



**PROTECTING PRECIOUS RESOURCES:
Tule Springs North Unit Fencing Project**

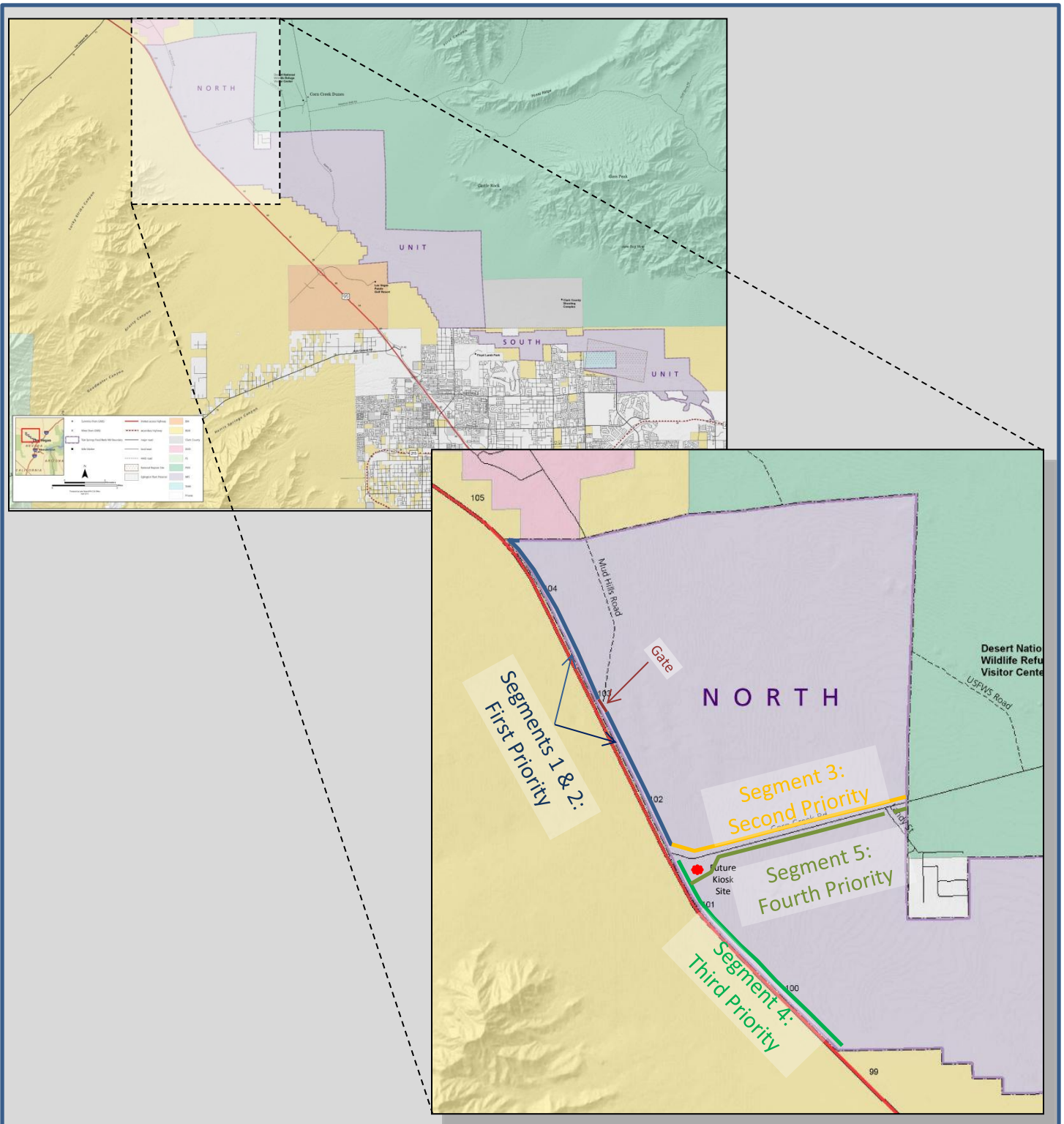


The North Unit of Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument contains an abundance of rich resources that can provide a key future visitor recreational experience. Wandering through the high, chalky canyons of the Las Vegas Wash, visitors will be exposed to 200,000 years of geologic history within a few miles of the world-class tourist mecca that is the Las Vegas Valley.

The area, however, will take concerted effort to make it safer for visitors. For years, the area was open to off-road vehicles and used heavily by target shooters. These activities are not allowed under the laws Congress has passed for the National Park Service. The shooters have left significant trash and will require an intensive cleanup effort. Acre upon acre is littered with spent cartridges, dumped and shot up appliances, and glass.

The National Park Service has spent two years contacting shooters at the site and informing them of the change in management, which closes the area to shooting and off-roading. Additionally, we have provided directions to alternative locations where shooting on public lands remains legal and to the Clark County Shooting Range. These efforts have yielded some success, but to help us truly protect the resources, clean up the trash and make it safer for visitors, we propose fencing the area to eliminate or greatly reduce unauthorized off-roading and target shooting.

LOCATION OF FENCING PROJECT



The segments are categorized in four priority areas. Segments 1 and 2 parallel US-95 north of Corn Creek Road and would include desert tortoise fencing along the bottom of the fence line. These two segments are separated by a gate that the National Park Service will install that will allow authorized vehicle access to the area. For additional information about the segments, see below.

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CURRENT CONDITION OF THE MUD HILLS AREA

The area of Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument north of Corn Creek Road is approximately 4,000 acres. The area includes high wash walls and side washes that have provided backstops for shooters for decades. Unfortunately, in addition to the significant amount of lead from bullets, the shooters have left significant debris including ammunition casings and target trash. Old televisions, furniture, boxes, bottles, propane tanks, and various other types of trash blanket much of the area. This activity has not only left a serious cleanup but has also proven to be dangerous for shooters. In addition to a March 2014 death from a ricochet off of trash, there have been several accidental shooting injuries in the area.



The cleanup of the area will be a significant undertaking. In addition to cartridges (upper left), the area contains shot up televisions (lower left) and furniture (right). Fencing will help eliminate or reduce unauthorized shooting, making the area safer for cleanup crews.

Steps to clean up the area will include ongoing education to shooters, providing alternate shooting areas, signage and fencing. This area, once cleaned up, will provide a memorable area for park visitors and will allow paleontologists to study a largely untouched area for studying the remains of Pleistocene fossils within this section of the Las Vegas Wash.

Fencing Segment Descriptions

First Priority: Segments 1 and 2

Segment 1A runs west from the existing fence at the Nellis Range (U.S. Air Force) on the northern boundary of Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument for approximately 1,980 linear feet. This type of fencing can either be post and cable or wire fencing.

Segment 1B runs southeast from the western end of Segment 1A for approximately 6,600 linear feet along US-95. This segment of the fence may see significant vandalism that will make maintenance of lower quality fences extremely difficult and expensive. The preferred fencing type is post and cable for this segment. Post and cable is expensive but highly durable and very difficult for vandals to destroy to gain access to the site. The post is creosoted which is naturally long lasting in the desert environment and is difficult to cut. The cable is very resistant (in comparison to wire fencing) to cutting with a bolt cutter. Due to the rigid nature of this fencing this is the preferred material and matches the fencing in the South Unit that essentially ended most off-road vehicle use and dumping in that area. This segment ends in a gate that the National Park Service will install to allow authorized access to the Mud Hills Road, which will allow vehicles to enter for the removal of the significant shooting debris in that area.

Segment 2 starts at the future Mud Hills Gate and runs for approximately 5,280 linear feet along US-95. For the reasons articulated in Segment 1, the preferred fencing material for this segment is also post and cable. Segments 1 and 2 need to be completed at the same time to guarantee that additional unwanted roads are not blazed across the healthy desert to access the former shooting areas. This segment ends at the Corn Creek Road.

Second Priority: Segment 3

Segment 3 starts at the south end of Segment 2 and runs east for approximately 10,560 linear feet to join with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service fence at Desert National Wildlife Refuge. This fence can either be post and cable or wire fencing. It is a much more visible area with the traffic that uses the road to access the Desert National Wildlife Refuge visitor center and the community of Corn Creek.

Third Priority: Segment 4

Segment 4 starts on the south side of Corn Creek Road and runs southeast for approximately 9,240 linear feet. The preferred fencing style is post and cable for this section due to the easy access off US-95. It is, however, less likely to be vandalized than Segments 1 and 2 as the area does not have as strong of a history of off-road vehicles and target shooting.

Fourth Priority: Segment 5

Segment 5 starts at the north end of Segment 4 and runs east for approximately 10,560 linear feet to join with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service fence at Desert National Wildlife Refuge with a break in the fence for the Corn Creek community. This fence can either be post and cable or wire fencing. It is a much more visible area with the traffic that uses the road to access the Desert National Wildlife Refuge visitor center and the community of Corn Creek.



An example of post and cable fencing from the South Unit of Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument