

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF THE
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Eighty-First Session
March 10, 2021**

The Committee on Natural Resources was called to order by Chair Howard Watts at 4:01 p.m. on Wednesday, March 10, 2021, Online. 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/App/NELIS/REL/81st2021.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Assemblyman Howard Watts, Chair
Assemblywoman Lesley E. Cohen, Vice Chair
Assemblywoman Natha C. Anderson
Assemblywoman Annie Black
Assemblywoman Tracy Brown-May
Assemblywoman Maggie Carlton
Assemblyman John Ellison
Assemblywoman Cecelia González
Assemblywoman Alexis Hansen
Assemblywoman Susie Martinez
Assemblywoman Robin L. Titus
Assemblyman Jim Wheeler

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:

None

GUEST LEGISLATORS PRESENT:

Assemblywoman Lisa Krasner, Assembly District No. 26

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jann Stinnesbeck, Committee Policy Analyst
Allan Amburn, Committee Counsel
Devon Kajatt, Committee Manager
Nancy Davis, Committee Secretary
Trinity Thom, Committee Assistant



OTHERS PRESENT:

Ashley Jeppson, Administrator, Plant Industry, State Department of Agriculture
Tony Yarbrough, State Legislative Deputy, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Nevada; and Secretary, United Veterans Legislative Council
Andrew LePeilbet, representing Military Order of the Purple Heart; Disabled American Veterans; and Chairman, United Veterans Legislative Council
Steve Sanson, President, Veterans in Politics International, Inc., and Veterans in Politics Foundation
Fred Wagar, Deputy Director of Operations, Department of Veterans Services
Robert Mergell, Administrator, Division of State Parks, State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Christi Cabrera, Policy and Advocacy Director, Nevada Conservation League
Jaina Moan, External Affairs Director, The Nature Conservancy
Larry Johnson, President, Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife
Russell Kuhlman, Executive Director, Nevada Wildlife Federation
Nikolai Christenson, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada
Grace Palermo, Southern Nevada Programs Director, Friends of Nevada Wilderness
Maria-Teresa Liebermann-Parraga, Deputy Director, Battle Born Progress
Patrick Donnelly, Nevada State Director, Center for Biological Diversity
Laura Richards, Member, Legislative Committee, Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club
David Ricker, Policy Chair, Nevada Chapter, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Lynn Chapman, Treasurer, Independent American Party of Nevada
Jake Tibbitts, Natural Resources Manager, Department of Natural Resources, Eureka County
Janine Hansen, State President, Nevada Families for Freedom
Wade Poulsen, General Manager, Lincoln County Water District
Doug Busselman, Executive Vice President, Nevada Farm Bureau Federation
K. Neena Laxalt, representing Nevada Cattlemen's Association
Chaunsey Chau-Duong, Public Affairs, Southern Nevada Water Authority
Colby Prout, Natural Resources Manager, Nevada Association of Counties
Cyrus Hojjaty, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada

Chair Watts:

[Roll was taken. Committee rules and protocol were reviewed.] We will begin with our work session, starting with Assembly Bill 34.

Assembly Bill 34: Revises provisions governing the control of pests, noxious weeds and pesticides. (BDR 49-272)

Jann Stinnesbeck, Committee Policy Analyst:

As an employee of the Legislative Counsel Bureau, I cannot advocate for or against any measures that come before the Committee.

Assembly Bill 34 was heard in this Committee on February 22, 2021 [[Exhibit C](#)]. The bill defines the term "control" as it applies to noxious weeds. The bill authorizes the director of the State Department of Agriculture to adopt regulations to certify certain agricultural products as being free from propagative parts from which noxious weeds may grow.

The bill authorizes the Department to provide a notice of its finding that an area is infested with certain pests, noxious weeds, or plant diseases to the owner or occupant of the area by electronic mail. The bill exempts a business that is licensed by another state that sells nursery stock only to the public exclusively via the Internet from obtaining a license from the director of the Department.

The bill revises the prohibition against engaging in certain activities involving pest control without a license and revises provisions governing the certification of restricted-use pesticide application.

There is one amendment [[Exhibit D](#)] that was proposed by the State Department of Agriculture which makes the following changes:

- Clarifies that the term "certificate" authorizes an applicator to purchase, use, or supervise the use of a restricted pesticide;
- Clarifies that a nonprivate applicator and a commercial applicator can be a person licensed to apply or supervise the application of any general-use pesticide;
- Clarifies that a restricted-use pesticide is a highly toxic pesticide that has been classified for restricted use pursuant to the federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act, Pub. L. 61-152, 36 Stat. 331 (1910); and
- Clarifies that certain provisions apply to an authorized commercial applicator or a certified nonprivate applicator, which are persons who are authorized or certified to use or supervise the use of restricted-use pesticides.

The amendment and justification are attached to the work session document.

Chair Watts:

In addition, during the hearing there were some questions about the fee provision within the bill. There were some follow-up conversations between our legal staff and the Department. I would like to invite Ms. Jeppson to provide any additional remarks or clarification on that component.

Ashley Jeppson, Administrator, Plant Industry, State Department of Agriculture:

The language in *Nevada Administrative Code* (NAC) Chapter 587 was specific to the inspection of forage for the presence of noxious weeds and the authority of charging a fee. The other provision that we have been acting under to do our weed-free recertification program is NAC Chapter 555. That is why we have been trying to fold in that fee structure within the actual area where the program is housed. The terminology that is existing in NAC, between weed-free forage versus weed-free certification, has certainly created some challenges. We would like to ensure that the fee is in NAC Chapter 555, and in the future,

our intention is to remove that language from NAC Chapter 587. Ultimately, we only charge the one fee of \$50 which is in NAC Chapter 587. Our intention is not to duplicate, and not to add additional fees, but to have the fee associated with the program. It is not as clear or streamlined as it should be and this will allow us to be able to change that.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

Currently this fee is being assessed; it just happens to be in a different area?

Ashley Jeppson:

That is part of the challenge. We currently do the weed-free certification program as a voluntary program. We have been using the fee authority in NAC Chapter 587 for the inspection of forage for noxious weeds. We have been operating under that authority to charge that fee to run the program. Now the actual program is housed in NAC Chapter 555. We are trying to ensure that the fee is in the same area as the actual program. There are language problems in NAC Chapter 587; there are program housing challenges; and we have been operating under the language in NAC Chapter 587 which we want to get into NAC Chapter 555. We are not trying to duplicate the fee.

Assemblyman Wheeler:

What I understand Ms. Jeppson to be saying is that the fee already exists, and this is not a new fee. If that is correct, will this remove the two-thirds majority vote requirement on the bill?

Chair Watts:

Since this is establishing the fee within this new chapter, the two-thirds majority vote requirement exists; however, the Department's intention is to have it in the chapter that matches for both statute and regulation and not to use the fee that is in another portion of regulation. The intent is that there will not be a new fee, but because we are establishing it within this section of statute, it will still have a two-thirds majority vote requirement.

Assemblyman Wheeler:

That is what I thought in looking at the amendment. I will be a no on this.

Chair Watts:

Is the issue that the fee is not explicitly being removed from the other portion of regulation in the bill?

Assemblyman Wheeler:

I believe that is the issue. When I do not see the language to move that fee over, to me it appears to be a brand-new fee.

Chair Watts:

Ms. Jeppson, would you like to add your intention in terms of the transition of the fee from areas of regulation and how you see that proceeding?

Ashley Jeppson:

We will be undergoing a number of regulation changes after the conclusion of session. We will be removing the fee from NAC Chapter 587 and putting it in NAC Chapter 555. That will be resolved.

Chair Watts:

Are there any additional questions? Hearing none, I will accept a motion to amend and do pass Assembly Bill 34.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN COHEN MOVED TO AMEND AND DO PASS
ASSEMBLY BILL 34.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN ANDERSON SECONDED THE MOTION.

Is there any discussion on the motion?

Assemblywoman Anderson:

I appreciate Assemblyman Wheeler bringing up the code change, especially as a freshman. Although I have watched the process, I do not think we have the ability to change code in the NAC. I understand where the concerns are coming from. I just want to verify, we do not have the ability to double-check code. If this were to go through, then the code would need to match up with the law, is that correct?

Chair Watts:

I would like to defer to Assemblywoman Carlton who has quite a bit of experience on these issues.

Assemblywoman Carlton:

We do not process regulations during the session because there is so much other work going on. I understand where Assemblyman Wheeler is coming from; he wants to see that it is actually going to be removed. Unfortunately, there is not an opportunity to remove the fee right now. It would not have been appropriate to do the change before the bill because they need to keep doing their job while we are in session, and until the regulations get all the way through, it could take up to a year after session to get another regulation through because of the backlog. This is one of those times where you have to trust the administrator to follow through on the commitments they have made on the record.

Chair Watts:

Thank you. I also received a message from our legal counsel confirming that they do not amend the NAC during session. They would need the new fee authority to implement the new fee and then they can eliminate the old fee. Is there any other discussion on the motion? Hearing none, we will vote.

THE MOTION PASSED. (ASSEMBLYMEN BLACK, ELLISON,
HANSEN, TITUS, AND WHEELER VOTED NO.)

I will assign the floor statement to Assemblywoman González. We will move on to the work session for Assembly Bill 72.

Assembly Bill 72: Revises provisions relating to the Nevada State Board on Geographic Names. (BDR 26-258)

Jann Stinnesbeck, Committee Policy Analyst:

Assembly Bill 72 was heard in this Committee on February 24, 2021 [[Exhibit E](#)]. The bill adds a representative of the Nevada Indian Commission as a voting member of the Nevada State Board on Geographic Names. The bill also removes the state resident cartographer as the Board's executive secretary and requires the voting members of the Board to select the person to serve in this position. Lastly, the bill clarifies that the chair and vice chair are designated from among the voting members of the Board and that the vice chair presides in the absence of the chair.

Chair Watts:

Are there any questions on A.B. 72? Hearing none, I will accept a motion to do pass.

ASSEMBLYWOMAN CARLTON MADE A MOTION TO DO PASS
ASSEMBLY BILL 72.

ASSEMBLYMAN WHEELER SECONDED THE MOTION.

Is there any discussion? Hearing none, we will vote.

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

I will assign the floor statement to Assemblywoman Martinez. That concludes our work session. I will now open the hearing on Assembly Bill 102.

Assembly Bill 102: Revises requirements for the issuance of certain annual permits for entering, camping and boating in state parks and recreational areas. (BDR 35-877)

Assemblywoman Lisa Krasner, Assembly District No. 26:

I am here to present Assembly Bill 102 for your consideration. We are working off of the amendment that you will find on the Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System (NELIS) [[Exhibit F](#)]. I would first like to give you a little background. As the Committee knows, Nevada offers truly beautiful state parks and recreational areas. There are so many amazing outdoor opportunities with state parks like Sand Harbor within the Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park, and Valley of Fire State Park in Nevada's Mojave Desert.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, we have seen an increase in visitation numbers in state parks and recreational areas. Understandably, more people have felt the need during these hard times to get outside and safely recreate in our state parks.

In Nevada, we have a long history of serving our country. In turn, Nevadans pride themselves on honoring their fellow men and women who have served this great country, our veterans. In the Legislature, we often consider proposed legislation that attempts to honor veterans and expresses our appreciation for them and for their dedicated service. Under certain legislation, we extend our gratitude to veterans on a service-connected disability. Assembly Bill 102 is such a bill, as it attempts to allow more disabled veterans to experience our state parks and recreational areas so that they can find relief and enjoy the great outdoors.

I would like to draw your attention to the amendment on NELIS because as of last night, we changed the bill [[Exhibit F](#)]. I contacted Robert Mergell, Administrator, Division of State Parks, State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, because there was a fiscal note on the bill. The fiscal note was \$48,000 for two years. I asked him, what can we do? We are in a budget crisis at the Nevada Legislature. How can we get this to a zero fiscal note? We looked at the bill and decided that currently, a veteran with a service-related disability of 10 percent or more who has been honorably discharged, gets to go to our Nevada state parks basically for free. The \$250 annual permit is waived and the veteran is asked to pay a \$30 administrative fee. The veteran can then enjoy hiking, boating, and camping for a year. The zero to 10 percent service-related disability was excluded. We decided to include that with the amendment and put in a zero to 10 percent service-related disability for a veteran who was honorably discharged and can now visit all Nevada state parks for free. When I say free, that is waiving the \$250 annual fee and merely paying the \$30 recreational fee for all activities for one year. With that change to the bill, the fiscal note is zero.

Tony Yarbrough, State Legislative Deputy, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Nevada; and Secretary, United Veterans Legislative Council:

I represent approximately 500,000 people in the state overall, for veterans, military families, and advocates. I can tell you this is something we have been working on for three sessions—to try to find a way that we can continue to honor, congratulate, and thank our veterans for their service. This is one of our simple processes that we can go to. One of the things that is critical to us is that we realize, and no one has the answer by the way, that suicide prevention is one of the biggest issues we try to tackle as far as finding the best way to help stop the 20 suicides per day in veterans. We have learned through a lot of analysis and testing done by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs—funded by Congress—that when people are involved in outdoor activities with their peers, it reduces and almost eliminates that process of suicide. It improves suicide prevention because it is a mental diversion that makes the veteran not think about the tragedy and loss of life that he has experienced and witnessed in his service to others. I can tell you that I think this is one of the best bills we have right now in the Legislature, and I would do everything and anything. I deeply appreciate your support in passing Assembly Bill 102. [Written testimony was also provided, [Exhibit G](#)].

Chair Watts:

I will open it up to questions from the Committee.

Assemblywoman Carlton:

In reading the bill, I am trying to put the pieces together. I am confused by your statement that the amendment actually zeros out the fiscal note. These folks are currently paying the \$250 fee; this will eliminate that and leave the \$30 fee. I believe there would still be a difference and we might need to have someone from the Division of State Parks give us an idea of about how many folks that is. I am not sure this really is a zero fiscal impact when you look at the whole picture. Am I missing something?

Assemblywoman Krasner:

I worked out the numbers with Mr. Mergell and again with Katherine Miller, Director, Department of Veterans Services. Ms. Miller said that the numbers for the zero to 10 percent disability are 9,695, but you have to take out the percent who were not honorably discharged, which is the other requirement.

Assemblywoman Carlton:

That is not my question. My question is, these folks are currently getting this pass and they are paying \$250, and now they will be paying \$30. There are a number of people who will be paying less. I understand what you are trying to do and I totally support this. I wish we could get rid of the \$30, but I still think there is fiscal impact someplace because we had folks paying \$250, and now they will only be paying \$30. That is a \$220 difference.

Assemblywoman Krasner:

That number is 7.5 persons.

Assemblywoman Carlton:

As I said, there are a lot more numbers that we need to get.

Chair Watts:

I appreciate your bringing that up; it is an interesting issue. As a policy committee, our job is to focus on evaluating policy issues, and the fiscal issues are addressed in our money committee, which is the Assembly Committee on Ways and Means. We may need to ask for some follow-up information from the Division of State Parks.

Are there any other questions from Committee members? Seeing none, I will move on to those in support of A.B. 102.

Andrew LePeilbet, representing Military Order of the Purple Heart; Disabled American Veterans; and Chairman, United Veterans Legislative Council:

After Mr. Yarbrough's testimony, we ditto everything he said. I would like to add that outdoor activity has been identified in suicide prevention as a big issue to help our veterans. There are many groups that have gotten together in the last couple of years with four-wheeling, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, and many other things that have helped our veterans. This is a bill that is representing all of those disabled, many of whom shed their blood on the battlefields of the world for our country. For the United Veterans Legislative

Council, Disabled American Veterans, and the Military Order of the Purple Heart, we wholly support this bill.

Chair Watts:

Thank you to you and all of our veterans who have served this country. I will go on to the next caller in support.

Steve Sanson, President, Veterans in Politics International, Inc., and Veterans in Politics Foundation:

I am a Marine Gulf War disabled service-connected veteran. We support veterans from all branches of the service and from all wars from World War II to the war on terror. In addition, we have an extremely large civilian membership. We have been active since 1992 and we continue our activism because we love our country and community. Our mission is to educate, organize, and awaken veterans and their families to select, support, and intelligently vote for those candidates who would help create a better world, to protect ourselves from our own government in a culture of corruption, and to be the political voice for those in other groups who do not have one.

Many of us say we support veterans, but fail to act on that phrase. Today, all of you will have an opportunity to show your support by voting for Assembly Bill 102. Less than 1 percent of our population serves in the military in defense of this country. The very least we can do is support them in every way possible. Remember, when you vote, it is a generation of veterans that gives you the right and opportunity to become an elected official. Without our veterans, none of us would live the life we have today. I speak for the entire membership of Veterans in Politics International; we support A.B. 102. May God bless our veterans, this legislative Committee, the great state of Nevada, and the United States of America. Semper fidelis.

Chair Watts:

We will go on to the next caller in support. Hearing no one, I will move to those wishing to testify in opposition to A.B. 102. Hearing no one, I will move on to those in neutral.

Fred Wagar, Deputy Director of Operations, Department of Veterans Services:

I am here to testify as neutral to A.B. 102. As amended, A.B. 102 will remove the requirement for veterans who are residents of Nevada to have a 10 percent service-connected disability or more to obtain a disabled veteran permit for unlimited entrance to all state parks and recreation areas for 12 months after the permit is issued. The permit will be issued without charge except that the Division of State Parks could charge and collect an administrative fee for the issuance of the permit, in an amount sufficient to cover the cost of issuing the permit.

According to the Department of Veterans Affairs regional office in Reno, 61,113 veterans currently receive service-connected compensation in Nevada with a 10 percent disability or higher. As Assemblywoman Krasner noted, she had a discussion with our office yesterday. She advised us that she had spoken with Mr. Mergell, Administrator, Division of State Parks,

who had indicated that approximately 0.1 percent of eligible veterans are currently taking advantage of the benefit.

If passed, this bill as amended will allow those with zero percent evaluations to be eligible for this benefit. An estimated 9,695 Nevada veterans have a zero percent disability evaluation. However, there is also the requirement to have an honorable discharge from military service. Using the national estimates, 78.29 percent of veterans have an honorable discharge. This equates to an estimated 7,590 zero percent service-connected disabled veterans with honorable discharges who would qualify for this benefit. However, if the same percentage of approximately 0.1 percent apply for the permit, this would equate to about eight veterans who might take advantage of this benefit.

I would like to note that a University of Michigan study states that veterans participating in extended outdoor recreation showed signs of improved mental health, suggesting a link between the activity and long-term psychological well-being.

Chair Watts:

Thank you for the additional context on potential utilization based on the proposal. Are there any questions from the members? Hearing none, is there anyone else wishing to testify in the neutral position?

Robert Mergell, Administrator, Division of State Parks, State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources:

The Division is neutral on Assembly Bill 102. As written, A.B. 102 would have a fiscal impact on the Division of State Parks. Currently, the Division gives Nevada veterans who have incurred a permanent service-connected disability an annual all-access permit for entering, camping, and boating in all Nevada state parks and recreational areas. An all-access permit costs the general public \$250, but is provided to veterans for free. The only charge is a \$30 administrative fee, which offsets the actual cost of the permit. By the time staff costs are factored in, the \$30 administrative fee does not even cover actual costs, but it does help to offset those costs.

The Division supports veterans. In fact, the Division recently made regulation changes to implement a day use discount of \$1 for all veterans. The Division does not, however, have the ability to absorb the additional fiscal impact, particularly during these unprecedented times. The proposed amendment would remove the Division's fiscal note as it restores the ability to collect the administrative fees.

Chair Watts:

Thank you. Are there any questions?

Assemblywoman Carlton:

Mr. Mergell brought up a point that I know has always been true: the \$30 administrative fee does not actually cover the whole cost. Mr. Mergell, can you give us an idea of what that cost actually is?

Robert Mergell:

I do not have those figures, but the \$30 definitely covers the printing costs and covers the actual cost of mailing the permits out to all of the various parks for distribution. We also have to buy receipt books in order to track the permits. It does not cover the costs of employees who touch that permit at every location. I would have to do some digging to figure out how long it actually takes to fill out the permit, interact with the public, and go through the rest of the process of tracking the permit. Those costs are difficult to calculate. We settled on \$30 several years ago because it covered the actual hard costs of the permit.

Assemblywoman Carlton:

I want everyone to be aware that when we talk about these issues, there are a lot of other costs that are not included. We just want to make sure we give the Division the money they need to do their job.

Assemblyman Wheeler:

Regarding the labor that is involved in issuing a permit, you are not going to have to hire additional staff for that. The employees who are doing this work now will continue to receive the same paycheck, and the end cost would be the same without adding extra employees and extra salary. Is that correct?

Robert Mergell:

That is correct. We have staff in place to issue these permits. There would be no additional cost as those employees are already there; this would just add to the number of permits issued.

Chair Watts:

Are there any more questions? Hearing none, are there any other callers wishing to testify in neutral? Hearing none, are there any closing remarks?

Assemblywoman Krasner:

I would like to say it is an honor for me to bring this bill on behalf of our veterans. Thank you.

[Also received but not mentioned are [Exhibit H](#), [Exhibit I](#), and [Exhibit J](#)].

Chair Watts:

I will close the hearing on A.B. 102. I will now open the hearing on Assembly Joint Resolution 3.

Assembly Joint Resolution 3: Urges various actions relating to the protection and conservation of land and water. (BDR R-775)

Assemblywoman Cecelia González, Assembly District No. 16:

Assembly Joint Resolution 3 attempts to address climate change by urging the United States Congress to help designate 30 percent of Nevada's land and water to be protected by the

year 2030. With me today is Christi Cabrera, Policy and Advocacy Director for Nevada Conservation League. I would first like to provide some general background and a short summary of the resolution before handing it over to my copresenter.

The conservation community, along with scientists, has long called for ambitious conservation goals to address both climate change and the extinction of endangered species. Specifically, they have called for a long-term goal of conserving and sustainably managing half of the planet by 2050. To achieve this long-term goal, they have set a target of conserving 30 percent of land and coastal seas by 2030. This is referred to as the "30 by 30" target.

The current White House administration issued an executive order in January to address the climate crisis by ordering a pause on new oil and gas leases on public lands and has committed to the 30 by 30 target [Executive Order 14008]. The majority of Americans in the western United States support the national target of 30 by 30. Specifically, recent polls found almost three-fourths of voters are in support of this target.

Furthermore, Nevada's abundant public land lends itself to follow the scientific community's recommendations. Currently, we only have around 15 percent of our lands protected in our state. More needs to be done to protect our precious lands and waters, and A.J.R. 3 is a step in this direction.

I would now like to summarize the resolution. Assembly Joint Resolution 3 expresses support for the goal of protecting 30 percent of the lands and waters in Nevada as well as in the United States by 2030. The resolution urges Congress and the Biden Administration to support a long-term goal of protecting half of the planet by 2050. The resolution further urges state and local agencies to work cooperatively with federal agencies to protect 30 percent of the lands and waters in Nevada by 2030. These same agencies are urged to consult with tribal governments and provide fair treatment and meaningful involvement to people of all races, cultures, incomes, and natural origins by working with communities of color, indigenous communities, and economically disadvantaged communities.

The resolution urges state and local agencies to encourage private landowners to participate in voluntary programs to protect wildlife habitat and increase carbon sequestration. Lastly, A.J.R. 3 urges federal, state, and local agencies to work with the Nevada congressional delegation to identify opportunities for federal legislation and regulatory action to expand protection and conservation measures on public lands in Nevada. I would now like to turn it over to my copresenter.

Christi Cabrera, Policy and Advocacy Director, Nevada Conservation League:

I would like to take some time to touch on why the 30 by 30 initiative is important across the country, as well as in our great state.

We are facing a massive environmental crisis. Every 30 seconds, a football field's worth of America's natural areas disappears. At least one-third of American wildlife is at increased

risk of extinction. And climate change is already happening and having disastrous impacts across the globe.

Nevada is on the frontlines of this crisis. Our state has lost more than nine million acres of wildlife habitat to wildfires in the last two decades, and we rank third in the nation for having the highest number of species at risk. Nevada is also home to two of the fastest-warming cities in the United States.

To fend off these crises, many prominent scientists have called for the conservation of 30 percent of the world's lands and waters by the year 2030.

Because Nevada is more than 80 percent federal land, we have a unique opportunity to lead the nation in the 30 by 30 effort. Conserving our state's lands and waters will help us mitigate the effects of climate change and protect wildlife, their habitat, and our precious natural resources. In addition to all that, conserving lands is good for our economy. A recent report out of the University of Cambridge found that the economic benefits of the 30 by 30 goal outweigh the costs by a ratio of at least 5-to-1. The report also shows that protection in today's economy brings in more revenue than the alternatives and likely adds revenue to agriculture and forestry while helping prevent climate change, water crises, biodiversity loss, and disease.

The 30 by 30 goal will also help support Nevada's booming outdoor recreation economy that already contributes significantly to our state's revenue, boosts local businesses, and creates jobs. This is especially important as we continue to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. The 30 by 30 goal has widespread support across the country and in our state.

In January, 450 bipartisan officials from 43 states signed an open letter supporting a national 30 by 30 goal. Last week, 70 mayors from across the country published a similar letter. Looking at Nevada, 2 county commissioners, 2 mayors, and 11 legislators signed on to these letters.

This is also supported by various businesses, organizations, sportsmen, and tribal members in our state. I would like to point to a letter we submitted as an exhibit that has 18 organizations and businesses signed on in support of this resolution [[Exhibit K](#)].

The 30 by 30 goal is also widely popular among Nevada voters. The 2021 Conservation in the West Poll found that 82 percent of Nevadans support this goal and 85 percent support creating new national parks, national monuments, national wildlife refuges, recreational areas, and tribal protected areas.

Passage of A.J.R. 3 sends a message to Congress and federal land managers that Nevadans highly value our public lands and the communities, plants, and wildlife which depend on these resources.

It also sends the message that Nevadans want to be active participants in conservation actions around our lands and waters and that those conversations and actions need to have a robust and inclusive stakeholder process.

In closing, conserving 30 percent of Nevada's lands and waters by 2030 will help our state mitigate against climate change, protect our treasured outdoor spaces, and give a much-needed boost to our economy. The Nevada Conservation League and our partners urge your support on this resolution.

Assemblywoman Hansen:

I take a little bit of an issue with some of the claims made by Ms. Cabrera. I know we all worry about our environment, our climate, and our beautiful state, but some of the things you said in your opening statement sound reminiscent of the concerns that were parroted in the 1970s by Paul Ehrlich, who was a big biodiversity biologist. In a speech that he gave, he said that by the year 2000 England might not even exist and that there would be dead fish along the coastlines if we continued on the course we were on. Of course, Ehrlich's predictions have not come true. Sometimes when I hear these very overreaching doomsday scenarios, I get a little concerned about how factual they are. How are we defining "protect"? Are we talking 30 percent in Nevada by 2030, which is nine years away? Thirty percent of Nevada is about the size of my Assembly district, which is one of the largest in the state. What does "protect" actually mean?

Christi Cabrera:

I think that is open for discussion, and I think this resolution is a good start to that conversation. It needs to be a robust stakeholder process with everyone who cares about our public lands, whether they be private landowners, ranchers, conservationists, sportsmen, or tribal representation. There needs to be a conversation that everyone is involved in so we can discuss what that means for Nevada specifically. Because so much of our land is federally owned, it needs to be a conversation with our federal land managers and our congressional delegation as well.

Assemblywoman Hansen:

We do not have any definitive definitions per se of what "protect" means, is that correct? If we protect 30 percent of Nevada by 2030, of that 30 percent, are we allowed to drive our four-wheelers on that land? Are we allowed to camp on it? Are we allowed to graze our cattle on it?

Christi Cabrera:

I think there are many different designations that have different levels of protection. I know if a new wilderness area is designated, frequently grazing rights are grandfathered in and grazing is allowed to continue there. There are more severe levels of protection in which there are no vehicles allowed, but there are levels of protection in which vehicles are allowed. Outdoor recreation is so big in our state, we would want to make sure that we are leaving it open to people who want to go out and enjoy our lands, whether that be hiking, camping, off-roading, et cetera.

Assemblywoman Hansen:

"Protecting" could include some of the more strict requirements of wilderness areas. When we see "protect" in this resolution, it could be very strict conditions like we see in some wilderness areas.

Christi Cabrera:

It could be that, but it could also be other levels of protection. I think when looking at our state now and considering what is protected, we take into consideration national monuments, national parks, and wilderness areas. These would continue to be considered protected. I do not think we would be limited to one specific designation of protection; it would not be only wildlife that is protected or only national parks that are considered protected. It would be more broad than that. It would really depend on where we are talking about and what that designation is.

Assemblywoman Cohen:

Page 3, line 27 relates to honoring tribal jurisdictions. I thought tribal jurisdictions were already required to be honored under federal law. I certainly understand that we want to have our indigenous tribes consulted and involved in decisions like this, but I think of this as being outside of their jurisdiction because their jurisdiction is already set in federal law.

Christi Cabrera:

I do not have an answer for that. I can look into it and follow up with you.

Assemblywoman Cohen:

I can also follow up with our legal counsel.

Assemblyman Wheeler:

I realize this is a resolution and we are basically asking the federal government to do something. What I am wondering is, as you said, we are not asking for a certain level of protection, whether it be just for camping, or for a wilderness area where everything is removed. Would it be capable for the federal government to remove some of the water rights that are on some of this land, and not make those water rights available to the public in the driest state in the nation?

Christi Cabrera:

I have not heard of that happening, but I can do more research.

Assemblyman Wheeler:

I would like to know for sure. I am sure everyone would because sometimes we can transfer those water rights from one place to another and be able to use it for certain things. We can get into the mismanagement the government is doing on our lands later.

Chair Watts:

I would remind all members of the Committee that the waters within this state are held in public trust and managed by the State Engineer, Division of Water Resources, State

Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Any water rights that are held within this state are managed in that way. I do not believe that there is any action being proposed within this resolution that would impact state water law and state water rights.

Assemblyman Wheeler:

I believe federal law trumps our law.

Chair Watts:

I will have legal counsel follow up on that, but I believe that our water and our wildlife remain within the state's purview to manage.

Assemblywoman Titus:

Some of the things you mentioned, Ms. Cabrera, were wildland fires and the climate change. Do you have some data on that? During the Committee to Conduct an Interim Study Concerning Wildfires, climate change was not really a major factor. Obviously, we had serious droughts and we had some of those concerns; however, the actual issue of climate change was not one of the resounding reasons for those wildland fires. Most reasons were due to perhaps poor management, or perhaps the response time, or lightning, or human causes. I am curious how this resolution supporting the 30 by 30 would actually have any impact on wildland fires since 80 percent of our property in Nevada is already controlled by the federal government. I am curious what you feel the connection is that will decrease the wildland fires.

Christi Cabrera:

As far as climate change and fire relations go, climate change frequently makes the West hotter and drier, which leads to more intense and faster fires. Where I was really going with that is to show how much of our land has been damaged by fires, including wildlife habitat. I was pointing out that we would be helping protect our habitat. I know that we cannot all of a sudden have all of our fires go away, but having more protection against them is helpful.

Assemblywoman Titus:

I just need clarity there. Like I said, 80 percent of our land is already part of the federal government. Although we own the land, they manage it, and now saying we want 30 percent of the land protected, when it has not helped having 80 percent protected. I want to make sure folks do not misunderstand what you were trying to say, that this would decrease wildfires, because I do not think you can make that connection.

Assemblyman Ellison:

We are going to ask Congress to consider this, but I think we should come up with a plan first because I do not think anyone realizes how much 30 percent of the waters in the state of Nevada is. The only place that has that much water where you could actually look at would be the Hoover Dam. I know we are coming up with better ideas all the time, and I think we should have a plan on where the water will come from before we put in a resolution. It seems we are putting the cart before the horse.

Christi Cabrera:

That is the point of this resolution: to start that conversation; to bring stakeholders together; and to come up with a plan of what can be protected in our state, where those areas are, and what kind of designation should we be considering protected for these various areas. I see this bill as a call to action for all stakeholders as well as our federal land managers and our federal delegation to come together to work on a plan and figure that out.

Assemblywoman Anderson:

On page 2, lines 32 to 41, there is a recognition of the Division of Outdoor Recreation, State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the industry itself. Has there been some discussion with the groups that sent us a letter [[Exhibit K](#)] basically saying they recognize the positive roles that hunting and fishing play in conservation, et cetera? Has there been discussion with these groups that signed the letter?

Christi Cabrera:

Yes, absolutely, we have been in many conversations with all of those groups. I do not think that letter was intended as an opposition letter, but rather as calling out the importance of sportsmen in the conversation. I could not agree more. Sportsmen have done so much for conservation in our state and continue to do so, and absolutely they should have a seat at the table. We are in very frequent conversations with them. If this resolution does move forward, I fully expect them to be part of that larger stakeholder process of figuring out what lands we can conserve and protect and what kinds of designations we should have.

Chair Watts:

I believe part of this resolution mentions cooperation with private landowners. Will you speak to conservation easements and other private agreements? Would that be something that would be contemplated under the language of this resolution as a way to protect lands while engaging our private landowners as well?

Christi Cabrera:

I believe that is in the "resolved" section of the resolution, calling for state and local agencies to encourage private landowners to participate in voluntary programs. I understand that conservation easements have been thrown out there as being considered protection under the 30 by 30 initiative across the nation, and I would assume that it would be in place in Nevada as well. We would like to have further conversations with private landowners to see if that is something they would be interested in and if that makes sense for them as being considered protected. Like I said, we really want to have a robust, lengthy discussion about what this means for our state.

Chair Watts:

It sounds like there are a variety of options for meeting this goal, all of which come with different potential uses for the land that can continue whether the lands are designated as national parks, national monuments, wilderness areas, state parks, conservation easements, et cetera. I have seen the word "restore" often used as well as "protect." I was reminded in

the discussion about wildfires as well and the impact it has had on some of our lands. Can you speak to the role that habitat restoration could play in meeting the goal of this resolution?

Christi Cabrera:

Restoration is absolutely critical. I think it could be considered as protected or conserved as our 30 by 30 goal. I think that could play a huge part in it, and I know there are lots of groups in the state as well as across the country advocating for that to be included.

Chair Watts:

That could help restore some of our lands to some of the uses that have been lost as well as providing critical habitat for our wildlife. The definitions that we used for some of the protections may make this a bit of a moving target, but as it has been stated, we have quite a bit of land under federal management. My understanding is that we still have quite a bit of land that is undeveloped. Knowing that we have seen some large impacts from wildfires, I believe that we have a large amount of land that is eligible for this protection but does not have that formal protection status. It seems to me that under consideration of this, Nevada could even punch above its weight in terms of conserving additional lands. We know that some other states in other parts of the country are going to have difficulty meeting their benchmarks, which could potentially come with some form of agreement to provide investments to support our state and our rural communities. Is that something that could potentially be part of a national 30 by 30 framework?

Christi Cabrera:

That has been frequently discussed. We know some of the smaller states on the east side of the country do not have as much available land, and I fully expect the Secretary of the Interior nominee Deb Haaland will be looking at this on a nationwide view and looking at some western states to protect more than 30 percent in order to reach the 30 percent goal across the country.

Chair Watts:

I am interested in seeing how those conversations will continue and bring in additional resources to enhance, protect, and restore the lands within our state, and how that can benefit all of our communities. Are there any other questions? Hearing none, I will move on to those wishing to testify in support of A.J.R. 3.

Jaina Moan, External Affairs Director, The Nature Conservancy:

We are a global organization, conducting science-based, on-the-ground conservation work to support our mission of conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends.

We are here to testify in support of A.J.R. 3. We want to thank Assemblywoman González and the sponsors and cosponsors for bringing this resolution forward.

The Nature Conservancy strongly supports the goal to conserve 30 percent of lands, waters, and oceans by 2030. We provided a written testimony and a fact sheet that offers guidance on how to achieve this goal [[Exhibit L](#)]. Notably, we believe that a broad definition of

protection is warranted—to include conservation efforts on public, private, and tribal land. All ecosystem types should have a minimum level of protection supported with effective management, and protections should be durable and equitable.

Our written testimony also provides a conceptual map of resilient, connected lands and waters in Nevada [[Exhibit L](#)]. These are places that have the potential to offer refuge for species as they move in latitude and elevation to adapt to the effects of climate change. This map is a qualitative analysis. More science needs to be done to understand the suitability and durability of specific locations, but we wanted to share it with the Committee to provide a visual example of areas in Nevada that warrant further investigation as being suitable places for protection to meet a 30 by 30 goal.

A lot of work needs to be done to achieve this goal. This resolution represents the first step, which is a statement of support for 30 by 30. The Nature Conservancy is committed to this goal, and we are available to help achieve it by providing our own science, mapping, and support. We urge the members of this Committee to vote yes on [A.J.R. 3](#).

Larry Johnson, President, Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife:

We have submitted written comments jointly with other sportsmen's groups [[Exhibit M](#)]. I would like to summarize a couple of things. We are in support of the concept of the 30 by 30 policy. We do have certain contingencies to our support which include:

- Recognizing existing and varying land management levels and actions that currently afford protection.
- Working to identify additional conservation needs and actions through an objective, science-driven, stakeholder-engaged process to determine the appropriate level of management actions necessary to meet conservation goals.
- Developing protected area definitions that allow for well-managed and sustainable wildlife-dependent activities that are in harmony with other management goals.
- Clearly defining roles and authorities for the entities charged with carrying out the 30 by 30 proposal.

There are certain levels of protection, such as wilderness designations, that may not be entirely in line with wildlife management goals in semiarid climates, such as Nevada. However, there are definite needs to protect things like wildlife migration corridors, and deer-wintering areas, precious water resources, and we need the ability to do habitat improvements, et cetera. In general, we are in support of the concept, but sportsmen definitely need to be at the table as this process continues. We call for your support of this; I think good things could happen if carefully tailored to the needs of Nevada.

Russell Kuhlman, Executive Director, Nevada Wildlife Federation:

I would like to express our support for this resolution. Nevadans cherish our public lands and landscapes. It is one of the largest economic drivers in many rural communities, providing approximately 59,000 jobs and \$1.1 billion in state and local tax revenue every year. This resolution expresses the broad collaboration between all public land user groups, including the sporting community, which has historically had a very successful track record for large-scale conservation objectives, including the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation; the Federal Duck Stamp that contributes millions of dollars every year for wetland habitat improvements; and the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act, just to name a few. I believe the 30 by 30 resolution has the potential to be another historic conservation victory, and the Nevada Wildlife Federation is excited to be a supporter of this resolution and looks forward to further collaboration with various public land advocates to help protect areas of importance for ourselves and future generations yet to come. Please support this resolution.

Nikolai Christenson, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I am here to speak in favor of A.J.R. 3. The Biden Administration has committed the United States to protecting at least 30 percent of the country's area by 2030. This overlaps considerably with what is proposed in A.J.R. 3. Nevada should do its part and make at least the same commitment to protect this amount of space within our state. We have the undeveloped area and we have plenty of amazing natural spaces that warrant additional protection. This is not only good climate policy, it is good for Nevada's rapidly growing outdoor recreation industry. We already see overcapacity crowds at places such as Red Rock Canyon. We need additional, accessible, protected wild spaces to help avoid our existing spaces being loved to death.

Two years ago, the Nevada Legislature passed a bill to identify policies that will help abate climate change. There are a lot of steps Nevada could and should take to ensure a livable future in our state, and A.J.R. 3 would definitely be one of these steps, and, frankly, it is one of the easiest we could take.

Appropriately, A.J.R. 3 does not stop with its commitment to 30 by 30. It recommends establishing Avi Kwa Ame National Monument, and it advocates permanent protection for the Desert National Wildlife Refuge. These would be positive developments for the state and for the nation. As part of a broad commitment to our future, I urge you to adopt A.J.R. 3. Thank you for your time.

Grace Palermo, Southern Nevada Programs Director, Friends of Nevada Wilderness:

I would like to echo other supporters for this resolution. From providing more outdoor recreation opportunities near urban areas to enhancing the outdoor experience in our rural landscapes to preserving some of the wildest open expanses of land in Nevada, the 30 by 30 initiative will support the health and well-being of all Nevadans and slow the threats of habitat loss, air and water pollution, and climate change.

We realize that Nevadans feel strongly about the importance of protecting much of our public lands from destructive development and keeping wildlife habitat and important wildlife corridors intact.

We urge members of the Committee to support [A.J.R. 3](#) and continue to advocate for policies that will help achieve the goals of the 30 by 30 initiative. [A letter was also provided, [Exhibit N](#)].

Maria-Teresa Liebermann-Parraga, Deputy Director, Battle Born Progress:

We are in full support of [A.J.R. 3](#), especially since, as many have mentioned, Nevada is on the frontlines of the issues that this resolution addresses. Our state is home to some of the most unique and valuable wildlife species. We are sixth in the nation for the number of unique species, ninth in animal diversity, and eleventh in the nation in total species diversity. However, we are third in the nation for having the highest number of species at risk. To confront the rapid loss of Nevada's precious wildlife, we must work to accelerate land and water conservation and restoration here in our state. Our commitment to 30 by 30 would ensure that we are protecting this wild heritage in the Silver State. We hope you will support [A.J.R. 3](#). Thank you for your time.

Patrick Donnelly, Nevada State Director, Center for Biological Diversity:

We support [A.J.R. 3](#) because 30 by 30 is an important framework for preserving lands for the future, to protect biodiversity, and preserve vital carbon sinks on undisturbed lands. We would note that, as the resolution makes note of, this is an incremental step toward the overall goal of 50 percent preservation by 2050, which is the so-called "halfers goal." The 30 by 30 initiative remains our best tool for understanding the magnitude of land preservation that we need to pursue. This resolution is an important step in signaling to our federal delegation and the world that the people of the state of Nevada support large-scale protection of lands. We urge you to support [A.J.R. 3](#).

Laura Richards, Member, Legislative Committee, Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club:

On behalf of the Sierra Club and our more than 30,000 members and supporters statewide, I am speaking in support of [A.J.R. 3](#).

Public lands, waters, and forests are spaces that protect the health of people, wildlife, and the planet. These places are under threat and are disappearing. With the threat of climate change and one million species at risk of extinction around the world, we need bold actions such as [A.J.R. 3](#) to combat this.

In Nevada, we have seen more intense wildfires, dangerous droughts, and loss of habitat due to sprawl and development, all of which is resulting in degradation of rangelands, forests, and safe air quality that takes a toll on human health, the economy, and the environment. We have a moral duty to stop the climate crisis for future generations. Conserving more nature will make our communities healthier and safer, both now and in the future.

This resolution is an important call for action, urging the U.S. Congress, Governor Sisolak, and federal, state, and local agencies to work cooperatively to protect 30 percent of Nevada's lands and waters by 2030. This resolution is Nevada's first step in doing our part in creating a vision to protect nature and combat the climate crisis. To reach this ambitious goal, we encourage Nevada lawmakers to urge the federal government to use all conservation measures available, including new national monuments, wildlife refuges, and wilderness study areas. We also urge prioritizing conservation efforts of tribal nations, towns, cities, and landowners.

For the reasons above, we urge you to support this resolution. [Written testimony in support was also provided, [Exhibit O](#)].

David Ricker, Policy Chair, Nevada Chapter, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers:

I would like to reiterate that the letter mentioned previously by Assemblywoman Anderson, of which the group I represent is a signee, was not meant to be an opposition letter as Ms. Cabrera already stated [[Exhibit K](#)].

We broadly support this resolution as written. With that said, we are concerned about the specifics of this initiative and need concrete details to ensure our enduring support.

We must have some flexibility in how "protected land" is defined so that habitat improvement projects and fire restoration and mitigation can be conducted as effectively and efficiently as possible. We are concerned about how this will affect feral horse and burro management. Lastly, we are concerned that the public land-rich states of the West will shoulder too heavy a burden as compared to the predominately privately held Great Plains and eastern states and be asked to conserve more than our share without just recompense.

I would like to thank members of this Committee for their shrewd commentary and questions which have already highlighted many of our concerns, and thank you for your time.

[Also provided in support of Assembly Joint Resolution 3 are [Exhibit P](#), [Exhibit Q](#), [Exhibit R](#), and [Exhibit S](#)].

Chair Watts:

Is there anyone else who would like to testify in support of A.J.R. 3? Hearing no one, I will open it up for those wishing to testify in opposition to A.J.R. 3.

Lynn Chapman, Treasurer, Independent American Party of Nevada:

We are opposed to A.J.R. 3. I heard a speaker this morning discussing the federal takeover of our state sovereignties throughout the United States. My mind went right to A.J.R. 3 and how this resolution sounds very much like he was describing. Private property is an important reason why people left their birth countries to come to the New World. They are still trying to get here today. Private property is an important part of our country and it goes hand in hand with our liberties. George Washington wrote, "Freedom and property rights are inseparable. You can't have one without the other." To use pretty words like "protecting the

land and water" is a bit deceiving to Nevada's citizens. This resolution is not exactly being truthful. Please vote no on A.J.R. 3.

Jake Tibbitts, Natural Resources Manager, Department of Natural Resources, Eureka County:

We have submitted written testimony and will summarize it here [[Exhibit T](#)]. While we are opposed to A.J.R. 3 as is, we are not opposed to truly working together to address the issues the language is intended to address. Our concern is with the 30 by 30 initiative. From what we have seen, it is a top-down decree that has a bias towards satisfied hands-off areas and restrictive land use regulations. This alienates many rural Nevadans and Americans who otherwise support healthy lands, waters, and wildlife. The 30 by 30 initiative will undoubtedly end up reducing working lands, implementing hands-off management, increasing wildfires, reducing productivity, and impairing rural communities.

Land users and managers operate at reduced capability in areas with mostly hands-off protection designation. They cannot implement sound land and resource management actions in these areas. I would also note that there are implications on state water law with some of these items. If any of these protected areas become federal reservations, they could have implications on public water reserves where there is always a public water reserve to fit the need and purpose of a federal land designation, so there could be implications on the state's water resources.

The work should instead be focused on working with local and tribal governments and private sectors with a local-driven focus built on proven models of incentive-based and locally led conservation and keeping working lands working. Crucial to this vision is keeping private agriculture lands profitable. Much of the prime and invaluable wildlife and riparian habitat in the state is under private control. Many of these private agricultural lands are tied to ranching operations conducted on or in concert with federal lands. Any time there are restrictions on federal lands, there is a cascade effect on the private lands, and there is a risk of degradation or subdivision of private lands.

We want to be clear that we do want to address the issues identified in this initiative. The way to do this is to work, incentivize conservation, not disenfranchise and offend rural communities and those making a living off the natural resource uses.

Janine Hansen, State President, Nevada Families for Freedom:

We have serious concerns about A.J.R. 3 and consider it a threat to one of the most essential freedoms, the unalienable right of private property.

John Adams said, "The moment the idea is admitted into society that property is not as sacred as the law of God, and that there is not a force of law and public justice to protect it, anarchy and tyranny commence."

Private property owners are mentioned in the resolution only as an afterthought encouraging them to participate in voluntary programs. There is no recognition of the critical importance

of private property to our state's economy or the wonderful job most private landowners do to preserve our state's wildlife and resources.

The sponsors of this bill are uninformed about the realities of the land and water in Nevada. The federal government controls 87 percent of Nevada lands and they have mismanaged it dreadfully, resulting in destructive wildfires, the loss of agricultural enterprises in ranching and farming, and harmed innumerable wildlife by destroying natural habitat.

What this resolution does not acknowledge is that there are many current inheritable property rights on that 87 percent of the land controlled by the feds. These include grazing rights and mineral rights. In addition, almost all the water in Nevada already has legal water rights attached and there is no water for this outlandish resolution to lock up. The goals of this resolution are possible only if the government plans to steal or confiscate the property and water rights of those who legally own it in Nevada.

This resolution is outside the realm of reality unless the real plan is to use the force of government to take private property rights and legally protected water rights from Nevada citizens. Please reject A.J.R. 3 and protect our most essential freedom of private property. [Written testimony was also provided, [Exhibit U](#)].

Wade Poulsen, General Manager, Lincoln County Water District:

We are opposed to A.J.R. 3. Lincoln County is home to the Nevada Test and Training Range, Area 51, seven wilderness areas, two critical BLM conservation areas, five state parks, two national wildlife reserves, and one national monument, which have inhibited the ability for Lincoln County to create a tax base. Several million acres have been taken out of a potential tax base for Lincoln County, thus making Lincoln County a welfare county. These designations have happened over the last 20 to 40 years. We appreciate the tourism and we appreciate the hunting and the hunters who come to Lincoln County although that is not an economic development for Lincoln County. Creating a tax base is the only way that Lincoln County will be able to get out of the welfare status. Please oppose A.J.R. 3.

Doug Busselman, Executive Vice President, Nevada Farm Bureau Federation:

We are testifying today in opposition to A.J.R. 3. Our concerns over A.J.R. 3 center on the meaning of the wording "protecting 50 percent of the world's lands, oceans and waters by 2050" as well as the wording "protecting 30 percent of the lands and waters in this State by 2030."

We appreciate the questions asked regarding what does "protecting" mean. We are still unclear over the calculations of 50 percent or 30 percent and how these levels are derived. These terms and how they translate into actions impact economic consequences as well as people's property.

As conservation-minded people, farmers and ranchers have a different view of how using natural resources is not a bad thing, and locking the ability for use of our federally managed lands under designations of wilderness, parks, national monument areas, et cetera, does not

automatically qualify those designated lands as being "protected," in our view. In our view, "protection" should mean active management as opposed to designations for nonmanagement.

Nevada farmers and ranchers already provide a great deal of enhanced wildlife habitat and essential resources through the production activities they carry out while making a living.

Resolutions like A.J.R. 3 in and of themselves serve as worthy aspirational concepts. How those aspirational concepts translate into impacts on people who depend on their private property and the ability to use natural resources for their livelihoods also matters. These potential ramifications are the reason for our opposing A.J.R. 3. Thank you for this opportunity to share our perspective.

Chair Watts:

I will move on to the next person wishing to provide testimony in opposition.

K. Neena Laxalt, representing Nevada Cattlemen's Association:

The Nevada Cattlemen's Association is in opposition to A.J.R. 3. Many of the comments and concerns that the cattlemen have, have been brought up, most specifically by Eureka County and by the Nevada Farm Bureau Federation.

The Nevada Cattlemen's Association and the farmers in Nevada have been taking care of land and water in the state of Nevada for many generations, so there is certainly no opposition to taking care of the precious resources we have in this state. The concern is that some of the science that has been relied on has become extremely politicized, controversial, and, at times, the science is providing biased and slanted information, rather than taking into consideration all points of view. We believe the language is vague in A.J.R. 3. Not all stakeholders have been brought in to have the discussion. We believe it is very important that the historical background on the management of the state of Nevada and its resources be considered. Do not go back 20 years, go back a few hundred years to see how Nevada has been managed by some of the ranching and farming thus far. We appreciate you allowing us to present and would be happy to join efforts to speak with those who have presented this bill.

[Also provided in opposition to Assembly Joint Resolution 3 are [Exhibit V](#) and [Exhibit W](#)].

Chair Watts:

Is there anyone else wishing to testify in opposition? Hearing no one, I will move on to those wishing to testify in neutral.

Chaunsey Chau-Duong, Public Affairs, Southern Nevada Water Authority:

The Southern Nevada Water Authority provides water to over 2.2 million residents of Nevada. The Southern Nevada Water Authority is neutral on this bill, but we did want to inform the Committee that we worked with Assemblywoman González on possibly amending A.J.R. 3 to further emphasize the importance of water conservation in the state by

urging state and local agencies that utilize the Colorado River to adopt requirements to remove existing nonfunctional turf by December 31, 2026. The watering of nonfunctional turf is an inefficient use of water and by removing nonfunctional turf, water can be prioritized and used for more efficient and effective purposes. Although we are not proposing an amendment to A.J.R. 3, we would like to thank Assemblywoman González for her time and we will be seeking a legislative vehicle this session to further advance water conservation by requiring the removal of nonfunctional turf.

Colby Prout, Natural Resources Manager, Nevada Association of Counties:

Assembly Joint Resolution 3 outlines the Legislature's support of an admirable goal set up by the Biden Administration to conserve 30 percent of the nation's land by 2030. Nevada's counties also believe strongly in conservation. Eighty-six percent of Nevada's land is managed by the federal government. The majesty of our natural resources is a central part of the quality of life for our communities. Much of our work in Nevada Association of Counties (NACO) is focused on ensuring that the federal government listens to local concerns, and on coordinating land use and management decisions with the counties. It is counties that are often trying to get a seat at the table on large federal projects that impact natural resources in public lands, not the other way around.

Specifically, NACO hopes that by encouraging the federal government to move forward with its 30 by 30 initiative, the Legislature also recognizes that whatever future designations or restrictions of public land use occur, they be consistent with the local land-use plans and not incapacitate mandated county functions and infrastructure and be implemented only after consultation and coordination with local government. Basically, it is important that counties are at the table for any conversations. We do want to thank Assemblywoman González and representatives of Nevada Conservation League for taking the time to talk with us about A.J.R. 3 and hear our perspective regarding the importance of the role of local government. County, state, and federal interests are often aligned when it comes to conservation. For instance, a recent Clark County lands bill introduced by Senator Cortez-Masto was a result of extensive local consultation and conversations that demonstrate just how important these conversations in local communities and local government can be. The Clark County lands bill looks to preserve some of the same areas identified in A.J.R. 3, such as the Desert National Wildlife Refuge and the Avi Kwa Ame National Monument, while also respecting county needs.

Chair Watts:

Is there anyone else wishing to testify in neutral? Hearing no one, are there any closing remarks?

Assemblywoman González:

In closing, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to present A.J.R. 3, and I urge your support for this important legislation.

Chair Watts:

I will note that we have had many letters sent in that are on the Nevada Electronic Legislative Information System. With that, I will close the hearing on Assembly Joint Resolution 3 and move on to the final item on our agenda, which is public comment.

Cyrus Hojjaty, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:

I have general comments about the environment. Do you realize that urban heat island is a different issue than climate change? I want to make sure that you know that Las Vegas is the fastest-warming city, not only due to global climate change, but to urban climate change. The rural towns nearby have a larger gap between day and night temperatures. You talk about how we need climate justice, why are Asian Americans not suffering from climate change disproportionately? I am curious to know. Also, I want to understand, are these conservation elements going to impact home prices because housing supply is also an issue. You talk about green living, what about politicians, are they living the green lifestyle: how they drive, how they live, how they get around across the world? Furthermore, my final thought, more importantly, is why do we consume so many resources? Why do we give out so many emissions? Why are people not talking about the fact that it is Wall Street that is the elephant in the room when it comes to the environment—the lending system, the Federal Reserve. Think about the fact that if we did not have all this credit, we would not be able to buy all the gasoline, cars, houses. If you shut down all credit tomorrow, consumption of resources would collapse overnight. The reason why you are seeing all of this massive construction in the Las Vegas Valley is due to this Wall Street Federal Reserve banking system. What can you do? You might as well just cut it off. Why not advocate that? I think the problem is that we have to keep positive, we have the environment, but I kind of feel like if the average person is being hunted down, but the real culprits are these large corporations. I feel like people in this Legislature and governments all across the world do not talk about that because I feel like Nevada is a state that is a merger of casinos, real estate [Allotted time was exceeded.]

Chair Watts:

Thank you, your time is up. We will move on to the next caller.

Wade Poulsen, General Manager, Lincoln County Water District:

I wanted to give an example of how designating an area creates a problem for developing water resources. When the Basin and Range National Monument was created, Lincoln County Water District had water applications in Garden Valley. Lincoln County also had designated a certain number of acres, approximately 3,000 to 5,000 acres, that was supposed to be disposed from the Lincoln County Land Act of 2000. The Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior, did not put it into the queue and did not dispose of it. When the Basin and Range National Monument came in, our applications for water in Garden Valley became null and void; thus, we are not able to develop those water resources for the economic development of Lincoln County. I just wanted to share how taking land out of a tax base and conserving it creates a situation with developing water resources.

Chair Watts:

Thank you. Just to be clear, Mr. Poulsen was sharing an anecdote and not providing additional testimony in opposition to A.J.R. 3. I will move on to the next caller. Hearing no one, our next meeting is Monday, March 15, 2021, at 4 p.m. We are adjourned [at 6 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Nancy Davis
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

Assemblyman Howard Watts, Chair

DATE: _____

EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda.

[Exhibit B](#) is the Attendance Roster.

[Exhibit C](#) is the Work Session Document for [Assembly Bill 34](#), presented by Jann Stinnesbeck, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit D](#) is a proposed amendment to [Assembly Bill 34](#) provided by the State Department of Agriculture and presented by Jann Stinnesbeck, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit E](#) is the Work Session Document for [Assembly Bill 72](#), presented by Jann Stinnesbeck, Committee Policy Analyst, Research Division, Legislative Counsel Bureau.

[Exhibit F](#) is a proposed amendment to [Assembly Bill 102](#), submitted by Assemblywoman Lisa Krasner, Assembly District No. 26.

[Exhibit G](#) is written testimony presented by Tony Yarbrough, State Legislative Deputy, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of Nevada; and Secretary, United Veterans Legislative Council, in support of [Assembly Bill 102](#).

[Exhibit H](#) is a letter submitted by Anne Davis, Chair, Women Veterans Advisory Committee, in support of [Assembly Bill 102](#).

[Exhibit I](#) is a letter dated March 9, 2021, submitted by Katherine A. Baran, Private Citizen, Carson City, Nevada, in support of [Assembly Bill 102](#).

[Exhibit J](#) is a letter authored by Frank Reynolds, Retired, Gunnery Sergeant, U.S. Marine Corps, in support of [Assembly Bill 102](#).

[Exhibit K](#) is a letter dated March 9, 2021, submitted by Christi Cabrera, Policy and Advocacy Director, Nevada Conservation League, and signed by Paul Selberg, Executive Director, Nevada Conservation League, et al, in support of [Assembly Joint Resolution 3](#).

[Exhibit L](#) is a letter dated March 9, 2021, authored by Mauricia M.M. Baca, Nevada State Director, The Nature Conservancy, submitted and presented by Jaina Moan, External Affairs Director, The Nature Conservancy, in support of [Assembly Joint Resolution 3](#).

[Exhibit M](#) is a letter dated March 9, 2021, signed by Tom Smith, Vice President, Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife, et al, and presented by Larry Johnson, President, Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife, in support of [Assembly Joint Resolution 3](#).

[Exhibit N](#) is a letter dated March 9, 2021, signed by Shaaron Netherton, Executive Director, Friends of Nevada Wilderness, submitted by Grace Palermo, Southern Nevada Programs Director, Friends of Nevada Wilderness, in support of [Assembly Joint Resolution 3](#).

[Exhibit O](#) is written testimony dated March 10, 2021, presented by Laura Richards, Member, Legislative Committee, Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club, in support of [Assembly Joint Resolution 3](#).

[Exhibit P](#) is a letter dated March 10, 2021, submitted by Denise Rohrer, Private Citizen, Reno, Nevada, in support of [Assembly Joint Resolution 3](#).

[Exhibit Q](#) is a letter dated March 10, 2021, submitted by Karen Boeger, Private Citizen, Washoe Valley, Nevada, in support of [Assembly Joint Resolution 3](#).

[Exhibit R](#) is a copy of an email dated March 4, 2021, sent by Misty Haji-Sheikh, Member, Executive Committee, Southern Nevada Group, Sierra Club, in support of [Assembly Joint Resolution 3](#).

[Exhibit S](#) is a letter dated March 10, 2021, submitted by Taylor Patterson, Member, Bishop Paiute Tribe, and Executive Director, Native Voters Alliance Nevada, in support of [Assembly Joint Resolution 3](#).

[Exhibit T](#) is written testimony presented by Jake Tibbitts, Natural Resources Manager, Department of Natural Resources, Eureka County, in opposition to [Assembly Joint Resolution 3](#).

[Exhibit U](#) is written testimony presented by Janine Hansen, State President, Nevada Families for Freedom, in opposition to [Assembly Joint Resolution 3](#).

[Exhibit V](#) is written testimony provided by Bob Russo, Private Citizen, Gardnerville, Nevada, in opposition to [Assembly Joint Resolution 3](#).

[Exhibit W](#) is a letter written by Joseph Schulz and Cretia Eyster, Private Citizens, Incline Village, Nevada, in opposition to [Assembly Joint Resolution 3](#).