes six years as a reporter, editor and photojournalist and three years as a regional marketing director.

I'm confident that Nevada continues to have one of the best management teams in the BLM. We are each committed to doing what is best for the public lands, to providing service to the public that uses these lands, and to empowering the employees that take pride in being public servants.

— Ron Wenker

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PHOTO BY RICH JOHNSTON, NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Energy to construct a natural gas-fired power plant, plus power lines, a pipeline and access road. BLM received an amended proposal from Sithe Global, on behalf of Toquop Energy, in 2005, which responds to the volatility of natural gas prices as well as developments in technology that increase efficiency of coal-fired power plants. The amended application includes a rail line. BLM completed public scoping on a new environmental impact statement last March.

Wind

Eastern Nevada's energy development potential is apparently not limited to coal-fired power plants and transmission lines. There is also interest in developing wind energy.

Proponents are monitoring wind at three potential project sites; two additional potential projects have ROWs for anemometers; and another proponent is applying for a project area.

Nevada Wind, LLC, is conducting wind monitoring at two of the proposed projects. One is in the Table Mountains and around Mt. Wilson area, about 30 miles north of Pioche. A completed application has not been submitted. The other is in partnership

Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne, speaking at the Lake Tahoe Forum in August, announces the approval of \$48 million for capital improvements and science and research projects in the Lake Tahoe Basin. The Lake Tahoe Forum brings together key stakeholders such as business leaders, elected officials in California and Nevada, federal/state/local agency partners, environmentalists, Native American tribes and the public to discuss the ongoing progress of the Lake Tahoe Restoration Act. Senator John Ensign hosted the meeting which was also attended by Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid.

with LS Power in the Egan Range, about 35 miles north of Ely. BLM expects to receive an application to construct a wind generation facility by the end of 2006.

The third potential project in the wind monitoring stage is in the Diamond and Egan ranges. The project proponents are enXco/Power Partners Southwest, LLC.

Three other potential wind energy development projects have yet to enter the wind-monitoring phase:

- Nevada Wind has project areas and ROWs for anemometers in the Antelope, South Egan and Schell Creek ranges.
- Spring Valley Wind, LLC, has identified a project area and has a right-of-way grant for an anemometer site in North Spring Valley.
- Invenergy, LLC, has applied for a project area and anemometers in Spring Valley, as well.

— Chris Hanefeld
Ely Field Office

BLM FIRE SAFETY

Wildland Fire

Wild horses run across land burned by wildland fire as BLM conducts an emergency gather of the horses from areas where there is no longer any habitat or forage for wildlife, livestock or wild horses. More than 500 wild horses were gathered from the Little Humboldt and Rock Creek herd management areas. Some of the horses were released into nearby areas. Most were transported to the National Wild Horse and Burro Center at Palomino Valley for adoption preparation. Thirty-three mares that were treated with fertility control in 2004, were moved to a holding facility in Fallon. They will be tested for levels of the fertility drug. These mares are representative of the unique characteristics of the two herds and will be returned to the herd management areas to continue these traits into subsequent generations. BLM is repairing fences, conducting cultural inventories, mobilizing equipment and issuing contracts to seed the burned areas.



BLM PHOTO BY BRUCE THOMPSON

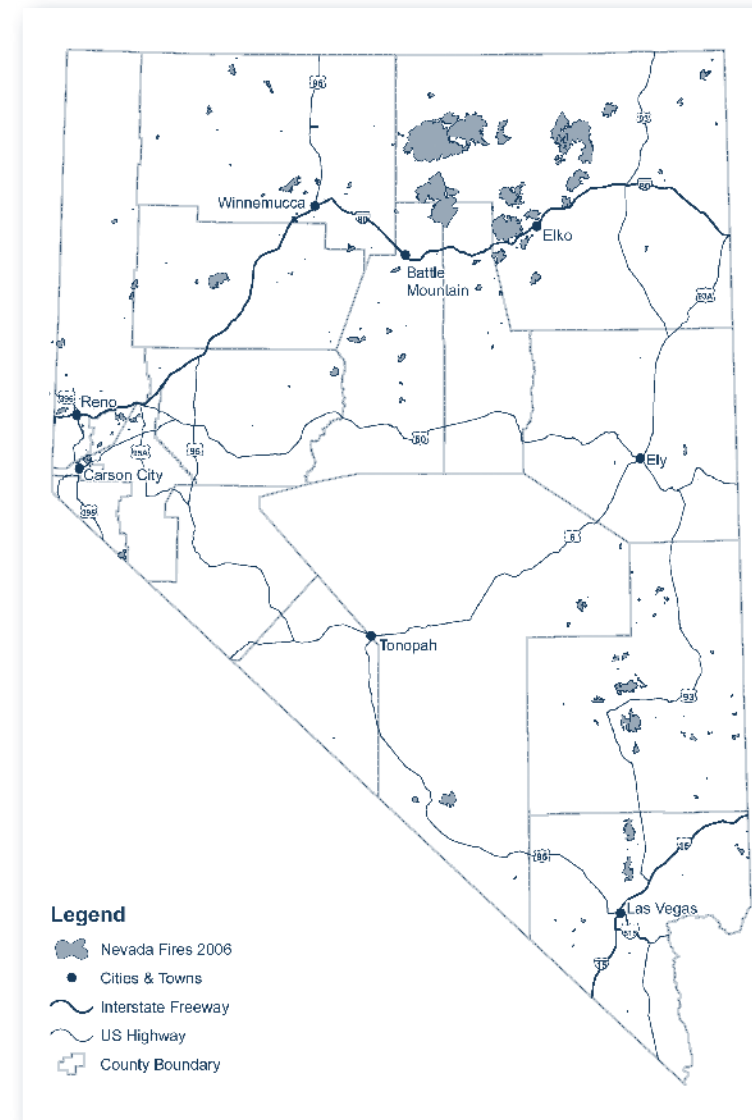
BLM Fire Aviation

BLM Fire Operations Specialist Ken Estes describes defensible space to schoolkids at the BLM Fire Aviation booth at the Reno National Championship Air Races. The diorama shows houses and property with defensible space on one side and fire hazards on the other side. Winnemucca High School student Ben Gibson earned a Eagle Scout badge by conceiving and building the project.



2006 FIRE SEASON

Areas Burned By Wildfire



BLM Nevada 2006 Fire Season

Battle Mountain Field Office:

49 fires/41,660 acres
10 fires human caused/burned 490 acres
39 fires lightning starts/ burned 41,170 acres

Carson City Field Office:

68 fires/71,482 acres 35 fires human caused/burned 1,204 acres
33 fires lightning starts/burned 70,278 acres

Elko Field Office:

132 fires/707,285 acres
15 fires human caused/burned 9,491 acres
117 fires lightning starts/burned 697,794 acres

Ely Field Office:

352 fires/116,223 acres
13 fires human caused/burned 3,907 acres
339 fires lightning starts/burned 112,316 acres

Las Vegas Field Office:

111 fires/6,484 acres
58 fires human caused/burned 778 acres
53 fires lightning starts/burned 5,706 acres

Winnemucca Field Office:

95 fires/58,814 acres
19 fires human caused/burned 2,439 acres
76 fires lightning starts/burned 56,375 acres

TOTAL: 807 FIRES/1,001,948 ACRES BURNED

Fire Awareness Billboard On I-80 Near Winnemucca



FEDERAL AND LOCAL SHARED RESOURCES

Clark County and BLM to Share Surveying Resources

A first-of-its-kind agreement will enable the BLM and Clark County to share resources for completing official federal surveys.

Under a memorandum of understanding, county surveyors working collaboratively with BLM and under BLM authority will be able to complete official federal surveys on public land scheduled to be patented to the county. This enables BLM to complete the survey near the beginning of the patenting process rather than at the end.

The official federal survey must be completed before a patent can be issued.

“The county will be able to help BLM cut a lot of time out of the patenting process, and that’s really important given the tremendous amount of growth in Southern Nevada,” said Clark County Surveyor Brett Lane. “We can’t get a patent issued until the official federal survey gets done and the results are identified in a plat.”

Plats are drawings that represent the boundary lines created or established through survey of a particular area.

The ultimate goal is to leverage federal and local government survey resources, eliminate duplicated survey efforts whenever possible, and create a proactive approach to the BLM’s and the county’s public land survey needs.

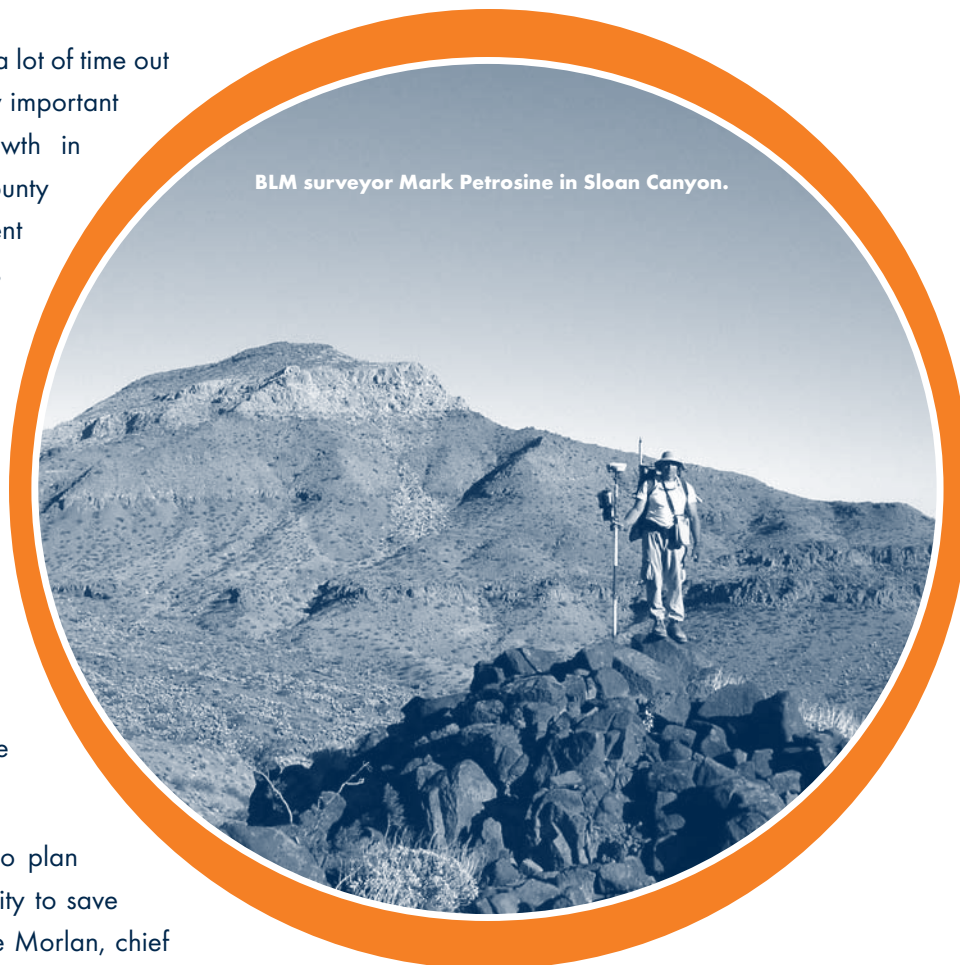
“Since the BLM and the county will also plan collaboratively, this creates the opportunity to save money, resources and efforts,” said Dave Morlan, chief

of the BLM Nevada Branch of Geographic Services.

The BLM is the federal agency authorized by Congress and through the Secretary of the Interior to complete official federal surveys.

The agreement applies to all public land disposal mechanisms, including the Recreation and Public Purposes (R&PP) Act, the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA), and the Lincoln County Land Act (LCLA).

– **Richard Brown**
Nevada State Office



BLM surveyor Mark Petrosine in Sloan Canyon.

HOW BLM BECAME THE COUNTRY’S SURVEYOR

When the United States became a nation, it faced paying off the huge debt created by the Revolutionary War. The new states gave to the nation all the land they held outside their actual state with the understanding that Congress would sell land to pay off the war debt. Congress authorized sale of the land through the federal, or cadastral, surveys.

As a young nation, we faced the daunting task of surveying more than 1.8 billion acres of public domain lands. As quickly as federal surveyors laid out sections, townships and ranges, it was offered for sale. Land was given as a reward to those who served in the Continental Army and Navy during the war. Land sales were brisk and by the mid-1820s the debt was paid off.

In 1862, the first Homestead Act was passed. By then, land sales had stopped providing a key source of national revenue. The Homestead Act allowed settlers to have their own farm, without having to pay for the land before starting to farm.

Two agencies were created in this process. One was the Office of Surveyor General, which subdivided the land into townships and ranges so prospective buyers would know exactly what land they purchased. The township and range system also ensured that all the land could be sold, and the nation would not be left holding swamplands or waste land.

The other office, the General Land Office (GLO), had two principal employees in each field office: a Register, charged with keeping track of who purchased what parcels; and the Receiver, authorized to receive money for the U.S. Treasury. The GLO was placed in the Department of the Treasury for administrative purposes. It was later moved to the Department of the Interior, along with the Surveyor General in 1849. In 1946, the Surveyor General, General Land Office and Taylor Grazing Service were combined into an administratively-created Bureau

of Land Management.

Today, the official government surveys of public lands are conducted by the Cadastral Survey office in each BLM state office. Cadastral Survey also performs surveys for other federal agencies, including Forest Service, Navy, Air force, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Indian Affairs. In addition, the BLM is the federal government’s official record keeper for more than 200 years’ worth of cadastral survey records and plats.

Almost 1.5 billion acres have been surveyed and monumented. This impressive accomplishment represents the greatest land surveying project ever undertaken. There are about 2.6 million section corners throughout the United States, each one located about a mile apart. Placing these corners required a vast expenditure of human energy in carrying heavy surveying equipment, dragging chains, cutting trails, climbing mountains, placing monuments, digging pits, and blazing “witness” trees.

In Nevada, the Cadastral program was initiated in 1861. About 30 percent of the state was surveyed prior to 1910 and uses stone and wooden post monuments at the survey corners. Another 40 percent has been surveyed after 1910 with iron posts and brass cap monuments. The remaining 30 percent is unsurveyed.

Identified through the last census, Nevada has become the fastest growing state in the union. Use of Nevada’s public lands for community expansion, recreation and entertainment has escalated as well. The immediate goal of Nevada’s Cadastral program is to accomplish surveys necessary to provide descriptions for land disposals and to define the boundaries of public lands in areas of intermingled public and private ownership patterns.

BURNING MAN

2006 Burning Man Event Larger and Safer

Black Rock City is a temporary city laid out on the Black Rock Playa, a dry, barren lakebed of ancient Lake Lahontan. Global Positioning System instruments are used to locate a network of streets and intersections that creates a semi-circular framework open to the northeast where The Man is constructed out on the open playa. The road grid quickly fills with visitors known as "burners" from all over the world to populate Black Rock City, which briefly becomes the seventh largest city in Nevada. This year's population grew nearly 10 percent over last year's attendance. By midnight on Friday, Sept. 1, there were 39,100 people in the City.

"The fire art and burns were larger and more numerous this year. I understand that as much propane had been burned by Thursday at noon as was burned during the entire 2005 event."

— Dave Cooper
BLM manager of Black Rock area

The Burning Man event is held during the week leading up to Labor Day. The annual festival of art and self expression operates on public land under terms of a permit issued by the BLM Winnemucca Field Office. The special recreation use permit includes numerous stipulations for public safety and resource protection.

A lot of planning takes place to ensure that Burning Man is as safe and trouble-free as possible. Throughout the year BLM, Black Rock City, LLC, (the organizers of Burning Man), and other cooperators meet to address any concerns about the event.

Clouds of dust are a natural phenomenon on the playa that no amount of planning or road watering can prevent. Burners are advised to bring goggles and face masks to wear during dust storms. On Wednesday evening a major dust storm slammed into Black Rock City causing total white-out conditions that lasted for several hours. Suddenly, people who had been carefree pedestrians or bicyclists one moment were lost in a white fog of choking playa dust. At times the dust would thin just enough to see fellow burners stopped in their tracks, frozen in mid stride, like the victims at Pompeii.

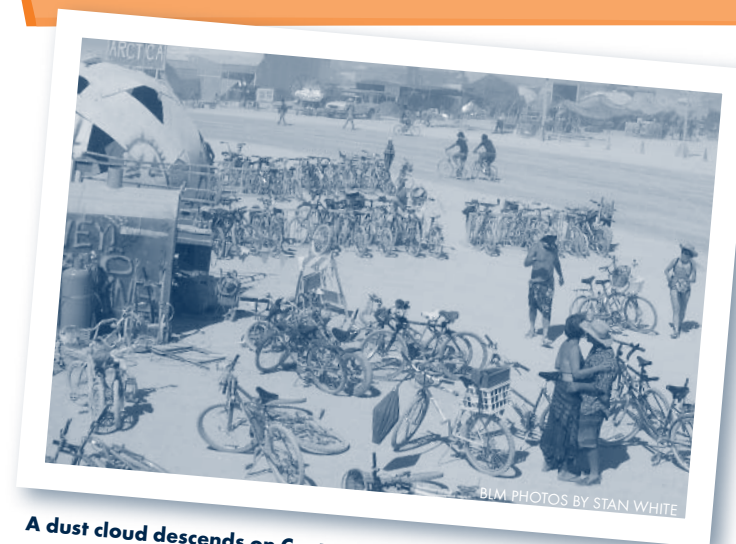
Cost of the Permit

BLM charges Black Rock City, LLC, \$4 per person per day for the seven-day event for days when these people are actually in attendance. The fee for this year's event, paid in installments, was \$843,000. The money is first used to cover BLM's costs to permit and administer the event, including BLM law enforcement costs. In accordance with BLM regulations, funds remaining after these costs are paid are used to improve resource protection, facilities and services in the immediate area.

Law Enforcement

Each year, BLM, the Pershing County Sheriff's Office and Black Rock City, LLC, set up an Incident Command Post (ICP) on the playa about a quarter mile outside of Black Rock City. BLM administration and law enforcement activities are conducted from the ICP, which also includes a dispatch center that enables communication beyond the playa. This year, BLM and cooperating agency law enforcement staffing levels remained essentially unchanged from those of the past several years.

Law enforcement statistics were down substantially from last year. BLM rangers issued 155 citations (a decrease of 27) and made no arrests (down from last year's one). Of the citations, 80 were for drug related offenses (down by 38 from 2005), 67 for violations of closure orders—trying to sneak into the event without paying



A dust cloud descends on Center Camp.

(continued...)

(up 45 from a year ago), and the remainder for miscellaneous violations ranging from creating a nuisance to reckless driving.

The Pershing County Sheriff's Office worked 38 cases (down four from last year), made six arrests (up by three from 2005) and issued two citations (same as a year ago). This means that the total citations and arrests this year was 163, down 25 from last year. Perhaps most significant was the decrease in drug citations and arrests; down from 120 in 2005 to 81 this year.

The Nevada Highway Patrol worked 119 shifts to cover the event and the heavy traffic entering and leaving it, the majority during the days when traffic was heaviest on Nevada Highway 447. Most activity involved assisting motorists, 560 of them, up 121 from last year. The number of accidents was unchanged from last year and there were no fatalities. Seventeen arrests were made for an increase of 12 over last year; four of which were DUI arrests. Speeding was the predominate reason for issuing 234 citations (129 for speeding, 42 hazardous, nine occupant restraint and 54 others), and 213 warnings/mechanical repair orders were issued.

REMSA recorded slight increases in medical treatments this year. Patient visits were up four percent to 1,819, transports by ground and air from Black Rock City to Reno were up by 30 percent to 52, and injuries due to vehicle accidents (aircraft, mutant vehicles, cars, trucks, scooters, bicycles, etc.) were up from five to eight. There was one death which was ruled cardiac arrest pending results from an

autopsy by Pershing County. As the event drew to its end, everyone involved in the administration of the event agreed that this was the smoothest running Burning Man held to date.

— Jamie Thompson
Winnemucca Field Office

Burning Man Event Cooperators

- BURNING MAN EVENT COOPERATORS
- FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION
- PERSHING COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
- NEVADA HIGHWAY PATROL
- NEVADA DIVISION OF INVESTIGATION
- NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
- NEVADA BUREAU OF HEALTH PROTECTION SERVICES
- NEVADA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION
- REGIONAL EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY (REMSA)
- GERLACH VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT
- GERLACH GENERAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
- GERLACH JUSTICE COURT
- WASHOE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
- WASHOE COUNTY ROAD DIVISION
- PYRAMID LAKE TRIBAL COUNCIL
- UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD



Outfits and costumes are de rigueur on the playa.

NEVADA ROCK ART

Sloan Canyon Petroglyphs

Sloan Canyon, near Las Vegas, is loaded with symbols scratched on rock by Native Americans. This art, or petroglyphs, were catalogued in 1997 when Congress gave Sloan special management status as a national conservation area. At the time, archaeologists recorded more than 300 panels with about 1,700 images. A documentation project conducted this year revealed more than 500 panels.

This year's inventory was conducted by the Nevada Rock Art Foundation with funding from the BLM through the sale of public land near Sloan Canyon that was set aside to finance the

conservation area. The inventory will give the BLM a record of what is there in case of vandalism or theft.

According to BLM Native American Coordinator Lola Henio, preserving the petroglyphs for future generations is all about educating people to be respectful of the drawings by not causing them damage.

Visitors are asked to stay on the canyon floor and stay off the walls of the canyon. By staying away from the boulders, people won't cause more erosion than what occurs naturally.



VOLUNTEER

Nevada Archaeological Site Stewardship Program

THE NEVADA ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITE STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM SEEKS MOTIVATED AND COMMITTED PEOPLE INTERESTED IN PROTECTING NEVADA'S PAST.

Training Provided

If you love rock art, caves and historic ghost towns, you might enjoy helping to protect these and other archaeological resources. Many cultural sites in Nevada are threatened by vandalism, natural deterioration and urban development. Through the site steward program, volunteer trainees learn about archaeological and historical resources and how to recognize and document vandalism. Volunteers develop skills on how to assist BLM and other agencies protect important and irreplaceable sites, by monitoring assigned sites and reporting to the appropriate agency. Stewards provide valuable data on changes at specific archaeological sites, which helps an agency manager make informed protection decisions.

One area in northern Nevada in need of site stewards is Dry Lakes/High Basin, an area of rare prehistoric rock rings and

more than 1,700 rock art images dating back as far as 2,000 B.C. Site stewards are required to sign a code of ethics and confidentiality agreement so that the specific location of some resources are kept confidential for protection purposes.

The stewardship program is helping to preserve, protect and document several hundred archaeological sites throughout Nevada. If you are interested in learning more about the stewardship program, get in touch with the State Historic Preservation Office Stewardship Coordinator, Sali Underwood, by phone at (702) 486-5011 or online at saunderw@clan.lib.nv.us.

- Jim Carter
Carson City Field Office

Geologic and Natural History Tours in the Reno Area

The tuff of Perry Canyon isn't a bully, it's a sheet of rock that was formed by a fiery cloud of rock froth exploding from a caldera volcano near Pyramid Lake.

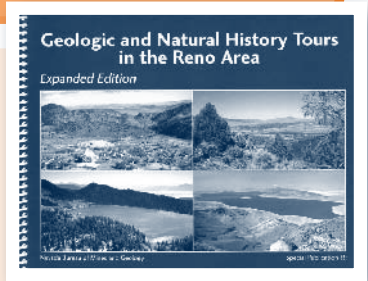
The Perry Canyon caldera is a point of interest on one of the tours in *Geologic and Natural History Tours in the Reno Area*, expanded edition, a guidebook published by the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology.

The Reno area is particularly good for the study of geology, especially earthquakes and faulting, volcanic rocks, precious-metal ore deposits, geothermal activity, and the effects of glacial erosion and deposition.

The four tours in the book cover the Truckee Meadows, Virginia City, Lake Tahoe, and the Truckee River Canyon to Pyramid Lake. Detailed logs for each trip are easy to follow. In addition to geologic wonders, the book offers information on historic mining and natural history such as the Sutro Tunnel and the ghost trees of Virginia City.

The book is available online from the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology (Publication 19) at www.nbmj.unr.edu/sales and at a variety of bookstores and shops throughout the state.

Two other tour guides in the series include, *Traveling America's Loneliest Road* and *Geologic Tours in the Las Vegas Area*.



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