

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS'
WILDERNESS AND WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS SUBCOMMITTEE
March 7, 2002
Reno, Nevada**

The third meeting of the Legislative Committee on Public Lands' Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas Subcommittee during the 2001-2002 interim was held on Thursday, March 7, 2002, in the Reno City Council Chambers, 490 South Center Street, Reno, Nevada. Page 2 contains the "Meeting Notice and Agenda" for this meeting.

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Senator Dean A. Rhoads, Chairman
Senator Mark E. Amodei
Assemblyman David D. Brown
Assemblyman Jerry V. Claborn
Speaker Emeritus Joseph E. Dini, Jr. (alternate)

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Assemblyman P.M. "Roy" Neighbors, Vice Chairman
Senator Dina Titus

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL BUREAU STAFF PRESENT:

Scott Young, Principal Research Analyst, Research Division
R. René Yeckley, Principal Deputy Legislative Counsel, Legal Division
Christine Kuhl, Senior Research Secretary, Research Division

All place names mentioned in these minutes are in Nevada unless otherwise noted.

MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

Name of Organization: Legislative Committee on Public Lands' Wilderness and Wilderness Areas Subcommittee

Date and Time of Meeting: Thursday, March 7, 2002
9 a.m.

Place of Meeting: Reno City Council Chambers
490 South Center Street
Reno, Nevada

A G E N D A

- I. Opening Remarks and Introductions
- *II. Approval of the Minutes of the Meeting Held on Monday, November 19, 2001, in Las Vegas, Nevada
- *III. Reports to the Subcommittee Concerning Perspectives and Recommendations on

Wilderness Issues from Various Organizations

Kevin Mack, Associate Director, Nevada Wilderness Project
C. Joseph Guild, III, President, Nevada Cattlemen's Association
Willis A. Swan, Jr., Member, City of Fallon City Council
Andrew List, Policy and Research Coordinator, Nevada Association of Counties

IV. Public Comment

*V. Possible Work Session on Preceding Agenda Items

*Denotes items on which the Subcommittee may take action.

Note: We are pleased to make reasonable accommodations for members of the public who are disabled and wish to attend the meeting. If special arrangements for the meeting are necessary, please notify the Research Division of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, in writing, at the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada 89701-4747, or call Christine Kuhl at (775) 684-6825 as soon as possible.

Notice of this meeting was posted in the following Carson City, Nevada, locations: Blasdel Building, 209 East Musser Street; Capitol Press Corps, Basement, Capitol Building; City Hall, 201 North Carson Street; Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street; and Nevada State Library, 100 Stewart Street. Notice of this meeting was faxed for posting to the following Las Vegas, Nevada, locations: Clark County Office, 500 South Grand Central Parkway; and Grant Sawyer State Office Building, 555 East Washington Avenue. Notice of this meeting was faxed for posting to the following Reno, Nevada, location: Reno City Council Chambers, 490 South Center Street. Notice of this meeting was posted on the Internet through the Nevada Legislature's Web site at: www.leg.state.nv.us.

OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Rhoads called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m., welcomed those in attendance, introduced the Subcommittee members and staff, and noted a quorum was present. He explained that more than two decades ago, approximately 5.1 million acres of Nevada land were designated as Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs) pursuant to federal law. As such, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), United States Department of the Interior (DOI), administers these tracts of land as if they were Wilderness Areas. The original intent of the Congress of the United States was to have these lands evaluated for permanent status as Wilderness Areas or returned to more general use. However, in the ensuing years, various interest groups have not been able to reach a consensus regarding the final disposition of Nevada's WSAs. Members of Nevada's Congressional Delegation have indicated they will not introduce legislation regarding these areas until a consensus is reached; therefore, the Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas Subcommittee was formed to address the issue. Additionally, Chairman Rhoads shared that he had breakfast earlier that morning with Kathleen Clarke, Director, BLM, who expressed interest in the recommendations of the Subcommittee.

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 19, 2001, IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

ASSEMBLYMAN CLABORN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD NOVEMBER 19, 2001, IN LAS VEGAS, NEVADA. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY SENATOR AMODEI AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY BY ALL MEMBERS PRESENT.

REPORTS TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE CONCERNING PERSPECTIVES AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON WILDERNESS ISSUES FROM VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

Erika Van Wie

Erika Van Wie, Conservation Director and Proposal Coordinator, Nevada Wilderness Project, Reno, explained she was involved in conducting research for and writing the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Nevada's Mojave Desert Region in southern Nevada. Ms. Van Wie provided information on the following topics:

- The Nevada Wilderness Coalition (NWC);
- Facts on Wilderness Areas;
- Data collection procedures utilized for preparing the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal;

- Current legislative process; and
 - Slide show highlighting areas recommended for Wilderness Area designation in the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Nevada's Mojave Desert Region.
- The Nevada Wilderness Coalition

Beginning her presentation, Ms. Van Wie explained the NWC consists of over a dozen organizations and 80 local Nevada businesses, and has a statewide vision for Wilderness Areas in Nevada. The NWC is working to protect all areas in the state that qualify as wilderness under the definition contained in the Wilderness Act of 1964 (herein referred to as "the Act"). Additionally, the NWC is focused on educating Nevadans about the importance of Wilderness Areas. Ms. Van Wie noted that 2.5 percent of Nevada has been designated as Wilderness Area, whereas percentages of this designation in other Western states, such as California, Idaho, and Washington, are 13.3, 7.5, and 9.5, respectively.

➤ Facts on Wilderness Areas

Continuing, she explained that activities not allowed in Wilderness Areas include development, mechanized vehicle use, new mining claims, and road construction. Activities allowed in Wilderness Areas include camping, development of preexisting mine claims, fire management, fishing, grazing, hiking, horseback riding, hunting, insect disease control, rock climbing, scientific study, and wheelchair use. Ms. Van Wie noted wildlife management activities are allowed in Wilderness Areas, including maintenance and construction of new guzzlers. The use of motorized vehicles and helicopters is allowed when shown to be necessary for fighting fires, conducting wildlife management activities, and other administrative needs.

➤ Data collection procedures utilized for preparing the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal

Ms. Van Wie explained that the NWC initiated a field inventory in southern Nevada's Mojave Desert region by utilizing data provided by federal land managers, state offices, and local government entities. Paid and volunteer field crews traveled the area's backcountry and took photographs of man-made impacts on the land. Next, the field crews marked the locations on a topographic map utilizing a global positioning system. Ms. Van Wie noted the inventory procedure is complimentary to the inventory protocol used in the 1970s and 1980s by the BLM. The result of this inventory is the 4 million-acre Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Nevada's Mojave Desert Region. This proposal includes public lands in Clark, Esmeralda Lincoln, and Nye Counties that are managed by the BLM; National Park Service, DOI; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, DOI; and the U.S. Forest Service, (USFS), U.S. Department of Agriculture. Some areas in the proposal correspond to lands identified for Wilderness Area designation by these management agencies; however, additional areas are included in the proposal.

➤ Current legislative process

Next, Ms. Van Wie explained that in May 2001, Nevada's U.S. Senators John Ensign (R) and Harry Reid (D) announced plans for a Clark County public lands bill. Since that time, stakeholders, including the NWC, have developed proposals. These stakeholders have been meeting to discuss issues in an attempt to minimize conflicts. As a result of these discussions, the NWC's proposal had been modified to accommodate land users' recommendations. Ms. Van Wie noted one land user affected by the NWC's proposal is a rancher who supports the proposal because he has been negatively affected by the use of off-road vehicles (ORVs). She provided a letter from this rancher (Exhibit A). Please see the "List of Exhibits" for details.

In conclusion, Ms. Van Wie presented a slide show that highlighted areas of the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Nevada's Mojave Desert Region. She explained the NWC looks forward to working with stakeholders to develop proposals for other portions of the state.

In response to Chairman Rhoads, Ms. Van Wie noted the NWC has not inventoried the entire state and therefore cannot make a determination regarding additional Wilderness Area proposals; however, a statewide inventory is planned.

Kevin Mack

In response to a question posed by Chairman Rhoads, Kevin Mack, Associate Director, Nevada Wilderness Project, Reno, explained if Congress recognized all areas recommended by BLM for Wilderness Area designation, it would represent approximately 7 to 8 percent of Nevada's land.

Sharron Netherton

Sharron Netherton, Executive Director, Friends of Nevada Wilderness, Reno, responded to Assemblyman Brown who inquired about the comparison between the amount of land identified by the BLM for designation as Wilderness Area in the southern Nevada Mojave Desert region versus the amount of land identified by the NWC. Ms. Netherton informed the Subcommittee she would compile the information and submit it at a later date.

C. Joseph Guild, III

C. Joseph Guild, III, Past President, Nevada Cattlemen's Association (NCA), Reno, informed the Subcommittee the NCA would like to participate in discussions regarding mapping of specific acreage for recommendations as Wilderness Areas. Additionally, if a technical advisory committee were formed, the NCA would like to be a participant.

Mr. Guild explained that one of the chief reasons the NCA exists is to create a consensus policy for ranchers, which guides educational, lobbying, and outreach activities. He noted the NCA has one policy that directly addresses wilderness and another that fits into the greater scheme of wilderness.

The policy that fits into the greater scheme of wilderness is the NCA's support of national and state legislation requiring explicit consideration of natural resource dependent communities in the public land use planning process. The NCA asserts these communities should be given maximum consideration during the planning process for decisions that will affect private economic activity on public lands.

Continuing, Mr. Guild discussed the NCA policy that directly addresses wilderness. This policy strongly recommends extensive hearings be held in Washington, D.C., and relevant locations in Nevada prior to any changes for the use of Nevada's land, such as Wilderness Area designation. Mr. Guild requested the Subcommittee urge local hearings be conducted if Congress contemplates any designation.

Next, Mr. Guild noted no public hearings were held regarding the Wilderness Areas designated within the Black Rock Desert – High Rock Canyon National Conservation Area. He was of the opinion this was "dead wrong" because the communities affected by the designation have strong opinions about the creation of the Wilderness Areas. Mr. Guild repeated the importance of public hearings, noting he did so for affect.

Mr. Guild informed the Subcommittee the NCA is not inherently opposed to Wilderness Areas, but is opposed to the discounting of affected parties' opinions. He noted there are protections with Wilderness Area designations that provide benefits for ranchers, such as prevention of destruction caused by ORVs. However, Mr. Guild insisted ranchers' preexisting rights to access (via cherry stem roads), grazing permits, and water permits be specifically outlined and guaranteed in Wilderness Area legislation.

In conclusion, Mr. Guild informed the Subcommittee the NCA asserts only areas identified by the BLM as suitable for Wilderness Area designation be considered for recommendations. He explained this would allow the process to move forward and get specific, not move backwards by conducting additional studies. If the Subcommittee takes this direction, the NCA is willing to participate in discussions. Mr. Guild noted his personal opinion is there are areas in the state in need of protection by Wilderness Area designation.

Andrew List

Andrew List, Policy and Research Coordinator, Nevada Association of Counties, Carson City, explained that management of WSAs as "de facto" Wilderness Areas raises concerns regarding:

- Economics;

- Legal considerations;
- Energy; and
- Effective BLM Management.

Mr. List submitted his prepared testimony titled “Testimony of the Nevada Association of Counties prepared for The Legislative Committee on Public Lands Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas Subcommittee – Thursday, March 7, 2002” (Exhibit B). Please refer to this document for details regarding these areas.

Mr. List addressed a 1991 study prepared by the Western Economic Analysis Center which estimated the proposed wilderness withdrawals will result in \$757 of lost personal income to each Nevada resident, \$2.3 billion in lost sales to Nevada businesses, and a loss of \$214 million in state and local government revenue. He did note, however, the figures seemed “high.”

In conclusion, Mr. List asserted any bill designating Wilderness Area in Nevada must be developed through a collaborative process that involves the consent of county elected officials. Additionally, he called for the release of all WSAs deemed by the BLM to be unsuitable for designation, and submitted an untitled document that shows total WSA acreage within Nevada’s counties and acreage recommended/not recommended by the BLM for designation. The untitled document consists of excerpts from BLM Field Office Reports on WSAs (Exhibit B).

In response to Chairman Rhoads, Mr. List explained county commissioners are not opposed to Wilderness Areas, and offered to meet with commissioners and develop a list of WSAs the respective counties will support for designation.

Doug Busselman

Doug Busselman, Executive Vice President, Nevada Farm Bureau, Sparks, explained the Bureau’s position with regard to Wilderness Areas. He noted the Bureau seeks resolution of the “wilderness issue” and opposes implied or expressed reservation of water or water rights for Wilderness Areas. Therefore, the Bureau will work toward keeping Wilderness Areas to a minimum and water rights sovereign. Additionally, Mr. Busselman called for a release to multiple use of all WSAs deemed by the BLM to be unsuitable for designation. Further, the Bureau would like Nevada’s Legislature to support amendment of the Act to allow county commissioners to accept or veto any proposals for Wilderness Areas in their counties. Mr. Busselman requested the Subcommittee recommend a resolution of the Nevada Legislature in this regard.

In conclusion, he urged the Subcommittee members to stay informed and encouraged participation at the local level.

Chairman Rhoads

Chairman Rhoads noted he received a letter dated March 3, 2002, from John Deymonaz, Dyer, California, and entered it into the record (Exhibit C). Please refer to the “List of Exhibits” for details.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

Brian Beffort

Brian Beffort, Northern Nevada Representative, Friends of Nevada Wilderness, Reno, addressed the testimony of Mr. List, previously identified. Mr. Beffort was of the opinion the negative economic impacts of Wilderness Areas referenced by Mr. List, which were extrapolated from a 1991 report, have changed because since that time the state has realized the value of outdoor recreation as it relates to tourism. He cited increased visitation of the Black Rock Desert – High Rock Canyon National Conservation Area as an example.

Continuing, Mr. Beffort addressed Nevada’s population growth and submitted a graph titled “Nevada’s Population Growth Since 1900” (Exhibit D). He explained that, despite the state’s rapid increase in population, many areas remain undeveloped, as illustrated by a map prepared by the Wilderness Society titled “Relative Wilderness of the Conterminous United States” (contained in Exhibit D). He was of the opinion these wild places must be guarded to ensure the beauty of nature and opportunities for solitude are available to future generations. In closing, Mr. Beffort

urged the Subcommittee to support Wilderness Areas because they are the “best protection” for the future of Nevada’s land.

In response to inquiries made by Chairman Rhoads, Mr. Beffort provided the following information:

- He was not aware of any studies that demonstrate there is increased tourism and resultant economic benefits due to Wilderness Area designations. However, he did note a membership survey conducted by Friends of Nevada Wilderness, posed the question “What are your favorite areas in Nevada?” The top three responses were: (1) Black Rock Desert Wilderness Area, (2) Arc Dome Wilderness Area, and (3) Ruby Mountains Wilderness Area.
- Friends of Nevada Wilderness disagrees with the BLM that 2.6 million acres of WSAs are not suitable for Wilderness Area designation. Mr. Beffort offered to prepare a response for the Subcommittee and explain the reasons.
- Mr. Beffort was “confident” there are areas in addition to the 4.2 million acres currently in WSA status that qualify as wilderness. He indicated the information would be provided to the Subcommittee once specifics were identified.

Susan Czopek

Susan Czopek, Outreach Coordinator, Nevada Wilderness Project, Reno, offered to send the Subcommittee information regarding economic factors relative to designated Wilderness Areas, as referenced by Mr. Beffort, previously identified. She explained there is a strong correlation between Wilderness Areas and positive economic development.

Ms. Czopek informed the Subcommittee she was reared on a farm in Wisconsin and understands the difficulties associated with earning a living “off the land.” She stressed the importance of allowing for the economic and recreational uses of public land, while preserving the area. Continuing, she explained the World is in a “6th great extinction crisis,” a concept discussed in *The Future of Life*, by Edward Osborne Wilson, and to preserve wilderness is to preserve the “building blocks of evolution.” Ms. Czopek was of the opinion the wilderness issue is a serious World matter and the “big picture” must be taken into account when making decisions. In conclusion, she spoke in favor of slowing the process to ensure all areas are examined carefully and none are overlooked.

In response to Chairman Rhoads, Ms. Czopek stated she would like all the WSAs in Nevada designated as Wilderness Areas, even those not recommended by the BLM as suitable. She was of the opinion that in addition to WSAs, other areas have been overlooked for various reasons and should be designated as well.

Pat Patera

Pat Patera, Washoe Valley, was of the opinion the public lands in Nevada belong to all Americans, not just Nevadans, and should be preserved for everyone. She commented that most people who oppose Wilderness Areas do so because they fear “loosing the old ways.” Ms. Patera expressed the opinion that people who are afraid of change become “poor and backwards,” and if change were embraced these individuals might encounter more prosperity.

Continuing, she explained eco-tourism is a growing industry and Nevada has the chance to become a worldwide tourist destination for its outdoor recreational opportunities. Ms. Patera noted tourists contribute to the economies of rural areas by purchasing camping equipment, fuel, and food. She observed tourists do not come to “step in cow pies;” they want to hunt.

In conclusion, Ms. Patera spoke in support of the designation of as much Wilderness Area as possible in order to promote Nevada as an outdoor recreation destination.

Corey Lewis

Corey Lewis, Program Coordinator, Great Basin Institute, University of Nevada, Reno, (UNR), Reno, explained one of the classes he teaches is a field-based program in environmental resource science and natural resource

management. The program relies “heavily” on Wilderness Areas and WSAs because they provide scientific values for gathering information on issues that affect Nevada’s lands. He explained that these areas provide an environment in which to study a naturally functioning ecosystem that can then be compared to more heavily impacted areas. Mr. Lewis was of the opinion studies conducted in these protected areas are valuable because they provide knowledge to utilize in order to improve areas that have been negatively impacted.

Turning to the economic impacts of Wilderness Areas, Mr. Lewis informed the Subcommittee that lands in the National Forest experience 28 times more income from recreation than from logging, and lands managed by the BLM also experience similar affects from recreation versus mining. He was of the opinion that the primary problem with Wilderness Area economic impact studies is the methodology. This is due to the fact that economists, who do not have an understanding of the correlation between ecological health and economic sustainability, conduct these studies. In this regard, he explained one-third of all agricultural output is dependant on wild insect pollination, which requires a healthily functioning ecosystem.

In conclusion, Mr. Lewis expressed the opinion that recreation areas already managed by the Federal Government are enhanced by Wilderness Areas. He informed the Subcommittee Reno was voted best city for outdoor recreation quality of life. Additionally, Las Vegas is surrounded by more wilderness quality lands visible from the city than any other except Anchorage, Alaska. Mr. Lewis asserted Nevada must diversify its recreation marketing to enhance ecotourism and preserve areas through wilderness designation.

In response to an inquiry posed by Senator Amodei, Mr. Lewis clarified that he did not speak on behalf of UNR, but did represent the Great Basin Institute.

Lori Bellis

Lori Bellis, Reno, explained she is a native Nevadan who has worked as a wilderness ranger for the USFS. She agreed with the testimony provided by Mr. Lewis, previously identified, and noted Wilderness Areas also protect wildlife habitat and preserves watershed integrity. She informed the Subcommittee grazing was allowed in Wilderness Areas where she worked. Concluding, she supported the designation of all WSAs in Nevada as Wilderness Areas.

Marjorie Sill

Marjorie Sill, Reno, informed the Subcommittee she has lived in Nevada since 1959 and worked directly on the passage of the Wilderness Act of 1964, which “strongly and deliberately” supports grazing.

Continuing, Ms. Sill expressed her opinion that access to these areas is extremely important and must be a component of legislation designating Wilderness Areas. In conclusion, she spoke in support of the Citizens’ Wilderness Proposal for Nevada’s Mojave Desert Region and expressed belief that such areas provide a legacy for future generations.

Bevan Lister

Bevan Lister, Pioche, informed the Subcommittee that Nevada’s Congressional Delegation requested the Tri-County Group develop one proposal for Wilderness Areas. In turn, the Lincoln County Commissioners requested the Coordinated Resource Management Committee develop recommendations for the county. The committee is making progress and has held well-attended public hearings and conducted technical reviews of WSAs.

Continuing, Mr. Lister explained Lincoln County was never requested to provide input with regard to the Citizens’ Wilderness Proposal for Nevada’s Mojave Desert Region, which contains recommendations for portions of Lincoln County. The county received the proposal after it was sent to Senators Ensign and Reid, and officials do not agree with the recommendations.

In addition, Mr. Lister expressed his opinion that land users have proven they are able to manage public lands and the assertion that certain areas must be protected by wilderness designation is a “slap in the face.” He agreed that misuse of public lands must be addressed, but was of the opinion that to “lock up” the land is not the best method for conservation.

In closing, Mr. Lister revealed he is “categorically opposed to wilderness” because it is “not a question of resource, it’s not a question of holding out something for the future, it’s a question of religion.” He was of the opinion that if people want areas to worship they may purchase lands for such purposes. However, Mr. Lister did express willingness to continue to participate in the Coordinated Resource Management Committee process and accept minimal Wilderness Area designation.

Kevin Mack

Kevin Mack, previously identified, made the following points:

- The Nevada Wilderness Coalition is “very open” and values dialogue with all parties because it breaks down barriers and does not disenfranchise any groups, even those that disagree.
- In response to the concern expressed by Mr. Guild regarding the need to guarantee preexisting rights in Wilderness Area legislation, Mr. Mack noted participation of all parties is the best method to ensure these rights.
- With regard to the economic impacts of Wilderness Areas, he informed the Subcommittee that if all the BLM WSAs were designated it would represent 10 percent of all BLM managed lands. This would leave 90 percent of the BLM land available for multiple-use. Mr. Mack was of the opinion this would not have a large fiscal impact on the state.

Ron Hunter

Ron Hunter, Environmental Programs Associate, Patagonia, Inc., Reno, explained the \$220 million outdoor clothing company relocated to Reno in 1996, following a nationwide search. Nevada was chosen because it provides a high quality of life due to affordable housing, good schools, and access to wild places. Patagonia’s workforce consists of 200 employees and is growing. He explained that because Patagonia is in the outdoor business, it is important for his company’s bottom line that wild places in which to recreate are preserved.

Continuing, Mr. Hunter informed the Subcommittee that in 2001, human powered recreational activities such as backpacking, hiking, rock climbing, and skiing, generated \$18 billion in revenue nationwide. He asserted that Nevada must share in this wealth and Wilderness Area designation can provide the means to achieve this. To demonstrate his point, Mr. Hunter provided a publication titled *The Bottom Line: Protecting the Value of America’s Public Lands*, prepared in 2001 by the Business for Wilderness – A Program of the Outdoor Industry Foundation (Exhibit E).

In closing, Mr. Hunter referenced statistics, contained in Exhibit E, which indicate in 2000, Las Vegas visitors spent an average of \$322 daily on accommodations, food and drink, and transportation. Using a more conservative figure of \$200 per day for outdoor recreational activities, one additional day per visitor would generate over \$1.5 billion. Mr. Hunter was of the opinion that other areas in the state, if designated as Wilderness Areas, would experience similar revenue generation.

John Wallen

John Wallen, Representative, Nevada Wilderness Project, urged the Subcommittee to take into consideration that Nevada’s population has grown significantly since 1991 and the economic analysis referenced by Mr. List, previously identified, should not provide a basis from which to make recommendations. He also agreed with Mr. Guild, previously identified, that it is important to specify allowable activities in Wilderness Area legislation. Continuing, Mr. Wallen provided two advertisements for the Soldier Meadows Guest Ranch (Exhibit F), which demonstrates the economic benefits provided by Wilderness Areas. Please refer to the “List of Exhibits” for details. Concluding, he offered to compile statistics about the value of wild lands and provide the information at the next meeting.

Senator Amodei noted many rural counties in Nevada have such a limited tax base they are in a poor financial position and economic information that can demonstrate how Wilderness Areas will affect the situation would be helpful to the Subcommittee.

In response to Senator Amodei, Mr. Wallen agreed to provide information and noted the Nevada Wilderness

Coalition is not opposed to grazing, mining, or other economic activities. Additionally, he noted there is a disconnect between state and local efforts to promote Wilderness Areas and indicated if the state would allocate funds to coordinate these efforts the NWC would participate. Further, he informed the Subcommittee that White Pine County is participating in the passage of the Great Basin Heritage Area proposal introduced in Congress (S. 1939), which would provide funding for economic development to celebrate national heritage and promote eco-tourism.

Rex Allen

Rex Allen, Co-Chairman, Advocates for Access to Public Lands, Bishop, California, was of the opinion that “citizen’s proposal” is a “code word adopted by the wilderness industry to indicate these are their proposals” and do not address broad community, citizen support. He asserted these types of proposals attempt to create Wilderness Areas where they do not exist as defined in the Act.

Continuing, he informed the Subcommittee that he and other members of Advocates for Access to Public Lands have met with members of their Congressional and Legislative Delegation to discuss WSAs. Additionally, the group is working to persuade counties in California to assert their rights to RS 2477 roads, which will assure future access to public lands.

Mr. Allen expressed his opinion that when conducting an economic analysis, new figures are always better than old figures, but if nothing else is available, at least there is something with which to begin. He encouraged the Subcommittee to look “very carefully” at the figures provided by Mr. List, previously identified.

Commenting further, Mr. Allen asserted regulation enforcement, not Wilderness Area designation, is the best method by which to protect public lands and spoke in support of more funding for federal land management agencies. He also informed the Subcommittee that a “gateway provision” allows for communities in close proximity to areas under consideration for Wilderness Area designation to be provided hearings and possibly veto power. Mr. Allen indicated he would explore this provision and provide the Subcommittee with information.

In closing, Mr. Allen cited figures provided by the USFS that 5 percent of its visitor days are devoted to backpacking, which, he asserted, indicates most people use vehicle access.

Shelley Hartman

Shelley Hartman, Planning Coordinator, Lincoln County, Pioche, provided the Subcommittee with four documents (Exhibit G). Please refer to the “List of Exhibits” for details.

Ms. Hartman informed the Subcommittee that Lincoln County has updated its master plan, which supports economic diversification, including mining, ranching, and tourism. She noted Lincoln County could not depend on tourism alone because the county does not have enough year-round recreation to support such a strategy. Continuing, Ms. Hartman explained the county seeks a sunset clause for WSAs. Additionally, she noted Lincoln County would only support designation of Wilderness Areas that meet the criteria set forth in the Act. In conclusion, Ms. Hartman spoke in favor of maintaining preexisting rights, including access, and was of the opinion that roads should not be used as boundaries for Wilderness Areas

Andrew List

Andrew List, previously identified, addressed various comments made during public testimony. First, he reiterated the figures contained in the 1991 study prepared by the Western Economic Analysis Center, which he referenced during earlier testimony, are “probably not accurate.” Second, Mr. List asserted the counties are engaged and desire to be involved in the Wilderness Area designation process. Next, Mr. List noted the benefits of eco-tourism are unproved but he has heard about a study completed by the state of Utah, which he will attempt to obtain.

Continuing, Mr. List addressed the comment by Mr. Wallen that the Soldier Meadows Guest Ranch (Exhibit F), demonstrate the economic uses provided by Wilderness Areas. He noted Mr. Estill of the Soldier Meadows Guest Ranch was opposed to the designation of the Black Rock Desert – High Rock Canyon National Conservation Area

and resultant Wilderness Area. Mr. Estill desired to remain a rancher but is “doing the best he can.”

In closing, Mr. List clarified that his use of anecdotal evidence are true stories and he offered to obtain statements to this affect.

Tina Nappe

Tina Nappe, Reno, discussed the impact of roads and people who use roads on the population of trophy quality of elk, and provided the following (Exhibit H):

1. Written testimony of Tina Nappe, titled “Legislative Committee on Public Lands’ Wilderness and Wilderness Areas Subcommittee”, dated March 7, 2002;
2. An article from the March/April 2002 edition of the *Bugle*, titled “Roads and Elk Hunting,” by Scott Stouder; and
3. An article from the March/April 2002 edition of the *Bugle*, titled “Roadless Lands: What Would Roosevelt Do?” by Bob Munson.

Please refer to Exhibit H for her complete testimony.

Henry Egghart

Henry Egghart, Reno, spoke in favor of Wilderness Areas and the designation of as many as possible. He was of the opinion Wilderness Areas would have a beneficial impact on the state as a whole because people choose to relocate their business and families in areas that offer open spaces.

Karen Boeger

Karen Boeger, Reno, shared the story of her family’s ranch and her childhood experiences exploring the land. Ms. Boeger noted when her grandparents died, the descendants decided to form a corporation and retain the land in its undeveloped state. This was determined to be the best decision to allow for preservation of the land and her family’s pioneer history. She revealed that adjacent lands have been developed or impacted by abuse.

In conclusion, Ms. Boeger explained the same opportunity is available for all Americans through Wilderness Area designation. She opined such designation is the “best tool” to retain these areas.

Dan Heinz

Dan Heinz, Reno, informed the Subcommittee he has worked in natural resource dependent areas, including Wilderness Areas. He was of the opinion that there are economic benefits of Wilderness Areas. Mr. Heinz spoke in support of holding congressional hearings in communities that would be impacted by Wilderness Area designations and expressed his opinion that visionary land allocation cannot be made without controversy.

Don Bowman

Don Bowman, Fallon, suggested all Wilderness Area legislation include a mandate to cherry stem all ranchers’ water diversions and access to those diversions, which is beyond the guarantee of preexisting rights. Additionally, Mr. Bowman spoke in support of the “right mix” of Wilderness Areas to protect lands from destruction caused by ORV use.

There being no further business to come before the Subcommittee, Chairman Rhoads thanked the speakers and adjourned the meeting at 12:26 p.m.

Exhibit I is the “Attendance Record” for this meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Kuhl
Senior Research Secretary

Scott Young
Principal Research Analyst

APPROVED BY:

Chairman Dean A. Rhoads

Date: _____

LIST OF EXHIBITS

Exhibit A, provided by Erika Van Wie, Conservation Director and Proposal Coordinator, Nevada Wilderness Project, Reno, is a letter to Senator Ensign, dated September 9, 2001, from Cal Baird, Bow & Arrow Ranch, Jean, regarding habitat degradation in the South McCullough Mountain Wilderness Study Area.

Exhibit B, provided by Andrew List, Policy and Research Coordinator, Nevada Association of Counties, Carson City, consists of the following:

1. Prepared testimony titled "Testimony of the Nevada Association of Counties prepared for The Legislative Committee on Public Lands Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas Subcommittee – Thursday, March 7, 2002"; and
2. Untitled excerpts from Bureau of Land Management, United States Department of the Interior, Field Office Reports on Wilderness Study Areas.

Exhibit C, is a letter to Senator Dean A. Rhoads, dated March 3, 2002, from John Deymonaz, Dyer, California, titled "February 15, Tonopah meeting, Comments on Nevada Wilderness Study Areas and the impact of Senator Barbara Boxers proposed California Wilderness Areas on Nevada," [sic] transmitted via United States Postal Service.

Exhibit D, provided by Brian Beffort, Northern Nevada Representative, Friends of Nevada Wilderness, Reno, consists of the following:

1. A graph titled "Nevada's Population Growth Since 1900"; and
2. A map prepared the Wilderness Society titled "Relative Wilderness of the Conterminous United States."

Exhibit E, provided by Ron Hunter, Patagonia, Inc., is a publication titled *The Bottom Line: Protecting the Value of America's Public Lands*, prepared in 2001 by Business for Wilderness – A Program of the Outdoor Industry Foundation.

Exhibit F, provided by John Wallen, Representative, Nevada Wilderness Project, Reno, consists of the following

advertisements for the Soldier Meadows Guest Ranch:

1. An Internet advertisement, available on the Web at: http://www.soldiermeadows.com/body_index.html; and
2. A classified advertisement, which appeared May 25, 2001, in the *North Lake Tahoe Bonanza*.

Exhibit G, provided by Shelley Hartman, Planning Coordinator, Lincoln County, Pioche, consists of:

1. A resolution titled “Resolution 2002-03 Of The Lincoln County Commission Urging Congress to Resolve The Status Of Lands Presently Managed Under Wilderness Study Area Designation”;
2. A resolution titled “Resolution 2002-04 Of The Lincoln County Commission Urging Nevada’s Legislative Public Land Study Committee To Resolve The Status Of Lands Presently Managed Under Wilderness Study Area Designation”;
3. A resolution titled “Resolution 2002-05 Of The Lincoln County Commission Adopting the updated Wilderness section of the Public Land Element of the Lincoln County Master Plan”; and
4. An untitled document, which addresses wilderness definition and policies.”

Exhibit H, provided by Tina Nappe, consists of the following,

1. Written testimony of Tina Nappe, titled “Legislative Committee on Public Lands’ Wilderness and Wilderness Areas Subcommittee”, dated March 7, 2002;
2. An article from the March/April 2002 edition of the *Bugle*, titled “Roads and Elk Hunting,” by Scott Stouder; and
3. An article from the March/April 2002 edition of the *Bugle*, titled “Roadless Lands: What Would Roosevelt Do?” by Bob Munson.

Exhibit I is the “Attendance Record” for this meeting.

Copies of the materials distributed in the meeting are on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, Carson City, Nevada. You may contact the library at (775) 684-6827.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BLM	Bureau of Land Management, United States Department of the Interior
DOI	United States Department of the Interior
NCA	Nevada Cattlemen’s Association
NWC	Nevada Wilderness Coalition
The Act	The Wilderness Act of 1964
WSA(s)	Wilderness Study Area(s)
ORV(s)	Off-Road Vehicle(s)
UNR	University of Nevada, Reno
USFS	United States Forest Service, United States Department of Agriculture