



Urban Expansion in Las Vegas



Landuse History in the Las Vegas Valley

Las Vegas is the fastest growing metropolitan area in the United States. Its growth was fairly slow during the first half of the 20th century, but as the gaming and tourism industry blossomed the population increased more rapidly. In 1950, Las Vegas was home to 24 624 people. Today, the population of the Las Vegas Valley tops one million, not including the tourists. According to one estimate, it may double by 2015. This population growth has put a strain on water supplies.

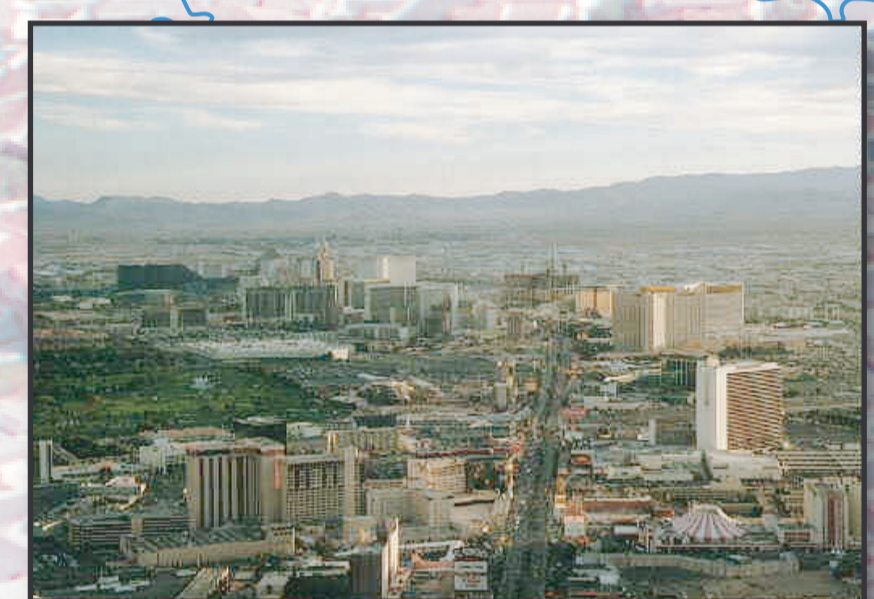
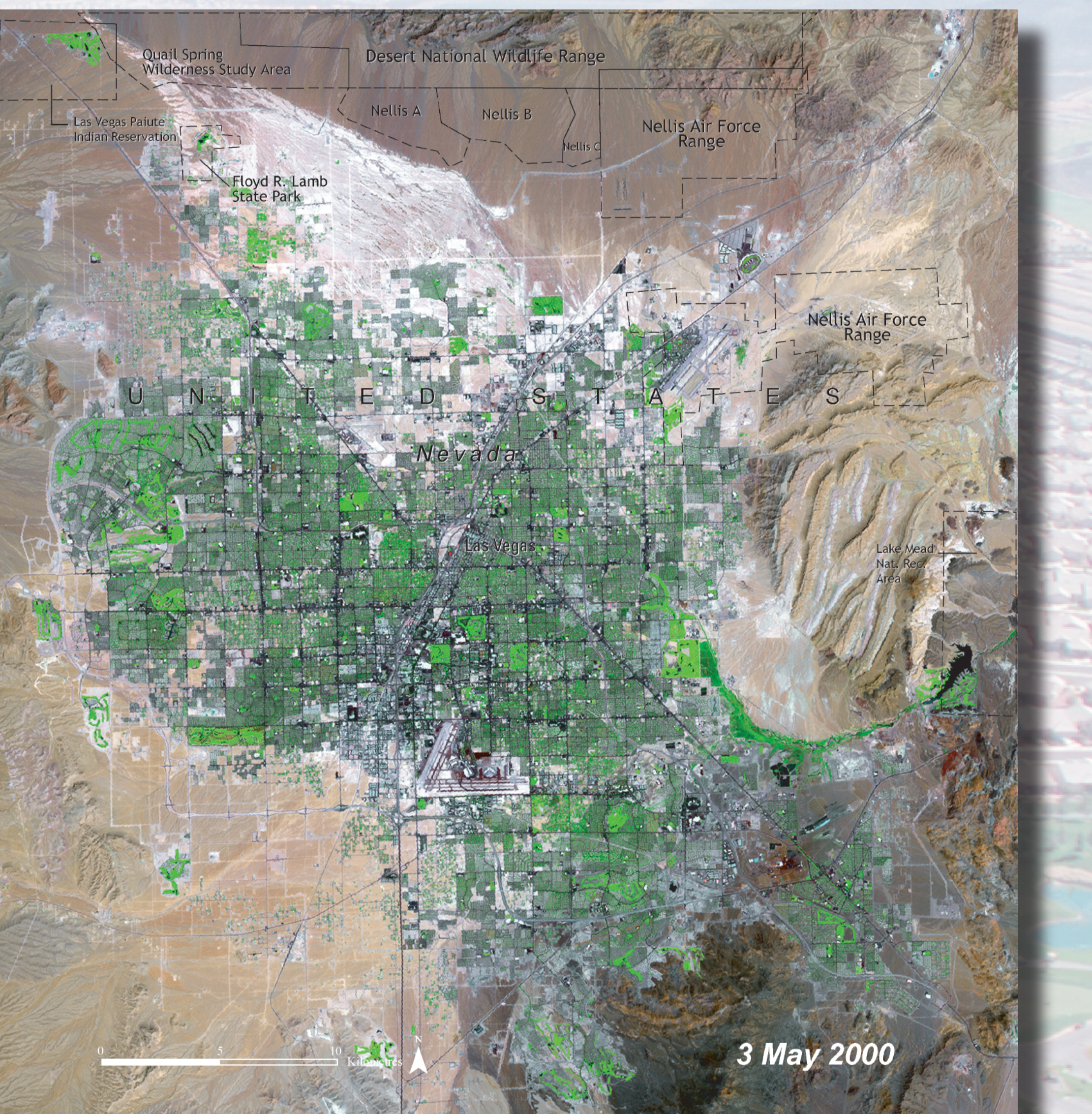
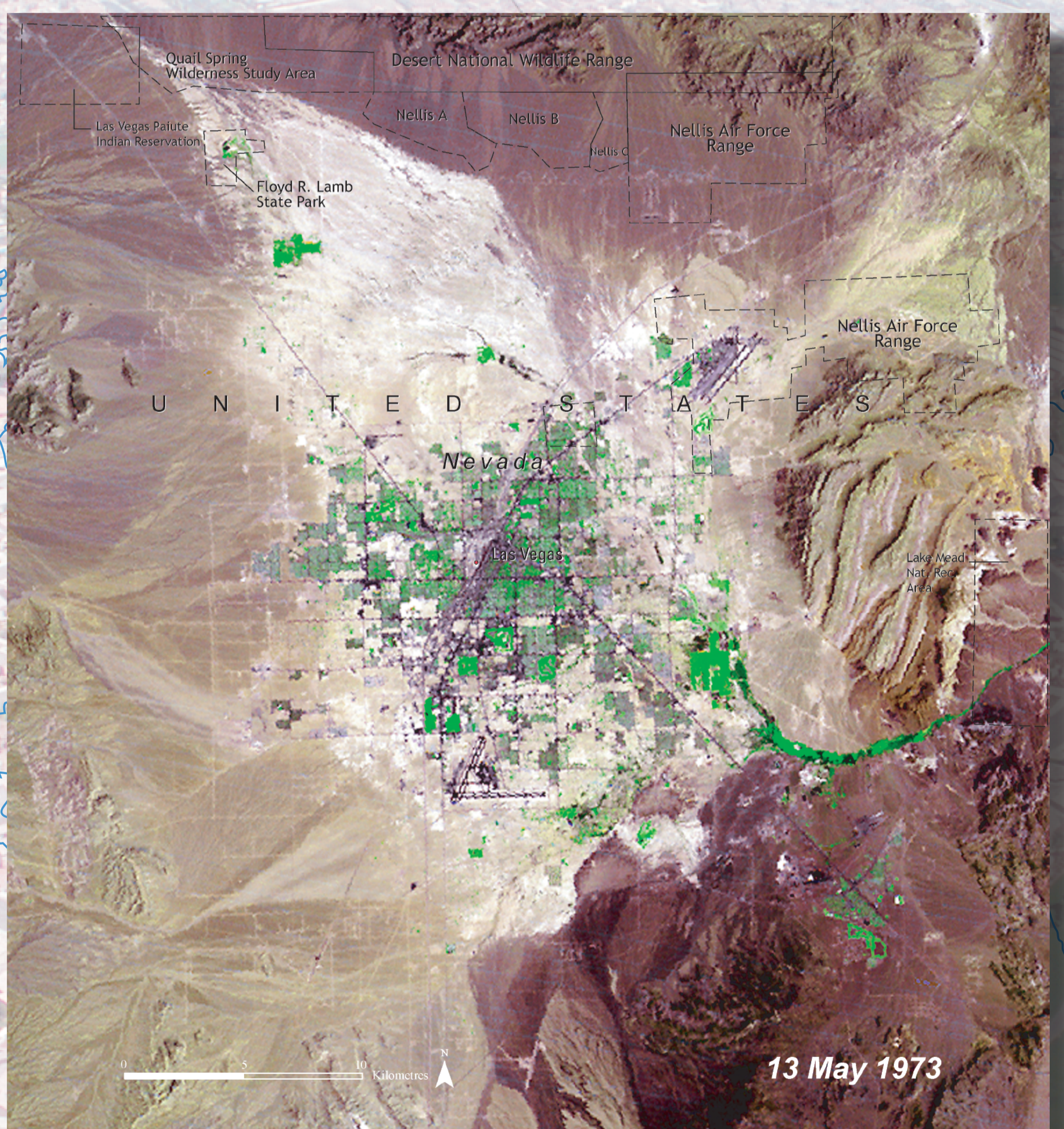


Photo courtesy of USDA NRCS

Satellite imagery of Las Vegas provides a dramatic illustration of the spatial patterns and rates of change resulting from the city's urban sprawl. Las Vegas is shown in the central portion of these images from 1973 and 2000. Note the profound modifications to the landscape—specifically the proliferation of asphalt and concrete roads and other infrastructure, along with the displacement of the few vegetated lands. By 2000, Las Vegas' growth had sprawled in every direction, with the greatest expansion to the northwest and southeast. As the city expanded, several new transportation networks emerged to serve the city's inhabitants.



Photo courtesy of USDA NRCS

Background Photo courtesy of USDA NRCS