

January 14, 2008

Dear Las Vegas area resident,

The Institute for Social Science Research on Natural Resources and the Ecology Center at Utah State University are conducting a study for the Bureau of Land Management that is focused on future management of the Upper Las Vegas Wash, an undeveloped area located to the north of your neighborhood. As you may already know, rapid growth in Las Vegas and North Las Vegas is creating increased demand for land where additional residential and commercial development might occur. As a result, some public lands surrounding the Upper Las Vegas Wash that currently are managed by the Bureau of Land Management are now being considered for auction to private investors and developers. In making decisions about this situation, the Bureau of Land Management must consider the ecological condition and value of this land area, as well as the ways in which various development options could affect social and economic conditions for local residents and the broader community. The enclosed survey questionnaire is designed to help us, and BLM decision-makers, understand how social and economic conditions in nearby neighborhoods are linked to the landscape and environment that surrounds the Upper Las Vegas Wash. We are especially interested in knowing how you and others living nearby think about and make use of this area.

A scientific sample of residences has been selected from all households located within four miles of the Upper Las Vegas Wash study area, and your household was included in the sample. Every household within the area had an equal chance to be included in the sample. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary, and there are no penalties for choosing not to participate. However, in order for our results to accurately reflect the views of people who live in your neighborhood, we need to hear from as many people as possible. To insure that our sample includes an even mix of men and women, and older as well as younger residents, we ask that this survey be completed by the adult (age 18 or older) living in your household who has had the most recent birthday. The questionnaire should only take about 25-30 minutes to complete.

All of your answers are voluntary, and your responses will remain completely anonymous. Results of this study will be released only as summaries based on grouped data, so that no individual's answers can be identified. The questionnaire booklet has an identification number on it only so that we can remove your name from our mailing list once the questionnaire is returned, and avoid bothering you with additional mailings. Your name or other identifying information will never be placed on the questionnaire, and all mailing address records will be destroyed as soon as we are done sending questionnaires to survey participants. The Utah State University Institutional Review Board has approved this study, and certifies that it presents no significant risks to any participant. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has also approved this research under the Paperwork Reduction Act. United States Code 1a-7 authorizes collection of this information, and the U.S. Department of Interior will use these results to better serve the public.

When you are finished, just place the completed questionnaire in the enclosed postage-paid return envelope, and drop it in the mail. No additional postage is necessary. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Richard Krannich either by telephone (435-797-1241) or by email (Richard.Krannich@usu.edu).

Thank you in advance for your help!

Sincerely,

Richard S. Krannich, PhD
Professor of Sociology and Project Director