

PRESS RELEASE

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THE COALITION FOR PUBLIC ACCESS CONTINUES ITS BATTLE TO KEEP OUR PUBLIC LAND OPEN

The Coalition for Public Access (CPA), a grass roots group of citizens mostly from Lyon and Mineral counties was formed last February to fight off a land grab by the Nevada Wilderness Project (NWP) and others. Lyon, Mineral and Esmeralda counties were then facing Lands Bills where the NWP was proposing nearly 1.4 million acres of open public land be designated as Wilderness.

With over 1500 members, CPA organized an overwhelming response by informed residents resulting in decisive actions taken by the County Commissioners in all three counties and resolutions were unanimously passed opposing any new Wilderness designations and Lands Bills at this time. Senators Reid and Ensign and Congressman Heller have said that a Lands Bill will not be forced on communities that don't want to participate. However, this is clearly not the end of the threat to keeping our public lands open.

To address the ongoing activities by the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, the NWP and other wilderness advocacy groups, the CPA formed an Ad Hoc Steering Committee with volunteers, including Emery Thran, Sue Silver, Phil Tucker, Larry Simmons, Jim Kinninger, Wade Harlan, Mike Rosachi and Don Smith. The committee is working to build relationships with various federal agencies to learn of their activities relating to management of public lands, pending changes to current management policy and the processes through which the public is permitted to participate.

By working with these agencies and using their processes CPA will have a voice – one the organization hopes will be an influential voice. The committee is also establishing working relationships with state and national organizations that are also committed to keeping public lands open and it expects to leverage from their experiences and cooperate jointly on legislation to protect access to the public lands in Nevada.

CPA is also working with organizations and agencies to promote and ensure responsible use of public lands. One example is a project to better educate the users of Wilson Canyon in Lyon County regarding the ethical and legal use of Forest Service and BLM managed lands, as well as restoring damaged lands and barriers.

The CPA Ad Hoc Steering Committee recently decided that to improve its efficiency and effectiveness it will reorganize and file to become a non-profit corporation. Anyone wishing to become an active volunteer or who wants more information about CPA's activities, should visit the CPA website at www.cfpa-nv.org or send an email message to cpa@cfpa-nv.org.