



Coalition for Public Access

P.O. Box 205
Smith, NV 89430

Email: cpa@cfpa-nv.org
Web: www.cfpa-nv.org

August 22, 2011

Submitted via email

Public Land Management Advisory Board
c/o County Manager's Office
27 S. Main Street
Yerington, NV 89447

Re: Development of Lyon County Public Lands Policy Plan

Dear Board Members:

The Coalition for Public Access fully supports your effort to produce a Lyon County Public Lands Policy Plan and wishes to assist in any way that you believe to be beneficial. We offer the following comments as a background to our issues regarding federally managed lands.

The Coalition for Public Access was formed to oppose a threat of more than 750,000 acres of public land being designated as wilderness. We continue to hold to the belief that wilderness designation cuts off public access to many people who work or recreate on these lands.

In addition to wilderness threats there are other ways public land managers use to limit access. Wilderness Study Areas are one type. There is a bill in congress now to release wilderness study areas to multiple use that would solve that problem, if it passes.

Areas of Critical Concern, another designation that limits access, must not be designated without the very best science that is peer reviewed. This will be of utmost importance in the future concerning sage grouse. Ranchers and others who make their living on the land must not be put out of business. Local government and the public should demand coordination with public lands managers before these designations are made.

Designation of Roadless Areas should be done only with coordination with local government and public input to the public land managers.

The Coalition supports keeping roads open, especially RS2477 roads. Exploring the mountains and deserts on these roads has long been a popular recreational use. Gathering pinenuts, keeping watch over livestock, hunting, cutting firewood and Christmas trees, and prospecting have all been respected activities in Lyon County. Exploring ghost town and cemeteries bring visitors to the area. Other visitors are OHV users. The Coalition supports responsible OHV users. The Coalition supports including all of Chapter 50 of the Eureka County plan in the Lyon County plan.

The Coalition supports livestock grazing as an historical use of public land. Cattle and sheep help renew the vegetation and are useful in preventing wildfires.

The Coalition supports mining on public lands following the various permitting and reclamation laws. Mining supports the US with strategic material while keeping jobs here at home. The revenues will help the state of Nevada and Lyon County.

NEPA is the process that the federal government uses in their planning. The law requires that the study be coordinated with local government. This means that Lyon County can deal with the federal agencies on an equal footing. Local government must be involved from the beginning. The county must invoke this coordinating status. The NEPA regulations require the agencies to reconcile its actions with local plans. Therefore, Lyon County must be active in working with federal agencies so that their decisions will fit Lyon County's plans and protect its citizens' private property, economy, and recreation opportunities. The county government has a better chance to make changes in plans than an organization such as the Coalition for Public Access.

The Eureka County plan has many requirements for monitoring and evaluation. While these are useful tools, they seem problematic as it would require a team of people. Rather than form a new bureaucracy to do this, we believe that keeping a close relationship with public land users who could report to the county any problems would be more useful. This would mean the county would have to have a receptive ear and be willing to step up to dealing with the federal agencies.

If you would like additional information please contact us.

Lu Weaver,
Vice President