

NEVADA LEGISLATURE'S  
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS  
LEGISLATIVE BUILDING  
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CARSON CITY, NEVADA 89701-4747

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June 23, 2008

The Honorable Catherine Cortez Masto  
Attorney General  
State of Nevada  
100 North Carson Street  
Carson City, Nevada 89701-4717

Dear Ms. Cortez Masto:

The 2009 Nevada Legislative Session recently adjourned and Nevada's Legislative Committee on Public Lands has completed its work for the current biennium. As you may know, the Committee travels throughout Nevada and to Washington, D.C., during the 18 months between legislative sessions to listen to citizens' concerns about public lands issues and to review federal and state land management policies with various elected officials, agency personnel, interest groups, and private organizations. In addition, the Committee actively monitors federal legislation impacting Nevada and strives to maintain open communication with federal agency representatives, local government officials, and public land users.

At its final meeting and work session, the Committee requested the drafting of a legislative resolution expressing disapproval of the ongoing and consistent legal challenges made by certain groups and organizations to decisions rendered by various federal land management agencies (and especially the Bureau of Land Management [BLM]) concerning public lands grazing. Over the past decade, many agency decisions extending the use of grazing allotments and reducing or expanding animal unit months on allotments have been immediately challenged in court. Several individuals and local government representatives who testified before the Legislative Committee on Public Lands suggested that these challenges represent efforts by certain groups to freeze and eventually eliminate public lands grazing across the West. They reported on the potential economic detriment such actions have on rural economies and implored the Committee to request legislation addressing this important development.

Therefore, the Committee was pleased to sponsor the drafting of Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 3 (File No. 67, *Statutes of Nevada*), which was approved by the Legislature last month. Among other things, the resolution urges the Attorney General "to take all available legal action in those civil actions to protect the interests of the State of Nevada in its

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rural communities and agricultural economy.” One particular legal challenge the Committee learned about at one of its hearings during the interim involved Steve and Robin Boies (Boies Ranches, Inc.) concerning the Hubbard Vineyard grazing allotment. This grazing allotment, in particular, is widely recognized by the BLM as utilizing environmentally conscious grazing practices, “holistic” allotment management, riparian protection, and cattle rotation. Nonetheless, the Boies’ were the subject of a frivolous challenge to their allotment renewal, which proposed no “on the ground” changes to existing grazing practices. This is just one of dozens of examples where well-meaning, conscientious, and environmentally conscious livestock owners have been targeted with frivolous challenges to their grazing allotments.

With the successful passage of S.C.R. 3, a copy of which is enclosed, the Committee wanted to express their ongoing support of the resolution and urge you, as Nevada’s Attorney General, to proactively protect the important agricultural interests in this State by responding to these legal challenges that clearly have a detrimental affect on Nevada’s ranching and agricultural activities.

Thank you for your consideration of this important request. As always, please do not hesitate to contact me if Nevada’s Legislative Committee on Public Lands or I may be of any assistance to you.

Sincerely,



Senator Dean A. Rhoads  
Chairman, Nevada’s Legislative  
Committee on Public Lands

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