

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 4—
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

(ON BEHALF OF THE LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
ON PUBLIC LANDS)

FEBRUARY 24, 2021

Referred to Committee on Natural Resources

SUMMARY—Urges Congress and the President of the United States to protect certain land containing swamp cedars in Spring Valley. (BDR R-467)

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.

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION—Urging the Congress of the United States and the President of the United States to protect certain land containing swamp cedars in Spring Valley.

1 WHEREAS, Spring Valley, located in White Pine County,
2 Nevada, has been a central part of the traditional homelands of
3 certain indigenous Newe peoples, including the Confederated Tribes
4 of the Goshute Reservation, the Ely Shoshone, the Duckwater
5 Shoshone and certain Paiute peoples, since time immemorial and
6 remains a place of current cultural uses for these peoples; and

7 WHEREAS, The indigenous Newe peoples continue to use an
8 area in Spring Valley known as Bahsahwahbee, locally known as
9 Swamp Cedars but traditionally known as the Sacred Water Valley,
10 to hold religious and ceremonial gatherings, pass down traditional
11 knowledge, honor their ancestors and mourn for their relatives; and

12 WHEREAS, A massacre of indigenous people occurred at
13 Bahsahwahbee in the Spring Valley Massacre of 1859 and was
14 committed during a religious and ceremonial gathering; and

15 WHEREAS, Two subsequent massacres occurred at
16 Bahsahwahbee at times of religious and ceremonial gatherings, the



1 Swamp Cedars Massacre of 1863 and the Swamp Cedars Massacre
2 of 1897; and

3 WHEREAS, The Rocky Mountain juniper trees, locally known as
4 swamp cedars, that grow on the valley floor in Spring Valley are
5 believed by the Newe peoples to embody the spirits of the
6 indigenous Newe who were killed during those massacres; and

7 WHEREAS, The Swamp Cedars is a globally and nationally
8 unique grove of Rocky Mountain juniper trees that exists at the
9 valley bottom, unlike Rocky Mountain juniper trees elsewhere in the
10 western United States, which largely grow in the mountains; and

11 WHEREAS, A large portion of Bahsahwahbee is listed on the
12 National Register of Historic Places as a Traditional Cultural
13 Property and a much smaller portion lies within the boundaries of an
14 Area of Critical Environmental Concern administered by the Bureau
15 of Land Management; and

16 WHEREAS, Bahsahwahbee, and the swamp cedar trees therein,
17 faces threats from climate change and development; and

18 WHEREAS, Neither being listed on the National Register of
19 Historic Places nor being designated as an Area of Critical
20 Environmental Concern provides legal protections to ensure the
21 survival of Bahsahwahbee and the indigenous Newe peoples'
22 continued religious and ceremonial use of the site; and

23 WHEREAS, The Federal Government has a fiduciary relationship
24 with all federally recognized Indian tribes, including tribes of the
25 indigenous Newe peoples; and

26 WHEREAS, Federal protection of Bahsahwahbee would be
27 strengthened by collaborative management with the sovereign tribal
28 nations that share ancestral and ongoing ties to the site; now,
29 therefore, be it

30 RESOLVED BY THE ASSEMBLY AND SENATE OF THE STATE OF
31 NEVADA, JOINTLY, That members of the 81st Session of the
32 Nevada Legislature hereby urge the Congress of the United States
33 and the President of the United States to take action to further
34 protect Bahsahwahbee, including, without limitation, designating
35 Bahsahwahbee as a National Monument or expanding Great Basin
36 National Park to include Bahsahwahbee; and be it further

37 RESOLVED, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly prepare and
38 transmit a copy of this resolution to the President of the United
39 States, the Vice President of the United States as the presiding
40 officer of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives
41 and each member of the Nevada Congressional Delegation; and be it
42 further



1 RESOLVED, That this resolution becomes effective upon
2 passage.

