



Yuma Proving Ground Highway 95 Addition Withdrawal Application and Legislative Environmental Impact Statement Virtual Public Meeting

The meeting will start at 3 p.m.

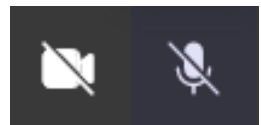
Phone Line: 571-616-7941

Meeting ID: 940 415 367#

Please mute yourself to reduce feedback and background noise.

Use *6 to mute/unmute the phone.

For technical assistance, use Chat box (computer) or *5 (phone).





Virtual Meeting Rules

- ✓ If you have any questions or issues, please let us know in the chat box or press *5 on the phone now.
- ✓ Feel free to enter questions in the chat box anytime.
- ✓ Participants' phone lines and audio will be muted throughout the meeting unless we call on you.
- ✓ Please be respectful and courteous. Any objectionable or rude language will be grounds for removal from the meeting.
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Meeting Purpose

- ✓ **Purpose of today's meeting is for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Department of the Army (Army) Yuma Proving Ground (YPG) to request comments and gather information.**
- ✓ **We welcome your comments and questions and will have subject matter experts available during the Q&A portion.**
- ✓ **Nothing in today's meeting constitutes a promise and/or an agreement.**



Meeting Agenda



- ✓ **Welcome and Introductions**
- ✓ **Meeting Protocol**
- ✓ **Presentation**
- ✓ **Question and Answer**
- ✓ **Closing**





Welcome

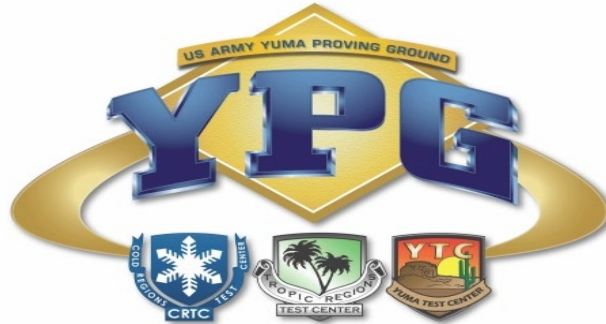


- ✓ **Welcome from Colonel Ben “Patrick” McFall,
Yuma Proving Ground Commander**
- ✓ **Welcome from David “Rem” Hawes,
BLM Yuma Field Office Manager**



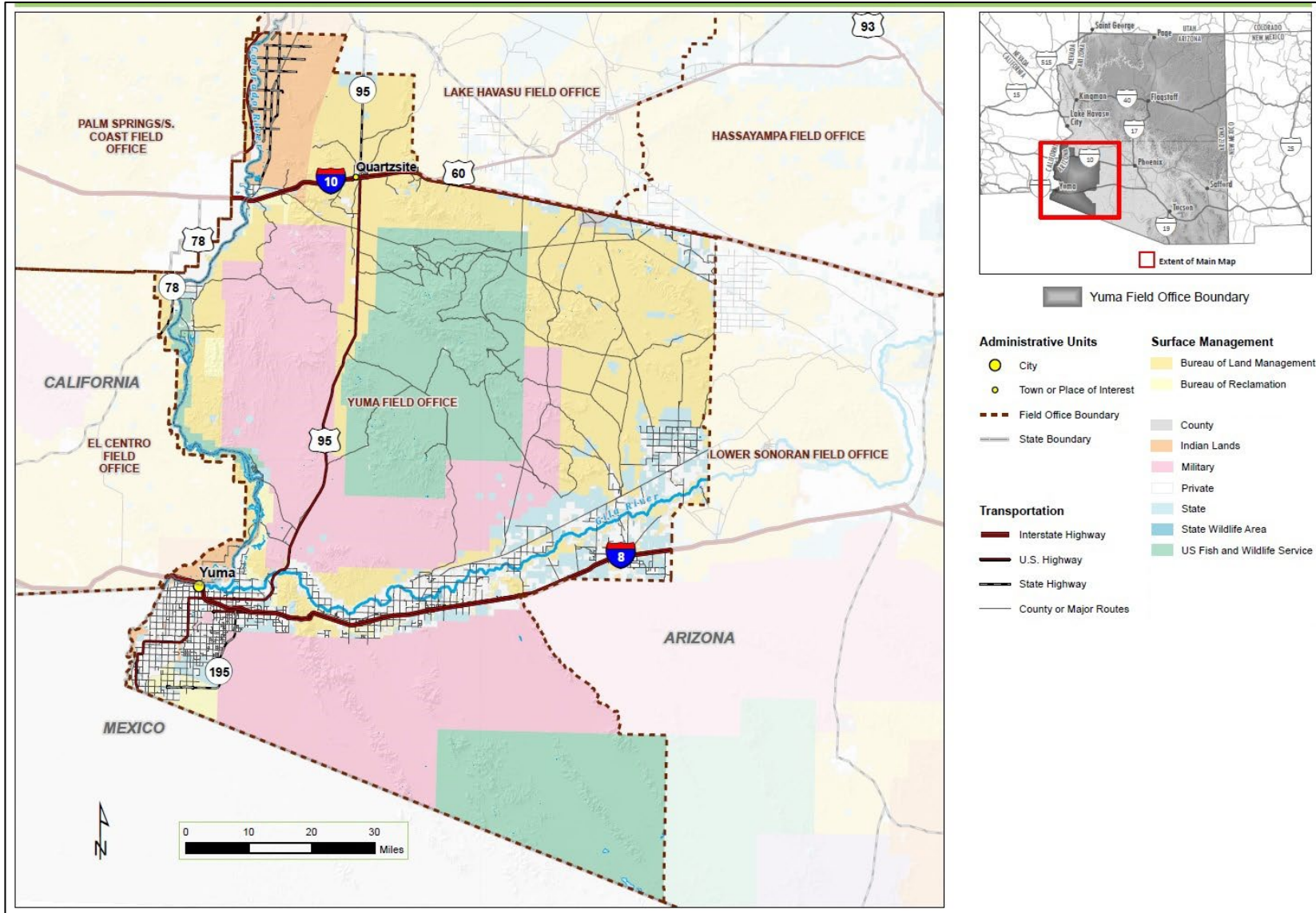
Yuma Proving Ground

Welcome from Colonel McFall, US Army Yuma Proving Ground





Welcome from Rem Hawes, BLM Yuma Field Manager



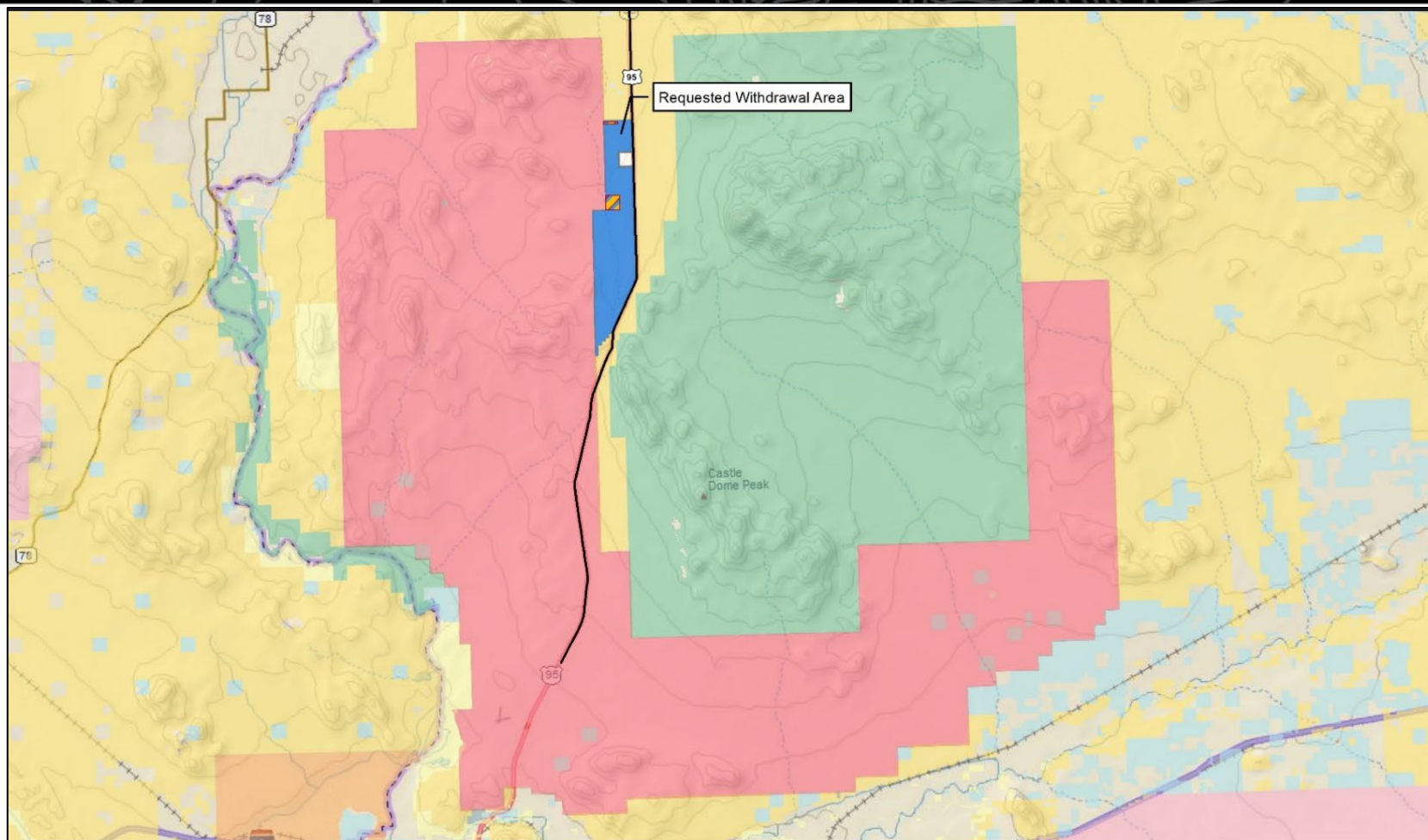


What is a Withdrawal & Why a Public Meeting?

- ✓ Army's 22,000-acre YPG Highway 95 withdrawal application received by BLM.
- ✓ A withdrawal means that, if approved, the requested lands are reserved for use by the Army and would no longer be subject to public land laws and mining-related laws that may allow a use or development, such as a mine, which may interfere with the Army's requested parachute air delivery safety buffer use. A withdrawal is subject to valid existing rights.
- ✓ The Army is requesting a withdrawal for over 5,000 acres, which requires a public meeting.
- ✓ As part of the withdrawal request, the Army is preparing a Legislative Environmental Impact Statement (LEIS), and a public meeting helps in gathering information for the LEIS process.
- ✓ Because of the uncertainty regarding COVID-19 transmission levels, the BLM and the Army decided to hold a virtual public meeting for this requested action.

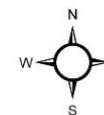


Requested Highway 95 Withdrawal Location



Legend

- Non-Federal Land
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- Surface Only Withdrawal
- US Fish and Wildlife (USFW)
- Requested Withdrawal Area
- YPG

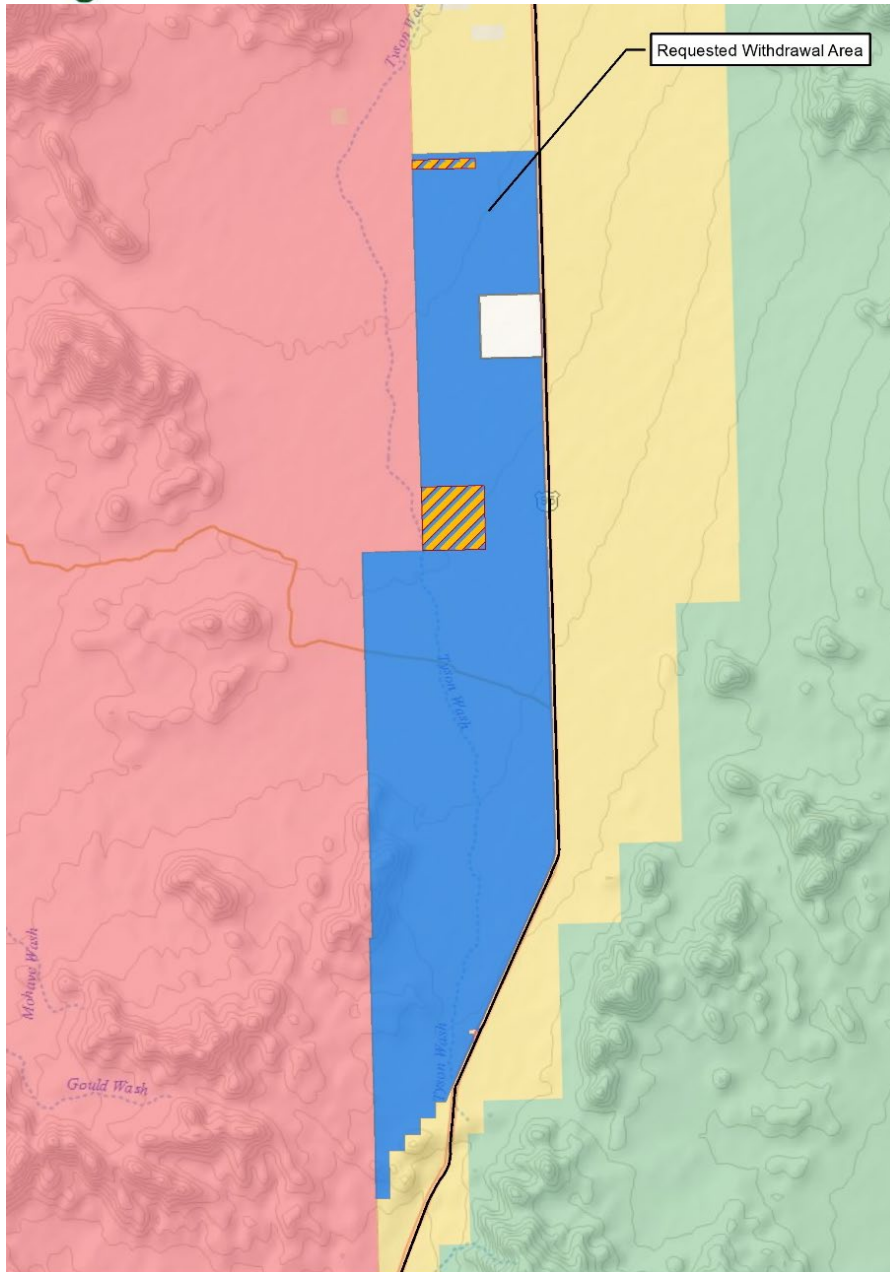


0 4.25 8.5 17 Miles
1:600,000

Date: 4/14/2021



Withdrawal Location



- ✓ Adds approximately 22,000 acres to the 830,000-acre YPG.
- ✓ Runs from approximately Mile Marker 74 to Mile Marker 91 along Highway 95.
- ✓ A nonfederal entity owns the subsurface rights to 800 acres.
- ✓ Additionally, there are 640 acres of private lands that are excluded from the withdrawal area.



- ✓ **YPG needs this additional area as a safety buffer for parachute air delivery testing on existing Drop Zones on YPG.**
- ✓ **Land authorization options include:**
 - ✓ Right-of-way (ROW)
 - ✓ Cooperative agreement
 - ✓ Land withdrawal and reservation.
- ✓ **A ROW or cooperative agreement does not meet the Army's need:**
 - ✓ Would not preclude other uses that may interfere with military testing purposes
 - ✓ Would not allow YPG to control public access with a dynamic testing schedule.



- ✓ **Notice of Application published in the Federal Register initiates public comment period, public meetings, and two-year segregation period (ends April 2024).**
- ✓ **Segregation is from mineral and other entry under the public land laws and mining-related laws, subject to valid existing rights.**
- ✓ **BLM processes Federal land withdrawal per:**
 - ✓ **Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) regulations (43 CFR 2300)**
 - ✓ **The Engle Act of 1958 (43 U.S.C. 155-158)**
- ✓ **LEIS and application case file is presented to Congress. If approved, Congress will enact legislation authorizing the withdrawal and reservation.**



Yuma Proving Ground Legislative Environmental Impact Statement





National Environmental Policy Act

- ✓ **Legislative Environmental Impact Statement (LEIS) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).**
- ✓ **Lead agency: Army.**
- ✓ **Cooperating agency: Bureau of Land Management (BLM).**
- ✓ **Public participation: Native American Tribes; federal, state, and local governments; and members of the public.**
- ✓ **This is the beginning of the process of gathering information to assist in the analysis.**
- ✓ **The LEIS will include proposed and alternative actions.**





Army Withdrawal LEIS Process

- ✓ **Army's application submitted to BLM.**
- ✓ **Army will publish the Notice of Intent in the Federal Register.**
- ✓ **Public comment meetings.**
- ✓ **Army develops LEIS based on comments and affected environment.**
- ✓ **Draft LEIS will be available for public comment.**
- ✓ **Army will incorporate comments and prepare a Final LEIS.**
- ✓ **LEIS and application case file is presented to Congress through BLM.**





LEIS Timeline

Department of the Interior Notice of Withdrawal Application (April 2022) / Army Federal Register Notice of Intent to Prepare LEIS (TBD)

Spring 2022

We are here

Application Public Comment Period (April-July)
LEIS Scoping (TBD)

Summer 2022

Prepare Draft LEIS

Fall/Winter 2022

Army Publish Notice of Availability (NOA)

Summer 2023

Draft LEIS Public Review Period 90 Days

Summer 2023

Prepare Final LEIS

Fall/Winter 2023

NOA for Final LEIS for Public Review

Summer 2024

LEIS and Supporting Reports to BLM

Fall 2024

Congressional Estimated Decision Date

Fall 2026





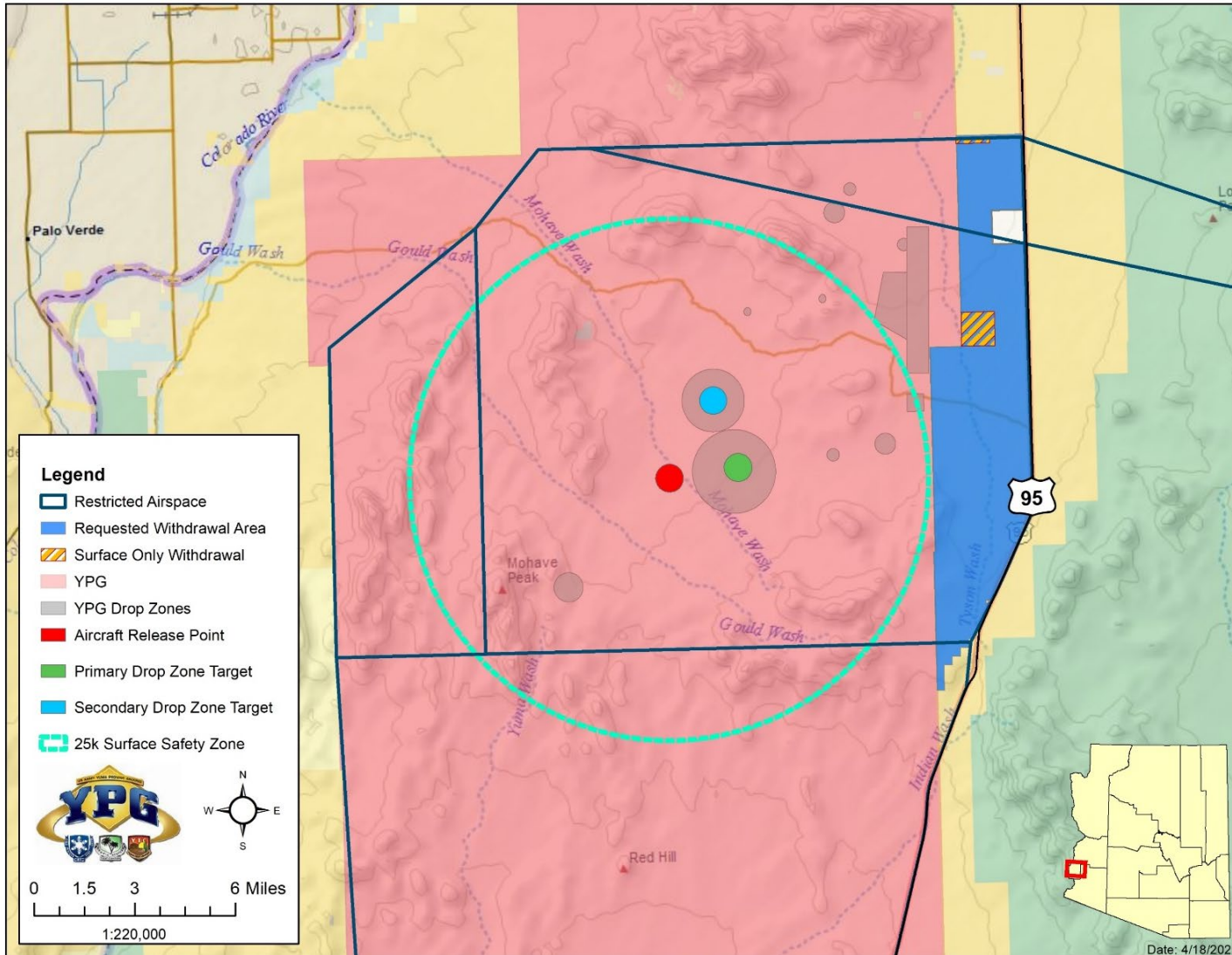
Purpose and Need

- ✓ The withdrawal would provide an *additional safety buffer* to support air delivery testing at higher altitudes on existing Drop Zones within the existing YPG boundary.



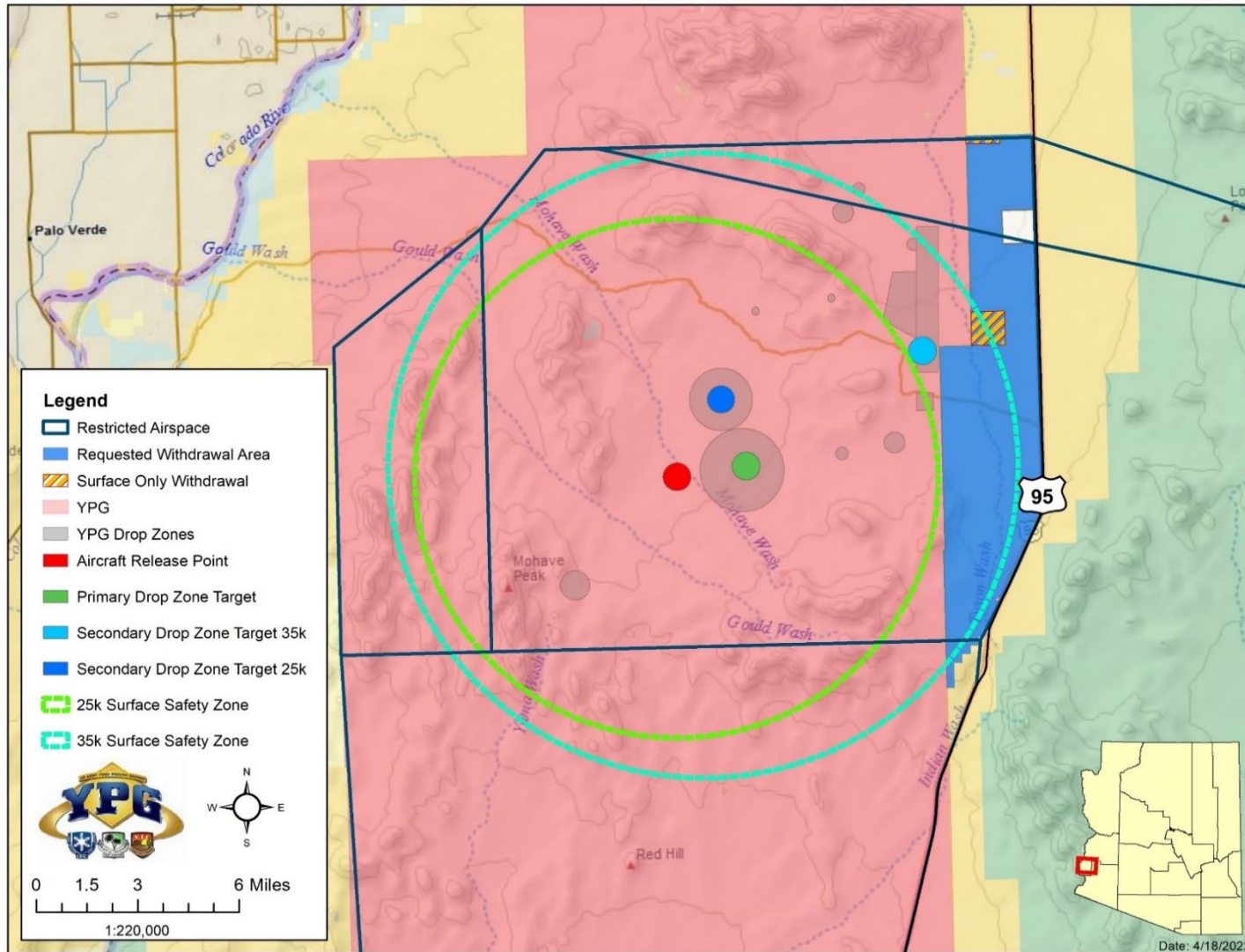


No Action: Current Capability





Proposed Action





Proposed Action



- ✓ **Withdrawal of approximately 22,000 acres of BLM-managed public lands.**
- ✓ **Reserved for military purposes.**
- ✓ **Indefinite period or until there is no longer a military need for the land.**





Preliminary Alternatives

Alternative 1: Withdrawal would be the same as the Proposed Action, but for a defined period (i.e., 25 years).

Extensions would require:

- ✓ BLM processing of the withdrawal application
- ✓ Congressional Approval.

No Action Alternative:

- ✓ Airdrop altitude would not increase.
- ✓ Army would not expand test capability.
- ✓ Does not meet the modern military/YPG Mission requirements.

Other alternatives may be determined based on internal/external scoping.





Preliminary Resources to be Analyzed

- ✓ **Land use, public access, and recreation**
- ✓ **Socioeconomics**
(mining and/or renewable energy development)
- ✓ **Biological resources**
- ✓ **Issues identified during public comment period will be considered and carried forward for analysis if warranted**





- ✓ **Proposed Action would reduce public access and opportunities for mining and/or renewable energy development.**
- ✓ **Current recreational activities (i.e., camping, hiking, target shooting, sightseeing, and photography) would be restricted.**
- ✓ **Hunting could be allowed through the YPG Hunting Program.**





Public Comment and Question and Answer Portion



Instructions:

- ✓ Phone Line: **571-616-7941**, Meeting ID: **940 415 367#**
- ✓ To raise your hand, use ***5** on your phone or the raise hand tool.
- ✓ When called upon, use ***6** to unmute/mute on the phone.
- ✓ Please introduce yourself before stating your comment or question.
- ✓ Each speaker has a 2-minute time limit for questions or comments.
- ✓ Use ***5** to lower your hand after you ask your question.
- ✓ If you have questions during a comment, please use the chat feature.
- ✓ Be respectful and courteous.





How to Comment Effectively



Comments should focus on:

- ✓ Potentially affected resources
- ✓ Uses of these lands
- ✓ Other nearby projects
- ✓ Important public use areas.

BLM Withdrawal Application Comments are due by July 5, 2022:

- ✓ BLM_AZ_Withdrawal_Comments@blm.gov

LEIS Comments will be due by 90 days after the NOI is published:

- ✓ Please email comments to usarmy.ypg.imcom.mbx.nepa@army.mil to be included in the LEIS project record and addressed in the LEIS.



Additional Project Information



For more information check the project website:
<https://ypg-environmental.com/highway-95-land-withdrawal-leis/>

Yuma Proving Ground Contact:
Daniel Steward, (928) 328-2125
usarmy.ypg.imcom.mbx.nepa@army.mil

BLM Contact:
Michael Ouellett, (602) 417-9561.
BLM_AZ-Withdrawal_Comments@blm.gov

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, please be aware that your entire comment – including your personal identifying information – may be made publicly available at any time. While you can request to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that it will not be disclosed.

