



SCOPING INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Southern Nevada Supplemental Airport ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT



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Introduction

The purpose of this scoping information document is to provide federal, state and local agencies and officials, Native American tribes as well as the public, with preliminary information on the Southern Nevada Supplemental Airport Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Background

The Clark County Department of Aviation (CCDOA) owns and operates McCarran International Airport, the primary commercial passenger and cargo airport for the Las Vegas metropolitan area and southern Nevada. Approximately 47 percent of visitors to the area arrive via the Airport. In 2005, McCarran International Airport was the 5th busiest airport in North America in terms of total passengers, handling 42,395,492 passengers. In 2005, the airport had 614,312 operations (takeoffs and landings).



Since 1995, the number of passengers and aircraft operations at McCarran International Airport has increased significantly, by 63 percent and 22 percent, respectively.

This increase is a result of the rise in tourism, convention business, and service industries associated with the gaming and entertainment industry in Las Vegas, as well as an increase in population. Between 1995 and 2005, visitors to Clark County increased from 29,002,122 to 38,566,717. This represents an increase of 33 percent. Between 1995 and 2005, the population of Clark County increased from approximately 1,036,000 to 1,710,000, an increase of 65 percent. Forecasts predict aircraft operations will continue to

grow at rates significantly exceeding the national average. By the year 2015, it is estimated that activity at McCarran International Airport will reach 706,684 annual aircraft operations, representing an approximate 15 percent increase over existing operations.

In the absence of action to address this growth, unacceptable levels of congestion and delay will occur at McCarran International Airport. Without additional capacity, airfield delay, measured in average annualized delay per aircraft operation, is forecast to exceed 20 minutes in 2018/2019. This does not mean that each aircraft operation will be delayed by 20 minutes or more, rather delay may range from zero for some aircraft operations to several hours for aircraft operations during peak operating periods of the day, on weekends, or during holidays. Delays will result in long lines at security check points, concessions, taxi curbs and elsewhere in the terminals; congestion in baggage and waiting areas; and deterioration of levels of service on the airport roadways to failing conditions.

The preliminary purpose and need is to provide sufficient airfield capacity to accommodate long-term aviation passenger demand in the Las Vegas metropolitan area.

Proposed Action

CCDOA is proposing to construct and operate a new supplemental commercial service airport 30 miles south of the Las Vegas metropolitan area in the Ivanpah Valley (the Proposed Action) in order to ensure sufficient commercial service capacity for the metropolitan area. The proposed Ivanpah Valley Airport, shown on page 2, would be located on 5,934 acres between Jean and Primm, east of I-15 and west of the Union Pacific rail line. CCDOA proposes that the airport will be operational in 2017.

The site is located on and adjacent to the dry Roach Lake and much of the soil on the site would likely have to be removed and replaced with more suitable material from another location. Roach Lake is occasionally wet and storm-water that flows to the site would have to be accommodated elsewhere on or adjacent to the site. Other potential environmental issues associated with this site include:

- ▶ Air quality impacts during both construction and operation of the airport.
- ▶ Secondary, induced development that may occur as a result of airport development.



Location of proposed Ivanpah Valley Airport



Looking north at the proposed Ivanpah Valley Airport Site



Looking south at the proposed Ivanpah Valley Airport Site

- ▶ Impacts to protected plant and wildlife species.
- ▶ Impacts to existing on-site and adjacent recreational uses.
- ▶ Effects on nearby Section 4(f) resources.
- ▶ Effects to archaeological resources on the site and to Native American cultural concerns in the area.

Joint Lead Agencies

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is responsible for complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) when an Airport Sponsor seeks approval of an Airport Layout Plan for a new airport and other FAA approvals.

The Ivanpah Valley Airport Public Lands Transfer Act of 2000, in which Congress directed the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) acting on behalf of the Secretary of the Department of Interior (DOI) to transfer property in the Ivanpah Valley to Clark County for the purpose of develop-

ing an airport facility and related infrastructure, requires both the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the DOI to serve as Joint Lead Agencies for carrying out the requirements of NEPA for the Proposed Action. The FAA will represent the DOT and the DOI has designated the BLM as its representative in preparing the EIS. The FAA has been designated the administrative lead in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among FAA, BLM and Clark County. However, the Joint Lead Agencies are substantively equal and will be equally responsible for assuring compliance with all of the requirements of NEPA.

The property acquisition and transfer from the BLM to Clark County for the airport site has already been completed. In accordance with the Ivanpah Valley Airport Public Lands Transfer Act of 2000, should completion of the NEPA process lead to the determination that an airport should not be constructed at the site, it will be transferred back to BLM ownership. Upon completion of the NEPA process and

should construction of the Ivanpah Valley Airport be approved, BLM is required, upon request by Clark County, to transfer an additional 16,903 acres of land to Clark County that will serve as a noise compatibility area for the Ivanpah Valley Airport, as required by the Clark County Conservation of Public Land and Natural Resources Act of 2002.

EIS Roles and Responsibilities

Three primary parties, FAA, BLM, and CCDOA, will participate in the preparation of the EIS.

The FAA and the BLM, as the Joint Lead Agencies, are responsible for:

- ▶ Preparing the EIS and Record of Decision (ROD) on the Proposed Action and reasonable alternatives.
- ▶ Conducting environmental analyses, public coordination, and coordination with other agencies.
- ▶ Ensuring compliance with NEPA and other applicable environmental laws and regulations.
- ▶ Supervising their EIS Contractor.

The CCDOA, as the Airport Sponsor, is responsible for:

- ▶ Facilitating and coordinating the exchange of technical information about McCarran International Airport, the Ivanpah Valley site, and other aviation facilities.
- ▶ Providing information about the County's goals and objectives for the Proposed Action.

The EIS Contractor, Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB), is responsible for providing technical and administrative expertise and staff to assist the Joint Lead Agencies in carrying out their responsibilities. The EIS Contractor is managed by and reports to the Joint Lead Agencies.

In addition, federal, state, regional and local environmental and cultural resource agencies, and Native American tribes, that have special expertise or jurisdiction by law, will assist the Joint Lead Agencies by providing technical assistance and review in their respective areas.

Environmental Impact Statement

The purpose of the EIS is to provide the FAA and BLM and other decision-makers, as well as the public, with detailed information on the potential environmental impacts with regard to the Proposed Action and other alternatives.

The Joint Lead Agencies will complete the EIS in accordance with NEPA, the Ivanpah Valley Airport Public Lands Transfer Act, and other relevant environmental laws; the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500-1508); Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures (FAA Order 1050.1E); the requirements of the Airport Environmental Handbook (FAA Order 5050.4B); the Department of Interior, Department Manual Part 516; BLM Handbook H 1790-1 (National Environmental Policy Act Handbook); and other relevant policies and guidance.

Purpose and Need and Alternatives Screening



The preliminary purpose and need is to provide sufficient airfield capacity to accommodate long-term aviation passenger demand in the Las Vegas metropolitan area. The alternatives screening process identifies those alternatives that achieve the purpose and need and that are reasonable.

Through the scoping process, agencies, public officials, Native American tribes, and the public will have the opportunity to recommend alternatives for consideration in the EIS.

The Joint Lead Agencies will develop a screening process and criteria for determining if alternatives recommended satisfy the purpose and need and are reasonable. Reasonable alternatives are those that are practical and feasible from a technical, economic, and common sense perspective. In determining whether an alternative is reasonable, the following types of issues will be considered among others:

- ▶ Is the alternative compatible with existing use of airspace and existing airports in the vicinity?
- ▶ Are there obstacles to air navigation associated with the alternative?
- ▶ Is adequate land available (area and terrain) so that the necessary facilities can be accommodated?

- ▶ Is or can the alternative be within a reasonable drive time of Las Vegas?
- ▶ Is the cost of the alternative reasonable compared to the cost of other alternatives?

The Joint Lead Agencies welcome suggestions from the general public, appropriate federal, state, and local agencies and officials, and Native American tribes regarding the issues to consider when developing the screening criteria.

Alternatives that satisfy the purpose and need and are reasonable will be advanced for detailed environmental analysis in the Draft EIS. Alternatives that do not satisfy the purpose and need, or are not reasonable, will be eliminated from further evaluation in the EIS and the reasons for their elimination will be provided.

EIS Preparation Process

Key Requirements for an Environmental Impact Statement

According to federal requirements, an EIS must:

- ▶ Explain the purpose and need;
- ▶ Identify those alternatives that are reasonable and achieve the purpose and need, and therefore will be retained for detailed environmental analyses;
- ▶ Identify alternatives that will not achieve the purpose and need or are not reasonable, and provide reasons why they will not be included for detailed analyses in the EIS;
- ▶ Determine the environmental consequences of the No-Action Alternative, the Proposed Action, and other retained alternatives;
- ▶ Identify measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate potential environmental consequences for each alternative;
- ▶ Describe the agency and public coordination efforts; and
- ▶ Serve as the NEPA document for the Joint Lead Agencies and the other federal agencies, as needed.

The requirements listed above are the key requirements for an EIS, and therefore this list is not comprehensive in terms of listing all federal requirements for an EIS.

Scoping: An early and open process for determining the issues and alternatives to be addressed in the EIS.

Purpose and Need: The FAA and BLM must define the reason for the project or the problem to be solved.

Alternatives Screening: The process by which the FAA and BLM identify, and impartially assess, all reasonable alternatives that satisfy the purpose and need.

Environmental Analysis: Evaluates the environmental impacts of alternatives.

Draft EIS: Initial EIS distributed for review and comment by the public, government agencies, Native American tribes, and interest groups.

Public Comment Period/Hearing: Provides opportunity for the public, government agencies, Native American tribes, and interest groups to provide oral or submit written comments on the Draft EIS.

Final EIS: Final version of the EIS that summarizes the comments made by the public, government agencies, Native American tribes, and interest groups on the Draft EIS, and provides responses to those comments. The Final EIS identifies the preferred alternative.

Record of Decision (ROD): A public record of the FAA's and BLM's decision on the Proposed Action that is distributed after the Final EIS. In the ROD, the Joint Lead Agencies explain what their decisions are, how the decisions were made, and what alternatives were considered, including the Proposed Action and the environmentally preferred alternative; and what mitigation measures are being imposed to lessen undesirable environmental impacts.

Environmental Impact Analysis

The Joint Lead Agencies, in cooperation with federal and state agencies that have jurisdiction by law or that have special expertise to assist the Joint Lead Agencies and Native American tribes, will prepare a detailed evaluation of the environmental impacts of the Proposed Action and other alternatives retained for detailed analysis.

The EIS analyses will cover a full range of technical areas. Study areas will be identified, appropriate analyses methods will be determined, field studies will be conducted to determine existing conditions, impacts will be analyzed, and conceptual mitigation measures will be developed. At each of these steps, the Joint Lead Agencies will coordinate with appropriate environmental review agencies and Native American tribes. Together with input from various agencies, Native American tribes, and the public, these technical analyses will provide the basis for the assessments and conclusions presented in the EIS. Some of the impact analysis categories are listed in the box below. It is important to note that the Joint Lead Agencies have not made a final decision on the content of the EIS and will not do so until after scoping when all the scoping comments have been evaluated and incorporated.



Environmental Documentation and Review

After completion of the environmental impact analysis, the Joint Lead Agencies will prepare a Draft EIS for agency and public review. The public will have no less than 60 days for review and comment. During that time, a public hearing will be held within the study area for the public to review the Proposed Action and the environmental impacts and mitigation for each alternative. The Draft EIS will be made available at public libraries, on the project website, and on CD to anyone who requests it.

Final EIS

Following the hearings and the public comment period, the Joint Lead Agencies will identify their preferred alternative and they will prepare a Final EIS.

The Final EIS will:

- Summarize the comments received on the Draft EIS and key issues raised during public hearings;
- Provide the Joint Lead Agencies' responses to the key issues and comments noted above;
- Identify the Joint Lead Agencies' preferred alternative;
- Document avoidance and minimization efforts associated with the preferred alternative;
- Describe conceptual measures and other commitments needed to mitigate any unavoidable environmental impacts that the preferred alternative would cause; and
- Discuss compliance with applicable federal and state regulations and laws.

Impact Analysis Categories

- Air Quality
- Compatible Land Use
- Construction Impacts
- Section 4(f) (publicly owned parks, recreation areas, and wildlife and waterfowl refuges and historic sites of national, state or local significance)
- Fish, Wildlife, and Plants (including migratory birds and noxious weeds)
- Floodplains
- Hazardous Materials, Pollution Prevention, and Solid Waste
- Historic, Archaeological, and Cultural Resources
- Light Emissions (Dark Sky)
- Native American Cultural Concerns
- Natural Resources and Energy
- Noise
- Secondary Induced Impacts
- Socioeconomic Impacts, Environmental Justice, Health, and Safety
- Surface Transportation
- Water Quality
- Wetlands
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- Geology and Mining
- Rangeland
- Recreational and other BLM Land Uses
- Visual Impacts
- Wild Horse and Burro
- Wilderness

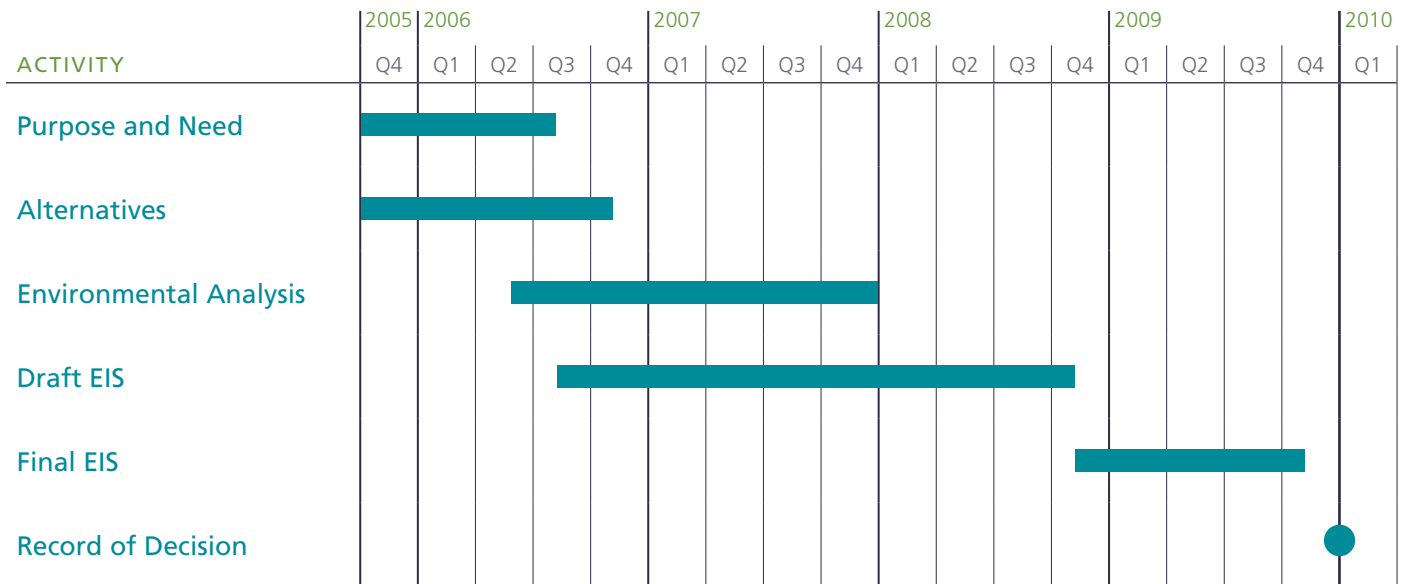
Record of Decision

The Joint Lead Agencies will issue separate Records of Decision (RODs) or a joint ROD no sooner than 30 days after publication of the notice of the Final EIS in the Federal Register. The ROD is a public record of the Joint Lead Agencies’ decision on the Proposed Action. The ROD explains the Joint Lead Agencies’ decisions, how the decisions were made, what alternatives were considered, and what mitigation measures will be imposed to lessen any environmental impacts.

EIS Schedule

The schedule of major milestones for preparation of the EIS is shown below. This schedule was developed based on what the Joint Lead Agencies believe to be reasonable at this time. As scoping comments are received and more information on the affected environment is developed, the schedule may be revised accordingly.

Schedule of Major Milestones



Public Participation

Public Participation is an essential part of the EIS process. It is a forum for information exchange between the Joint Lead Agencies and interested parties. Public involvement programs provide the public an opportunity for continuous involvement and reasonable access to information about the Proposed Action, alternatives, and their environmental impacts, as well as an opportunity for the Joint Lead Agencies to solicit input and consider issues most important to the public. The information gathered influences decisions made during preparation of an EIS. Public Participation is initiated through scoping, public hearings, public meetings, newsletters, and an information website.

Scoping

Scoping is an early, open, and on-going process used to determine the range of alternatives, issues, and impacts that the EIS will address. The process includes the general public, appropriate federal, state, regional, and local agencies and officials, and Native American tribes. Scoping provides the opportunity for agencies, officials, the public, and Native American tribes to present additional background and technical information, as well as to make any comments on the Proposed Action, alternatives to be considered, and impacts to be evaluated.

Scoping meetings for the general public are scheduled on:

- ▶ **October 3, 2006** from 5 PM to 8 PM
at the Jean Airport Special Events Center, Jean, NV.
- ▶ **October 4, 2006** from 5 PM to 8 PM
at the Panos Hall (located behind St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church), 5300 South El Camino Road, Las Vegas, NV.
- ▶ **October 5, 2006** from 10 AM to 12 Noon
at the Panos Hall (located behind St. John the Baptist Greek Orthodox Church), 5300 South El Camino Road, Las Vegas, NV.

These meetings will involve interaction with the EIS team members, a short presentation about the Proposed Action and the EIS process, and the opportunity to provide comments to the Joint Lead Agencies. The format and content of each of the three public meetings will be the same.

Agency scoping meetings and meetings for Native American tribes will be held separately.

A Scoping Comment Form is enclosed with this package and may also be downloaded from the project website at www.snvairste.com. Comments may be submitted at the scoping meetings or may be submitted to the following, postmarked by November 6, 2006:

**Federal Aviation Administration &
Bureau of Land Management**
c/o VHB
101 Walnut Street
P.O. Box 9151
Watertown, MA 02471-9151

via email to:

snvairste@vhb.com

or online to:

www.snvairste.com

Upon completion of the scoping meetings, a Scoping Process Report will be prepared. This report will document the issues raised during the comment period. It will be distributed to those appearing on the distribution list at the end of this document. The report will also be available on the project website www.snvairste.com.

Public Hearing and Comment Period on the Draft EIS

A public hearing on the Draft EIS will be held in the study area to provide an opportunity for the public to comment on the content of the Draft EIS. A Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS, as well as a notice of the comment period and hearing, will be published in the Federal Register, as well as in an area-wide or local newspaper 30 days before the hearing. The hearing information will also be publicized in other local media.

Public Meetings

Public meetings may be held at key milestones during the preparation of the EIS. The meetings may include technical presentations of information and analyses, opportunities to discuss issues with the Joint Lead Agencies, and opportunities to comment on the information presented.

Newsletters

Newsletters may be developed and distributed at key points during preparation of the EIS and will contain information about the EIS. The newsletters may provide brief summaries of progress of the EIS, as well as information on upcoming meetings and particular issues or analyses of concern. The first newsletter issued will summarize the results of scoping. To receive this newsletter and future project updates, sign up for the mailing list on the project website at www.snvairste.com.

Website

An EIS information web site (www.snvairporteis.com) will be maintained throughout the development of the EIS. The website currently includes general project information; meeting locations, dates and times; the Scoping Comment Form; the materials presented at meetings; project updates; and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). The web site will be updated regularly to include new information and project documents as they become available for public review.

Agency and Tribal Coordination

As Joint Lead Agencies, the FAA and BLM will prepare the EIS. However, the EIS will be prepared in consultation with federal, state and local agencies, and Native American tribes. Agencies, which have jurisdiction by law, will be invited to be cooperating agencies. The Joint Lead Agencies may also invite agencies to become cooperating agencies if they have special expertise to assist the FAA and BLM in meeting their responsibilities. Native American tribes may also be invited to become cooperating agencies.

Agency scoping meetings and meetings with Native American tribes will be held separately.

The Joint Lead Agencies will coordinate closely with cooperating agencies and other environmental review agencies with regard to technical issues throughout the development of the Draft and Final EIS. Specifically, these agencies will coordinate on:

- ▶ Data collection and analysis methods;
- ▶ Review of impact analysis results; and
- ▶ Measures to mitigate any unavoidable environmental impacts.

Distribution List

United States Senate

Honorable John Ensign
Honorable Harry Reid

United States House of Representatives

Honorable Shelley Berkley
Honorable Jim Gibbons
Honorable Jon Porter

Federal Agencies

National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration
Headquarters

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Headquarters
Sacramento District Office

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Davis CA Regional Office
Forest Service
Headquarters

U.S. Department of Commerce
Headquarters

U.S. Department of Defense
Nellis Air Force Base

U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Headquarters
Pacific Area Office
Transportation Security Administration
Headquarters

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Headquarters
Las Vegas Office

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Headquarters
Red Rock and Sloan Canyon National Recreation Areas
Bureau of Reclamation
Headquarters

National Park Service
Headquarters
Lake Mead National Recreation Area
Mojave National Preserve
Pacific West Region

U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs
Southern Paiute Field Office, Western Region

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
California/Nevada Operations Office
Headquarters
Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office

U.S. Geological Survey
Headquarters

U.S. Department of Transportation, Headquarters
Federal Highway Administration
California Division
Headquarters
Nevada Division

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Headquarters
Region 9

Federally Recognized Indian Tribal Entities

Chemehuevi Indian Tribe
Colorado River Indian Tribe
Fort Mojave Indian Tribe
Hualapai Tribal Council
Kaibab Paiute Tribe
Las Vegas Paiute Tribe
Moapa Band of Paiutes
Pahrump Paiute Tribe
Paiute Indian Tribe of Utah
Cedar Band
Indian Peaks Band
Kanosh Band
Koosharem Band
Shivwits Band
Torres-Martinez Cahuilla Indians
Twenty-Nine Palms Band of Mission Indians

State of Nevada - Elected Officials

Governor Kenny Quinn

State Senate

Senator Bob Beers
Senator Terry Care
Senator Barbara Cegavske
Senator Maggie Carlton
Senator Bob Coffin
Senator Warren Hardy
Senator Joe Heck
Senator Steven Horsford
Senator John Lee
Senator Dennis Nolan
Senator Michael Schneider
Senator Sandra Tiffany
Senator Dina Titus
Senator Valerie Wiener

State Representatives

Assemblywoman Francis Allen
Assemblyman Morse Arberry Jr.
Assemblyman Kelvin Atkinson
Assemblywoman Barbara Buckley
Assemblyman Chad Christensen
Assemblyman Jerry Claborn
Assemblyman Marcus Conklin
Assemblyman Mo Denis
Assemblywoman Susan Gerhardt
Assemblywoman Chris Giunchigliani
Assemblyman Joe Hardy
Assemblyman Joseph Hogan
Assemblyman William Horne
Assemblywoman Marilyn Kirkpatrick
Assemblywoman Ellen Koivisto
Assemblyman Garn Mabey

Assemblyman Mark Manendo
Assemblywoman Kathy McClain
Assemblyman Bob McCleary
Assemblyman Harry Mortenson
Assemblyman Harvey Munford
Assemblyman John Ocegvera
Assemblywoman Genie Ohrenschaal
Assemblyman David Parks
Assemblyman Richard Perkins
Assemblywoman Peggy Pierce
Assemblyman Bob Seale
Assemblyman Scott Sibley
Assemblywoman Valerie Weber

State Agencies

Nevada Department of Agriculture
Nevada Department of Conservation
and Natural Resources
Division of State Lands
Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs
State Historic Preservation Office
Nevada Department of Transportation
Nevada Department of Wildlife
Southern Region
Nevada Division of Forestry
Southwest Region
Nevada State Clearinghouse
Department of Administration
Nevada State Health Division

Regional Agencies

Las Vegas Valley Water District
Southern Nevada Water Authority

County Agencies

Clark County Administrative Services
Clark County Assessor
Clark County Assistant County Managers
Clark County Board of Commissioners
Clark County Business License
Clark County Department of Air Quality
and Environmental Management
Clark County Department of
Comprehensive Planning
Clark County Department of
Public Communication
Clark County Development Services Department
Clark County Finance Department
Clark County Fire Department
Clark County Manager
Clark County Office of Diversity
Clark County Office of Emergency Management
Clark County Office of Intergovernmental Relations
Clark County Parks and Recreation Department
Clark County Public Works Department
Clark County Real Property Management
Department
Clark County Redevelopment Agency

Clark County Regional Flood Control District
Clark County Regional Transportation Commission
Clark County Water Reclamation District
Metropolitan Police Department
Town and Liaison Services

Local Governments

Las Vegas, NV
Mayor Oscar Goodman
City Councilors
City Manager
Deputy City Managers

North Las Vegas, NV
Mayor Michael Montandon
City Councilors
City Manager
Assistant City Managers

Boulder City, NV
Mayor Robert Ferraro
City Councilors
City Manager

Henderson, NV
Mayor Jim Gibson
City Councilors
City Manager
Assistant City Managers

For additional information contact:

Andrew Richards, Manager
Federal Aviation Administration
San Francisco Airports District Office
831 Mitten Road, Room 210
Burlingame, CA 94010
Email: snvairporteis@vhb.com

Jeffrey Steinmetz, Lead Planning and
Environmental Coordinator
Bureau of Land Management
Las Vegas Field Office
4701 North Torrey Pines Drive
Las Vegas, NV 89130
Email: snvairporteis@vhb.com

