

NACO resolution seeks local initiation & support before any lands bill is enacted

BY JIM SANFORD • SPECIAL TO THE MVN • JUNE 6, 2008

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nCounties may not want a lands bill if it includes wilderness areas

ADVERTISEMENT The Board of Directors for the Nevada Association of Counties over the weekend unanimously adopted a resolution saying "county governments may not want to have a public lands bill if it includes wilderness areas" and adds that no lands bills should be enacted "without a resolution of support by the affected Board(s) of County Commissioners".

In addition, Resolution #08-06 resolved that "all future lands bills in Nevada should be initiated by resolution of the Board(s) of County Commissioners and that introduction of a public lands bill before Congress must occur only after a resolution of support by the Board(s) of County Commissioners".

NACO also said it "appreciates the hard work and support of Nevada's Congressional Delegation in passing bills to convey public lands and make funds available for future development in certain Nevada counties". Copies of the resolution will be transmitted to that delegation, the Governor, the Majority Leader of the Nevada Senate, the Speaker of the Nevada Assembly, the Minority Leaders of the Nevada Senate and Assembly, and the Chairman of the Nevada Legislative Committee on Public Lands.

The text of the resolution adopted at the May 30 NACO board meeting:

RESOLUTION REGARDING COUNTY APPROVAL OF PUBLIC LANDS BILLS

WHEREAS, Nevada has the highest percentage of federal land ownership in any state, and in some Nevada counties, federal land ownership exceeds ninety-five percent of the land mass, and

WHEREAS, the economies of Nevada's rural counties rely on the use of federal lands for mining, livestock grazing, and recreation, and

WHEREAS, Nevada's counties are exploring ways to diversity their economies including developing renewable energy resources and expanding military operations on public lands, and

WHEREAS, for residents of all Nevada counties and visitors alike public lands provide a myriad of opportunities for recreational activities such as hiking, hunting, camping, fishing and off-highway vehicle travel, and

WHEREAS, public lands bills have freed up much needed land for development, parks, utilities and other government facilities, and have generated new revenues for education, preservation of environmentally sensitive lands and other public improvements, and

WHEREAS, any public lands bills not enacted as of the date of this resolution must recognize that each county has unique assets, and its citizens their own interests, and

WHEREAS, a successful public lands bill requires a significant amount of time and resources to develop long-range land use plans and to analyze impacts which may not be immediately available to some county governments, and

WHEREAS, the passage of a successful public lands bill also requires ample opportunity for local input and an ongoing and collaborative effort amongst all stakeholders, and

WHEREAS, county governments, being closest to the people, have the best understanding of the needs and interests of their residents and that the use of public lands is one of their top concerns, and

WHEREAS, county governments may not want to have a public lands bill if it includes wilderness areas, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that NACO appreciates the hard work and support of Nevada's Congressional Nevada's Congressional Delegation in passing bills to convey public lands and make funds available for future development in certain Nevada counties, and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any public lands bill in Nevada not enacted as of the date of this resolution not be enacted without a resolution of support by the affected Board(s) of County Commissioner, and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all future lands bill in Nevada should be initiated by resolution of the board(s) of County commissioners and that introduction of a public lands bill before Congress must occur only after a resolution of support by the Board(s) of County Commissioners, and