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# Appendix F: Public Participation



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## APPENDIX F PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

This appendix includes information about the public's participation in the development of the Fallon Range Training Complex (FRTC) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This appendix summarizes the public scoping process that began with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) in the *Federal Register* in May 2013. The scoping period allowed a variety of opportunities for the public to comment on the scope of the EIS, and included two public scoping meetings. This appendix also summarizes the public participation in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process through the publication of the Draft EIS.

### F.1 PROJECT WEBSITE

A public website was established specifically for this project (<http://www.FRTCEIS.com/>) and went active on May 24, 2013. This website address was published in the initial NOI and has subsequently been reprinted in all newspaper advertisements, agency letters, and public postcards for both the NOI to Prepare an EIS and Notice of Availability of the Draft EIS. Scoping meeting fact sheets, posters, brochures, and various other materials have been available on the project website throughout the course of the project.

### F.2 GENERAL SUMMARY OF THE SCOPING PERIOD

The scoping period for the FRTC EIS began with the publication of a NOI in the Federal Register on May 24, 2013. The scoping period began on this date and concluded on July 8, 2013. The United States (U.S.) Department of the Navy (Navy) held four scoping meetings in Nevada, from June 10 through 13, 2013, for the FRTC EIS. The purpose of the meetings was to actively involve the public and other agencies in identifying the environmental issues to be addressed in the Draft EIS as well as other potential alternatives to accomplish the purpose and need. Efforts to notify the public, media, federally recognized tribes, government agencies, and elected officials about the scoping meetings were conducted in accordance with the Navy's *Public Involvement Plan* for the FRTC EIS.

#### F.2.1 PUBLIC SCOPING NOTIFICATION

The Navy made significant efforts at notifying the public to ensure maximum public participation during the scoping process. A summary of these efforts follows.

##### F.2.1.1 Federal Register Notice

On May 24, 2013, the Navy published a NOI/Notice of Public Scoping Meetings in the Federal Register, which announced the intent to prepare a Draft EIS to evaluate potential environmental effects associated with current and proposed military readiness activities at FRTC; the proposed action and alternatives; and the dates, locations, and times of the scoping meetings.

##### F.2.1.2 Tribal Letters

A personalized tribal notification letter was mailed to eight federally recognized tribes on May 23, 2013. This letter served to inform the tribes that the Navy was preparing an EIS, provide detailed information about the proposed action, and request input regarding concerns or comments.

##### F.2.1.3 Notification Letters

A personalized agency notification letter was mailed to 109 federal, state, and local elected officials and government agencies on May 23, 2013. This letter provided detailed information about the proposed action, the scoping process and the dates, locations, and times of the scoping meetings. Information for submitting comments was also provided.

### F.2.1.4 Advertisements

A project display advertisement was published in three series in the Lahontan Valley News, *Nevada Appeal*, *Reno Gazette-Journal*, and *Battle Mountain Bugle*. As listed in Table F.2-1 below, the first series ran concurrent with availability of the NOI in the Federal Register on May 24, 2013. The series ran for 3 consecutive days in the daily newspapers and for fewer days in the weekly newspapers. The second series of advertisements was published 5–10 days prior to the open house information sessions. The third series was published 3 consecutive days (for weekly papers) prior to the information sessions, with one advertisement appearing on the day of the first information session.

**Table F.2-1: Newspaper Display Advertisements Schedule**

COVERAGE AREA	NEWSPAPER	DATES OF ADVERTISEMENT
Fallon, Fernley, Lahontan Valley and Highway 54 corridor, NV (Nevada)	<i>Lahontan Valley News</i> (twice-weekly – Wednesday, Friday)	Friday, May 24, 2013 Wednesday, May 29, 2013 Friday, May 31, 2013 Wednesday, June 5, 2013 Friday, June 7, 2013
Reno, Carson, NV	<i>Nevada Appeal</i> (daily – Tuesday–Sunday)	Friday, May 24, 2013 Saturday, May 25, 2013 Sunday, May 26, 2013 Wednesday, June 5, 2013 Friday, June 7, 2013 Saturday, June 8, 2013 Sunday, June 9, 2013
Reno, Sparks, Spanish Springs, Fernley, Dayton, Yerington, NV	<i>Reno Gazette-Journal</i> (daily)	Friday, May 24, 2013 Saturday, May 25, 2013 Sunday, May 26, 2013 Wednesday, June 5, 2013 Saturday, June 8, 2013 Sunday, June 9, 2013 Monday, June 10, 2013
Battle Mountain, NV	<i>Battle Mountain Bugle</i> (weekly – Wednesday)	Wednesday, May 29, 2013 Wednesday, June 5, 2013

### F.2.1.5 Press Releases

Two news releases were distributed by the Naval Air Station (NAS) Fallon Public Affairs Officer to local and regional media outlets. The NOI press release was distributed on May 24, 2013 and announced the intent to prepare an EIS. The Notice of Scoping Meetings press release was distributed on June 11, 2013, and emphasized the scoping process. The NOI and Notice of Scoping Meetings press releases included details on the proposed action, scoping meeting dates, locations, times, and comment information.

### F.2.1.6 Postcard Mailer

A postcard mailer announcing the preparation of an EIS, proposed action, comment information, project website, and the scoping meeting dates, locations, and times, was sent out to 143 individuals on the project mailing list on May 23, 2013.

## F.2.2 SCOPING MEETINGS

Four public meetings were conducted in an informal open house format where members of the public could arrive at any time during the 2-hour event. There were no formal presentations or oral comment sessions. The locations, dates, and times of the meetings are listed in Table F.2-2.

**Table F.2-2: Scoping Meeting Locations**

MEETING LOCATION	VENUE	DATE	TIME
Fallon, Nevada (NV)	Churchill County Commission Chambers	June 10, 2013	5 to 7 p.m.
Crescent Valley, NV	Crescent Valley Town Office Boardroom	June 11, 2013	5 to 7 p.m.
Gabbs, NV	Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3677	June 12, 2013	5 to 7 p.m.
Austin, NV	Emma Nevada Town Hall	June 13, 2013	5 to 7 p.m.

Staffers at the welcome station greeted guests and encouraged meeting attendees to sign in to receive project information and future notifications, and to identify how they learned about the scheduled information session. A fact sheet booklet and comment forms were distributed to attendees, and verbal direction was provided on the format of the meeting and the organization and flow of the poster stations.

The fact sheet booklet included the following topics: (1) an introduction to the Fallon Range Training Complex, (2) military readiness activities at the Fallon Range Training Complex, (3) the Proposed Action and alternatives, (4) environmental resources to be analyzed, (5) natural and cultural resources, (6) public safety and access, and (7) the NEPA process and community involvement.

Poster stations were set up around the room offering visual displays, fact sheet booklets, and comment forms. Posters covered the following topics: (1) welcome and sign-in, (2) importance of the Navy mission and training at the Fallon Range Training Complex, (3) Study Area, (4) Proposed Action and alternatives, (5) environmental resources to be analyzed, (6) cultural resources, (7) natural resources, (8) public safety and access, and (9) NEPA process and community involvement. Navy and contractor subject matter experts staffed each poster station to answer questions and provide project information.

A comment station, which included tables, chairs, pens, comment forms, and a digital voice recorder for oral comments, was also provided to facilitate the submission of public comments. Attendees were encouraged to provide comments for consideration in the development of the Draft EIS. Individuals could submit comments at the meetings, mail them to the address provided, or submit them online at [www.FRTCEIS.com](http://www.FRTCEIS.com).

### **F.2.2.1 Attendance**

Guests were encouraged to sign in at the welcome table. The information below reflects the number of guests who chose to sign in at the welcome table. Media attendance reflects the number of persons who identified themselves as media. In total, 34 people signed in at the welcome table.

- Eight (8) people signed the attendance sheet at the Fallon meeting. Federal, local, and tribal government representation included: Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, City of Fallon, Churchill County, and Nevada State Health Division.
- Nine (9) people signed the attendance sheet at the Crescent Valley meeting. Federal, local, and tribal government representation included: Crescent Valley Town Advisory Board and the Eureka County Sheriff's Office.
- Eleven (11) people signed the attendance sheet at the Gabbs meeting. There was no Federal, local, or tribal government representation at this meeting.
- Six (6) people signed the attendance sheet at the Austin meeting. Federal, local, and tribal government representation included the Austin County Commission.

### **F.2.2.2 Public Scoping Comments**

During the FRTC scoping period, public and agency comments were submitted via mail, website, and e-mail. A total of eight (8) written comments were received during the public comment period from May 24, 2013 through July 8, 2013. Four (4) written comments were submitted at the information sessions, one (1) comment was submitted via the project website, two (2) comments were submitted via e-mail, and one (1) comment was submitted by mail.

Issues and questions submitted at the information sessions or during the comment period (not prioritized) include:

- Noise
- Sonic booms
- Notification of activities, including supersonic areas
- General support for the proposed action
- Flood water mitigation
- Unmanned Autonomous Systems
- Sage grouse and impacts of sonic booms