

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

**Seventy-Fourth Session
February 28, 2007**

The Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining was called to order by Chair Jerry D. Claborn at 1:33 p.m., on Wednesday, February 28, 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:

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

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart, Washoe County, Assembly
District No. 22

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jennifer Ruedy, Committee Policy Analyst
J. Randall Stephenson, Committee Legal Analyst

Minutes ID: 391



Sherrada Fielder, Committee Secretary
Matt Mowbray, Committee Assistant

OTHERS PRESENT:

CSM John Hefner, Legislative Director, Nevada Enlisted Association of
the National Guard

Felix T. Castagnola, Colonel, Chief of Staff, Nevada Army National Guard

Chris McKenzie, Chairman, Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners

Tim Tetz, Executive Director, Nevada Office of Veterans' Services

Steve Robinson, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor

Tina Nappe, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada

Pamela Wilcox, Administrator, Division of State Lands, Department of
Conservation and Natural Resources

Chair Claborn:

[Called meeting to order.]

**Assembly Bill 105: Provides certain benefits to members of the Nevada
National Guard and their families relating to licenses, tags or permits for
fishing, hunting or trapping. (BDR 45-833)**

Chair Claborn:

[Opens hearing on Assembly Bill 105.]

Assemblyman Lynn D. Stewart, Washoe County, Assembly District No. 22:

It has been the tradition of our country and state to honor our fighting men and women who serve to protect us. I served in the army years ago and our country honored us then with combat pay at \$65 per month. In the State of Nevada, we have honored members of the United States Armed Services with benefits and privileges. However, in most cases, those benefits and privileges were not extended to the National Guard. I am not sure why that was; perhaps people thought the Nevada National Guard was not involved in actual combat and was not in actual danger like our Armed Forces. That situation has changed over the last few years. We have seen hundreds and thousands of our Guardsmen serving in Afghanistan and the Middle East. We have 3,500 members of the National Guard in Nevada, both the air and guardsmen.

The bill we are discussing today recognizes the outstanding service and dedication of the Nevada National Guardsman. The Nevada Guard has a longstanding reputation for being a safe, professional organization that makes strong and on-going contributions to our communities. The Guard is actively involved in the global war on terrorism and also here at home. It has been here

to fight wildfires and floods and is prepared to respond to any situation in support of the State of Nevada.

The legislation today provides the same benefit to the guard that is extended to active duty soldiers. It is important to distinguish that the justification for each is different. Active duty soldiers earn the reduced rate due to the fact they have limited ability to fully use their fishing and hunting license. We want to extend to the National Guard the same privileges that the armed services of the United States have regarding hunting and fishing licenses, and extend to them a reduced rate and fee and to waive the six month residence requirement.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

I would like clarification on the way the present statute is written. It says under existing law, "all necessary hunting or fishing licenses, tags or permits for fishing, hunting or trapping in the State of Nevada." Technically, if you are in the Armed Forces or National Guard you could receive any and all tags available in the State. I do not believe that is the case but would like clarification.

Assemblyman Stewart:

It was not our intent to automatically give tags for elk and antelope—they have to be drawn. If we need to clarify that in the language I would agree to that.

Chair Claborn:

We have a person in the audience who can answer all our questions who will give testimony.

CSM John Hefner, Legislative Director, Nevada Enlisted Association of the National Guard:

My role as the Legislative Committee Chair for the Enlisted Association for the National Guard is to represent all the enlisted members of the National Guard. Last year our committee considered ideas on how to increase benefits and how to help our membership and guard members. Our members questioned why active duty service members received a reduced fishing license but Guard members did not. We decided to pursue the issue and Assemblyman Stewart agreed to sponsor the Bill Draft Request.

[Submits Nevada National Guard Executive Summary ([Exhibit C](#)).] This summary is an extraction of the National Guard's Annual Report and provides information on federal deployments in 2005-2006 for the Army and Air Units.

The legislation submitted is to recognize guardsman for serving on behalf of the State of Nevada. On line 29 of the bill draft request, it says, "a member of the Nevada National Guard on active service in full-time National Guard duty as

defined in 10 U.S.C." As it reads, it would be exclusive to the active duty soldier in the Nevada Guard. We would like to amend it to be "a member of the Nevada National Guard *in good standing*." It would then include the weekend soldiers.

Assemblyman Stewart:

The weekend soldier has in many cases, become the six month a year soldier.

Chair Claborn:

Do you have the amendment with you today?

John Hefner:

No, we did not get it in writing. We had talked to the Legislative Counsel Bureau two weeks ago and were of the understanding the amendment would be put in at that time but it did not happen.

Assemblyman Grady:

If they are on active duty or not on active duty, and are members of the National Guard, they would qualify for this license?

John Hefner:

Yes sir.

Assemblyman Stewart:

I can clarify that. The Sergeant here is a full time employee of the guard. The weekend warriors that do one weekend a month and two weeks in the summer would not be included. It would be the ones who are deployed for a year or on extended tours.

Chair Claborn:

My impression is that this bill would be uniform with all other Armed Forces under the same category. The bill would put all the National Guard under the category we already have. The law is already here with the other Armed Forces. Is that correct?

Assemblyman Stewart:

That is correct.

Chair Claborn:

There are several questions regarding this measure. As I understand it, what we are trying to do is make it uniform with all the military, not to give the National Guard any more benefit than anybody else. It all has to be uniform.

Felix T. Castagnola, Colonel, Chief of Staff, Nevada Army National Guard:

On behalf of the Adjutant General and Major General Cindy Kirkland we feel this is a benefit to our soldiers and airmen and we would appreciate passage of the bill, subject to your questions.

Chair Claborn:

At this time, I would like to have Mr. McKenzie come up to get us in the right direction.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

How many active guards do we have in Nevada today? We have a guard strength of 3,500, but they all would not be active.

Felix Castagnola:

On the army side we have about 300 in theatre right now that are on active duty. I do not have the information for the Air Guard at this time.

John Hefner:

As a guess, there are approximately 250 between the Air Guard at the base and those who are deployed.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

This bill would then apply to 550 individuals in the State of Nevada today. Is that correct?

John Hefner:

As it is written right now.

Felix Castagnola:

Yes, sir, as it is written right now, those are the individuals who are on active duty.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

If we were to amend the bill, this would incorporate the 3,500 guardsmen and their spouses and dependents?

Felix Castagnola:

That is correct.

Assemblywoman Smith:

In two places, the bill states, "any member of the Nevada National Guard," and on line 29 it is specific to what it means to be in active service. Is there a disconnect there? Is part of it what you intended and part of it not?

Felix Castagnola:

To us that are in uniform, active duty is a key phrase, meaning you are on duty. In the other paragraph it refers to any member of the Nevada National Guard. Those two, in their concept for the bill are contradictory. The first statement applies to all weekend soldiers and anybody who is a member of the Nevada Guard. The exclusion comes in the second part under (b), that it only applies to these particular individuals.

Assemblywoman Smith:

I wanted to clarify that point, that we have a disconnect between sections of the bill.

Felix Castagnola:

Yes. Those two are contradictory.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

As you look at Section 1 of the existing statute, it states "... the Armed Forces of the United States who has been assigned..." that is where they take the weekend warriors out. That is where it clarifies the confusion.

Chair Claborn:

We can have more testimony to clarify this if needed.

Chris McKenzie, Chairman, Nevada Board of Wildlife Commissioners:

This bill was brought before our legislative committee. It was our understanding that there would be an amendment to the language. It has come to light today that it would extend to all members of the National Guard. We did not have opposition, at the time, to providing benefits to active members. We did a fiscal impact to determine what extending the privilege to those members would mean. We are not here to oppose the extension of this to the members of the National Guard as it is extended to the other Armed Forces, but there would be a definite fiscal impact. There would be a \$38,000 difference per year based on the percentage of the population, those who would apply, and those who are non-resident who would be granted exemption. Our numbers were based on 300 guard members being extended this privilege.

I would note in terms of Section 1 compared to subsection 2, I read Section 1 to waive the residency requirement. Section 2 would provide, beyond the residency requirement, a reduced fee for a license. Beyond being considered a resident, Section 2 would also reduce the cost more than just the \$5. That is the distinction between Section 1 and 2.

Chair Claborn:

What the bill would actually do is put everyone on the same level with the only change being a waiver of their residency. Everything would be the same. The licensing would be the same. Is that correct?

Chris McKenzie:

I had people approach me who said we would be giving tags to all the National Guard, but that is not how I read it. There would not be enough tags in certain species to issue for the guards. As an example, we would not have enough big horn tags to give them. I do not believe that was the intent. That is not how I read it, but several people were concerned and some clarification is needed.

Assemblyman Goicoechea:

We do need clarification. If you read the statute at face value, it says that not only will you give them the hunting and fishing license, but tags and permits. I talked with our legal analyst and he says that is how it is written in this particular bill. I know this is not the intent, and never was the intent. It is not new language, it is existing language. Technically, if you have an active soldier, he could come and request it and request a tag and license. It would at least require litigation.

Assemblyman Stewart:

We would be willing to strike the tag part. We believe the guardsmen should be in the drawings as everyone else. As far as residency, it says all members of the guard are residents.

Assemblywoman Smith:

Can we, for a future meeting, have someone from the Department of Wildlife or the Commission clarify how this is handled with other members of the military? If we get that clarified, it will help us to proceed with this bill.

Chris McKenzie:

They have been treated the same as everyone else in terms of tag application and the lottery draw.

Assemblywoman Smith:

They would get the waiver of residency and five dollar license fee?

Chris McKenzie:

Yes. That brings us to the point where we go to each Session and ask for reimbursement for all low-cost license fees for juniors and Native Americans. In tight fiscal periods, we go to the Legislature to request augmentation from the

general fund allocation to bring us back to the point where we would be if we received the full amount for the license fees.

Assemblywoman Smith:

I would request that we look to see if we need to correct existing language so it is clearly based on Assemblyman Goicoechea's concerns and advice from Legal.

Assemblyman Grady:

If you go to page 2, line 7, it may clear it up. It says, "All such license and permits must be issued on the same terms and conditions and at the same costs as licenses, tags or permits are issued to Nevada residents, except that the 6 months' residence requirement must be waived."

Chris McKenzie:

That was the exact provision I relied on when I thought this would not grant any special privileges in terms of tags and permits.

Chair Claborn:

That is how I interpreted it as well. I will probably hold this bill over.

John Hefner:

Line 22 on page 2 mentions the \$5 license. It is different from the combined hunting and fishing resident license fee of \$54. If you go to Wal-Mart and ask for a servicemen's license, and provide a copy of your leave form, they charge you \$9. I do not know what the \$4 difference is for. The residence fee for regular Nevada residents is \$54. It is not at the same cost as I read in the previous line. It is a reduced fee.

Chair Claborn:

Seems we are having a real problem with this bill.

Assemblyman Stewart:

I would like to introduce Mr. Tim Tetz.

Tim Tetz, Executive Director, Office of Veterans' Services:

I would agree with Assemblyman Grady. Our office's interpretation of lines 7, 8, and 9 would mean that tags and licensing go through the same process, but we are allowing it to extend out to the servicemen and now to the National Guard. Lines 29, 30 and 31, the amendment that should have been written and now I would like to propose, would change paragraph B to read "...and a member in good standing of the Nevada National Guard." It would remove the confusion and would include all 3,500 guardsmen serving Nevada.

Chair Claborn:

There is so much confusion on this that we will probably submit it to committee. We will listen to testimony on this bill, but will not take any action on the measure.

Tim Tetz:

In respect of your time, I will wait to submit my written and oral testimony for a future time.

Chair Claborn:

Would you be willing to work on a subcommittee?

Tim Tetz:

Yes.

Chair Claborn:

Any further testimony for this bill? [None]

Steve Robinson, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor:

The Governor favors the intent of the legislation. We will check on the fiscal impact and will meet with Mr. Stewart and Counsel to answer some of the questions presented.

Tina Nappe, Private Citizen:

My intent in speaking in opposition to the bill is to speak to the gravity of the situation of the National Guard, what they face, and the trauma they have undergone and we have watched them undergo. My concern with the legislation is that the fee reduction impacts the Wildlife Department. There should be written into the legislation that the general fund will reimburse. It also concerns me that the \$5 does not cover the cost of administration.

Assemblyman Marvel:

Do you know what the fiscal impact might be?

Tina Nappe:

I saw the fiscal impact attached to the bill, but was not sure if it included the match. All of the funds are matched with federal dollars. Did it only include the general loss fee or the match fee? I would think the National Guard, as it has expressed, is interested in this and it could potentially have an impact on the Department's (NDOW) revenues. Our concern overall is the flattening in some areas of the interest in hunting and fishing and the fact the deer herds have been on a substantial decline. It is a primary income source we are losing.

Assemblyman Marvel:

With three fires we had last year, it will also have an impact on the herds.

Tina Nappe:

The sportsmen have set up a special fund themselves to raise money to restore many of those areas, but it would need a substantial amount of money. I am looking at the organization and wildlife as a whole.

Assemblyman Marvel:

Mr. Robinson stated they plan on working with everybody to make sure we have an accurate fiscal analysis.

Chair Claborn:

Any questions? I want to put this into a subcommittee. I would like Mrs. Smith as Chair and to include Mr. Grady and Mr. Bobzien. Go into a subcommittee and bring back some recommendations.

Assemblyman Grady:

Can we have someone from Wildlife assist us?

Chair Claborn:

Chris McKenzie, can you assist?

Chris McKenzie:

Yes.

Assemblyman Bobzien:

We would like Tim Tetz, and Mr. Stewart as well.

Chair Claborn:

[Closes hearing on Assembly Bill 105.]

Pam Wilcox, Administrator, Division State Lands, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources:

[Submits PowerPoint presentation on State Lands ([Exhibit D](#)). The mission statement of State Lands has been developed by our staff and reads "to uphold the conservation and land resource values of Nevadans through responsible land use planning, resource programs that protect and enhance the natural environment, and land stewardship worthy of the lands entrusted to us."

We have 22 full-time positions and our budget is a little over \$2 million. I will go over each of the four programs in our office. The State Land Office has existed since statehood in the Land Surveyor's office. The categories of land

the office manages are sovereign, school trust lands, and lands in the Lake Tahoe Basin. Sovereign lands are lands under bodies of navigable water. The second category is school trust lands. Every state since Ohio has received a grant of lands at statehood from the federal government for support of the common schools. Nevada received 4 million acres. We were the only state that was able to trade 2 million acres for land we could select wherever we wanted.

We still hold today 2,500 acres of school trust land and hope to sell it. Any revenues from the sale of lands is deposited into the permanent school fund. The interest from those revenues goes into the distributed school fund and supports the state schools.

Assemblyman Marvel:

Do you know how much is in the school fund now?

Pam Wilcox:

I can find out for you.

Assemblyman Ohrenschall:

Are the school trust lands in northern Nevada? Are there any in Clark County?

Pam Wilcox:

There are some in Clark County, but none left in the Las Vegas valley. The remaining lands in Clark County are in the Overton and Moapa Valley area and some in Pahrump. They are scattered throughout the state.

Assemblyman Ohrenschall:

How does the State acquire them?

Pam Wilcox:

The lands are provided by the federal government at the time of statehood. Most of our lands today are agency lands. These are state working lands used by state agencies. We are the state's real estate agency. We acquire land needed by the state and dispose of it. We issue easements, leases and permits, and are the state lands archive.

The second section of our office is the State Land Use Planning Agency. This agency provides technical planning assistance and facilitation to local governments. We help with the development of master plans and ordinances, partnership building, outreach, process facilitation and community visioning. We also work on public land planning and policy development. This agency oversees the Mt. Charleston special license plate. We also have a planning

council for state land use planning, it is the State Land Use Planning Advisory Council (SLUPAC). It is the only State, Governor-appointed council that includes members from every county. They advise on all land use planning issues.

The third program in the office is the Nevada Tahoe Resource Team. This is an interagency effort to protect Lake Tahoe. This team includes people from state lands, Department of Wildlife, Division of Forestry, Division of State Parks, Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP), Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) and any agency that has jurisdiction over the lake. We have had environmental improvement of the lake since July 1997. This was when the President and Vice-President came to Lake Tahoe for a Presidential Summit. All federal agencies, two states and local governments made a commitment to have an environmental improvement program to protect the lake. August of this year will be the 10-year anniversary of the program; and we will all reaffirm our support of Lake Tahoe.

We also administer the Lake Tahoe license plate program. This program has been successful and we have 20,000 license plates issued. The program has generated \$3.7 million for the Lake Tahoe Basin. \$25 is paid for the first year and \$20 each year after. We issue grants between \$300,000 and \$400,000 every year for Tahoe projects.

Chair Claborn:

I see on the slide, it says "the Nevada Land Bank." Would that be our Clark County Lands bill money?

Pam Wilcox:

No. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency has created, by their own regulations, many partial interests in land. In the land bank, we hold partial interests that the State has acquired and make them available for public projects or in some instances, we make them available to sell to the public. It is specific to the Tahoe Basin. It is interest the State has acquired for one of the Tahoe environmental programs that we hold and make available.

Chair Claborn:

So you do not receive any of the \$300 million?

Pam Wilcox:

We do not receive any of the \$300 million.

Chair Claborn:

Is that what goes from the Clark County Lands bill to keep Lake Tahoe clear?

Pam Wilcox:

It does and when we talked about the commitment made by all the partners in 1997, the federal agencies made the \$300 million commitment. The money generated by the sale of lands in Clark County is going to federal commitment. It is going to Forest Service projects, federal highways, Army Corp and EPA projects, and federal agency projects in the Tahoe basin.

Chair Claborn:

I just wanted to point out that we do give money to the north sometimes.

Pam Wilcox:

The support of Lake Tahoe from all the partners has been exceptional. It is a great project. We hold sensitive lands that have been acquired and protect them for the people of the State.

These are some of the projects we do at Lake Tahoe. We have 124 projects under the first phase of the Tahoe EIP (Environmental Improvement Program). Of those we have 65 completed and 37 in construction or planning. We are doing well in meeting our commitment made in 1997. We have 22 projects left to initiate in the future. Our highest priority is water quality. We have a water quality and erosion control grant program. We have completed 44 of the 65 water quality projects. They might be done by either state or local agencies through grants. Altogether, we have 200,000 acres that have been protected by erosion control projects for storm water treatment. Our second priority is forest health and fire prevention.

Assemblyman Carpenter:

One of the slides referred to sensitive land. Is that land acquired from the Southern Nevada Land Management Act?

Pam Wilcox:

No. All three of the major partners in the Tahoe Basin have land acquisition programs. The federal government, California, and Nevada. Nevada's program started in 1985 with a \$31 million Tahoe Bond program approved by the voters and legislature. The State, with state fund monies, would buy lots from people who found themselves in the position where they owned the lot and were paying taxes on it, but because of the environmental controls in the Tahoe Basin, they could not build on it. We have acquired 500 parcels. We hold those lands in perpetuity and manage them to protect the lake. The federal government has a parallel program which is the one you are thinking of from the sale of land in Clark County.

Assemblyman Carpenter:

On those lands do they just sit there or can they be leased or used?

Pam Wilcox:

We manage them and protect them as sensitive land. We inspect them regularly, and if they need erosion control work, we do it. If they need fuels work, we do that also. The public is welcome to enjoy these lots. Because they are restricted and cannot be developed, they do not have a lot of potential for lease. We sometimes have leases or permits to local governments to use the frontage areas for snow storage during the winter, and generally they generate revenue that way. These are lands we are committed to manage forever, just for the environmental value to protect the lake. They are mostly very steep. Two areas we manage are very steep and in-stream environments.

Assemblyman Carpenter:

Are these lands marked?

Pam Wilcox:

Yes, we have a silver and blue plaque mounted on a fence post. The Forest Service puts theirs on trees.

Forest Health is a huge component of our program. The Tahoe Basin was clear cut during the Tom Scott era so the forest is a second growth forest and is not as healthy as it could be. We have projects on the small parcels and state parks for thinning, forest improvement, and to treat excess fuels so the forest will be as healthy as possible and to diminish the fire hazard. So far, we have treated 936 acres of state park land for fuels reduction and forest self improvement. The pictures provided show you the clarity of the lake.

Our last program is the Question 1 Bond Program approved by the voters in 2002. This was a \$200 million bond program of which \$65.5 million was given to the Division of State Lands for the State's first ever conservation grant program. The funds can be used for a variety of purposes, such as recreational trails, acquisition of land for a variety of purposes, open space conservation, parks and green belts. They can be used for habitat conservation planning and open space planning. Habitat conservation planning is important in Nevada because we have a number of sensitive species around the State. If local governments are surprised when local species are listed, it can cause disruption locally. Habitat conservation plans let local governments get ahead of the curve to do a study of what species need to be protected and how they can be protected. If the habitat is protected, the species will not have to be listed.

The open space planning program is also important because you cannot ask for money to acquire land for open space unless it is in the open space plan. There is \$10 million for projects along the Carson River available to the four counties that are along the Carson River and \$5 million for the Tahoe path system. This is not the rim trail, but the path system is what is at lake level and goes around the lake.

To date we have awarded over \$30 million in grants. Over \$30 million has provided matching funds. Most of the projects do not require 50 percent matching, and the planning grants require only 5 percent matching. Many of the others require only 25 percent match. These are popular programs and people have been over-matching where they are willing to put in more funds than required. These go to local governments, counties, cities and towns, and to non-profits. We have awarded funds for 90 projects located in 3 of the 17 counties in the State.

Highlighted projects under the Question 1 program includes the Griel Ranch in Washoe Valley on the east side of Washoe Lake. It has been a working ranch for a long time. There has been development pressure in Washoe Valley and the owners of the property were willing to sell Washoe County a conservation easement, and we have issued a grant for that acquisition.

A few other highlights in Clark County is Project Green, a recreational trail.

Assemblyman Carpenter:

I would like to put on the record that a project in Elko City, called the East Park, has recently received \$464,000 for their project. For habitat restoration, a group in Elko involved with the Sage Grouse situation has a grant, or will be getting a grant, for their planning efforts. Thank you for helping Elko County.

Pam Wilcox:

Another project under the Question 1 program is the Soda Lake Acquisition in Churchill County. It is a small lake west of Fallon. It was an isolated area, but due to subdividing and development pressures, the local government started looking for ways to protect the land and to protect public access. We were able to provide funds for the acquisition of 1,200 acres for public access and a county recreation area.

The last program is a separate division, the Division of Conservation Districts. This is a program that has existed since the 1930's. There are Conservation Districts in every state. They were created when there were dust bowl conditions and the dust was blackening Washington D.C. Congress created the Soil Conservation Service and the Roosevelt Administration set up model

legislation for Conservation Districts to be set up in every state. Nevada, like every state in the 1930's passed legislation to establish Conservation Districts.

The Division of Conservation Districts' mission is to serve the State Conservation Commission in assisting, guiding and regulating Nevada's 28 locally elected Conservation Districts to meet the goals of Nevada landowners and land users in conserving renewable natural resources. This is a small division with three full-time positions.

We have a state grant program of \$5,000 for each conservation district. They leverage that by looking for other sources. Right now, that leveraging is up to \$27 for every state dollar, for a total of \$4 million.

Assemblyman Grady:

We were talking to people in the Conservation Districts who said they used to be able to get their engineering work done but now are not able to without having to pay for it, and the \$5,000 does not provide for what they need.

Pam Wilcox:

The districts have traditionally had a close relationship with the federal Soil Conservation Service (SCS) which today is the Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS). The SCS provided the engineering and other types of assistance to the conservation district programs. Most federal resource agencies have had severe budget cuts and no longer have the staffing available to assist Conservation Districts as they have in the past. Districts have been talking about getting funds from a number of sources. I know Assemblyman Settelmeyer has been looking for possibilities also.

The Division of Conservation Districts has a set of internal goals. The first is to increase the visibility and effectiveness of Nevada's 28 Conservation Districts. The second is to assist Conservation Districts in strengthening the locally-led leadership role in considering natural resource planning. The third is to provide partnership assistance between public and private entities and Conservation Districts, and the fourth is to support the Nevada State Conservation Commission.

Each conservation district has an elected board and an appointed official who serves voluntarily without pay. We have a State Conservation Commission which is the regulatory body appointed by the Governor. The division provides administrative support to expand and implement conservation district programs in education, watershed management and restoration, agricultural practices, water quality improvement projects, noxious weed abatement programs, and others.

Chair Claborn:
Any questions?

Assemblyman Marvel:
How much money is left in the Question 1 grant program?

Pam Wilcox:
The program we run is \$65.5 million and it is half committed at this point.

Assemblyman Marvel:
How many applications do you have pending?

Pam Wilcox:
We just awarded one grant, and there are about a dozen more.

Assemblyman Marvel:
How long will the money last?

Pam Wilcox:
This is a bond that was approved by the voters. There is a general state statute that states that when a bond is approved by the voters it has to be sold within six years. This bond was approved in 2002.

Assemblyman Marvel:
Is that money held in the general fund or is there a special account?

Pam Wilcox:
There is a special account.

Assemblyman Marvel:
Does interest accrue to that account?

Pam Wilcox:
The interest does accrue to that account. The staffing for both this program and the Tahoe program are both bond supported programs. We support our staff by the interest on those bonds.

Assemblyman Marvel:
How much money have you generated in interest so far?

Pam Wilcox:
I do not know, but I can find out for you. The Tahoe program over the years has generated enough money to pay the salary of the State Lands people who

worked on it, one person from the Division of Forestry, one from State Programs, 75 percent for a person from the Department of Wildlife and a clerical position. They have all been supported from the interest over the years. We take seriously the obligation that if the voters or legislators approve a bond, those bond moneys should go for the purpose for which they were approved.

Assemblyman Marvel:

How much money have you saved in the general fund?

Pam Wilcox:

I would have to get you that information.

Chair Claborn:

Any further questions?

[Mr. Atkinson leaves meeting.]

BDR 49-626: Revises provisions governing licenses to engage in pest control.
(Later introduced as [Assembly Bill 228](#).)

Chair Claborn:

[Introduces Bill Draft Request 49-626] This is the first BDR we have introduced this session. [Reads the BDR Summary.]

ASSEMBLYMAN CARPENTER MOVED TO DO APPROVE THE BILL
DRAFT REQUEST AS PRESENTED.

ASSEMBLYMAN KIHUEN SECONDED THE MOTION.

THE MOTION CARRIED (ASSEMBLYMAN ATKINSON WAS
ABSENT FOR THE VOTE).

Chair Claborn:

Approval of the BDR is to allow the action to become a bill. It requires a 2/3 majority vote.

J. Randall Stephenson, Committee Legal Analyst, LCB Legal Division:

The tags given to the servicemen would be given on the same terms as everyone else in the State except the residency requirement would be waived. Also, to clarify Section 1 and Section 2, refer to two different circumstances applying to two different groups. One refers to the permanent members of the Armed Forces and any member of the Nevada National Guard. Those people are

the persons to whom Section 1 applies. Section 2 is not intended to be worked in tandem, it is only for those who are bona fide residents of Nevada and who are on active duty in the Armed Forces or are on identical duty in the National Guard. If we want to make an amendment, as proposed, to Section 2 of Assembly Bill 105 about the numbers of Nevada National Guard on active service who are in good standing, it is understood that we would also have to make a similar amendment for those who are on active duty in the Armed Forces. The intent of the bill is to provide parity for both groups. Whatever one group gets, the other group gets.

Chair Claborn:

Did you draw this bill?

J. Randal Stephenson:

No, I did not.

Assemblywoman Smith:

It would be helpful if Mr. Stephenson came to the subcommittee to help with clarification.

Chair Claborn:

Any further questions? [None]

Chair Claborn:

[Meeting adjourned at 3:02 p.m.]

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Sherrada Fielder
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblyman Jerry D. Claborn, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

**Committee Name: Assembly Committee on Health and Human Services / Senate
Committee on Human Resources and Education**

Date: 02/28/07

Time of Meeting: 1:30 PM

Bill	Exhibit	Witness / Agency	Description
***	A	*****	Agenda
***	B	*****	Sign-In Sheet
A.B. 105	C	CSM John Hefner, Legislative Director, Nevada Enlisted Association of the National Guard	Nevada National Guard Executive Summary
	D	Pam Wilcox, Administrator, Division of State Lands, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources	PowerPoint Presentation on State Lands