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Air Force proposed Area 51 takeover

From: campbell@ufomind.com (Glenn Campbell, Las Vegas)

Date: Mon, 9 Nov 1998 14:16:52 -0800

Re: <http://www.ufomind.com/misc/1998/nov/d05-002.shtml>

In an earlier message, Norio Hayakawa suggested that we attend the current hearings on the renewal of the Nellis Air Force Range to protest abuses at Area 51. I replied that this would be futile, since the Nellis Range surrounds but does not include Area 51.

I now stand corrected. Although Area 51 is not part of the current Nellis range, the Air Force is proposing that it be added. In its recently released Environmental Impact Statement, the Air Force proposes taking over the land as part of the Nellis Range beginning in 2001.

Steve Hauser" <steve_hauser@hotmail.com> writes:

You talk about the PLO 1662 (Area 51) land as perhaps being some covert component of the NAFR renewal process. The truth is the USAF's efforts in this are surprisingly overt.

In the draft LEIS (DLEIS) for NAFR under alternatives 1B and 2B control of the PLO 1662 land would be transferred from DOE to USAF. The DLEIS refers to this as "administrative realignment." Similarly, Pahute Mesa would be "administratively realigned" such that DOE would be the controlling agency.

This provides the opportunity for the skillful orator at public hearings or drafter of comments to the DLEIS to link Area 51 to the PLO 1662 land transfer and NAFR renewal.

This note prompted me to take a look at the huge environmental document (DLEIS), which I was previously using as a doorstop. Steve is correct. The proposal is stealthy. The Air Force refers to Area 51 only by the act that withdrew it (PLO 1662).

Area 51 currently occupies a sort of no man's land. It appears on most maps as part of the Nevada Test Site, and technically it still belongs to the Department of Energy. The Department of Energy now says the land is controlled by the Air Force, while the Air Force acknowledges that it does have facilities there (without saying what they are). The proposed change would formalize this de facto status.

I can't say whether the change is good or bad, but the environmental process could yield some new information on the base.

The 6 by 10 mile block of land once labelled Area 51 was originally withdrawn from public use in 1958 with Public Land Order 1662 (PLO 1662), which you can read at:

http://www.ufomind.com/area51/events/range_renewal/plo_1662.html

In the current process, the Air Force will be asking Congress to renew its lease on the much larger Nellis Range, which borders Area 51 on three sides. It is also proposing (as Alternatives 1B and 2B) that Area 51 be absorbed into the Nellis Range.

Before the issue is sent to Congress, there is a drawn-out series of environmental hearings and assessments, in which ordinary citizens can present their environmental concerns. The whole process results in reams of paperwork, which is presented to Congress. Congress is then free to ignore it and do whatever it wants.

The Air Force is currently conducting a series of public hearings in Nevada, requesting input on its recently released environmental document. Traditionally, Air Force personnel at these meetings outnumber interested citizens by about 3 to 1, and the last series of meetings was very heavy on the brass. If you are interested in military affairs or operations on the Nellis Range, this is a good opportunity to meet the commanders and ask them questions. They also usually have some free stuff, like aircraft posters, maps and maybe refreshments.

To make any impact on the process, you have to understand it, and there aren't many people who do. You could stand up and rail against the New World Order, as some people did at the Freedom Ridge hearings, but it won't accomplish anything unless you can link your complaint to a specific environmental concern.

Perhaps the largest hearing will be held in Las Vegas this Wednesday (Nov. 10) at the El Dorado High School, starting at 6:30 pm. (Also in Reno on Nov. 17 and Pahrump on Nov. 12.) In my opinion, it is not worth attending unless you have a genuine interest in military land use.

The Draft EIS document, the size of a couple of large telephone books, is available free from Nellis Air Force Base by contacting the public affairs office. The comment period on the document ends on Dec. 31.

For more info, see <http://www.nellis.af.mil/range/renewal/index.htm>

Glenn

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RELEVANCE OF THIS MESSAGE: Area 51

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