

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 1—COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES

(ON BEHALF OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC
LANDS SUBCOMMITTEE TO STUDY WILDERNESS
AREAS AND WILDERNESS STUDY AREAS)

PREFILED FEBRUARY 3, 2005

Referred to Committee on Natural Resources

SUMMARY—Urges Congress to take certain actions concerning
wilderness areas and wilderness study areas.
(BDR R-703)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.
Effect on the State: No.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets [omitted material] is material to be omitted.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION—Urging the Nevada
Congressional Delegation and Congress to take certain
actions concerning wilderness areas and wilderness study
areas.

- 1 WHEREAS, The provisions of 16 U.S.C. §§ 1131 et seq.,
2 commonly referred to as the Wilderness Act, establish the National
3 Wilderness Preservation System, which consists of areas of federal
4 public lands that are designated by Congress as wilderness areas;
5 and
6 WHEREAS, Congress has designated approximately 2.8 million
7 acres of federal public lands in Nevada as wilderness areas; and
8 WHEREAS, If an area of federal public land is designated as a
9 wilderness area, it must be managed in a manner that preserves the
10 wilderness character of the area and ensures that the area remains
11 unimpaired for future use and enjoyment as a wilderness area; and
12 WHEREAS, A reasonable amount of wilderness area in this State
13 provides for a diverse spectrum of recreational opportunities in
14 Nevada, promotes tourism and provides a place for Nevadans to
15 escape the pressures of urban growth; and



1 WHEREAS, The provisions of the Wilderness Act and the
2 Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. §§
3 1701 et seq., provide for the study of certain areas of land to
4 determine whether those areas, commonly known as wilderness
5 study areas, are suitable for designation as a wilderness area; and

6 WHEREAS, In conjunction with the provisions of the Wilderness
7 Act and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the Bureau
8 of Land Management of the Department of the Interior in the late
9 1970s conducted an initial inventory of approximately 49 million
10 acres of federal public lands in Nevada to determine the suitability
11 of such lands for designation as wilderness areas or identification as
12 wilderness study areas and, in 1980, recommended that
13 approximately 5.1 million acres of those lands be identified as
14 wilderness study areas; and

15 WHEREAS, Although Congress recently enacted the Lincoln
16 County Conservation, Recreation, and Development Act of 2004,
17 Pub. L. No. 108-424, 118 Stat. 2403, pursuant to which
18 approximately 768,000 acres have been given status as wilderness
19 areas and approximately 251,000 acres have been released for
20 multiple use under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act,
21 the Bureau of Land Management continues to manage
22 approximately 2.8 million acres of federal public lands in Nevada
23 identified as wilderness study areas; and

24 WHEREAS, Decisions concerning whether to designate
25 wilderness study areas as wilderness areas or release those areas for
26 multiple use are important and must be made in a timely manner and
27 without any unnecessary delays so that those lands which are
28 suitable for designation as a wilderness area may be afforded full
29 protection as such and those lands which are not suitable for
30 designation as a wilderness area may be released for use and
31 management for the public good as accorded by law; now, therefore,
32 be it

33 RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF
34 NEVADA, JOINTLY, That the members of the Nevada Legislature
35 urge the Nevada Congressional Delegation to work with all
36 interested Nevadans, land managers, affected parties, local
37 governments, special interest organizations and members of the
38 public in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect to address issues
39 concerning the designation of wilderness areas in Nevada; and be it
40 further

41 RESOLVED, That the members of the Nevada Legislature urge
42 Congress to take the following actions concerning wilderness areas
43 and wilderness study areas:

44 1. As part of the legislative process for determining which
45 federal lands should be designated as wilderness areas, and in



1 accordance with stakeholder agreements, continue the policy of
2 releasing federal lands that are a part of a wilderness study area for
3 multiple use, and to continue the appropriate disposal of suitable
4 federal lands for conversion to state or private lands, when the
5 determination is made that those federal lands are unsuitable for
6 designation as wilderness areas;

7 2. When determining whether to designate land as a wilderness
8 area, carefully consider the requirements of existing and future
9 military operations on the land and in the airspace over the land and
10 make appropriate decisions based on those requirements; and

11 3. Support the adoption of a schedule for the timely
12 consideration of a plan to release wilderness study areas that are
13 found unsuitable for designation as wilderness areas; and be it
14 further

15 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate prepare and
16 transmit a copy of this resolution to the Vice President of the United
17 States as the presiding officer of the Senate, the Speaker of the
18 House of Representatives and each member of the Nevada
19 Congressional Delegation; and be it further

20 RESOLVED, That this resolution becomes effective upon
21 passage.



