

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

**Seventy-Eighth Session  
February 3, 2015**

The Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining was called to order by Chair Robin L. Titus at 1:31 p.m. on Tuesday, February 3, 2015, in Room 3138 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: [www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/App/NELIS/REL/78th2015). In addition, copies of the audio or video record of the meeting may be purchased, for personal use only, through the Legislative Counsel Bureau's Publications Office (email: [publications@lcb.state.nv.us](mailto:publications@lcb.state.nv.us); telephone: 775-684-6835).

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Assemblywoman Robin L. Titus, Chair  
Assemblyman Jim Wheeler, Vice Chair  
Assemblyman Nelson Araujo  
Assemblywoman Maggie Carlton  
Assemblyman Richard Carrillo  
Assemblywoman Victoria A. Dooling  
Assemblyman Chris Edwards  
Assemblyman John Ellison  
Assemblyman David M. Gardner  
Assemblyman Ira Hansen  
Assemblyman James Oscarson  
Assemblywoman Heidi Swank

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

None

**GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:**

None



**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Susan E. Scholley, Committee Policy Analyst  
Jim Penrose, Committee Counsel  
Stephen Wood, Committee Manager  
Donna J. Ruiz, Committee Secretary  
Cheryl Williams, Committee Assistant  
Diane Hudson, Proofreader

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

None

**Chair Titus:**

[Roll was taken.] I want to thank you for coming to our first meeting of the session of the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining (NATRAM). I would like the members to introduce themselves and share some of their goals for being on this Committee.

**Assemblywoman Swank:**

I represent Assembly District No. 16 in Las Vegas, which includes the Las Vegas Strip; the Arts District; the University of Nevada, Las Vegas; part of McCarran International Airport; and many of our historic neighborhoods. I have worked on animal welfare bills and historic preservation bills in the past. That is where my interests lie with natural resources.

**Assemblyman Araujo:**

I represent Assembly District No. 3, which is in the northwest part of the Las Vegas Valley. I am particularly interested in this Committee because I come from a history of farmers, and I know that my constituents are very familiar with a lot of the issues that will be presented in this Committee.

**Assemblywoman Dooling:**

I represent Assembly District No. 41, which takes in part of Henderson and part of Las Vegas. There are a lot of small horse ranches in my district. I grew up in Texas and I was always out riding the range and enjoying everything that was there on the land. My interest is in the land, water, and natural resources.

**Assemblyman Edwards:**

I am representing Assembly District No. 19, which includes parts of Boulder City, Henderson, North Las Vegas, Moapa (minus Logandale), and all of Mesquite. There are a lot of water rights issues, water use issues, land issues,

and interest regarding minerals and the development of that area. This Committee fits in well with my constituents.

**Assemblyman Gardner:**

I represent Assembly District No. 9, which is the southwest part of Las Vegas including the Rhodes Ranch area. It is a very urban area. I do not know a lot about natural resources, but I am hoping to learn more, especially with regard to development and water issues. I believe those are very important issues.

**Assemblyman Carrillo:**

I represent Assembly District No. 18, the southeast area of Las Vegas. It consists of parts of Clark County and Henderson. It also includes part of the Clark County Wetlands Park, a hidden gem of the southeast area. I served on this Committee last session and learned a lot of interesting information regarding the different aspects of animals, minerals, water, and everything in between. I am looking forward to continuing that education.

**Assemblywoman Carlton:**

I represent Assembly District No. 14 in Las Vegas. I served on the Senate Committee on Natural Resources. I learned a lot from former Senator Dean Rhoads, and former Senator Lawrence "Jake" Jacobsen would take us on tours. Being from an urban district, it was very interesting to learn about those things.

**Assemblyman Ellison:**

I represent Assembly District No. 33. My district takes up about three-quarters of one-half of the state, from the Idaho border to the north, along the Utah border all the way down to Caliente. I am a private businessman. I have served for the past 25 years either on the Elko City Council, the Elko County Board of Commissioners, or Nevada Association of Counties and have been involved with legislative issues. This is my third term on this Committee. I was raised on cattle ranching, and I have been involved with ranching all of my life.

**Assemblyman Wheeler:**

I represent Assembly District No. 39. It is not quite as big as Assemblyman Ellison's district, but my district is still about the size of Vermont. It includes all of Douglas County, all of Storey County, and the northwest corner of Lyon County. I served on NATRAM last session. I represent a very rural area, and the issues before this Committee are very important to me. I have been asked to serve as Vice Chair of this Committee.

**Assemblyman Hansen:**

I represent Assembly District No. 32. It includes parts of seven Nevada counties: all of Pershing, Humboldt, Lander, Mineral, and Esmeralda; a large section of Nye County; and most of Washoe County. It encompasses a little over 38,000 square miles. A lot of very important issues come before this Committee that will impact the people I represent: specifically, the consumptive users of wildlife, feral horse issues, sage grouse, ranching, farming, grazing, and the wildfire invasive species issues. I have served on the Legislative Committee on Public Lands twice and learned a lot while serving on that committee. The Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining Committee is probably the most important committee for my district.

**Assemblyman Oscarson:**

I represent Assembly District No. 36, which is about 36,000 square miles of rural Nevada. It encompasses parts of Lincoln, Clark, and Nye Counties. The issues that are important to my constituents, and me as well, are mining, ranching, farming, hunting, all-terrain vehicles, resources, and a variety of other things that have to do with the beautiful Nevada outdoors. It is my privilege to represent and show off my district. This is my first term on NATRAM. I look forward to serving and being a part of the Committee. I also look forward to making good decisions for the constituents that I represent.

**Chair Titus:**

I represent Assembly District No. 38. The previous representative, Tom Grady, is in the audience. We have not had a lot of people representing this district because before Mr. Grady, former Assembly Speaker Joseph Dini represented us for many years. I am honored to follow such legacies, and it is my privilege to be here. This may be my first year in the Legislature and my first year on NATRAM, but it is certainly not my first time dealing with issues in the state of Nevada.

Mining is dear to my heart. My great-grandfather came to Nevada as a miner in the 1860s. My grandfather was a shepherd and sheep man in Smith Valley, and he also raised bees. Some members did not know that we have sheep in Nevada. It will be fun to explore all of the issues of Nevada and all of its wonderful resources.

I would like to introduce all of the committee staff who are going to help us get through this session with style and get a lot of work done. First, I would like to introduce Susan Scholley. Susan is our committee policy analyst. Her duties include working with me and the committee manager to schedule and track bills and provide policy analysis and research work for the Committee. She will organize work sessions when the Committee is ready to act on bills and

amendments. This is Susan's eighth session with the Legislature. Her prior assignments were the Assembly Committee on Government Affairs and one session on the Senate Committee on Natural Resources. I am very honored to have Susan working with us.

Jim Penrose is committee counsel for NATRAM. His duties are to provide legal advice as needed by the Committee and to work with the Chair and other committee staff on bill amendments and other legal matters. This is Jim's fifth session, and his prior committee assignments included the Assembly Committee on Government Affairs.

The committee manager is someone who is personally known to me. Stephen Wood is my personal attaché, and he is a native of Smith Valley. He has helped me in many ways prior to my becoming a legislator. His committee duties include preparing agendas, uploading exhibits to the Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System (NELIS), and working with other committee staff on processing bills. He will interface with the front desk and Chief Clerk. He is very accessible, so do not hesitate to contact Stephen.

The committee secretary is Donna Ruiz. She will be attending all of our meetings and taking notes and preparing minutes. Donna is retired from the Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Department of the Interior, and a 40-year resident of Nevada, most of which was spent in Boulder City. This is her first session.

The committee assistant is Cheryl Williams. She gets the room set up, distributes exhibits and bills, and assists the committee secretary and other committee staff in a wide variety of tasks. Cheryl is retired from Churchill County School District and is a native Nevadan. This will be her fifth session and her second session with NATRAM.

Diane Hudson is our proofreader. This is her third session, and she is a retired librarian. Karla Reed is also one of our proofreaders. She was not able to attend today. She is a former teacher.

Regarding standing rules for the Committee, Susan has made a copy of the Assembly Standing Rules which we adopted yesterday. Those will be the rules this Committee will follow. You can get a copy if you do not already have one. On a personal note, I expect you to be on time and ready for business at 1:30 p.m. Out of respect for the folks who are coming to testify, we will be in our seats and ready to conduct business at 1:30 p.m. I would hope that committee members be courteous and respectful not only to each other, but to witnesses as well.

Be sure to mute your laptops and turn off cellphones; even a vibrating cellphone will interfere with the recording, so at least put it in your pocket. If you need to leave, please let me or staff know and also let us know whether or not you will return. We probably will not be taking breaks in between presentations. Please wait to be called upon and make sure your microphone is turned on.

We are trying to go as paperless as possible, even though it seems we generate more paper as a result. These bills will likely be on our laptops, and we will be looking down. We mean no disrespect; we are just following what is being presented. We will try to make eye contact because that is really important, but again, with this digital world, we will frequently be looking down at our computers.

Lobbyists and members of the public are not permitted on the dais before, during, or after meetings. This is to preserve privacy.

We can provide videoconferencing of a meeting when asked. We must, however, receive proper notice. We have a web-based system called NELIS which you can link to on our website to access any handouts. Please submit your exhibits in electronic form at least 24 hours prior to a meeting of this Committee. We will upload it so that it will be accessible.

If you are going to testify before the Committee, make sure you sign in at the table by the door and give the committee secretary your business card prior to testifying. Even if you are not testifying, you may want to sign in so that we can record who attended and what your particular interest is. If you have handouts, we ask that you bring 20 copies for use by the public.

Susan Scholley will now present our Committee Brief.

**Susan E. Scholley, Committee Policy Analyst:**

My name is Susan Scholley. I am a chief principal research analyst with the Research Division of the Legislative Counsel Bureau (LCB) and am the committee policy analyst for the Assembly Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining, which I will call NATRAM for short. I want to remind the Committee and the public that the Legislative Counsel Bureau is nonpartisan staff for the Legislature. You will hear us say that we neither advocate nor oppose legislation. However, within the limits of nonpartisanship, we are here to help the Committee process bills and get through the session. We will provide you with the information you need to make informed decisions.

You have before you ([Exhibit C](#)), "Committee Brief, Assembly Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining, 2015 Nevada Legislature." It is

also available on NELIS for those of you on the Internet, or there are paper copies here for the public. I am going to provide a quick overview and just hit the highlights. I will start on page 2 with key dates for the 2015 Session. You have all seen the 120-day calendar multiple times, but for those in the audience who are not aware of the calendar, there are a number of deadlines. The two important ones for committees are April 10, which is the deadline for getting bills out of committee in the first house, and May 15, which is the deadline for getting Senate bills out of the Assembly committees. You will find that you will be extremely busy in all your committees about a week or a little more before those deadlines. You may want to prepare for that.

To give you a little bit of an idea of the workload of the Committee, this Committee had 53 bills last session. The session before that there were 34 or 35 bills, so the workload varies from session to session. Based on last session's workload, you have an average of 1.4 bills per meeting between now and the first committee passage deadline. That is a very manageable workload. You might find yourself a little busier in April and May dealing with the Senate bills and the second deadline.

In terms of committee jurisdiction in the past, the title of the Committee certainly summarizes the broad range of the Committee's jurisdiction. Of course, money bills and tax bills will go to the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means and the Assembly Committee on Taxation, even though they may be related to natural resource issues.

Water bills have historically been shared with the Assembly Committee on Government Affairs, depending upon leadership's determinations as the individual bills are introduced on the floor. We will see how that rolls out this session.

There are more bill statistics from the 2013 Session on page 3 of the exhibit. Out of the 53 bills that were referred to NATRAM, 45 of them became law, so that is a pretty good record. On pages 3 through 5, I summarized about half the bills that went through this Committee last session that became law. This is to give the new members a feel for the breadth of the Committee's jurisdiction and the rather wide variety of topics that come before the Committee. Perhaps it will serve as a little bit of a reminder to the previous members as well. I could not include all 45 bills, so if I left out a bill of yours, I do apologize.

On page 5, you can see there was one vetoed bill from last session, Assembly Bill No. 345 of the 77th Session. I understand the Speaker said yesterday that

those bills were going on the desk and would not be seen again, so I am not going to waste any time going over that bill.

The Research Division of LCB publishes a document called the "Summary of Legislation" which contains summaries of all the bills that were passed last session. There is an entire chapter devoted to natural resource bills. If you would like a more comprehensive summary of what was passed last session, we can get that for you, or it is available online from the web address shown on page 5 of the exhibit.

In terms of the 2015 Session, it is going to look a lot like the 2013 Session. I listed a few potential topics at the bottom of page 5. You might be surprised, for example, to think about the fact that food safety issues will be coming to you. Historic preservation and archaeology might not come to mind, or recycling. You may also get solid waste, state parks and monuments, and motor vehicle fuels bills. Motor vehicle fuels is a topic you may see because of the Committee's State Department of Agriculture jurisdiction.

Appendix A on page 8 of the Committee Brief is a list of bill draft requests. I have culled these out of the longer bill draft request (BDR) list, trying to guess at which BDRs might possibly be referred to this Committee. I will warn you that it is really just an educated guess, so some of those bills are going to go to other committees. In the next week or two, there will be other BDRs—both personal and committee—that will probably be added to that list. This is just to give you an idea of some of the issues you might see in the coming weeks.

In terms of reports to the Legislature, in prior sessions lots of bills required reports, so that there can be a follow-up on issues that came before the committees and Legislature. Three of the reports that may be of particular interest to you are listed on pages 6 and 7 of the Committee Brief: the black bear harvest report from the Department of Wildlife [Senate Bill No. 82 of the 77th Session]; the report of the Nevada Land Management Task Force required by Assembly Bill No. 227 of the 77th Session; and the report on fire prevention and forest health activities at Lake Tahoe required by *Nevada Revised Statutes* 528.150.

There are dozens of other reports covering other topics. If you are interested in the reports on something other than natural resource issues, there is a link on page 7.

Another Legislative Counsel Bureau publication I would like to point out to you would be the policy and program reports, which provide a quick overview of topics within committees' jurisdictions. The three that may be of interest to



you as members of NATRAM are listed on page 7 of the exhibit. Again, they are very short, very 30,000-foot-level views of the topics, but they may be a good place to start.

Interim legislative committees that meet between sessions prepare reports; three that often send their bills to this Committee are the Committee on High-Level Radioactive Waste, the Legislative Committee on Public Lands, and the Legislative Committee for the Review and Oversight of the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency and the Marlette Lake Water System. Those reports summarize what those committees did over the interim and give you some background on some of their bill drafts.

Finally, Appendix B starting on page 13 is a contact list of people, organizations, and entities in the natural resources, agriculture, and mining fields. If you need to get in touch with any of them, we have given you that information, and you can reach out to them as needed. I would like to remind you that, in addition to our work for the Committee that I and the other research analysts do, we also work on individual requests. If there is anything I can help you with, please see me before or after a meeting, and I will be happy to assist.

**Chair Titus:**

Are there any questions for Ms. Scholley? [There were none.] Is there any public comment? [There was none.] Are there any members that have comments?

**Assemblyman Ellison:**

Do we have a date set for Assembly Joint Resolution 1 and Assembly Joint Resolution 2? I have had people calling me who want to testify.

**Chair Titus:**

We do not. We are working to schedule presentations with different departments. We should have that available to you in the next couple of days.

I want to note that on Thursday, February 5, we are starting early at 1 p.m. We will have a presentation from the State Department of Agriculture. They also have a presentation scheduled with the Senate, so we assured them that we will start at 1 p.m. We will also be hearing Assembly Bill 35 on Thursday.

We had seven prefiled bills that have been referred to us; there are eight now. The good news is that we can actually get started on some of these bills.

I wanted to make sure that we did this because we have a lot of issues to address. As soon as the bills get to us, we will get them scheduled. For the

next couple of meetings we are going to try to have one or two bills for review on the agenda along with other presentations.

I would also like to continue the policy of taking some of our members and anyone who is interested out to the rural areas so they can see what Nevada has to offer. Prior to this session, a number of our members were able to take some mine tours. We have scheduled a tour of agricultural country in Mason Valley and Smith Valley for March. You will be able to see what we produce here in this great state of Nevada. I am happy to hear any other suggestions you might have.

I think we are going to get a lot of work done, but at first, I felt we should have presentations from some of the departments that we need to be familiar with.

Are there any additional comments? [There were none.]

This meeting is adjourned [at 2:01 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Donna J. Ruiz  
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

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Assemblywoman Robin L. Titus, Chair

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

**EXHIBITS**

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

**Date:** February 3, 2015

**Time of Meeting:** 1:31 p.m.

<b>Bill</b>	<b>Exhibit</b>	<b>Witness / Agency</b>	<b>Description</b>
	<a href="#">Exhibit A</a>		Agenda
	<a href="#">Exhibit B</a>		Attendance Roster
	<a href="#">Exhibit C</a>	Susan E. Scholley	Committee Brief, Assembly Committee on Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Mining, 2015 Nevada Legislature