

I would like to begin my remarks by saying all wealth is generated by or from natural resources. It is either mined or grown, nothing else exists. So, whom ever controls the natural resources controls the wealth. That brings me to the numbers we have trotted out over and over again. Lincoln county is 98.9 % federal land.

We tried to fix our short fall of tax revenue with the LCLA and the LCRDA land acts. In the process we were given 14 wilderness areas some of which were established around mining districts, private property, and cherry stems in to private water holdings. These areas do not fit the wilderness criteria. The wilderness areas consist of 700,000 acres and the Basin and Range Monument encompasses another 700,000 acres.

The acres designated are heavily regulated for no growth and the natural resources that lie within these boundaries are no longer available for disposal or generation of tax revenue.

The land acts that were passed by congress mandated that the federal government dispose of 90,000 acres to be placed in private property for the increase of tax base in Lincoln county. It has been 13 years and less than 500 acres have been put up for public auction. Because of that, there has been no increase in tax revenues for the county. The cost of social programs mandated by the state and federal government have increased along with the cost of benefits for county employees. This leaves the county in a deficit that increases yearly and will consume our surplus in 3 to 5 years. Abandoning programs and laying off employees would be the result.

The land around prior developments in wilderness areas is the most desirable and has a higher sale value even though there is no infrastructure. Land offered for disposal close to infrastructure has a lower sale value, but was appraised at 14,000.00 per acre. Realistically, its value is 100.00 to 200.00 per acre. Land is only worth what someone is willing to pay for it. And not one bid was submitted on the 150 acres up for auction in the Pahranaagat area.

I would ask the state to support the county's request for fair market auctions with no

floor and that land sells as is. And also support the county's request to dispose of small parcels in and around wilderness areas. Preferably around prior water and other resource developments.

This great nation was built on the doctrine of John Lock. The creation of private property resulted by mixing sweat equity and energy with a natural resource.

We would ask the state to push the federal agencies to soften regulations for developments on federal lands to further the growth and economic status of the counties.

We would ask the state to recognize the many homestead acts that established private property rights in the form of rights of way and water developments. If the state would recognize these rights, counties could establish tax rates for developments on federal land.

The federal agencies have made it a point not to recognize developments and rights of way on federal lands. Through a series of homestead acts beginning in 1860 to 1933 ending with the Taylor Grazing Act, the federal government and congress created a layer of private property rights on federal land. Those rights are recognized in the form of developments and rights of way to and from and around said developments. We would urge the state to recognize and protect those rights which are critical to the natural resource industries and the counties tax base.

We request that the state and federal agencies soften mining regulations and give the industry the ability to become compliant in 1 to 2 years. As it stands now, it takes 10 to 15 years to get the permits allowing the operations to begin. In Lincoln county we have 728 mines available with a varying range of rare earth minerals. Our county is steeped in a rich mining history that led to the establishment and growth of the great state of Nevada.

It is my belief that Andrew Jackson correctly vetoed the Western Lands Act giving certain eastern states claim to the Midwest territories. He wrote that the natural resources needed to be fully intact so that when those territories became states, they would have the ability to fund state and local governments. The tax revenues generated from the natural resources is critical

to state and local governments.

We recommend the state change water laws to make it easier to claim vested water rights for livestock grazing on federal lands. This would give the counties the ability to generate tax revenues from those water developments. As of now, it costs 5 to 7 thousand dollars to file on water for livestock. Some of these water developments have been in place and used for livestock since the 1800's. The users of these waters assumed that the rights were tied to the allotments. It has been the custom that who ever owned the allotments owned the right to livestock water.

We request that the state take control of the wild horse populations and let the individual counties manage the horse numbers within the ranges that have been established by the Wild Horse and Burro Act. Using all the tools provided within the act to bring the numbers down to sustainable levels. I have provided an economic effects assessment produced by RCI that illustrates the impacts of horse overpopulation on our economy.