

**MINUTES OF THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Seventy-third Session  
February 28, 2005**

The Senate Committee on Natural Resources was called to order by Chair Dean A. Rhoads at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, February 28, 2005, in Room 2144 of the Legislative Building, Carson City, Nevada. [Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda. [Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster. All exhibits are available and on file at the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau.

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Senator Dean A. Rhoads, Chair  
Senator Mark E. Amodei  
Senator Bob Beers  
Senator Bob Coffin  
Senator Michael Schneider  
Senator Maggie Carlton

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Senator Mike McGinness, Vice Chair (Excused)

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Linda Eissmann, Committee Policy Analyst  
Jonathan Sherwood, Committee Secretary

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Doug Busselman, Nevada Farm Bureau  
Joseph Guild, Cattlemen's Association  
Brian Beffort, Conservation Director, Friends of Nevada Wilderness  
Joe L. Johnson, Toiyabe Chapter Sierra Club

Chair Rhoads called the meeting to order. He stated there were bill draft requests (BDR) that needed to be introduced by the Committee.

**BILL DRAFT REQUEST 40-654**: Makes various changes concerning detection and marking of subsurface installations. (Later introduced as [Senate Bill 146](#).)

SENATOR BEERS MOVED TO INTRODUCE BDR 40-654.

SENATOR CARLTON SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS MCGINNESS, AMODEI AND SCHNEIDER WERE ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

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**BILL DRAFT REQUEST 30-914**: Increases amount of general obligation bonds that State Board of Finance is required to issue to provide grants to certain water systems. (Later introduced as [Senate Bill 147](#).)

SENATOR CARLTON MOVED TO INTRODUCE BDR 30-914.

SENATOR SCHNEIDER SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS MCGINNESS, AMODEI AND COFFIN WERE ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

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Chair Rhoads said he wanted a bill draft that would allow mining companies the ability to recover costs associated with legal challenges should they prevail.

SENATOR BEERS MOVED TO REQUEST A BILL DRAFT THAT WOULD ALLOW MINING COMPANIES THE ABILITY TO RECOVER COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH LEGAL CHALLENGES SHOULD THEY PREVAIL.

SENATOR SCHNEIDER SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATORS MCGINNESS AND AMODEI WERE ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

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Chair Rhoads opened the hearing on Senate Joint Resolution (S.J.R.) 1.

**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 1**: Urges Congress to take certain actions concerning wilderness areas and wilderness study areas. (BDR R-703)

Doug Busselman, Nevada Farm Bureau, spoke in support of S.J.R. 1.

Joseph Guild, Cattlemen's Association, spoke in support of S.J.R. 1.

Brian Beffort, Conservation Director, Friends of Nevada Wilderness, spoke from a prepared statement ([Exhibit C](#)) in regard to a proposed amendment to S.J.R. 1. Chair Rhoads asked what the amendment to S.J.R. 1 would do. Mr. Beffort said the amendment clarified the difference between the release of wilderness study areas (WSA) and the identification of lands for disposal for the purpose of economic development or community expansion. He said S.J.R. 1 without the amendment mixes the two processes. He said WSAs were not the right areas for community expansion. Senator Beers asked if the proposed amendment had been presented to the Legislative Committee on Public Lands, Subcommittee to Study Wilderness Areas and Wilderness Study Areas. Mr. Beffort said he did not have the opportunity to testify before that Committee on the proposed amendment. Senator Carlton asked if the amendment would allow more land to be available for conversion from federal-owned to private- or State-owned lands. Mr. Beffort said it would. Senator Beers asked if striking the word "release" from S.J.R. 1 would make it more difficult to convert the lands from federal ownership. Mr. Beffort said the word "release" was too confusing and so it was removed for greater clarity. Mr. Beffort discussed an article from "Outside" magazine about the economic benefits of wilderness ([Exhibit D](#).) He reviewed an article from the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* titled "Number of hunters declines nationwide, especially in West," about the economic benefits of hunting ([Exhibit E](#)). He discussed another newspaper article from the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* titled "Rural towns count on hunters in winter," about the reduced number of hunters in the west ([Exhibit F](#)).

Joe Johnson, Toiyabe Chapter Sierra Club, spoke in support of S.J.R. 1 and the proposed amendment.

Mr. Busselman said he supported the idea of the proposed amendment. He said if wilderness is unsuitable to remain as wilderness, it should be released to the public.

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Chair Rhoads said Senator McGinness had information on a program in New Mexico that financially assisted farmers markets. Chair Rhoads said a program like this in Nevada would provide greater incentive to hold farmers markets. Chair Rhoads asked for a bill draft on this issue.

SENATOR AMODEI MOVED TO REQUEST A BILL DRAFT FOR FUNDING TO DEVELOP AND PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO FARMERS MARKETS IN NEVADA.

SENATOR COFFIN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED. (SENATOR MCGINNESS WAS ABSENT FOR THE VOTE.)

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Chair Rhoads adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Jonathan Sherwood,  
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

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Senator Dean A. Rhoads, Chair

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_