

## SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC LANDS

*Nevada Revised Statutes 218E.510*

This summary presents the recommendations approved by the Legislative Committee on Public Lands during the 2011-2012 Legislative Interim at its final meeting on August 24, 2012, in Carson City, Nevada. The bill draft requests (BDRs) will be forwarded to the Legislative Commission for transmittal to the 77th Session of the Nevada Legislature in 2013.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEGISLATION

1. Amend the statutes governing the sale of electricity and the provision of transmission and distribution services by the Colorado River Commission of Nevada to implement the federal Hoover Power Allocation Act of 2011 (Public Law 112-72). **(BDR -206)**
2. Adopt a resolution emphasizing the potential impacts on Nevada's rural and urban areas of listing the sage-grouse as an endangered species, and urging the Governor to incorporate the continuing involvement of the Legislature in efforts to preclude the listing. **(BDR -207)**
3. Adopt a resolution urging Congress to ensure that public lands in Nevada remain open to multiple use and that Nevada and its local governments receive a portion of the revenues from commercial activities conducted on the public lands. **(BDR -208)**
4. Adopt a resolution urging the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), United States Department of the Interior, and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), U.S. Department of Agriculture, to consider an increase in livestock grazing under certain circumstances, in order to prevent range fires. **(BDR -209)**
5. Adopt a resolution expressing the intent of the Legislature to establish a biomass industry to restore Pinyon-juniper and sagebrush ecosystems on public lands for the enhancement of economic stability, energy production, hydrologic function, rangeland health, and wildlife habitat. **(BDR -210)**

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMITTEE ACTION

6. Send a letter to the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior supporting the recommendations of the Governor's Greater Sage-grouse Advisory Committee and emphasizing what is being done and what can be accomplished in Nevada to manage Pinyon-juniper woodlands and sagebrush ecosystems and preclude the listing of the Greater Sage-grouse as an endangered species under the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973.
7. Send a letter to Nevada's agricultural producers, expressing the Committee's support for their efforts to help preclude the listing of the sage-grouse and urging them to continue those efforts.
8. Send a letter to Nevada's Congressional Delegation emphasizing the potential impacts of listing the sage-grouse on both the rural and urban parts of the State, and emphasizing what is being done to preclude the listing.
9. Send letters to the Nevada System of Higher Education, the USFS, and other parties as appropriate, supporting ongoing research concerning the control of cheatgrass, red brome, and other annual grasses that contribute to the cheatgrass-fire cycle in Nevada.
10. Send a letter to the Forest Supervisor, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, urging the USFS to revise its process for preparing and updating travel management plans for the National Forest.
11. Send a letter to the Director of the Nevada State Office of the BLM, urging the BLM to work with local governments, the State of Nevada, and the users of the public lands to expedite verification of R.S. 2477 rights-of-way for access to private property.
12. Send a letter to the BLM and the USFS urging the agencies to work with grazing permittees to ensure that: (a) management decisions are based on the best rangeland science; (b) flexibility is included in grazing permits to allow for adaptive management as conditions change; and (c) the quality and quantity of data collected is adequate to support decisions based on measurable resource objectives.
13. Send a letter to the Nevada Pinyon-Juniper Partnership expressing the Committee's support for the Partnership and its mission of promoting proactive, sound management to achieve healthy ecosystems for stronger communities.
14. Send a letter to the U.S. Secretary of the Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture, the Acting Director of the BLM, the Chief of the USFS, and Nevada's Congressional Delegation expressing the Committee's support for establishment of a biomass industry, in order to expand efforts to restore Pinyon-juniper and sagebrush ecosystems at a

landscape scale on public lands for the benefit of economic stability, energy production, hydrologic function, rangeland health, and wildlife habitat.

15. Send a letter to the Chairs of the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means and the Senate Committee on Finance in support of restoration of funding to the Division of Water Resources, State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, for processing the backlog of water rights applications and enhancing online data sources.
16. Send a letter to the Governor, the Senate Committee on Finance, and the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means, urging their support for the necessary resources and staff for the State Engineer to set priorities and take action on orders and petitions for determining the relative rights of various claimants to the waters of any stream or water system.
17. Send a letter to the Chief of the USFS and the Forest Supervisor, Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, urging no further delays in approving and investing in water-related range improvements, notwithstanding the concerns of the USFS with Nevada water law on stockwater rights, and requesting the USFS to revise its policy requiring federal ownership of stockwater rights as a prerequisite to authorizing federal expenditures on livestock water improvements on the National Forest.
18. Send a letter to the Director of the Nevada State Office of the BLM expressing concern about the management of the Shoshone Ponds Area of Critical Environmental Concern in Spring Valley in White Pine County and inviting the BLM to meet with the Chair and interested members of the Legislative Committee on Public Lands to review the management objectives.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STATEMENTS IN THE FINAL REPORT**

19. Include a statement in the final report calling for more collaboration and cooperation in the management of the public lands, on such subjects as fuels management, grazing leases and permits, land use plans, management of wild horses and burros, rights-of-way, travel management plans, water improvements, water resources, wilderness designations, and others.
20. Include a statement in the final report supporting improved accountability and transparency in the administration of the Equal Access to Justice Act (EAJA) of 1980, while respecting the intent of the EAJA, which is to create a level playing field on which individual citizens may question management decisions of federal agencies.
21. Include a statement in the final report supporting streamlining of both federal and State permitting of activities on public lands, provided that such streamlining preserves necessary community and natural resource protections.

22. Include a statement in the final report supporting: (a) full funding for the Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) program; (b) reauthorization of the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (SRS) of 2000; (c) no reduction in PILT payments based on SRS payments; and (d) a shift in emphasis for these programs to create jobs and produce receipts for revenue sharing.
23. Include a statement in the final report supporting sharing of federal receipts from commercial activity on public lands among the federal government, the State of Nevada, and Nevada's counties.
24. Include a statement in the final report concerning the renewal of grazing permits, supporting a review of the fee formula, a streamlined renewal process with accountability and flexibility, identification of the circumstances in which it is appropriate to extend permit terms to 20 years, and elimination of unwarranted delays.
25. Include a statement in the final report supporting legislative authority for and funding of drought monitoring, response planning, and mitigation measures resulting from the work of Nevada's Drought Response Committee.