Nevada State Specific Professional Land Surveyor Exam
Category Descriptions and Reference Material

Map image courtesy of Nevada Magazine
Following conditional approval for licensure, per Nevada Administrative Code 625.310 (4), the applicant is complete a 2-hour open-book examination on the laws of this State and the procedures for the practice of land surveying in Nevada. A professional land surveying applicant taking this exam will have already passed two different national land surveying exams prior to this exam. This exam will not focus on mathematical computations, except for those relevant in the Public Land Survey System (PLSS) questions. The exam is intended to prepare and evaluate a professional land surveying applicant in the practice of surveying in Nevada.

The exam is multiple choice format and the total number of questions in the exam is 55. A minimum passing grade of 70% is required. Exam results are typically available 2-3 days after the exam via an email notification.

The exam is proctored virtually over webcam from Reno and is available Monday – Friday (non-holiday) at 10am PST/PDT.

For information, contact board@boe.state.nv.us or 775.688.1231
## Nevada State Specific Professional Land Surveyor Exam Specifications

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55 Total Exam Questions
Specifications

Standards of Practice & Licensing

Quoted from NRS 625.005 “The Purpose of this chapter is to safeguard life, health and property and to promote the public welfare by providing for the licensure of qualified and competent professional engineers and land surveyors.”

Primary references

Links to the statutes and administrative code can be found on the Nevada Board’s website nvbpels.org under the Statutes & Regulations heading.
Specifications

Public Lands Survey System

A complete understanding of the Public Lands Survey System is extremely important in Nevada. Having knowledge of the subdivision of standard and fractional sections, how to survey against a Township Line or Range Line, how to deal with meander corners and closing corners and knowing the significance of which Manual of Survey Instruction is being retraced, are all important to know thoroughly.

**Primary reference**

The primary reference is the Bureau of Land Management – 2009 Manual of Surveying Instruction. A PDF copy of the manual can be sourced by searching the blm.gov website.

**Secondary reference**

A secondary reference is The Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 – As Amended, which can be downloaded from the Laws and Regulations section of blm.gov website.
Specifications

**Subdivision Law**

Since a map is commonly considered the graphic result of a field survey, NRS 278 is of paramount importance. The various types of recorded maps are thoroughly detailed, along with necessary components thereof. The subdividing of parcels of land necessitates the creation, approval, and recordation of a map for ownership transfers to occur. This means a solid, complete comprehension of this chapter is essential.

**Primary reference**

The primary reference is *Nevada Revised Statutes Chapter 278 – Planning and Zoning*. A link to NRS 278 can be found at the Nevada Legislature website [leg.state.nv.us](http://leg.state.nv.us) by searching the Law Library – Nevada Revised Statutes section.
Specifications

Mining Law

Land surveying activities related to mining claims will most likely be some type of location survey. Whether locating a new mining claim or retracing older mining claims, a land surveyor in Nevada should be familiar with where the mining claim information is kept and the different options available to gather all data to assist with an accurate survey. The rights for a mining claim could come from local customs or rules in a particular mining district, the Mining Act of 1866, the Mining Act of 1872 or a variety of other sources.

Primary references

The primary references for mining law are Nevada Revised Statutes Chapter 517 - Mining Claims, Mill Sites and Tunnel Rights, Nevada Administrative Code Chapter 517 – Mining Claims. Links to the statutes and administrative code can be found at the Nevada Legislature website leg.state.nv.us by searching the Law Library Revised Statutes and Administrative Code sections.

An additional reference of interest is Mining Claim Procedures for Nevada Prospectors and Miners – Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology, Sixth Edition. This publication can be downloaded from the board website or from the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology nbmg.unr.edu website by searching the Special Publications section (the download is free).

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Specifications

Common Interest Communities

Details common-interest communities, to better understand the components. In its most basic form, the differences and similarities between unit ownership and allocated interests, such as common elements, must be understood. The significance of governing documents, and an understanding of the various types of communities, must be clear regarding the survey and mapping exercises. Additionally, an understanding of NRS 116B is necessary to be competent in the surveying and mapping of condominium hotels.

Primary references

The primary references are Nevada Revised Statutes Chapter 116 - Common-Interest Ownership and Nevada Revised Statutes Chapter 116B - Condominium Hotel Act. Links to the statutes can be found at the Nevada Legislature website leg.state.nv.us by searching the Law Library Revised Statutes section.
Specifications

Water Rights & Water Law

Water is a precious resource in Nevada. Understanding the eligibility and processes of water surveying is important.

Primary references

The primary reference for this category is Nevada Revised Statute Chapter 533 - Adjudication Of Vested Water Rights. A link to the statute can be found at the Nevada Legislature website leg.state.nv.us by searching the Law Library Revised Statutes sections.
Specifications

Nevada State Boundary

A good understanding of the overall Nevada State boundary with an emphasis on the history and monumentation on the Nevada/California boundary.

Primary references

The references for this section are the articles The Colorful History of the California/Nevada State Boundary (part 1 and part 2), by John P Wilusz, PE/PLS about the history of the boundary line between the two states.

An additional reference of interest is the Opinion of the Court from the 1980 California v Nevada Supreme Court Case.

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Specifications

Nevada State Coordinate Systems

Knowledge and understanding of the coordinate system used in the State of Nevada.

Primary reference

The primary reference is Nevada Revised Statute Chapter 327 - Nevada Coordinate System; Geographic Names. Links to the statutes can be found at the Nevada Legislature website leg.state.nv.us by searching the Law Library Revised Statutes.
Practice Exam

To help you prepare for the two-hour open-book PLS exam, an online practice exam can be accessed at the link below.

https://nvbpels.org/apply/pls-practice-exam

The practice exam is only available online and includes answer feedback after it is completed.
Acknowledgment

Nevada State Specific Professional Land Surveyor Exam - Acknowledgement

A special Thank You to all the Nevada professional land surveyors that assisted with this exam re-write and compiling the reference material to review in preparation for this exam.

Paul Burn Nevada PLS #011174
Robert Carrington Nevada PLS #009103
Dan Church Nevada PLS #006886 & CFedS
Alan Dill Nevada PLS #007808
Jason Fackrell Nevada PLS #017833
Kevin German Nevada PLS #020461
Jason Higgins Nevada PLS #013601
Russell Jamison Nevada PLS #014633
Michael Kidd Nevada PLS #012141
George Lindesmith Nevada PLS #006306
Steve Parish Nevada PLS #009475 & CFedS
Greg Phillips Nevada PLS #017616