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March 31, 2003

Senator Dean Rhoads
Nevada Legislature
State Capitol
Carson City, Nevada

Dear Senator Rhoads:

In Rangeland Reform 94 under the then, Secretary Babbitt, they literally stole the opportunity for the permittee ownership of improvements on public lands. Most of those improvements dealt with water.

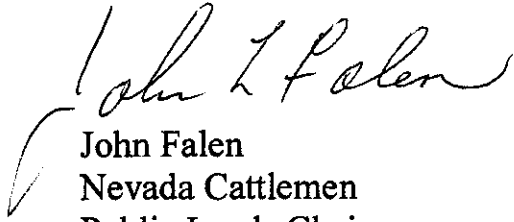
As part of Rangeland Reform, the BLM filed for more than 100 stock water permits on public lands in Nevada, saying it wanted the ability to obtain and reallocate the water rights to users seeking grazing permits. This move proves the governments desire for ultimate control.

If we allow the Government, through the BLM, to joint file on water, it will not only weaken state water law, it will give the Federal Government a new arena of power. The Government cannot prove beneficial use unless they own domestic livestock.

The joint filing is a short sighted, short term fix to a long term problem. If allowed private enterprise will develop and maintain the water on public lands and provide water for both domestic livestock and wildlife at the same time.

The Nevada Cattlemen/permittees are apposed to joint filing. They believe the persons who retain the priority use to the forage will serve as the beneficial users of the water.

Therefore we (Cattlemen) support a resolution seeking exclusion of joint permit fillings and language that states only applicants who own or possess livestock can acquire a right to water livestock.


John Falen
Nevada Cattlemen
Public Lands Chair