

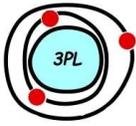
## **Summary of the NASA Land Withdrawal in Railroad Valley, Nevada**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) received notice on April 29, 2021 from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) to withdraw 23,000 acres in Railroad Valley from public use for 20 years. NASA's claimed purpose is to calibrate satellite activities with ground-based light reflection studies, for climate change research.

The NASA Land Withdrawal segregates 36 square miles in the center of Nevada's lithium mining and development core. 3PL Operating Inc. (3PL) has held valid existing placer mining claims in Railroad Valley since 2017, including about one-half of the acreage that the NASA Land Withdrawal removes from public use. Other mining and oil companies are affected as well.

### **The NASA Land Withdrawal neglects five important points that are vital to public debate:**

1. Lithium is a strategic mineral vital to the United States and its extraction is a national priority since 2017, as described in Presidential Executive Order 13817, "A Federal Strategy to Ensure Secure and Reliable Supplies of Critical Minerals." The mining act of 1872 authorizes mining for lithium and other minerals on public land.
2. Railroad Valley is a unique geologic location that hosts one of the largest lithium-bearing complexes in the United States. The conditions that led to the concentration of lithium and other minerals have not been found in other salt flats.
3. Several lithium mining companies are active in Railroad Valley. 3PL in particular has spent millions of dollars in the exploration and development of active mining claims since 2017. A significant portion of 3PL's acreage is directly affected by the NASA Land Withdrawal (Figure 1). This land withdrawal directly jeopardizes 3PL's ability, as well as that of other lithium mining companies, to develop and produce a lithium resource in this unique location.
4. There are at least 41 alternative sites for NASA in other salt flats to conduct surface-based reflection studies. Several of these areas already have been withdrawn from public use, and may be available to NASA.
5. NASA specifically has targeted mining in Railroad Valley, according to their publication "The Ongoing Battle for Railroad Valley" (NASA, 2018), shown in Figure 2. They have erroneously cited evaporation ponds as a threat to the playa, showing their misunderstanding of operations in the valley.



## 3PL OPERATING INC.

### Important details of the new NASA Land Withdrawal order include:

- \* Segregation of the land from public use is effective immediately.
- \* This withdrawal of land from public use will be studied for *up to* two years before Congressional acceptance.
- \* NASA admits they do not know how much land is actually needed. Several thousand acres are available in Railroad Valley that do not interfere with ongoing activities.
- \* Valid existing rights (such as mining claims) within the NASA Land Withdrawal area are recognized, though the future conditions for operating on valid mining claims are unknown.
- \* NASA will hold a one-hour public hearing (virtual) at 11:00 a.m. Eastern time on July 19, 2021. Public comment is requested and the deadline is July 28, 2021.

### What the public can do:

If you have an opinion on the NASA proposed withdrawal of 23,000 acres in Railroad Valley, please send comments, before July 28, 2021, to:

BLM Nevada State Office  
1340 Financial Boulevard  
Reno, NV 89502

Or send email to: [blm\\_nv\\_so\\_nasafrncomments@blm.gov](mailto:blm_nv_so_nasafrncomments@blm.gov)

### For Additional Information:

3PL Operating Website: [www.3PLoperating.com](http://www.3PLoperating.com)

LITHIUM, STRATEGIC MINERALS, and [EXECUTIVE ORDER 13817](#)

[NASA request for Land Withdrawal in Railroad Valley](#)

NASA Options: [Salt Flat Report for NASA – 41 Alternative sites](#)

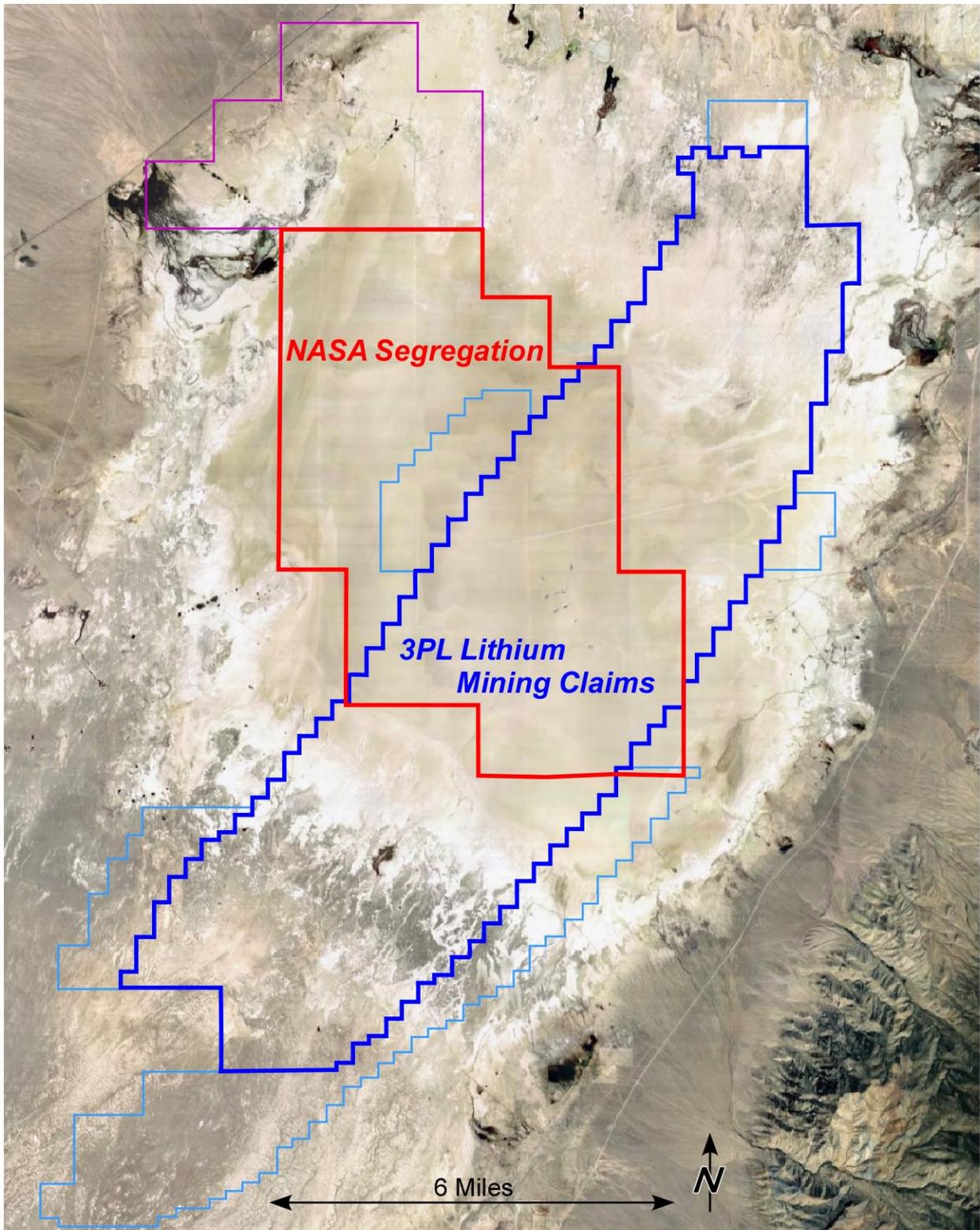


Figure 1. The NASA Segregation area in Railroad Valley is 23,000 acres. 3PL lithium mining claims (dark blue) and other mining claim blocks are shown in light blue and purple. NASA intends to use 5,000 acres, but requests to stop public use in the Segregated area. They currently use 6 acres.

**Excerpts from NASA Report:**

 2018 OCO – GOSAT Technical Interchange Meeting at AGU

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**RRV Report**

OCO-2 Science Team,  
<https://trs.jpl.nasa.gov/bitstream/handle/2014/49556/CL%23187498.pdf?sequence=1>

 **The Ongoing Battle for Railroad Valley**

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**“Problem:** Mining claims threaten to disrupt the playa floor”

**“Objective:** Submit a “Withdrawal” application ... to preclude mining and other activities”

- “The oil industry has explored RRV since the 1980's”
- “A greater threat ... are the recent lithium mining claims”
- “Mining claims filed in 2018 now threaten RRV”

The NASA satellite studies are for calibration of “GOSAT” and “OCO” Satellites. These are for climate studies.

OCO = Orbiting Carbon Observatory.

GOSAT = Greenhouse Gases Observing Satellite.

***NASA Studies CO<sub>2</sub>, but 3PL Eliminates CO<sub>2</sub>***

Figure 2. Excerpts from NASA report.

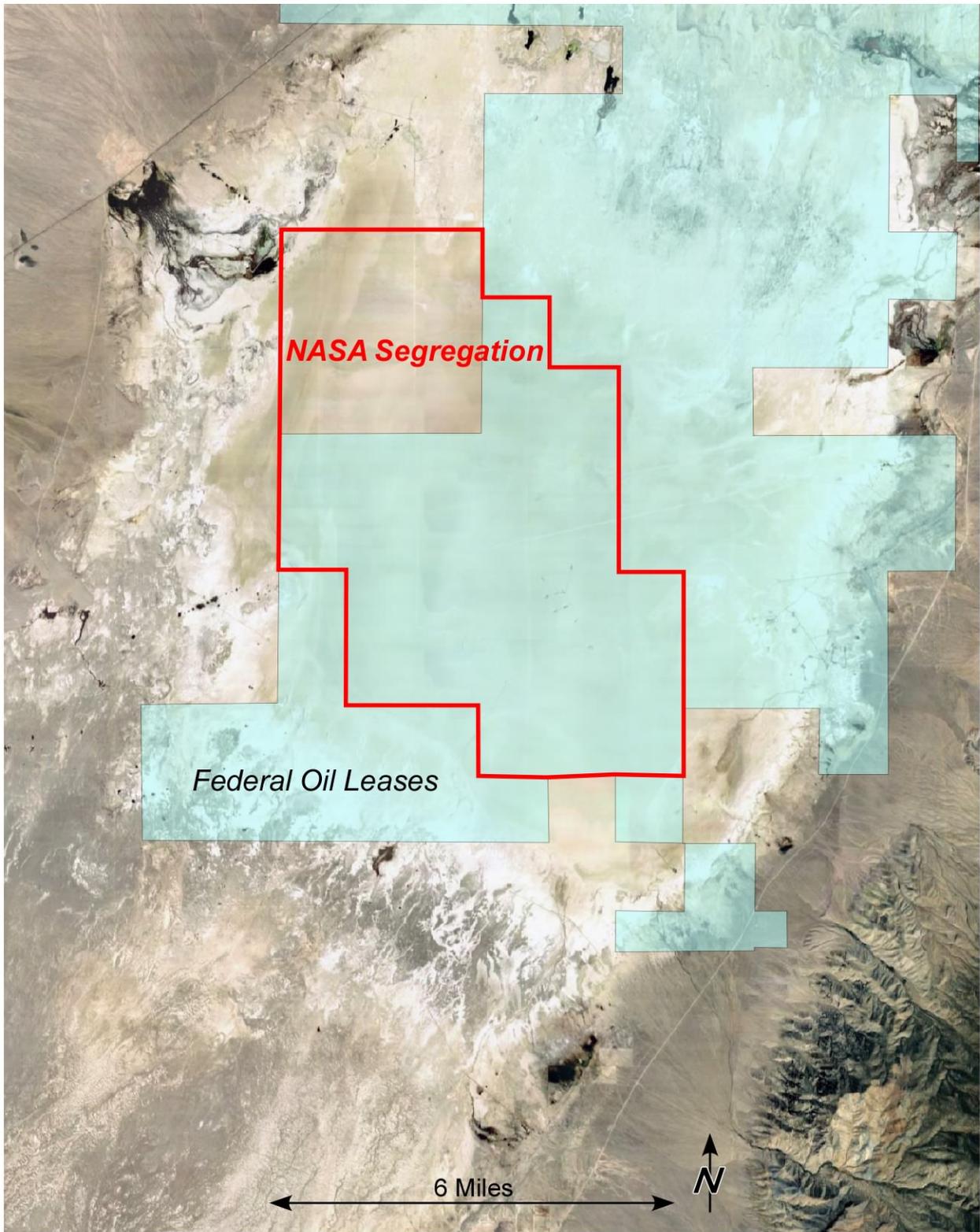


Figure 3. The NASA Segregation Area in Railroad Valley is 23,000 acres. Federal oil leases are shown in light blue. NASA intends to use 5,000 acres.

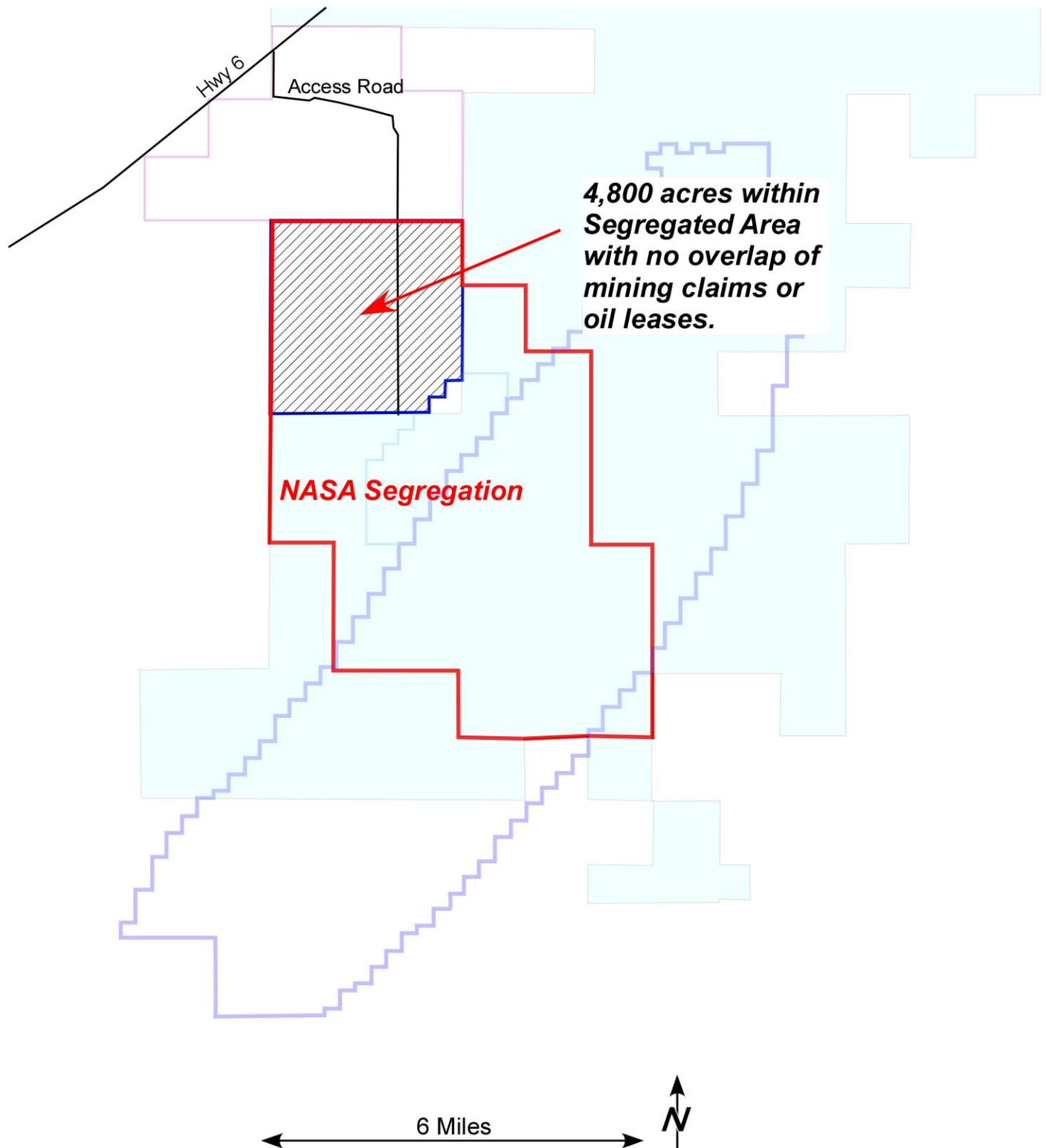


Figure 4. NASA intends to use 5,000 acres. They currently use 6 acres. There are 4,800 acres available that do not overlap with mining claims or oil leases.