



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Las Vegas Field Office
4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive
Las Vegas, Nevada 89130
<http://www.nv.blm.gov>

In Reply Refer To:
N-76700
3600
NV-053

October 21, 2003

RECEIVED
OCT 23 2003
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
BUDGET AND PLANNING DIVISION

Dear Interested Party:

The Bureau of Land Management, Las Vegas Field Office, has received a request for the sale of mineral materials from an area in the Lone Mountain Community Pit. Nevada Ready Mix Corporation has requested the sale of 450,000 tons of sand and gravel. The site is located in T. 20 S., R. 59 E., sec. 3, S1/2NE1/4NE1/4, SE1/4NW1/4NE1/4, Clark County, Nevada. I have attached a copy of Environmental Assessment NV-050-2003-141 for your review. The EA analyzes the impacts of the proposed sale. If you have any comments please forward them to this office no later than November 25, 2003.

If you have questions concerning the proposed sale contact Edward Seum at (702) 515-5070.

Sincerely,

Mark R. Chatterton
Assistant Field Manager
Nonrenewable Resources

1 Enclosure
1. EA

LAS VEGAS FIELD OFFICE

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
NV-053-2003-141
NEVADA**

**43 CFR 3600
Competitive Sale
Lone Mountain Community Pit
N-76700**

**PREPARED BY THE
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
October, 2003**

I. Introduction

The Act of July 31, 1947, as amended (30 U.S.C. 601 et seq.) gives authority for the disposal of mineral materials from public lands of the United States. Section 302 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (43 U.S.C. 1732) directs the Secretary to manage public lands under the principles of multiple use and sustained yield in accordance with land use plans developed under the act.

The 43 CFR 3600 regulations establish procedures for the exploration, development and disposal of mineral material resources under permit or contract for sale, or free use. Subpart 3602 of the regulations deals with mineral material sales, while Subpart 3603 covers sales in community pits and common use areas.

Activities occurring on public lands are subject to all Federal, State and local regulations concerning health and safety. Zoning laws or ordinances do not apply to Federally managed lands.

II. Background

Mining of sand and gravel has taken place in the Lone Mountain Community Pit since the mid 1980's. The purpose for establishing the pit was to provide a local source of sand and gravel to the community. Both short and long term contracts to remove mineral materials are issued to sand and gravel companies and the general public. Mineral materials are sold at fair market value, which is determined through appraisal. Approximately 300 acres of public lands have been affected by mining to date.

III. Need For The Proposed Action

The BLM completed an Environmental Assessment (EA), EA-053-97-046, and Decision Record for operations within the Lone Mountain Community Pit in November of 1997. The BLM has received a request for competitive sale of mineral materials. This assessment will evaluate the impacts for the potential sale of 450,000 tons, through competitive sale from the community pit, in an area outside that which was evaluated in 1997.

Materials in this pit represent a local source for the valley. Mineral material sales may be made as long as the aggregate damage to public lands and resources will not exceed the benefits derived from the proposed sale (43 CFR 3601.11). The proposed action is in conformance with Federal Regulations and Bureau Policies. The action conforms to the Las Vegas Resource Management Plan, signed October 1998, Objective MN-1, page 27, and Objective MN-1-k, page 29.

A. Proposed Action and Alternatives

Proposed Action

The proposed project is located in T. 20 S., R. 59 E., sec. 3, S1/2NE1/4NE1/4, SE1/4NW1/4NE1/4, Clark County, Nevada. The attached map shows the general location of the proposed competitive sale. The BLM has received a request from Nevada Ready Mix Corp. for the sale of 450,000 tons of mineral materials from the Lone Mountain Community Pit. The disturbance would take place over a 5 year period, on a 30 acre parcel which is adjacent to patented lands which Nevada Ready Mix owns.

Lands making up the parcel are currently undisturbed. Mining of public lands would allow Nevada Ready Mix (NRM) to produce more materials from their private lands. This is due to the fact that they would be able to push the slope back further. They would also be able to put in a more stable slope between the private and public lands.

Materials would be drilled and blasted so that slopes will be benched 45 feet high and 25 feet wide. Blasting would be carried out on the public lands in the same manner as it is done currently on the private lands, by a certified blaster. The blasted materials would then be pushed down to the quarry floor. Haul trucks would transport the materials to a crusher located on private land.

All crushing, screening and washing would take place at the NRM plant under an existing air quality permit. The area would be watered regularly to suppress dust. Water would come from permitted wells on NRM owned lands.

Should NRM not submit the winning bid, then the winning bidder would be required to meet the existing mine plan, and get any permits required for operations. They would also be required to furnish their own water for dust control and processing.

Upon completion of mining, the final slope would be shot to leave a rocky slope. The pit floor would be left in a level condition, with any waste piles shaped or used to reduce the slopes. Native seed and vegetation would be used to re-establish vegetation on the site.

Access to and from the pit is by an approved truck route. Trucks have direct access to U.S. 215 without traveling on roads open to the public.

C. "No Action" - Alternative

Under this alternative operations within the community pit would continue at their current levels. The competitive sale contract would not be bid out. NRM would probably continue to mine their private property in the current manner.

IV. Affected Environment

The following discussion on the affected environment concerns those areas for which mitigation has not completely removed the impacts to the environment.

A. Declaration of No Effects

The area under consideration would not affect any Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, prime or unique farm lands, Native American Religious Concerns, hazardous or solid wastes, drinking or ground water, wetlands or riparian zones, recreation, wild and scenic rivers, floodplains, migratory birds, noxious weeds, designated wilderness or environmental justice issues.

B. Proposed Action

The area to be disturbed is located on 30 acres in the northwest part of Las Vegas Valley, within the legal location of T. 20 S., R. 59 E., sec. 3, S1/2NE1/4NE1/4, SE1/4NW1/4NE1/4, of Clark County, Nevada. The elevation of the project area ranges to slightly over 3600 feet. The site encompasses both alluvial and hard rock materials.

Local vegetation contains elements of both the creosote brush scrub and blackbrush communities. Dominant species include creosote bush, blackbrush and Mojave yucca. Ephedra, indigo bush, and eight varieties of cactus are other common plants in the area. No "live" populations of candidate or sensitive plant species are known to occur within the area. A small population of dead, yellow twotone beardtongue was found. This short-lived herbaceous perennial, a member of the penstemon family, is a candidate and sensitive species.

The area is desert tortoise habitat. The desert tortoise is listed as a threatened species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The pit is covered under BO#1-5-96-F-23R.2.

The site is within the Las Vegas Valley Air Shed. The air shed has been classified as a serious non-attainment area for carbon monoxide and particulate matter less than or equal to 10 micrometers (PM₁₀). De minimis levels for CO and PM₁₀ are 100 tons and 70 tons per year, respectively. Air quality management responsibilities in Clark County reside with the Clark County Department of Air Quality Management.

Currently there are no occupied dwellings near the boundaries of the area proposed for mining. The distance to the nearest inhabited structure is 1 mile.

C. "No Action" - Alternative

Under this alternative operations within the community pit would continue at their current levels. The competitive sale contract would not be bid out. NRM would continue to

mine their private property at current levels.

V. Environmental Consequences and Mitigating Measures

A. Proposed Action

Environmental Consequences

Air Quality - Air quality would be impacted by the proposed operations. Dust and other air pollutants would be generated during mining and reclamation. Projects which will not exceed the de minimis levels do not require a conformity determination.

Sources of CO at the proposed site include the operation of heavy equipment, such as bulldozers and front end loaders. Other sources would be trucks for hauling materials to the processing area. CO would also be generated away from the pit, by travel to and from the pit by employee and service vehicles, and trucks hauling materials to market.

Days of operation are usually Monday through Friday. That would total 260 days per year, less major holidays, for a total of around 255 days of operation. The volume of materials mined can fluctuate on a day to day basis, as well as yearly. Currently, there is one less operator in the community pit than when the 1997 EA was completed.

Table 1 has the allowable CO emissions (based on the air quality permits) on a per year basis for the operations currently taking place in the community pit.

Table 1	
Table 1 Operation	Allowable CO tons/yr.
American S&G	1.22
Diamond Construction	1.91
Hollywood Gravel	1.43
Las Vegas Paving	40.39
Pipes Paving	1.15
Quality S&G	0.32
R.L. McVane	1.15
Total	47.57

The addition of this sale would not put the CO emissions on public lands over the de minimis levels.

A major component of PM₁₀ is dust created by disturbed vacant land/unpaved parking lots, paved road dust, construction activity fugitive dust, natural sources and travel on unpaved roads. Disturbed vacant land/unpaved roads represent more than a third of the

PM₁₀ emissions in the valley, on an annual basis. Sand and gravel operations are considered stationary sources and contribute only 627 tons of PM₁₀ emissions per year according to the Clark County Department of Air Quality Management.

Table 2 has the allowable PM₁₀ emissions (based on the air quality permits) on a per year basis for the operations currently taking place in the community pit.

Table 2

Operation	Allowable PM ₁₀ tons/yr.
American S&G	8.83
Diamond Construction	4.46
Hollywood Gravel	14.07
Las Vegas Paving	104.8
Pipes Paving	8.36
Quality S&G	13.02
R.L. McVane	8.82
Total	162.36

The above numbers are all based on total production figures which currently exceed the annual production of these operations. For example, American Sand & Gravel is allowed to produce 500,000 tons of sand and gravel a year under the air quality permit, to reach the 8.83 tons of PM₁₀ per year. American's average annual production, for the 5 and a half years they have been in the pit, is 186,777 tons. Through 9 months of 2003, they have produced 137,516 tons of aggregate.

NRM is allowed to emit 65.18 tons of PM₁₀ per year. The total PM₁₀ that could be emitted from this area by sand and gravel operations is 227.54 tons. This would only occur if each operator produced the maximum materials allowable under their permits. This would represent approximately .0015 percent of the total emissions for the Valley. A conformity determination for PM₁₀ was completed as part of the 1997 EA. There would be no appreciable changes in the amounts of PM₁₀ generated under the proposed action. Therefore, the conformity determination made in 1997 is still valid.

The amounts of CO and PM₁₀ that this project will add to the valley can be further lessened by incorporating mitigation measures. The mitigation measures listed below would, upon implementation, reduce the annual emissions of PM₁₀.

Proposed Mitigating Measures for Air Quality

1. All operators shall be required to obtain the applicable permit from the Clark County Department of Air Quality Management, prior to any surface disturbing activities. The operators shall carry out any monitoring requirements and pay any off-set fees imposed by the permit. The permittee shall agree to indemnify the United States against any

liability arising from the release of dust on the permit area. This agreement applies without regard to whether a release is caused by the Holder, its agent or contractor, or unrelated third parties.

2. Dust abatement measures shall be taken concurrent with mining and reclamation activities. All operations shall use best available control technology to meet air quality regulations. Roads and operating areas shall meet air quality standards established by Clark County.
3. All areas to be excavated shall be watered prior to removal. All borrow, pit run and transferred materials shall contain no less than 2 percent moisture by weight, or be treated with the equivalent volume of water necessary to maintain a 2 percent moisture content by weight in 1/4 inch minus material.
4. Operations shall limit disturbance to the smallest area needed for operations. Operating areas not in use for more than 14 days shall be treated with a chemical dust suppressant. Armoring with oversized rock is an acceptable alternative to chemical treatment. Operators shall complete reclamation within 30 days on areas no longer needed for operations or production. Armoring of reclaimed sites or use of a dust suppressant shall be used to reduce erosion until vegetation is established.
5. Measures taken shall be in conformance with Federal, State and County laws or regulations. All sand and gravel trucks shall use load covers when transporting mineral materials. If atmospheric conditions are such that air quality violations would occur, then the purchaser shall cease operations until such time as the atmospheric conditions change and air quality standards can again be met. If new air quality standards are promulgated during the life of the contract, then the purchaser shall come into compliance with the new standards within a reasonable amount of time.
6. All machinery and vehicles used in the operation shall meet air quality standards. Any machinery/vehicles exhibiting signs of not meeting air quality standards, i.e. black smoke from diesel equipment or visible exhaust, shall either be removed from the pit or shut down until serviced to meet standards.
7. The BLM shall suspend the contract of any operations failing to meet air quality regulations, if requested by the Clark County Department of Air Quality Management to do so. The BLM shall suspend the contract of any operations with a pattern of violations (three violations in any four month period) for air quality regulations, regardless of any request by the Clark County Department of Air Quality Management.
8. No open fires for the burning of trash or to provide warmth to workers shall be allowed in the pit. Vehicles and equipment shall not be left idling unnecessarily within the pit.

9. Operators shall be encouraged to get employees involved in car pooling to and from the pit.

Vegetation & Wildlife - Vegetation on the area would be destroyed during the mining process. Wildlife inhabiting the project area would be displaced during the life of the operation. Reclamation of those areas would give some types of wildlife and vegetation a chance to reestablish over the long term. The community which reestablishes itself on the site would differ from the historic vegetation.

Burrowing mammals and reptiles occurring on the site may be killed during mining activities. However these species are generally common and widespread. Negative impacts would be minimal. Most other wildlife species would be displaced during mining.

The project area is in desert tortoise habitat, a federally listed, threatened species. The project area is covered by Biological Opinion File No. 1-5-96-F-23R.2. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) determined that the proposed action was "not likely" to jeopardize the continued existence of the threatened Mojave population of the desert tortoise.

Under the biological opinion, a tortoise mitigation fee is required to be collected on materials sold from the area

Proposed Mitigation Measures for Vegetation & Desert Tortoise

1. All cactus and yucca, growing in the alluvial areas, must be salvaged and taken to the Desert Tortoise Conservation Center. Agave and silver cholla do not need to be salvaged. Prior to ground disturbance, the permittee must contact the BLM botanist for a transportation permit and a map to the Desert Tortoise Conservation Center.
2. Plants that are not salvaged must be disposed of in trash receptacles out of the view of the public.
3. All applicable desert tortoise mitigation measures required under Biological Opinion Files No.: 1-5-96-F-23R.2 will be implemented. A tortoise mitigation fee of \$16,500.00 will be charged for the proposed disturbance.
4. If a tortoise is in imminent danger with immediate death or injury likely (such as from an approaching vehicle or equipment), and the tortoise has been given the opportunity to move but has withdrawn in its shell and is not moving, onsite personnel may capture the tortoise and place it in a clean, unused cardboard box or similar container. Clark County's tortoise pick-up service will be notified immediately (593-9027). The contained tortoise will be held in the shade or temperature controlled environment until removed by the pick-up service.

Cumulative Effects

The action area associated with this project is currently sparsely developed. The land ownership pattern is a mix of public and private lands. Lands in this area are generally zoned as Rural Open Land, and Open Land. The largest private development sits over 1 mile to the southeast. Nevada Ready Mix is mining its private property to the north. The boundary for the Red Rock National Conservation Area is approximately a mile to the west, and a mile to the south of the site. The lands are outside the current disposal boundary identified in the Las Vegas Resource Management Plan and by law. Therefore they can not be exchanged or sold without a plan amendment or legislation.

Private Development - Private lands outside of the action area are being developed at a rapid pace. Within the action area, other than the mining by NRM, development has been slow. Mining has been taking place since the early 1980's. It is not known how much reserves exist, but mining will probably continue for at least the next 10-20 years. NRM's lands would probably be developed for other purposes once mining is completed.

Public Land Development - Certain actions on public lands, such as off-road vehicle use not associated with organized events, and dumping are difficult to control and may contribute to habitat destruction and degradation. These may increase with population growth and staffing decreases.

There are no mining claims in the area. No locatable minerals are known to occur. It is reasonable to believe that no valid mining claims will be located under the General Mining Law of May 10, 1872 (17 Stat. 91), as amended.

Mining of the proposed project area would potentially disturb 30 acres. Additional acres could be mined in the future. At this point it is not known how many acres might be mined. This would be determined in part by market requirements, and a need for a buffer between the mining and NCA lands. Post mining, the disturbed areas would be reclaimed.

Mining will continue in the Lone Mountain community pit for the foreseeable future. Clark County Public Works is in the process of putting together design drawings for mining the area. Public Works is hoping that the BLM will cooperate in having the area within the community pit mined to leave a detention basin, or series of detention basins to protect down stream private lands. This would necessitate the mining of lands immediately to the west of the beltway alignment to an engineered depth. Mining of the materials this way would be less costly to the public.

There are no known development plans for the rest of the public lands which are dispersed throughout the action area.

C. "No Action" - Alternative

Under this alternative operations within the community pit would continue at their current levels. The competitive sale contracts would not be offered for bid.

VI. Consultation and Coordination

A. Resource Reviewing Staff

Edward Seum	Geologist
Heather Hundt	Wildlife Biologist
Bob Bruno	Recreation Specialist
Christina Nelson	Botanist
Stan Rolf	Archaeologist
Amy Torres	Wild Horses & Burros

B. Individuals and Public Agencies Contacted

CLARK COUNTY OF DEPARTMENT COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING
ATTN: RON GREGORY
500 S. GRAND CENTRAL PARKWAY
P.O. BOX 551741
LAS VEGAS, NV 89155-1741

CLARK COUNTY REGIONAL FLOOD CONTROL
ATTN: MR. TIM SUTKO
STE. 300
600 S. GRAND CENTRAL PARKWAY
LAS VEGAS, NV 89155

CLARK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT
C/O STEVE DEYO
500 S. GRAND CENTRAL PARKWAY
LAS VEGAS, NV 89155

NEVADA STATE CLEARINGHOUSE
C/O HEATHER K. ELLIOTT
209 E. MUSSEY STREET, ROOM 200
CARSON CITY, NV 89710

NATURE CONSERVANCY
SOUTHERN NEVADA OFFICE
C/O CONSERVATION PLANNING
3380 W. SAHARA AVE., SUITE 120
LAS VEGAS, NV 89102

SOUTHERN NEVADA GROUP, SIERRA CLUB
CONSERVATION CHAIRPERSON
P.O. BOX 19777

LAS VEGAS, NV 89132

DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 3141
WRIGHTWOOD, CA 92397

JERRY HELTON
RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL, CHAIR
DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANTS, INC.
8275 SOUTH EASTERN AVE., SUITE 200
LAS VEGAS, NV 89123

STEVE MELLINGTON
RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL, VICE CHAIR
7300 LAKE FARM AVE.
LAS VEGAS, NV 89131

GREAT BASIN MINE WATCH
C/O TOM MEYERS
P.O. BOX 10262
RENO, NV 89510

OUTSIDE LAS VEGAS
C/O ALAN O'NEIL
2252 MORNING MESA AVENUE
HENDERSON, NV 89052

ROBERT W. HALL
NEVADA ENVIRONMENTAL COALITION
P.O. BOX 370956
LAS VEGAS, NV 89137

C. Public Comment

VII. Recommendation and Rationale

A. Recommendation

Approve the project incorporating the appropriate, recommended mitigating measures into the stipulations, which would be added as an attachment to the material sale contract.

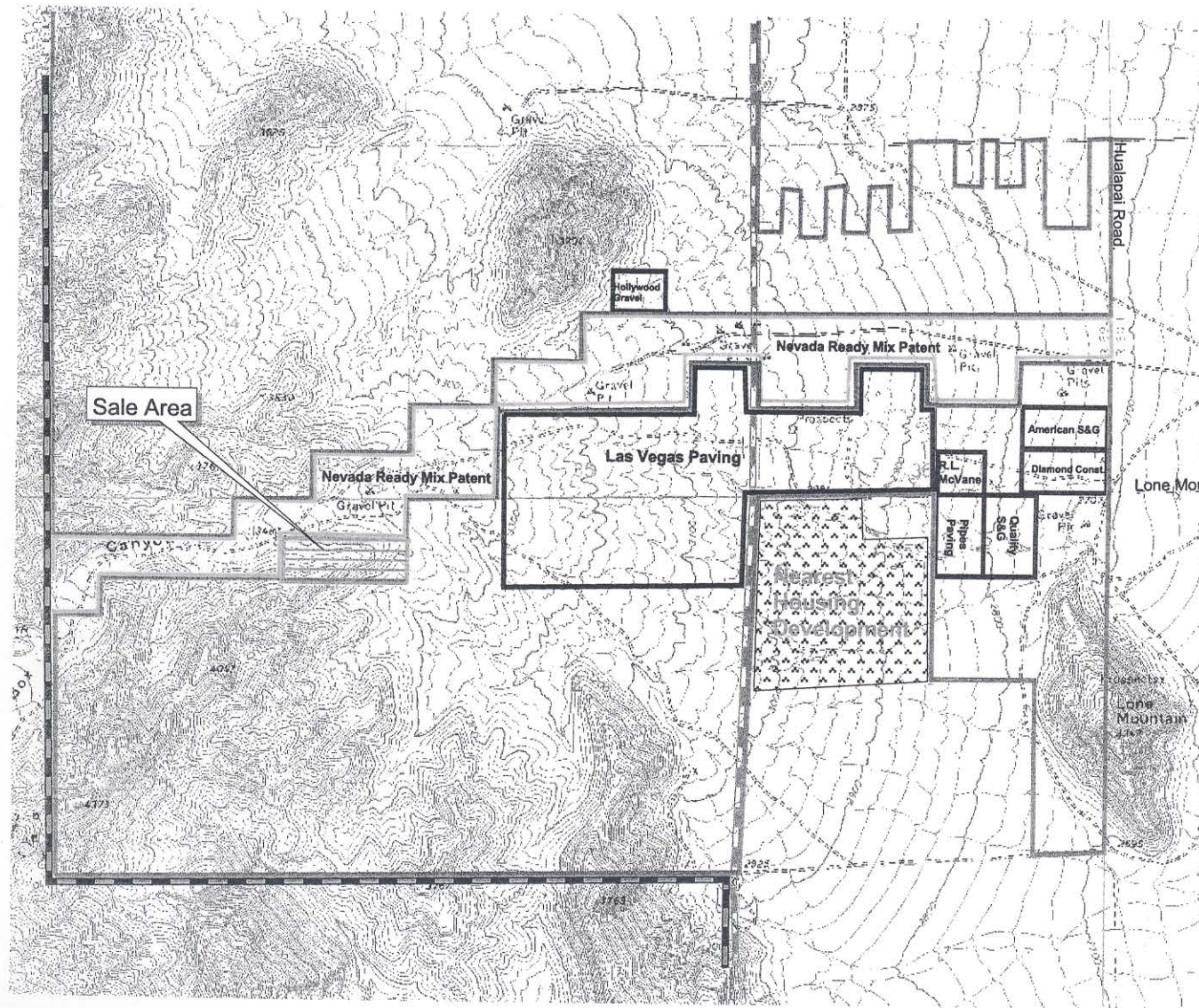
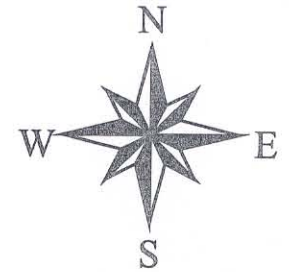
B. Rationale

Approval of the project is in conformance with Federal Mineral Material Regulations, the land use plan and current Bureau policy which encourages mineral development.

Prepared By: Edward Seum

Date: October 20, 2003

Lone Mountain Area



- 
-  Sale Area
 -  Patented Land
 -  Community Pit Boundary
 -  Red Rock Canyon NCA Boundary
 -  SNPLMA Disposal Boundary
 -  Contract Area
 -  Housing Development

A horizontal scale bar with three segments. The first segment is labeled '0' at its left end and '1' at its right end. The second segment is labeled '1' at its left end and '2' at its right end. The third segment is labeled '2' at its left end and '2 Miles' at its right end. The segments are colored in alternating black and white.

Created 10/9/2003 by E. Seum