

RESOLUTION NO. 08-003

WHEREAS, Mineral County continues to oppose wilderness areas as previously adopted in 1984 by resolution and motion of Commissioner Allen Conelly "...that Mineral County Commissioners hereby deem all areas of Mineral County to be UNSUITABLE for wilderness designation.";

WHEREAS, currently, Mineral County lands are significantly encumbered and controlled by a variety of federally managed public lands and other government designations;

WHEREAS, the people of Mineral County rely on access to public lands for a large number of economic purposes;

WHEREAS, these purposes include oil and natural gas development, mining, outdoor recreation and other multiple uses, rights of way for transportation, waterlines, alternative energy development, electric transmission, and telecommunication lines;

WHEREAS, Mineral County's economy relies on these important industries to fuel its economy and tax base;

WHEREAS, energy price increases have a disproportionately negative impact on Mineral County's residents;

WHEREAS, Mineral County schools and local governments are among the benefactors of access to Mineral County public lands;

WHEREAS, the United States Forest Service (USFS) reviews of Excelsior roadless area found no outstanding geographic features in these areas other than vast and harsh conditions, of Mt. Hicks and the Buller found that major mineral activity and multiple uses and that again there were no outstanding geographic features, no perennial streams;

WHEREAS, homeland security depends upon the development of alternative energy sources such as wind, solar and geothermal, much of which is on public lands, and loss of this resource threatens our country's security;

WHEREAS, no Environmental Impact Statement is required until it is too late to stop the Wilderness designation, the financial and environmental risk to Mineral County Citizens cannot be fairly calculated in time to describe those threats and values adequately;

WHEREAS, Mineral County Commissioners are directly charged with protection of every Mineral County Citizen, their assets and their values;

WHEREAS, United States agriculture feeds the world, and our food supply is secure through American ranching and farming, and any designations that cuts into the water or lands necessary for feeding America and the World is a threat against all humanity, and Mineral County agriculture substantially contributes to Nevada and world food, fiber and money markets;

WHEREAS, the proposed Wilderness Area will emasculate the economies in Mineral County relating to mining, agriculture, natural resources, potential alternative energy sources, recreation, hunting and other public trust resources;

WHEREAS, public law are for all of the public not an elite group of special interest groups values, and therefore violates the entire Public Trust by protecting one group of Americans and not the rest;

WHEREAS, roadless designations by USFS is never supported especially where the custom and culture of the region depends upon those roads for conducting business, recreation and commercial uses,

WHEREAS, the Nevada Wilderness Project and it's membership, proposes to deny Mineral County citizens access and multiple use to thousands of acres of Mineral County federal lands through a wilderness or roadless designation;

WHEREAS, Mineral County has ongoing gold and oil exploration;

WHEREAS, Mineral County has ongoing geothermal development and other alternative energy projects being proposed;

WHEREAS, the Hawthorne Ammunition and Weapons Depot provides 75% of our employment and loss of access threatens that employment;

WHEREAS, the Hawthorne Ammunition and Weapons Depot survived the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) because of our training values to the military because the lands here look like Iraq and Afghanistan;

WHEREAS, these military training opportunities for all branches of the military expand our joint effort which prevents us from being included again on the BRAC list;

WHEREAS, oil from domestic oil shale and oil sands production will significantly reduce the United States energy security vulnerability;

WHEREAS, the proposed wilderness area would preclude development of oil shale and oil sands production in areas of Mineral County;

WHEREAS, the entire Mineral County Commission opposes wilderness;

WHEREAS, the United States Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and USFS is considering resource management plan revisions and closure of roads throughout the lands in Mineral County that would restrict access to existing public lands in Mineral County through so-called "wilderness characteristics" options;

WHEREAS, attempting to withdraw thousands of acres in Mineral County from public access is without precedent;

WHEREAS, if successful, this effort by Congress will cost Mineral County hundreds of millions of dollars in lost revenues that help fund local communities and schools;

WHEREAS, locking away much of Mineral County's valuable mineral resources from environmentally sound development not only hurts Mineral County economically, but also weakens America by hamstringing the production of more energy in Mineral County; and

WHEREAS, less American energy means more imported energy from hostile nations, some with ties to terrorist organizations that despise the United States.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED Mineral County urges Congress to reject wilderness in Mineral County;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mineral County Commission urges the BLM and USFS not to limit the public's access to public lands under its jurisdiction;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mineral County Commission urges BLM and USFS to approve resource management plans without "wilderness characteristics" designations before the end of 2008;


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mineral County Commission urges Congress to not enact any wilderness designations in Mineral County without the unanimous support of Mineral County's commissioners and voters;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Mineral County joins with its sister Counties to oppose any further wilderness or roadless area to be designated within the rural counties;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Mineral County Board of County Commissioners requests the State of Nevada by and through its elected Officials and Officers, including but not limited to Governor Jim Gibbons, Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto, Nevada State Senators and Assembly persons, U.S. Senator Harry Reid, U.S. Senator John Ensign, U.S. Congressman Dean Heller, U.S. Congresswoman Shelly Berkeley, and U.S. Congressman John Porter to assist Mineral County in opposing any wilderness areas to be designated in Mineral County;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate, the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, the President of the United States and the members of Mineral County's congressional delegation.

Passed and adopted this 6th day of March 2008.


EDWARD FOWLER, Chairman


FERRIE TIPTON, Vice Chairman


RICHARD BRYANT, Member

ATTEST:


CHERRIE GEORGE, Clerk