The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

Northern Nevada Office
639 Isbell Road, Suite 330
Reno, NV 89509

Tel 775-322-4990
Fax 775-322-5132

Southern Nevada Office
8329 W. Sunset Rd., Ste. 200
Las Vegas, NV 89113

Tel 702-737-8744
Fax 702-737-5787

April 17, 2024

Senator Dallas Harris, Chair
Interim Committee on Growth and Infrastructure
Transmitted via email to GRIInterim@lcb.state.nv.us and Members of the Committee

RE: Public comment to share information relevant for clean energy supply chain and agrivoltaics

Dear Senator Harris and Members of the Interim Growth & Infrastructure Committee:

Thank you for hearing presentations on the clean energy supply chain, lithium battery recycling, and agrivoltaics at the April 17, 2024 committee meeting. At The Nature Conservancy, as we think about the climate solutions that are being pursued, we are also vigilant that the world is in a biodiversity crisis. We are losing species at a rapid rate. Most of this loss is due to habitat encroachment, fragmentation, and destruction from development and other human activity. It is imperative we ensure that species and ecosystems are protected as we implement climate solutions. We are also concerned with the impacts that climate infrastructure has on Tribal and rural communities.

We advocate for a smart-from-the-start approach to lithium extraction, mining and renewable energy deployment. A smart-from-the-start approach is one where renewable energy generation, transmission, and storage and mineral extraction can be deployed with as little impact as possible to natural lands, cultural resources, recreation, and other resources that support vibrant communities and ecosystems.

The Nature Conservancy is a science-based organization. For the past several years, our scientists have been working to understand the potential impacts to biodiversity from proposed lithium extraction in Nevada, California, and across the U.S. With this letter, we are sharing links to recent publications and reports that describe our findings.

> Clifford, MJ, SS Parker, L Saito, B. Cohen, and NS Fraga. 2024. Potential impacts of proposed lithium extraction on biodiversity and conservation in Nevada and California. The Nature Conservancy. https://www.groundwaterresourcehub.org/content/dam/tnc/nature/en/documents/groundwater-resource-hub/saftner23_hydrol_impacts_lithium.pdf
>
> Parker SS, MJ Clifford, BS Cohen. 2024. Potential impacts of proposed lithium extraction on biodiversity and conservation in the contiguous United States. *Science of the Total Environment*. doi:10.1016/j.scitotenv.2023.168639. https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969723072674

We also wanted to alert the Committee to a recent report on the feasibility of retiring groundwater rights coupled with agrivoltaics in Diamond Valley. This is a solution that would address the need to reduce groundwater use while implementing low-impact renewable energy.

> Saito, L., J. Tibbitts, P. Gower, G. Zimmerman, and D. McHugh. 2024. Resolving groundwater overuse: feasibility of agrivoltaics coupled with groundwater rights retirement. Eureka County, Eureka Conservation District, and The Nature Conservancy.

Press release: https://www.nature.org/en-us/newsroom/nevada-agrivoltaics-feasibility-study/
Report: https://www.groundwaterresourcehub.org/content/dam/tnc/nature/en/documents/groundwater-resource-hub/Feasibility_GW_Ret_Agrivoltaics_DV_Phase2.pdf

By sharing this information, we hope to keep nature and communities front and center as we plan for our future clean energy economy. If we plan correctly, we can meet our clean energy needs and also preserve biodiversity and community integrity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mauricia M.M. Baca
State Director
The Nature Conservancy in Nevada