

SENATE BILL NO. 413—SENATORS CANNIZZARO, SEGERBLOM,
RATTI, FORD, CANCELA; ATKINSON, DENIS, FARLEY,
MANENDO, PARKS, SPEARMAN AND WOODHOUSE

MARCH 20, 2017

JOINT SPONSORS: ASSEMBLYMEN YEAGER;
AND BENITEZ-THOMPSON

Referred to Committee on Government Affairs

SUMMARY—Establishes “Public Lands Day” in the State of
Nevada. (BDR 19-772)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.
Effect on the State: Yes.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to public lands; establishing the last Saturday in
September of each year as “Public Lands Day” in the
State of Nevada; requiring the Governor to issue annually
a proclamation encouraging the observance of Public
Lands Day; and providing other matters properly relating
thereto.

Legislative Counsel’s Digest:

1 Under existing law, various days and weeks of observance are recognized in
2 this State. (NRS 236.018-236.085) **Section 1** of this bill establishes the last
3 Saturday in September of each year as “Public Lands Day” in the State of Nevada
4 and requires the Governor to issue annually a proclamation encouraging the
5 observance of Public Lands Day.

1 WHEREAS, In 1994, National Public Lands Day was established,
2 with 700 volunteers working at three sites and, since then, the
3 activities relating to National Public Lands Day have expanded to
4 include new places, projects and persons; and

5 WHEREAS, More than 80 percent of the public lands in this State
6 are owned by the people of the United States and are managed by



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1 various federal agencies for the benefit of all persons living in the
2 United States; and

3 WHEREAS, The public lands in this State include national parks,
4 national monuments, national conservation areas, national forests,
5 national wildlife refuges, wilderness areas and public lands managed
6 by the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Forest
7 Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the National
8 Park Service and other federal agencies; and

9 WHEREAS, All public lands located in this State feature a
10 diverse array of landscapes, from sculpted desert sandstone to
11 dramatic limestone cliffs with caves and fossils, from colorful
12 volcanic ranges to the high peaks with ancient bristlecone pine and
13 lush oases that stand in sharp contrast to open sagebrush valleys;
14 and

15 WHEREAS, The public lands in this State protect vital pieces of
16 our region's past and important cultural heritages, including the
17 remnants of ancient civilizations that once thrived in the region and
18 whose ancestors still protect their legacy, deserted mining
19 settlements where riches were made and lost and contemporary
20 works of art, all waiting to be discovered by current and future
21 generations of Nevadans; and

22 WHEREAS, The public lands in this State reflect many noble
23 democratic ideals because they are open and accessible to all
24 persons, regardless of whether those persons are rich or poor; and

25 WHEREAS, The public lands in this State provide many benefits
26 to the residents of this State and support a wide variety of activities,
27 including recreational pursuits and the development of natural
28 resources; and

29 WHEREAS, Outdoor recreation is dependent on access to public
30 lands and is an essential part of the economy of this State,
31 generating \$14.9 billion in consumer spending, \$1 billion in state
32 and local tax revenue and 148,000 direct Nevada jobs in this State;
33 and

34 WHEREAS, Large-scale transfers of the federal public lands in
35 this State from the people of the United States into state or private
36 control are contrary to the democratic values of the United States
37 and jeopardize activities such as hiking, camping, hunting, fishing
38 and off-road pursuits; and

39 WHEREAS, In 1864, Congress enacted a law (13 United States
40 Statutes at Large (1864), pp. 30-32), commonly referred to as the
41 Enabling Act, which authorized the people of the Territory of
42 Nevada to form a constitution and state government, and provided
43 for the admission of the State of Nevada into the Union; and

44 WHEREAS, As required by the Enabling Act, the Nevada
45 Constitution includes an ordinance, immediately preceding the



1 preamble to the Nevada Constitution, which states, in part, that the
2 “people inhabiting [this State] do agree and declare, that they
3 forever disclaim all right and title to the unappropriated public lands
4 lying within [this State], and that the same shall be and remain at the
5 sole and entire disposition of the United States”; and

6 WHEREAS, At the general election held in 1996, those
7 provisions of the Nevada Constitution were repealed, effective on
8 the date Congress consents to the amendment or on a legal
9 determination that the consent of Congress is not necessary; and

10 WHEREAS, The residents of this State support national efforts to
11 promote the stewardship and celebration of all public lands in this
12 State: now therefore,

13
14 THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
15 SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:
16

17 **Section 1.** Chapter 236 of NRS is hereby amended by adding
18 thereto a new section to read as follows:

19 *1. The last Saturday in September of each year is established
20 as “Public Lands Day” in the State of Nevada.*

21 *2. The Governor shall issue annually a proclamation
22 encouraging the observance of Public Lands Day. The
23 proclamation shall, without limitation:*

24 *(a) Call upon the news media, state and local officers, private
25 nonprofit groups and foundations, schools, businesses and other
26 public and private entities to bring to the attention of the residents
27 of this State the importance of the public lands in the State of
28 Nevada;*

29 *(b) Recognize the economic, scenic, historical, scientific,
30 aesthetic and other values of the public lands in the State of
31 Nevada; and*

32 *(c) Encourage the residents of the State of Nevada to engage
33 in volunteer stewardship activities which contribute to the
34 conservation of the unique public lands which are only found in
35 the State of Nevada.*

36 **Sec. 2.** This act becomes effective on July 1, 2017.

