

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, AGRICULTURE, AND
MINING**

**Seventy-Fourth Session
February 7, 2007**

The Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining was called to order by Chair Jerry D. Claborn at 1:32 p.m., on Wednesday, February 7, 2007, in Room 3161 of the Legislative Building, 401 South Carson Street, Carson City, Nevada. Copies of the minutes, including the Agenda ([Exhibit A](#)), the Attendance Roster ([Exhibit B](#)), and other substantive exhibits are available and on file in the Research Library of the Legislative Counsel Bureau and on the Nevada Legislature's website at www.leg.state.nv.us/74th/Committees/. In addition, copies of the audio record may be purchased through the Legislative Counsel Bureau's Publications Office (email: publications@lcb.state.nv.us; telephone: 775-684-6835).

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mr. Jerry D. Claborn, Chair
Mr. Joseph Hogan, Vice Chair
Mr. Kelvin Atkinson
Mr. David Bobzien
Mr. John C. Carpenter
Mr. Pete Goicoechea
Mr. Tom Grady
Mr. Ruben Kihuen
Mr. John W. Marvel
Mr. James Ohrenschall
Mrs. Debbie Smith

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jennifer Ruedy, Committee Policy Analyst
Randy Stephenson, Committee Counsel
Millicent Jorgenson, Committee Manager
Betty Francis, Committee Secretary

Chair Claborn:

Will the Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining please come to order. We will begin with introductions of Committee members and the staff.



I have been a member of this Committee for four sessions; this will be my second session as chairman of the Committee. We have seven returning members of the Committee: the Vice Chair to my right, Assemblyman Joe Hogan; Assemblyman Kelvin Atkinson; Assemblyman John Carpenter; Assemblyman Pete Goicoechea; Assemblyman Tom Grady; Assemblyman John Marvel; and Assemblywoman Debbie Smith. We also have three new members, not only to the Committee, but also to the Assembly. Please welcome Assemblyman David Bobzien, Assemblyman Ruben Kihuen, and Assemblyman James Ohrenschall. Thank you for being here and welcome to the Committee. I would like each of you to introduce yourself and your goals on this Committee for the Legislative Session, starting with Mr. Ohrenschall.

Assemblyman Ohrenschall:

Thank you, Chair Claborn. I have known you for many years and have a great amount of respect for you. It is an honor to serve on this Committee. I am a native Nevadan and grew up in Las Vegas, which is considered an urban center. For many years my mother, former Assemblywoman Ohrenschall, practiced law in Las Vegas. As a child I got to spend a lot of time with my mother hiking in Red Rock Canyon and Mt. Charleston, and developed a love for Nevada and the environment. Even though I am from Las Vegas, I do care a lot about the issues that will be before this Committee, so I am looking forward to it. Thank you, Chair Claborn.

Assemblyman Grady:

I am also a native Nevadan, born in Tonopah. Raised in the Reno area most of my life, I have been in Yerington now for about 30 years, and I too care about this State of Nevada. I have seven grandchildren, and I want them to enjoy Nevada as much as I have. Thank you, Chair Claborn.

Assemblywoman Smith:

Thank you, Chair Claborn. I grew up in Northern Nevada, rural Nevada, so the issues in this Committee are vitally important to my family and to me. My husband is a hunter, and I care very much about these issues. I worked in the mining industry, so I have those interests in my background as well. I know the interests of this Committee are important to my constituents.

Chair Claborn:

Thank you, Mrs. Smith.

Assemblyman Bobzien:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee for welcoming me. I can honestly say this is the number one Committee that I am the most

interested in serving on. As a dedicated outdoorsman, I have paid my fair share of money over the years for stamps and licenses. I am married to a miner's daughter, and have been involved in parks and conservation issues over the years. I am very much looking forward to serving on this Committee and thank you, again, for welcoming me.

Chair Claborn:

Thank you, Mr. Bobzien.

Assemblyman Kihuen:

Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for pronouncing my last name correctly. I represent the 11th District, which is in Las Vegas, the eastern part of Las Vegas. I am looking forward to being on this Committee. It should be a good learning experience for me. I want to work with all of you and also the rest of my Committee members on any issues and try to understand and be there for you. Thank you for having me.

Assemblyman Atkinson:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I am happy to be back with you this session. Thank you for letting me come back. This is my third session and my third time on Natural Resources. I was Vice Chair last year. I am ready to assist you in any way possible, Mr. Chairman. We are going to have a good session, and you can count on me.

Assemblyman Carpenter:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I am glad to be back with the Committee, and glad to see you as Chairman. I am sure we are going to do good things on this Committee. I have been in the Legislature, starting my twenty-first year, and I have been on Natural Resources the entire time I have been in the Legislature. I am glad that you are here.

Chair Claborn:

Thank you, Mr. Carpenter. It has always been a pleasure. I worked with you on Judiciary in 1999, and you taught me the ropes. I am so happy to have you on my Committee and happy to have you as my friend. Thank you. On my right is my Vice Chair, Mr. Hogan.

Assemblyman Hogan:

I am Joe Hogan, and I represent the 10th Assembly District in Las Vegas. It is a particular pleasure and honor to serve as Vice Chair with my good friend the Chairman. There are not a lot of crops and wildlife. There is some wildlife in my district--the entire Strip is in my district--so that is a whole different kind, but my background is in agriculture. I grew up in northern Iowa where by late

summer you could not see anything because the corn was 10 feet tall. I am interested in agriculture and in all the subjects that we deal with. Since I have lived in the West, I have been intrigued by rockhounding and fossil hounding and interesting things that bring you to the far corners of all the western states. I am interested in minerals and mining as well. I am interested in environmental issues and want to make sure that our agricultural interests and mining thrive and prosper. All of us are looking for the best interests of the land, water and air quality. We have some good state agencies to work with. We have very high interest among the public, and we get some spirited discussions. I am looking forward to a great 120 days. Thank you.

Chair Claborn:

I would like to say I had the pleasure of working with Mr. Hogan last session and now as my Vice Chair. Mr. Hogan brings a lot of knowledge and dignity to this Committee. We are happy to have you on the Committee. Mr. Goicoechea is another good friend and a good agriculture man.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am Pete Goicoechea. I am a third generation rancher and represent Assembly District 35, which includes eight, predominately rural counties. I think I have the best group of constituents in the State of Nevada. I do appreciate the opportunity to be on Natural Resources. The rural counties are dependent on their natural resources, agriculture, and mining. This has always been a good Committee, and Jerry has always been a very good Chairman to work with. He understands the issues, and we are able to discuss them. Along with Chairman Claborn and Vice Chairman Hogan, we will have a good session, and I am looking forward to it.

Chair Claborn:

Thank you, Mr. Goicoechea. Mr. Marvel, I think you have been on this Committee longer than anybody.

Assemblyman Marvel:

I have been on this Committee since 1979. Along with the Standing Committee on Public Lands, this Committee is a good mix of the same issues. I am an ex-rancher. At one time before apportionment, they had most of the major gold mines in my district. I look forward to a good session.

Chair Claborn:

I am really blessed to have such a knowledgeable and qualified Committee. Thank you.

Next, I would like to introduce our staff. Our Committee Manager is Millie Jorgenson. She also serves as my Personal Secretary. This will be her fifth term, so I owe her a great deal of gratitude because if I have any smarts, it comes from her. So thank you, Millie. Next, we have our new Committee Secretary, Betty Francis. Welcome aboard, Betty. Our Committee Assistant, Matt Mowbray, was with us last time. He is a hard-working young man, and we are happy to have him back. Our Committee Policy Analyst, Jennifer Ruedy, we are happy to have you. Also, we have Randy Stephenson, serving as Committee and Legal Counsel. I had the pleasure of working with Randy on the Legislative Committee on Public Lands in the Interim, and he is very knowledgeable. Randy would you like to tell us your goals.

Randy Stephenson, Committee Counsel, Legislative Counsel Bureau:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am Randy Stephenson, Principal Deputy, for the Legal Division here at the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB). We are a non-partisan staff. Always feel free to come and ask me questions. Our primary goals are obviously to prepare the bill drafts and any upcoming amendments for the Committee, and also other legal questions you may have. I look forward to being assigned to this Committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chair Claborn:

We are also happy to have you.

The first order of business today is to adopt the Standing Rules, which have been provided for you ([Exhibit C](#)). They remain basically the same as last session. Review them, and if you have any questions, I will try to answer them.

I wanted to say that unless a Committee member advises the Chairman otherwise, I will presume that during the Floor Session a member will vote on the amendments and measures consistent with that member's vote in our Committee. I think that among the Standing Rules, that rule is the most important because it carries a lot of respect when the vote comes in and the tally comes up on the board. So I will entertain a motion.

ASSEMBLYMAN HOGAN MOVED FOR ADOPTION OF THE COMMITTEE
STANDING RULES.

ASSEMBLYMAN MARVEL SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Jennifer Ruedy, Policy Analyst, Legislative Counsel Bureau:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am a Senior Research Analyst in the Research Division with the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB), and I am honored to be serving as the Committee Policy Analyst for the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining. Although this is my fifth session with the Nevada Legislature, it is my first assignment with a staff and Assembly Committee, and I am really looking forward to working with you. You have already met Randy Stephenson. He is actually going to be providing legal counsel to both the Senate and the Assembly Natural Resources Committees, and he will be attending most of our Committee meetings. I would like to remind both the Committee and the public that the Legislative Counsel Bureau is a non-partisan agency. As a non-partisan staff person, I neither advocate nor oppose those legislations. My role is to assist the Committee and its members in processing bills and finding the information you need to make informed decisions.

Let us turn to the Committee Policy Brief ([Exhibit D](#)), which hopefully you have in front of you. Every session, Committee staff prepare a Committee policy brief to recap last session, to review the Committee's jurisdiction, and to alert the members to the issues you will be facing in this session. There are no major changes to the Committee's jurisdiction with the exception of a new chapter – chapter 445D – on environmental covenants and the deletion of chapter 533 – on Adjudication of Vested Water Rights; Appropriation of Public Waters. While water-related measures are referred to the Senate Natural Resources, most of these water related measures are referred to Government Affairs on the Assembly side. On pages 4 to 7 in the Committee brief, I have summarized many of the bills that were heard by the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining and passed by the Legislature last session. I erred on the side of inclusion, but I hope you find it useful in remembering what happened two years ago. For the new members, this may be a helpful summary of measures before this Committee in the 2005 Session. On page 8 of the brief is a listing of general topics that will come before the Committee. Again, I think these topics are the same ones the Committee dealt with last session. Also, you will notice the red bill books that each of you should have. There were five bills, prefiled for this Committee; those can be found in the red bill books should you have any questions about the bills that were already prefiled for this Committee.

Although I am sure that you have all received a copy of the session calendar and the deadlines, I want to emphasize a couple of important dates. Coming up next week, actually on Monday, February 12, is the final deadline for individual BDRs (bill draft requests). February 23 is the deadline for Committee BDRs.

The deadline for getting Assembly bills out of Committee is April 13, followed by the April 24 deadline for passage of Assembly bills out of the Assembly. Toward the back of the brief, there is a list of key contacts for State and federal agencies and various interest groups that often come before the Committee. If you are looking for contact information in this list for any group or individual and you do not find it, please let me know, and I will be happy to get it for you. I want to emphasize that if I can be of assistance to you, don't hesitate to ask and that goes for Randy also. Even if your question does not relate to the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining, I will be happy to take the request and relay it to the appropriate person in Research or Legal, and get you an expert response. Thank you.

Chair Claborn:

Thank you, Jennifer. We are happy to have you. Are there any questions of Ms. Ruedy? No questions. Thank you, Jennifer. I think that we are going to hear a couple of bills next week. I don't anticipate more than 50 bills. I want you all to know my door is always open to each member of this Committee, and if you need something you can come and talk with me. Does anybody have any questions or want to make any comments to the members? If there are no questions, we can adjourn the meeting. I appreciate your attention. Thank you very much. See you on Monday. We are adjourned. [1:56 p.m.]

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Betty Francis
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblyman Jerry D. Claborn, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

Committee Name: Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture,
and Mining

Date: February 7, 2007

Time of Meeting: 1:30 p.m.

Bill	Exhibit	Witness / Agency	Description
	A	*****	Agenda
	B	*****	Sign In Roster
	C	Chair Claborn	Standing Rules
	D	Jennifer Ruedy, Policy Analyst	Committee Brief