



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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In Reply Refer to:

2800 (NV-910)
N79734

May 1, 2009

Dear Reader:

Enclosed for your review is the *Lincoln County Land Act Groundwater Development and Utility Right-of-Way Project Final Environmental Impact Statement* (EIS) that evaluates rights-of-way applications to construct and operate a water development and pipeline conveyance system, a telephone utility line, a natural gas pipeline and an electric power line across public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Cooperating agencies for this Final EIS include: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the State of Nevada Department of Wildlife.

The BLM compiled a Draft EIS that analyzed a plan of development submitted to BLM by Lincoln County Water District, which included information about the water conveyance system, powerlines and telephone lines and a plan of development from Southwest Gas for the natural gas pipeline. The Draft EIS was released to the public on May 23, 2008, with publication of a Notice of Availability (NOA) in the *Federal Register*. The NOA initiated a 60-day public comment period ending on July 22, 2008. Public meetings were held June 23, 2008 through June 26, 2008. The BLM received comments on the Draft EIS through 19 letters and emails. The BLM reviewed the comments and provided written responses in this Final EIS. Some comments resulted in modifications to text in the EIS. This Final EIS is a "full text" document that contains the entire EIS and supersedes the Draft EIS.

Although water rights, pumping rates, volume of water proposed for transfer annually to the Lincoln County Water District's service area and point of use of water proposed for transport across public land are under the purview of the Nevada State Engineer and outside the jurisdiction of the BLM, these issues have been included in this document. Water distribution and use associated with development of the LCLA lands have been addressed by local and regional planning agencies in accordance with Nevada statutes; these issues are included in this document.

The *Lincoln County Land Act Groundwater Development and Utility Right-of-Way Project Final EIS* will be available for 30 days. A hard copy of the document will be provided on request to the office listed. A description of new or missed information within this Final EIS may be submitted within the thirty days to:

Penny Woods, Groundwater Projects Manager
Bureau of Land Management (NV-910)
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Reno, NV 89520
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The BLM will issue one or more records of decision (ROD) based on this Final EIS. The ROD(s) will not be issued until other agency permits and approvals have been finalized and their conditions of approval will be incorporated into the ROD(s). For more information, Please contact Penny Woods at 775.861.6466.

**Environmental Impact Statement
for the Lincoln County Land Act Groundwater Development and Utility
Right-of-Way Project**

() Draft

(X) Final

Lead Agency: United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Cooperating Agencies: United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Nevada Department of Wildlife

Counties Directly Affected: Lincoln County, Nevada

Environmental Impact Statement Contact:

Penny Woods, Nevada Groundwater Project Manager
U.S. Bureau of Management, Nevada State Office
P.O. Box 12000
Reno, Nevada 89520-0006

Date Final EIS filed with U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: May 1, 2009

Abstract

The Ely District Office of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has prepared this Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) in response to a right-of-way (ROW) application submitted by the Lincoln County Water District (LCWD or Applicant) to construct and operate the Lincoln County Land Act Groundwater Development and Utility Right-of-Way Project (Proposed Action). The project facilities would be located in southeastern Lincoln County, Nevada, primarily within the 2,640-foot wide utility corridor established by the Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act (LCCRDA) under Public Law 108-424. Enacted on November 30, 2004, the LCCRDA designated utility corridors to be used for ROWs for roads, wells, pipelines, and other infrastructure needed for construction and operation of water conveyance systems in Lincoln County. For engineering feasibility reasons and/or to minimize environmental impacts, the ROW requested by the LCWD deviates from the LCCRDA corridor in several locations.

The LCWD, in cooperation with the Lincoln County Power District No. 1 (LCPD), and the Lincoln County Telephone Company (LCT), intends to construct groundwater and ancillary facilities in order to pump and convey groundwater that has been permitted or may be permitted in the Clover Valley and Tule Desert Hydrographic Areas for use by LCWD customers. In addition, Southwest Gas Corporation (Southwest Gas) is proposing to construct and operate a natural gas line and metering facility within the southernmost portion of the project corridor to serve planned development in the LCLA area, specifically the lands that Congress mandated be sold by the BLM in Section 102 of the LCCRDA.

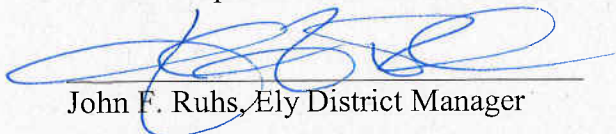
ROW grants may be issued based on future agreements between the LCWD and LCPD/LCT and the analysis in this EIS. If a single ROW is issued, the LCWD would be responsible for

construction and operation of all the proposed facilities needed to develop and transport groundwater subject to the terms and conditions of the grant. In the single ROW grant option, the LCWD would purchase electric and communication services from LCPD and LCT at a location(s) as designated in the agreements, but all physical facilities within the ROW would be owned and operated by the LCWD. If multiple ROWs are issued, the LCWD, the LCPD and LCT facilities would be authorized under separate ROW grants. The ROW for Southwest Gas would be a separate grant issued pursuant to Section 28 of the Mineral Leasing Act under either option. A single ROW issued to the LCWD for the water production/delivery system, electrical distribution system, and fiber optic lines, would be issued in perpetuity. This ROW would be granted pursuant to Title III of the LCCRDA and in the case of facilities outside the boundaries of the ROW corridor, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). Individual ROWs issued to the LCPD and LCT would be subject to the terms and conditions of the FLPMA and 43 CFR 2800. Components of the Proposed Action and the entity responsible for constructing and operating the facilities are listed below.

Features of the Proposed Action	
Facility	Entity Responsible for Constructing and Operating Facility
<i>Water Facilities</i>	
Groundwater production/monitoring wells (well fields in the Clover Valley and Tule Desert Hydrographic Areas)	Lincoln County Water District
Water collection/transmission pipelines	
Water pipeline booster stations	
Water storage tanks	
<i>Electric Utility Facilities</i>	
Electrical distribution/transmission lines	Lincoln County Water District or Lincoln County Power District No. 1
Electrical substations	
<i>Natural Gas Facilities</i>	
A natural gas pipeline and metering station	Southwest Gas
<i>Communication Facilities</i>	
Buried telemetry system/fiber optic lines	Lincoln County Water District or Lincoln County Telephone Company
<i>Ancillary Facilities</i>	
Temporary and permanent access roads to wells and other facilities	To be coordinated among the various utilities sharing the permitted right-of-way
Staging/storage areas during construction	

This Final EIS considers the expected environmental effects associated with granting of ROWs across public land and subsequent construction and operation of the Proposed Action. The BLM will use the EIS when rendering a decision whether to grant the requested ROWs. The BLM's action is to either grant or deny the request for ROWs through public land administered by the BLM. This Final EIS satisfies the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act, which mandates that federal agencies analyze the environmental consequences of major federal actions.

Official responsible for the environmental impact statement:


 John F. Ruhs, Ely District Manager

3 March 2009
 Date

FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Lincoln County Land Act Groundwater Development and Utility Right-of-Way Project

Cooperating Agencies:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Nevada Department of Wildlife

May 2009

FES 09-05

It is the mission of the Bureau of Land Management to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ES-1.1	PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED	3
ES-1.2	AGENCY CONSULTATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION	4
ES-1.2.1	Public Participation	4
ES-1.2.2	Public Controversy	5
ES-1.2.3	Agency Consultation	7
ES-1.3	PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES	9
ES-1.3.1	Proposed Action	9
ES-1.3.2	Alternative I – Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act Corridor	12
ES-1.3.3	No Action Alternative	13
ES-1.3.4	Other Alternatives Considered But Not Evaluated in Detail	13
1.0	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	GENERAL OVERVIEW	1
1.2	PURPOSE AND NEED	3
1.3	RATIONALE FOR RIGHT-OF-WAY APPLICATION	3
1.4	PROJECT BACKGROUND	4
1.5	POLICIES, PLANS, AND PROGRAMS	5
1.5.1	Relationship to BLM Policies, Plans and Programs	5
1.5.2	Relationship to Non-BLM Policies, Plans, and Programs	6
1.5.2.1	Water Rights	6
1.5.2.2	Regional Planning	8
1.6	SCOPING	9
1.7	ORGANIZATION OF THE FINAL EIS	10
1.8	APPLICABLE LAWS, AUTHORIZING ACTIONS AND PERMITS	11
1.8.1	Air and Water Resources	13
1.8.2	Fish and Wildlife Resources, Including Threatened, Endangered, Candidate, and Special Status Species	14
1.8.3	Waters of the U.S., Wetlands, and Floodplains	15
1.8.4	Heritage Resources	15
1.8.5	Tribal Consultations	16
1.8.6	Highways	17
1.8.7	Authorizing Actions and Permits	17
1.9	INTERRELATED PROJECTS	18
2.0	PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES	2-1
2.1	PROPOSED ACTION	2-1
2.1.1	Facility Components and Design	2-4
2.1.1.1	Well Field Collection System / Pipelines	2-4
2.1.1.2	Monitoring Wells	2-6
2.1.1.3	Booster Stations / Flow Control Stations	2-6
2.1.1.4	Storage Tanks	2-7
2.1.1.5	Power Distribution	2-8
2.1.1.5.1	138 kV Transmission Line	2-8
2.1.1.5.2	Tule Substation	2-9

2.1.1.5.3	Overhead Distribution Lines.....	2-9
2.1.1.5.4	Well Substations	2-9
2.1.1.6	Fiber Optic Lines	2-9
2.1.1.7	Natural Gas Pipeline	2-10
2.1.1.8	Extra Work Spaces.....	2-10
2.1.1.9	Road Access and Transportation	2-10
2.1.2	Construction Procedures	2-11
2.1.2.1	Survey and Staking	2-12
2.1.2.2	Topsoil Salvage and Storage.....	2-12
2.1.2.3	Clearing and Grading.....	2-13
2.1.2.4	Trenching and Blasting.....	2-13
2.1.2.5	Construction of the Electric Utility Facilities	2-14
2.1.2.6	Installation of Groundwater Pipeline and Fiber Optic Line.....	2-14
2.1.2.7	Construction of Storage Tanks.....	2-15
2.1.2.8	Construction of the Natural Gas Facilities.....	2-15
2.1.2.9	Hydrostatic Testing.....	2-16
2.1.2.10	Grading and Post Construction Cleanup.....	2-16
2.1.2.11	Topsoil Redistribution	2-17
2.1.2.12	Operation and Maintenance	2-17
2.1.2.13	Abandonment.....	2-18
2.1.2.14	Applicant Proposed Environmental Protection Measures	2-18
2.2	ALTERNATIVE 1 – LINCOLN COUNTY CONSERVATION, RECREATION, AND DEVELOPMENT ACT CORRIDOR.....	2-21
2.3	NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE.....	2-21
2.4	ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED BUT ELIMINATED FROM DETAILED ANALYSIS.....	2-21
2.4.1	Aboveground Water Transmission Pipeline	2-22
2.4.2	Underground Electrical Transmission and Distribution Lines	2-22
2.5	AGENCY PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE	2-22
3.0	AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT	3-1
3.1	GEOLOGIC RESOURCES	3-2
3.1.1	Data Collection Methods	3-2
3.1.2	Physiography and Topography	3-2
3.1.3	Stratigraphy and Geologic History	3-3
3.1.3.1	Clover Valley.....	3-4
3.1.3.2	Tule Desert and Virgin River Valley	3-5
3.1.4	Structural Geology and Faulting.....	3-6
3.1.4.1	Clover Valley.....	3-7
3.1.4.2	Tule Desert and Virgin River Valley	3-7
3.1.5	Seismicity.....	3-9
3.2	SOIL RESOURCES	3-9
3.2.1	Data Collection Methods	3-9
3.2.2	Existing Conditions.....	3-9
3.2.3	Landslides and Subsidence	3-12
3.3	WATER RESOURCES	3-12
3.3.1	Surface Water Resources	3-12

3.3.1.1	Data Collection Methods	3-12
3.3.1.2	Hydrologic Setting.....	3-13
3.3.1.3	Local Climate.....	3-13
3.3.1.4	Surface Water Features.....	3-15
3.3.1.4.1	Clover Valley and Meadow Valley Wash	3-15
3.3.1.4.2	Tule Desert and Virgin River Valley	3-17
3.3.1.5	Local Springs	3-19
3.3.1.6	Surface Water Quality.....	3-20
3.3.1.6.1	Clover Valley and Meadow Valley Wash	3-20
3.3.1.6.2	Tule Desert and Virgin River Valley	3-21
3.3.1.7	Surface Water Use and Water Rights	3-22
3.3.2	Groundwater Resources.....	3-22
3.3.2.1	Data Collection Methods	3-22
3.3.2.2	Regional Setting.....	3-22
3.3.2.3	Regional Groundwater Occurrence.....	3-23
3.3.2.4	Local Hydrogeology	3-25
3.3.2.4.1	Clover Valley and Meadow Valley Wash	3-25
3.3.2.4.2	Tule Desert.....	3-28
3.3.2.4.1.	Virgin River Valley.....	3-36
3.3.2.5.	Regional Springs.....	3-37
3.3.2.6.	Groundwater Quality	3-37
3.3.2.6.1.	Clover Valley and Meadow Valley Wash	3-38
3.3.2.6.2.	Tule Desert and Virgin River Valley	3-38
3.3.2.7.	Groundwater Use and Water Rights	3-41
3.4	VEGETATION RESOURCES.....	3-42
3.4.1	Data Collection Methods	3-42
3.4.2	Great Basin Biome.....	3-43
3.4.2.1	Mountain Shrub Vegetation Community.....	3-44
3.4.2.2	Piñon-Juniper Vegetation Community	3-44
3.4.2.3	Sagebrush/Perennial Grasses	3-45
3.4.2.4	Blackbrush	3-46
3.4.2.5	Riparian.....	3-46
3.4.3	Mojave Desert Biome	3-46
3.4.3.1	Mojave Creosote Bush Scrub.....	3-47
3.4.3.2	Mojave Desert Wash Scrub	3-48
3.4.3.3	Blackbrush	3-49
3.4.3.4	Virgin River Riparian	3-49
3.4.4	Non-Native Invasive Species and Noxious Weeds.....	3-49
3.4.5	Special Status Plant Species.....	3-50
3.4.5.1	Federally Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, and Candidate Plant Species	3-50
3.4.5.2	BLM Sensitive Species.....	3-51
3.4.5.3	State of Nevada Protected Species.....	3-54
3.5	WILDLIFE RESOURCES.....	3-54
3.5.1	Data Collection Methods	3-54
3.5.2	Environmental Setting	3-55

3.5.3	Special Status Wildlife Species	3-55
3.5.3.1	Federally Threatened, Endangered, Proposed, and Candidate Wildlife Species	3-55
3.5.3.1.1	Desert Tortoise.....	3-56
3.5.3.1.2	Southwestern Willow Flycatcher.....	3-57
3.5.3.1.3	Yuma Clapper Rail	3-58
3.5.3.1.4	Yellow-billed Cuckoo.....	3-58
3.5.3.1.5	Virgin River Chub.....	3-59
3.5.3.1.6	Woundfin	3-59
3.5.3.2	BLM Sensitive Wildlife Species and State of Nevada Classified Wildlife Species.....	3-60
3.5.3.2.1	Mammals.....	3-60
3.5.3.2.2	Reptiles and Amphibians	3-61
3.5.3.2.3	Migratory Birds.....	3-62
3.5.3.2.4	Fisheries	3-62
3.5.3.2.5	Invertebrates.....	3-63
3.5.4	Wild Horses and Burros.....	3-64
3.6	LAND USE.....	3-64
3.6.1	Data Collection Methods	3-64
3.6.2	Existing Conditions.....	3-64
3.6.3	Rangelands and Livestock Grazing	3-67
3.6.4	Mineral Resources	3-68
3.6.4.1	Solid Minerals.....	3-68
3.6.4.2	Fluid and Geothermal Minerals	3-68
3.6.5	Transportation.....	3-69
3.6.5.1	Regional Transportation.....	3-69
3.6.5.2	Union Pacific Railroad.....	3-70
3.6.5.3	Airports	3-70
3.7	AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN, WILDERNESS, AND OTHER SPECIAL USE AREAS	3-71
3.7.1	Data Collection Methods	3-71
3.7.2	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern.....	3-71
3.7.3	Wilderness.....	3-72
3.7.4	National Wildlife Refuges and National Recreation Areas	3-72
3.8	RECREATION.....	3-73
3.8.1	Data Collection Methods	3-73
3.8.2	BLM-Administered Recreation Areas	3-73
3.8.3	State Parks and State Recreation Areas	3-73
3.8.4	State Wildlife Management Areas	3-74
3.9	AIR QUALITY.....	3-74
3.9.1	Data Collection Methods	3-74
3.9.2	Existing Air Quality.....	3-74
3.9.3	Areas with Special Air Quality Protection.....	3-76
3.9.4	Existing Stationary Sources of Air Emissions.....	3-76
3.9.5	Air Quality Regulations	3-76
3.10	NOISE.....	3-76

3.10.1	Data Collection Methods	3-76
3.10.2	Existing Environment	3-77
3.11	VISUAL RESOURCES.....	3-77
3.11.1	Data Collection Methods	3-77
3.11.2	Environmental Setting	3-78
3.11.3	Key Observation Points	3-79
3.12	SOCIOECONOMICS.....	3-80
3.12.1	Data Collection Methods	3-80
3.12.2	Social Characteristics.....	3-80
3.12.3	Economic Characteristics.....	3-84
3.12.4	Housing.....	3-87
3.12.5	County Services	3-88
3.12.6	Lincoln County Master Plan	3-88
3.12.7	Lincoln County Fiscal Condition.....	3-89
3.13	ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE	3-92
3.14	HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND SOLID WASTES	3-92
3.14.1	Hazardous Materials	3-92
3.14.2	Solid Waste.....	3-92
3.15	PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES.....	3-93
3.15.1	Existing Conditions.....	3-93
3.16	CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES.....	3-94
3.16.1	Surrounding Regions	3-94
3.16.2	Paleoarchaic Period (11,500 through 7500 B.P.).....	3-94
3.16.3	Middle Archaic Period (7500 through 5000 B.P.) and Late Archaic Period (5000 through 1650 B.P.)	3-95
3.16.4	Late Prehistoric Period (1650 through 200 B.P.).....	3-95
3.16.5	Historical Period (AD 1800s – 1950s).....	3-96
3.16.6	Region of Influence.....	3-97
3.16.7	Area of Project Direct and Indirect Effects.....	3-98
4.0	ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES.....	4-1
4.1	GEOLOGIC RESOURCES	4-2
4.1.1	Methods.....	4-2
4.1.2	Proposed Action.....	4-2
4.1.2.1	Geology.....	4-2
4.1.2.2	Seismicity.....	4-3
4.1.3	Alternative 1.....	4-3
4.1.4	No Action Alternative.....	4-3
4.1.5	Mitigation.....	4-4
4.2	SOIL RESOURCES	4-4
4.2.1	Methods.....	4-4
4.2.2	Proposed Action.....	4-4
4.2.2.1	Soils.....	4-4
4.2.2.2	Landslides and Subsidence	4-5
4.2.3	Alternative 1.....	4-5
4.2.4	No Action Alternative.....	4-5
4.2.5	Mitigation.....	4-5

4.3	WATER RESOURCES	4-6
4.3.1	Proposed Action.....	4-6
4.3.1.1	Impacts from Construction	4-6
4.3.1.1.1	Methods.....	4-6
4.3.1.1.2	Impacts to Water Resources from Construction	4-7
4.3.1.2	Impacts to Surface Water Resources from Operation.....	4-8
4.3.1.2.1	Methods.....	4-8
4.3.1.2.2	Clover Valley and Lower Meadow Valley Wash Hydrographic Areas	4-8
4.3.1.2.3	Tule Desert and Virgin River Valley Hydrographic Areas	4-10
4.3.1.3	Impacts to Groundwater Resources from Operation	4-10
4.3.1.3.1	Methods.....	4-10
4.3.1.3.2	Drawdown and Depletion on Groundwater Resources.....	4-11
4.3.1.3.3	Impacts to Groundwater Quality.....	4-16
4.3.1.3.4	Impacts to Local Springs	4-17
4.3.1.3.5	Impacts to Regional Springs.....	4-18
4.3.1.3.6	Impacts to Local Water Users.....	4-18
4.3.2	Alternative 1.....	4-20
4.3.3	No Action Alternative.....	4-20
4.3.4	Mitigation.....	4-20
4.4	VEGETATION RESOURCES.....	4-21
4.4.1	Methods.....	4-21
4.4.2	Proposed Action.....	4-21
4.4.2.1	Tule Desert Hydrographic Area.....	4-23
4.4.2.2	Clover Valley Hydrographic Area.....	4-23
4.4.2.3	Non-Native Invasive Species and Noxious Weeds.....	4-23
4.4.2.4	Special Status Plant Species.....	4-24
4.4.2.4.1	Federally Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Plant Species ...	4-24
4.4.2.4.2	BLM Sensitive Species.....	4-24
4.4.2.4.3	State of Nevada Protected Species.....	4-25
4.4.3	Alternative 1.....	4-25
4.4.4	No Action Alternative.....	4-26
4.4.5	Mitigation.....	4-26
4.5	WILDLIFE RESOURCES.....	4-26
4.5.1	Proposed Action.....	4-26
4.5.1.1	Clover Valley Hydrographic Area	4-27
4.5.1.2	Tule Desert Hydrographic Area.....	4-28
4.5.2	Federally Threatened, Endangered, and Candidate Wildlife Species.....	4-28
4.5.2.1	Desert Tortoise.....	4-28
4.5.2.2	Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	4-30
4.5.2.2.1	Tule Desert Hydrographic Area.....	4-30
4.5.2.2.2	Clover Valley Hydrographic Area	4-30
4.5.2.3	Yuma Clapper Rail	4-31
4.5.2.4	Western Yellow-billed Cuckoo.....	4-31
4.5.2.4.1	Tule Desert Hydrographic Area.....	4-31
4.5.2.4.2	Clover Valley Hydrographic Area	4-31

4.5.2.5	Virgin River Chub and Woundfin.....	4-31
4.5.3	Special Status Wildlife Species	4-32
4.5.3.1	Mammals.....	4-32
4.5.3.2	Reptiles and Amphibians	4-32
4.5.3.3	Migratory Birds.....	4-33
4.5.3.4	Fisheries	4-34
4.5.3.4.1	Tule Desert Hydrographic Area.....	4-35
4.5.3.4.2	Clover Valley Hydrographic Area	4-35
4.5.3.5	Invertebrates.....	4-35
4.5.3.6	Wild Horses	4-35
4.5.4	Alternative 1.....	4-35
4.5.5	No Action Alternative.....	4-36
4.5.6	Mitigation.....	4-36
4.6	LAND USE.....	4-36
4.6.1	Proposed Action.....	4-36
4.6.1.1	Rangeland and Livestock Grazing.....	4-37
4.6.1.2	Mineral Resources	4-37
4.6.1.3	Transportation.....	4-37
4.6.2	Alternative 1.....	4-38
4.6.3	No Action Alternative.....	4-38
4.6.4	Mitigation.....	4-38
4.7	AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN, WILDERNESS, AND OTHER SPECIAL USE AREAS	4-38
4.7.1	Proposed Action.....	4-38
4.7.2	Alternative 1.....	4-39
4.7.3	No Action Alternative.....	4-39
4.7.4	Mitigation.....	4-40
4.8	RECREATION	4-40
4.8.1	Proposed Action.....	4-40
4.8.2	Alternative 1.....	4-40
4.8.3	No Action Alternative.....	4-40
4.8.4	Mitigation.....	4-40
4.9	AIR QUALITY.....	4-41
4.9.1	Proposed Action.....	4-41
4.9.2	Alternative 1.....	4-43
4.9.3	No Action Alternative.....	4-43
4.9.4	Mitigation.....	4-43
4.10	NOISE.....	4-43
4.10.1	Proposed Action.....	4-43
4.10.2	Alternative 1.....	4-44
4.10.3	No Action Alternative.....	4-44
4.10.4	Mitigation.....	4-44
4.11	VISUAL RESOURCES.....	4-44
4.11.1	Proposed Action.....	4-44
4.11.1.1	Sensitive Viewing Areas.....	4-47
4.11.2	Alternative 1.....	4-47

4.11.3	No Action Alternative.....	4-47
4.11.4	Mitigation.....	4-48
4.12	SOCIOECONOMICS.....	4-48
4.12.1	Proposed Action.....	4-48
4.12.1.1	Population and Housing.....	4-48
4.12.1.2	Economy and Employment.....	4-50
4.12.1.3	Public Utilities and Services.....	4-50
4.12.2	Alternative 1.....	4-51
4.12.3	No Action Alternative.....	4-51
4.12.4	Mitigation.....	4-51
4.13	ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE.....	4-51
4.13.1	Proposed Action.....	4-51
4.13.2	Alternative 1.....	4-51
4.13.3	No Action Alternative.....	4-51
4.13.4	Mitigation.....	4-52
4.14	HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND SOLID WASTES.....	4-52
4.14.1	Proposed Action.....	4-52
4.14.2	Alternative 1.....	4-52
4.14.3	No Action Alternative.....	4-52
4.14.4	Mitigation.....	4-52
4.15	PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES.....	4-52
4.15.1	Proposed Action.....	4-52
4.15.2	Alternative 1.....	4-53
4.15.3	No Action Alternative.....	4-53
4.15.4	Mitigation.....	4-53
4.16	CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES.....	4-53
4.16.1	Evaluation of Effects on Historic Properties.....	4-54
4.16.2	Proposed Action.....	4-54
4.16.3	Alternative 1.....	4-55
4.16.4	No Action Alternative.....	4-55
4.16.5	Mitigation.....	4-55
4.17	UNAVOIDABLE ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS.....	4-54
4.18	IRREVERSIBLE AND IRRETRIEVALBE COMMITMENTS OF RESOURCES...	4-56
4.19	SHORT-TERM USE AND LONG-TERM PRODUCTIVITY.....	4-57
4.19.1	Short-Term Uses.....	4-57
4.19.2	Long-Term Uses.....	4-58
4.20	CUMULATIVE IMPACTS.....	4-58
4.20.1	Regulations and Guidance.....	4-58
4.20.2	Methodology for Assessing Cumulative Impacts.....	4-58
4.20.3	Interrelated Projects or Actions to be Analyzed.....	4-60
4.20.3.1	Past Actions.....	4-61
4.20.3.2	Present Actions, Including the Proposed Action.....	4-63
4.20.3.3	Reasonably Foreseeable Future Actions.....	4-64
4.20.3.4	Toquop Energy Project.....	4-64
4.20.3.5	Holly Energy Partners.....	4-65
4.20.3.6	Mesquite Replacement Airport.....	4-65
4.20.3.7	Interstate 15 - Exit 109 Interchange.....	4-66

4.20.3.8	Build-Out of the Lincoln County Land Act Area (LCLA Development Area)	4-66
4.20.3.9	Build-Out of the Mesquite Land Act Area	4-66
4.20.4	Evaluation of Potential Cumulative Impacts	4-67
4.20.4.1	Soil Resources	4-68
4.20.4.2	Water Resources	4-69
4.20.4.3	Vegetation Resources.....	4-71
4.20.4.4	Wildlife Resources.....	4-72
4.20.4.5	Land Use	4-74
4.20.4.6	Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Wilderness, and Other Special Use Areas	4-75
4.20.4.7	Recreation	4-75
4.20.4.8	Air Quality	4-76
4.20.4.9	Noise	4-76
4.20.4.10	Visual Resources.....	4-76
4.20.4.11	Social and Economic Resources	4-77
5.0	CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION.....	5-1
5.1	PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROCESS.....	5-1
5.2	FORMAL CONSULTATION WITH INTERESTED AGENCIES.....	5-2
5.3	LIST OF AGENCIES, ORGANIZATIONS, AND PERSONS TO WHOM COPIES OF THE EIS WERE SENT	5-4
5.3.1	Federal Government.....	5-4
5.3.2	State Government.....	5-4
5.3.3	Local Governments.....	5-5
5.3.4	Tribal Governments	5-5
5.3.5	Other Organizations	5-5
5.3.6	Elected Government Officials.....	5-5
5.3.7	Availability	5-6
5.4	LIST OF PREPARERS.....	5-6
6.0	REFERENCES.....	6-1

GLOSSARY

INDEX

TABLES

Table ES-1	Features of the Proposed Action	ES-1
Table ES-2	Estimated Surface Disturbance by Utility Type	ES-12
Table ES-3	Summary of Impacts by Resource for the LCLA Groundwater Development and Utility ROW Project Proposed Action, Alternative 1, and No Action Alternative.....	ES-15
Table 1-1	Features of the Proposed Action.....	1-1
Table 1-2	BLM Land Use Plans Applicable to the Project Area	1-5
Table 1-3	Water Rights Application Submitted by LCWD and Pertaining to the Proposed Action.....	1-6
Table 1-4	Organization of the Final EIS	1-11

Table 1-5	Laws and Executive Orders that May Apply to the Proposed Action	1-12
Table 1-6	Authorizations, Permits, Reviews and Approvals	1-17
Table 2-1	Estimated Surface Disturbance by Utility Type	2-4
Table 2-2	Summary of Supplemental Plans that Include Measures to Minimize Impacts to Environmental Resources.....	2-19
Table 2-3	Summary of Impacts by Resource for the LCLA Groundwater Development and Utility ROW Project Proposed Action, Alternative 1, and No Action Alternative.....	2-25
Table 3-1	General Regional Stratigraphy.....	3-3
Table 3-2	Soil Series Descriptions	3-9
Table 3-3	Summary of Climatic Statistics in the Vicinity of the Project Area	3-14
Table 3-4	Streamflow Statistics for USGS Monitoring Station on Meadow Valley Wash.....	3-16
Table 3-5	Streamflow Statistics for USGS Monitoring Stations – Virgin River Valley	3-17
Table 3-6	Summary of Proposed Wells in the Clover Valley	3-27
Table 3-7	Current LCWD Production/Test/Monitoring Wells in the Tule Desert.....	3-31
Table 3-8	Aquifer Parameter Data	3-34
Table 3-9	Summary Of 2006 Groundwater Quality Data	3-40
Table 3-10	Perennial Yield and Water Rights in ROI and Hydrographic Area of Interest	3-42
Table 3-11	Common Great Basin Vegetation Associations in the Project Area.....	3-44
Table 3-12	Common Plant Species in the Mountain Shrub Community in the Great Basin Biome.....	3-44
Table 3-13	Common Plant Species in the Piñon-Juniper Community in the Great Basin Biome.....	3-45
Table 3-14	Common Plant Species in the Sagebrush/Perennial Grasses Community in the Great Basin Biome.....	3-45
Table 3-15	Common Plant Species in the Southern and Northern Desert Shrub Communities in the Mojave Desert Biome.....	3-47
Table 3-16	Dominant and Associate Plant Species in the Mojave Creosote Bush Scrub Vegetation Community	3-48
Table 3-17	Invasive Non-Native Plant Species that may Occur in the Project Area ¹	3-50
Table 3-18	BLM Sensitive Plant Species that May Occur in or near the Project Area .	3-52
Table 3-19	Bat Species Detected in 2004 Surveys at Five Sites.....	3-60
Table 3-20	Federal, State, Local Government and Private Lands in Lincoln County ...	3-65
Table 3-21	BLM-Granted Rights-of-Way near the Project Area.....	3-65
Table 3-22	Grazing Allotments in the Project Area.....	3-67
Table 3-23	Maximum Monitored Ambient Concentrations for the Year 2005	3-75
Table 3-24	Mesquite PM ₁₀ Concentrations 2002 - 2005.....	3-75
Table 3-25	Intersection of Hwy 93 and I-15 (Apex) PM ₁₀ Concentrations 2002 - 2005	3-75
Table 3-26	Population Trends in the ROI	3-81
Table 3-27	Population Projections for State of Nevada, Clark County and Lincoln County.....	3-82
Table 3-28	Population Projections for State of Utah and Washington County.....	3-82

Table 3-29	Labor Force Characteristics of the State of Nevada, Lincoln County and Clark County - 1990 through 2005	3-84
Table 3-30	Labor Force Characteristics of the State of Utah, Washington County - 1990 through 2005	3-85
Table 3-31	Employment by Industry for State of Nevada, Lincoln County and Clark County in 2005	3-85
Table 3-32	Employment by Industry for State of Utah and Washington County in 2005	3-86
Table 3-33	General Fund Revenues and Expenditures for Lincoln County FY Ending 6/30/04 and FY Ending 6/30/05	3-89
Table 3-34	General Fund Revenues and Expenditures for Clark County FY Ending 6/30/04 and FY Ending 6/30/05	3-90
Table 3-35	General Fund Revenues and Expenditures for Washington County FY Ending 12/31/04 and FY Ending 12/31/05	3-91
Table 3-36	Archaeological Resources and Historic Properties Expected in the ROI....	3-98
Table 4-1	Proposed Action - Vegetation Community Impact Acreages.....	4-21
Table 4-2	Alternative 1 - Vegetation Community Impact Acreages.....	4-26
Table 4-3	Desert Tortoise Habitat Disturbed by the Proposed Action.....	4-29
Table 4-4	Estimated Construction Equipment Exhaust Emissions	4-42
Table 4-5	Interaction Between Resources and Interrelated Projects.....	4-67
Table 4-6	Perennial Yield And Water Rights In The Cumulative Impacts Area.....	4-70
Table 4-7	Area and Type of Disturbance by Watershed (Acres).....	4-71

FIGURES

Figure 2-1	Typical Utility Layout for Parallel Road Construction
Figure 2-2	Typical Utility Layout for Cross-Country Construction
Figure 2-3	Typical Layout of Project Components within the Existing Right-Of-Way East of the Proposed Toquop Power Plant
Figure 2-4	Typical Utility Layout within the Proposed Right-Of-Way
Figure 2-5	Typical Production Well House Building
Figure 2-6	Typical Production Well Facility Site Plan
Figure 2-7	Elevation Gains/Losses within the ROW Alignment
Figure 2-8	Typical Booster Station Building Layout
Figure 2-9	Typical Flow Control Station
Figure 2-10	Typical Booster Station Plan View
Figure 2-11	Typical Site Plan for a Water Storage Tank
Figure 2-12	Topsoil Salvage Procedures
Figure 3-1	Region of Influence in Relation to the Basin and Range Physiographic Province
Figure 3-2	Clover Valley – Stratigraphic Column for Cross Sections
Figure 3-3	Clover Valley – Geologic Cross Sections A – A’
Figure 3-4	Clover Valley – Geologic Cross Sections B – B’
Figure 3-5	Clover Valley – Geologic Cross Sections C – C’
Figure 3-6	Tule Desert – Geologic Cross Sections
Figure 3-7	Clover Valley and Tule Desert in Relation to the Carbonate Rock Province
Figure 3-8	Conceptual Groundwater Flow Systems

Figure 3-9	Clover Valley Conceptual Model
Figure 3-10	North-South Hydrologic Cross-section Through Tule Desert (Location of Cross Sections Shown on Map 3-4)
Figure 4-1	Key Observation Point No. 1
Figure 4-2	Key Observation Point No. 2

MAPS

Map ES 1-1	Proposed Action and Alternative 1
Map 1-1	Project Area
Map 2-1	Proposed Action and Alternative 1
Map 3-1	General Physiography and Faults in the Region of Influence
Map 3-2a	Clover Valley Geology and Description of Map Units
Map 3-2b	Description of Map Units
Map 3-3	Geologic Map of the Tule Desert
Map 3-4	Springs and Wells in the Region Of Influence
Map 3-5	Hydrologic Basins and Flow Systems in Nevada
Map 3-6	Groundwater Elevation Map for Selected Portions of the Carbonate Rock Aquifer
Map 3-7	Vegetation Communities within the Region of Influence
Map 3-8	Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat and Southwest Willow Flycatcher Habitat within the Region of Influence
Map 3-9	Virgin River Fish and Southwest Willow Flycatcher Critical Habitat
Map 3-10	Land Ownership and Use in the Region of Influence
Map 4-1	Cumulative Impacts Analysis

APPENDICES

Appendix A1	Nevada State Engineers' Ruling 5181 (Tule Desert)
Appendix A2	Stipulation for Dismissal of Protests between the LCWD/Vidler Water Company and the National Park Service
Appendix A3	Monitoring Plan for Groundwater Development in the Tule Desert
Appendix B	Proposed Water Resources Monitoring and Management Plan for Future Pumping in Clover Valley, Nevada as it Relates to the LCLA Groundwater Development and Utility Rights-of-Way Project
Appendix C	Applicant Proposed Environmental Protection Measures - Standard Construction and Operation Procedures
Appendix D	Surface Water Rights within the Tule Desert, Clover Valley, and Virgin River Hydrographic Areas
Appendix E1	Federally-Listed Species List from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Appendix E2	Sensitive Plant and Wildlife Species that may Occur Within or Near the Project Area
Appendix E3	Wildlife Species that are Expected to Occur Within or Near the Project Area
Appendix F	Comments on the Draft EIS and BLM's Responses to Comments

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AADT	annual average daily traffic
ACEC	Area of Critical Environmental Concern
AFY	acre-feet per year
AIRFA	American Indian Religious Freedom Act
amsl	above mean sea level
ANFO	ammonium nitrate and fuel oil
Applicant	Lincoln County Water District
APE	Area of Potential Effect
APLIC	Avian Power Line Interaction Committee
ARPA	Archaeological Resources Protection Act
ATR	Automatic Traffic Reader
AUM	animal unit month
BARCASS	Basin and Range Carbonate Aquifer System Study
bgs	below ground surface
BLM	U.S. Bureau of Land Management
BMPs	best management practices
CEDS	Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
cfs	cubic feet per second
°C/km	degrees Celsius per kilometer
CO ₂	carbon dioxide
CO	carbon monoxide
Corps	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
CTX	consolidated tax
dB	decibel
dBA	A-weighted decibels
DOD	Department of Defense
DOT	Department of Transportation
DRI	Desert Research Institute
EIS	environmental impact statement
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Endangered Species Act
ET	evapotranspiration
°F	degrees Fahrenheit
FLPMA	Federal Land Policy and Management Act
GID	General Improvement District
gpd/ft	gallons per day per foot
gpm	gallons per minute
GLO	General Land Office
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HMA	Herd Management Area
HPTP	Historic Properties Treatment Plan

I-15	Interstate 15
ID	interdisciplinary
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
KOP	Key Observation Point
kV	kilovolt
LCCRDA	Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2004
LCLA	Lincoln County Land Act
LCPD	Lincoln County Power District
LCT	Lincoln County Telephone Company
LCWD	Lincoln County Water District
L_{dnmr}	Onset Rate Adjusted Monthly Day-Night Average Sound Levels
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MFP	management framework plan
mg/L	milligrams per liter
mi^2	square miles
micromho/cm	micromhos per centimeter
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
MW	Monitoring Well
NAC	Nevada Administrative Code
NBMG	Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology
NDEP	Nevada Division of Environmental Protection
NDOT	Nevada Department of Transportation
NDOW	Nevada Department of Wildlife
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NNHP	Nevada Natural Heritage Program
NO_x	oxides of nitrogen
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPS	National Park Service
NRA	National Recreation Area
NRCS	National Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NRS	Nevada Revised Statutes
NSE	Nevada State Engineer
NTS	Nevada Test Site
NWR	National Wildlife Refuge
O_3	ozone
OEDP	Overall Economic Development Plan
OHV	off-highway vehicle
Pb	lead
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter with mean aerometric diameter smaller than 2.5 microns
PM_{10}	particulate matter with mean aerometric diameter smaller than 10 microns
pmc	percent modern carbon
POD	Plan of Development
RMP	Resource Management Plan
ROD	Record of Decision

ROI	Region of Influence
ROW	right-of-way
RV	recreational vehicle
SCCRT	Supplemental City/County Relief Tax
SHPO	State Historic Preservation Office
SO ₂	sulfur dioxide
SR	State Route
SPCC	Spill Prevention Containment and Countermeasure
SWPPP	Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan
TCP	Traditional Cultural Property or Place
TDS	total dissolved solids
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Loads
ug/L	micrograms per liter
ug/m ³	micrograms per cubic meter
UPRR	Union Pacific Railroad
U.S.C.	United States Code
uS/cm	microSeimens per centimeter
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USDOT	U.S. Department of Transportation
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey
Vidler	Vidler Water Company, LLC
VOC	volatile organic compound
VRM	Visual Resource Management
WMA	Wildlife Management Area
WRCC	Western Regional Climate Center

