

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

**Eighty-First Session  
March 15, 2021**

The Committee on Natural Resources was called to order by Chair Howard Watts at 4:02 p.m. on Monday, March 15, 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](http://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:**

None

**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:**

Delaine Stark Spilsbury, Private Citizen, McGill, Nevada  
Rupert Steele, Chairman, Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation  
Monte Sanford, Consultant, Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation  
Marla McDade Williams, representing Reno-Sparks Indian Colony  
Christi Cabrera, Policy and Advocacy Director, Nevada Conservation League  
Shania Marques, Private Citizen, Ely, Nevada  
Rick Spilsbury, Private Citizen, McGill, Nevada  
Kyle Roerink, Executive Director, Great Basin Water Network  
Lisa Ortega, Member, Legislative Committee, Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club  
John Hadder, Executive Director, Great Basin Resource Watch  
Neal Desai, Senior Director, Field Operations, National Parks Conservation Association  
Christine Saunders, Policy Director, Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada  
Jaina Moan, External Affairs Director, The Nature Conservancy  
Patrick Donnelly, Nevada State Director, Center for Biological Diversity  
Ainslee Archibald, Hub Coordinator, Sunrise Movement Las Vegas  
Teresa Melendez, Vice Chair, Nevada Statewide Native American Caucus  
Teresa Crawford, Member, Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club  
Dominique Etchegoyhen, Deputy Director, State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
Cyrus Hojjaty, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada

**Chair Watts:**

[Meeting was called to order. Committee rules and protocols were reviewed.] I will be presenting both bills today.

[Assemblywoman Cohen assumed the Chair.]

**Vice Chair Cohen:**

I will open the hearing on Assembly Bill 171.

**Assembly Bill 171: Establishes certain protections for certain swamp cedars. (BDR 47-468)**

**Assemblyman Howard Watts, Assembly District No. 15:**

It is my honor today to present Assembly Bill 171 for the Committee's consideration. My intent is to turn this over fairly quickly to my copresenters to speak about the swamp cedars and why protection of them is so important. I will then walk you through the content of this measure as well as the amendment [[Exhibit C](#)].

One thing that I would like to acknowledge is that we are gathering here at the Legislature on the lands of the Washoe people who were displaced from it and who have been its stewards for countless generations. Also, I have had the opportunity to know some of the copresenters

of this bill for a long time, and I consider them close personal friends. I have had the ability to visit Bahsahwahbee and the swamp cedars in Assemblyman Ellison's district. That is why it was so important for me to bring the idea to the Legislative Committee on Public Lands, which some Committee members along with myself sat on during the interim, to try and increase protection. Assembly Bill 171 specifically looks to increase the protection that is available at the state level. I would now like to turn this over to my copresenters. Joining us today, we have Delaine Spilsbury, Rupert Steele, and Monte Sanford.

**Delaine Stark Spilsbury, Private Citizen, McGill, Nevada:**

I am a small business owner, former Nevada Test Site employee, and a Western Shoshone woman whose family has lived in the Great Basin for time immemorial. Today I ask you to support Assembly Bill 171 and Assembly Joint Resolution 4.

I am enrolled with the Ely Shoshone Tribe and currently live near McGill. I am a former Territory Chair of the Nevada Commission on Tourism and currently serve on the boards of the Great Basin National Heritage Area and the Great Basin Water Network. Today I am here on behalf of Nevada's indigenous communities.

For many years, the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation, the Ely Shoshone and the Duckwater Shoshone have been working to tell an important story about our heritage. My contribution to those efforts follows.

I am here today to encourage protection of what is sacred to my family and my tribe, the Spring Valley stand of Rocky Mountain juniper trees, known locally as the swamp cedars.

Spiritually and culturally, the swamp cedars grow within an area referred to by my people as Bahsahwahbee, which means the Sacred Water Valley in our Newe language.

Bahsahwahbee was an important meeting place for the Newe. Before colonization, indigenous peoples from across the Great Basin traveled far and wide to congregate in Spring Valley. It was a place for prayer, celebration, medicine, and rejuvenation—and that remains so today. The spiritual and cultural past of the swamp cedars represent what it means to be Native and what it means to be Newe. However, the swamp cedars also tell a damning story about the history of Nevada and the ethnic cleansing of my people.

Spring Valley was home to at least three major massacres of native people between 1850 and 1900. Two were military-led engagements. The third was conducted by a band of vigilantes. My grandmother was one of two children who survived the last massacre. As she hid in a ditch, she witnessed bloodthirsty thugs kill off her relatives and friends and desecrate her place of worship, her place of solace.

For the remaining Newe people, it is our firmest belief that the swamp cedars in Spring Valley embody the spirits of the lives lost during the three massacres. Our relatives are in those trees, and that is why I continue to go out there. That is where I go to visit my relatives.

The significance of Bahsahwahbee to my people is hard to describe. We have heard Bahsahwahbee be compared to places like Mecca or Vatican City. Another comparison would be to a massacre site like Wounded Knee and countless other sites where Native people were unjustly attacked. But I want to say that you cannot compare Bahsahwahbee to anywhere else. There is only one. And if the swamp cedars are gone from Bahsahwahbee, then it is all gone.

Bahsahwahbee is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as a Traditional Cultural Property. A part of the site is also listed as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Department of the Interior. While those designations sound like proper safeguards, we have learned over many years that those terms only offer nominal protections. We are here today to ask for something with more teeth.

Assembly Bill 171 ensures that anyone committing any activity that would extricate a swamp cedar would have to get a permit from the Division of Forestry (NDF), State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, or else face a penalty under the law. Currently, there are no protections in Nevada law for sacred trees like the swamp cedars. We are long overdue for a change.

While I respect what state officials wrote in January to the Legislative Committee on Public Lands, we respectfully ask that they use this opportunity to listen, learn, and respect our wishes. We hope this can be an opportunity to build bridges between our tribal governments and the state of Nevada. Though the swamp cedars may not be officially considered a unique genetic population of Rocky Mountain junipers, they sure are unique to me. If genetic tests were taken, obviously, there would be differences. It is just a judgment call either way.

Nonetheless, that misses the point. Bahsahwahbee trees bring my people feelings of both comfort and sadness. On top of some mountain, a juniper is just a juniper. As it relates to A.J.R. 4, we know that U.S. Congress or the executive branch of the federal government can take more action to help preserve such a special place. Together, these two measures give Nevada the chance to do something that we thought would be impossible just a few years ago. My son Rick often says, "If Bahsahwahbee and the swamp cedars are harmed, it will be my own personal extinction event." I feel the same; it would be my extinction event also. Bahsahwahbee represents what it means to be me; what it means to be Native; and what it means to be Newe. This is why I encourage you now to protect the Spirits of our Newe ancestors, our culture, and the history of our Newe people." Please pass A.B. 171. [Written testimony was also provided, [Exhibit D](#).]

**Vice Chair Cohen:**

Thank you for sharing your family and your people's story with us. Assemblyman Watts, would you like to introduce your next presenter?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

Thank you, Ms. Spilsbury, for tuning in from rural Nevada and working through the connectivity issues to share your words with us. Mr. Steele will be our next presenter.

**Rupert Steele, Chairman, Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation:**

[Introduction was spoken in Mr. Steele's native tongue.] Thank you for giving me this opportunity to testify on behalf of my relatives and all those who gave up their lives for me to survive. I am half Shoshone and half Goshute. The Bahsahwahbee is a very important, sacred, spiritual place for us, just as when you enter your place of worship. Our people were massacred in a very harsh way at swamp cedar. Just like a seed, each one of those swamp cedars was fertilized by one of those who were massacred there; one of my people fertilized a tree. Through that, we live spiritually and connect with Mother Earth through them. To destroy those trees would be an act of genocide. It is very important for me to come before you today in support of A.B. 171 to protect them.

Yes, there are protections out there, but experience tells us it is not enough. It is not sufficient to protect the natural environment, including swamp cedar trees. Spring Valley has a historical and very important significance to all Indian people: it is a place of gathering, a place of mourning, a place to tell stories, a place to be together, to pray for each other, and pray for those who have gone before us, and pray for us here that are walking the earth, and pray for young ones who are still coming our way.

I go there to say good things when I am there with my ancestors, knowing their spirits are there with me. It gives me a good feeling to go and thank them for what they have done. They gave up their lives, the ultimate sacrifice for me to live here—and for my children and my grandchildren to be here and enjoy life as my ancestors would if they were still here. It makes me proud to be among them when I go there.

I want to say that we are all human, we were all brought here, we had no choice in who we are, but we do have a choice in how we treat people including each other. I want to say again, please support A.B. 171. [A letter was also provided, [Exhibit E](#).]

**Vice Chair Cohen:**

Thank you for sharing your family and your people with us.

**Assemblyman Watts:**

I believe Mr. Sanford would like to present next.

**Monte Sanford, Consultant, Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation:**

I have worked with the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation for almost a decade and a half. I want to extend our thanks for creating this opportunity to be heard regarding Assembly Bill 171.

Swamp cedars is the only place in the United States that we know of where indigenous people were specifically targeted and massacred at times of religious gatherings—at the same place—time, after time, after time. As Ms. Spilsbury and Mr. Steele have said, the swamp cedar trees are the living embodiment of their relatives who are now spirits.

It cannot be emphasized enough how important and sacred this connection is for the Goshute and Western Shoshone people and some Paiute people. They have suffered some of the worst atrocities of human rights violations in recorded history. The massacres at Bahsahwahbee were part of the Native American genocide that went on for centuries. Goshute and Western Shoshone people have little left, but what remains, including the sacred grove of the swamp cedar trees, is vital for the survival of their religion and culture.

Currently, the swamp cedar trees have little to no legal protection at the state or federal level. Parts of Bahsahwahbee, as Ms. Spilsbury mentioned, do have certain federal land management designations: one part is an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and the larger part is a Traditional Cultural Property (TCP). Unfortunately, neither one of those designations actually provide any real legal protection for the swamp cedar trees. The ACEC and the TCP could potentially result in changes to management plans and management decisions, but it does not protect the trees from being destroyed, whereas A.B. 171 proposes changes to *Nevada Revised Statutes* (NRS) Chapter 527 that would make it unlawful to destroy the trees.

That said, we are simply asking that the swamp cedar trees be protected, as provided in this bill. There is no other place in Nevada or in the nation like swamp cedars. This is a special circumstance that deserves special protection. This bill would not make the swamp cedar trees an endangered species; rather, it would simply afford the trees similar protections.

We have heard opponents say that protections for swamp cedar trees are a matter better suited for the federal government. We do not dispute that the federal government could do much more to protect this sacred area; however, there is no provision in existing federal law to protect these trees as intended under A.B. 171. To get a new federal law passed through Congress is an enormous mountain to climb. But that is separate and apart from A.B. 171. Moreover, the Nevada Legislature has already codified protections for all kinds of other plants, including Christmas trees, yuccas, and cacti, all of which are widespread across the western United States. Since the Legislature has chosen to protect and regulate these common plants, then clearly the protection of the only grove of swamp cedar trees anywhere in the world is a matter appropriate for the Legislature to support.

We have heard opponents argue that the swamp cedar trees should not be protected for fear that they may not be a distinct population. As it relates to A.B. 171, that is an arbitrary rule and does not apply. This bill does not legislatively make the swamp cedar trees a distinct population or an endangered species. Christmas trees, yuccas, and cacti have special protections, but those are also not listed as endangered or occurring as distinct populations.

We have also heard fears that protecting the swamp cedar trees could set a precedent. If the Legislature could not act for fear of setting a precedent, then the entire Legislative Branch of government would likely deteriorate. We feel that it is appropriate to honor and protect indigenous history and culture in Nevada. If A.B. 171 sets that precedent, then it is time to do so.

That said, A.B. 171 offers a clear path to providing protections for the swamp cedar trees. The bill would not only protect an exceptional and unique stand of trees within the state, but it would also protect the last fragments of where we mourn the families lost during the genocide, the connection we have with our ancestors, and our indigenous place for ceremony. Swamp cedars is like a temple and an Arlington National Cemetery, all in one. It adds significant depth of history, culture, religion, and diversity to the great state of Nevada. Surely, this sacred grove of swamp cedar trees is worthy of protection as proposed in A.B. 171.

For all these reasons, the Tribes respectfully ask that you vote yes to support A.B. 171. Thank you for your time, and we appreciate your support.

**Vice Chair Cohen:**

Is there anyone else speaking as part of the presentation?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

That concludes the presentation. I would like to step everyone through the bill and then we will be glad to stand for any questions the Committee may have.

I will briefly review Assembly Bill 171. Section 1 adds a new section to NRS Chapter 527, which provides for the protection of certain flora in our state. It essentially declares the policy of the state to be to protect the Spring Valley population of Rocky Mountain junipers known as "swamp cedars." It specifically confines this to those trees that occur in White Pine County within the Bahsahwahbee Traditional Cultural Property. That is important. As was heard earlier, there was a discussion in the Legislative Committee on Public Lands. Juniper trees are found all across the state and across the region; however, there is nowhere else you can find them on a valley floor. This is quite unique, based primarily on the fact that the water table is essentially at ground level, providing the resources that these trees need to survive and thrive.

For those who travel the state, when you get to this valley, you see how different and significant it is to have a stand of Rocky Mountain junipers thriving on this valley floor. We used the geographic area to define these trees to separate them from the junipers that occur in the mountain ranges all across the state.

This bill makes it unlawful for any person to negligently or willfully cut, destroy, mutilate, pick, or remove any of these trees without first obtaining a special permit issued by the State Forester Firewarden and complying with any other applicable requirements. The bill permits NDF to develop any needed regulations to carry this out.

This is similar to the protection that is found in what are called "fully protected species," which is essentially how our state defines and protects endangered plants. There was a discussion about this in the Public Lands Committee, and again, that is a scientific designation made for distinct populations. This is essentially laying out—because of the

incredible cultural importance of this area and importance of the trees to this area—that we are going to require a permit.

I know there will be questions about to what extent the state and federal government have the ability to do these things; this is just applying a standard that we already have. It is not a ban on the removal, but it requires that if anyone wants to purposefully take any of these trees down, they must go through an additional permitting process with NDF before they would be able to do so. This is putting additional constraints and a higher barrier to demonstrate that the importance of the removal would outweigh the cultural importance that these unique trees have to our state.

Section 2 makes conforming changes.

I would now like to discuss the amendment that I proposed [[Exhibit C](#)], specifically section 2, subsection 4. The current language of NRS mentions that some of these provisions do not apply to Indians, "native to Nevada," who gather any such article for food, medicinal, or ceremonial use for themselves or for any other person being treated by Indian religious ceremonies. The Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation's lands span multiple state borders, as do some other native tribes. What we are offering here is to clean up some language so it would instead read, "the provisions of this section do not apply to Indians who gather any such article for food, medicinal, or ceremonial use." This will streamline the language about uses, and again, ensure that if a member of the Confederated Tribe of the Goshute happens to reside within the current state of Utah, for example, they are not considered nonnatives to come to Bahsahwahbee and practice their ceremonies and traditional activities.

**Vice Chair Cohen:**

Mr. Amburn, our legal counsel, mentioned that the current punitive scheme would apply if the person cut, destroyed, mutilated, picked, or removed a swamp cedar pursuant to [A.B. 171](#), and the penalty is found in NRS 527.050, subsection 2. The penalty is that a person who cuts, destroys, mutilates, picks, or removes a swamp cedar is guilty of a public offense proportionate to the value of the tree, and is no less than a misdemeanor. This means that if the damage is valued at \$5,000 or more, the person is guilty of a category C felony; if the damage is valued at \$250 to \$5,000, the person is guilty of a gross misdemeanor; and if the damage is valued at less than \$250, the person is guilty of a misdemeanor. These definitions are found in NRS 193.150, which provides the punishments for misdemeanors, and NRS 193.155, which provides the punishment of public offense proportionate to the value of property affected.

Because of the pandemic, many more people are taking advantage of getting out in nature and enjoying recreation in Nevada. Is there something that will let these people know that the swamp cedars are special?



**Assemblyman Watts:**

I would leave that to NDF. We can potentially get some follow-up information on how the Division notifies folks about the protections that exist for other protected flora. I assume this would follow a similar process. Again, there are usually things in place for people who wish to gather. I know there are some restrictions on access to the swamp cedars. I think there are several opportunities where signage could be posted and education could happen. This is an area that is not frequented by campers and other recreationalists; it is more often frequented by the Native people. This is focusing on if there were to be some future activity that would have a major impact, that would require a major reduction in the population of these trees, there would have to be some additional oversight from the state before that could move forward.

**Assemblywoman Titus:**

Early on in the presentation of the bill, there was a statement made about the type of junipers. I live in a rural area, we have a ton of juniper trees, and I am wondering about the genetic testing on these trees. I understand there is no unique genetic testing done on these trees; they are like the other juniper trees throughout the state. Is that correct?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

I do not believe any genetic testing has been done on these trees. I would love to have the resources to do some scientific testing to find out; I think that would be very interesting. We simply do not know. This was something that came up during the Public Lands Committee discussion as well. I would say, what is important is the cultural importance of these trees to the tribes and to their beliefs, regardless of the genetic makeup. That is specifically why we did not look to protect these trees under the existing statute for fully protected species and instead created a new section of statute to afford them these protections.

**Assemblywoman Titus:**

Do we know the number of acres and how much of this is on private land versus BLM land? I have not seen a map.

**Assemblyman Watts:**

The Bahsahwahbee Traditional Cultural Property overlays with BLM-managed lands. Within that, there is a smaller Area of Critical Environmental Concern which is on public lands. I believe Mr. Sanford may know the acreage, but the Traditional Cultural Property is federal land overlay.

**Assemblywoman Titus:**

We have negotiated some situations with the federal government and other folks about not putting sage grouse on the endangered species list. Part of that negotiation was clearing sage brush/juniper interface and encroachment of piñons and junipers on sage grouse land. I would like some clarity that none of this area would interfere with the negotiations we have already made for the habitat for the sage grouse.

**Assemblyman Watts:**

This would not interfere. These lands have had these trees on them for quite some time, so this was never sage grouse habitat that has been encroached upon. There is discussion about many areas very close by that have seen some encroachment. This is not one of those areas, and I do not believe it would be factored into those decisions about sage grouse habitat.

**Assemblywoman Anderson:**

I am questioning the word "may" in section 1, subsection 3. Is there an expectation of participation from the tribes, particularly from the tribes of Elder Spilsbury or Elder Steele, or can NDF make a decision on its own without conferring with others?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

Ultimately, that is left to the discretion of the Division of Forestry. Since they already have permitting programs in place for other types of protected flora, they may borrow considerably from that. The Division may need to simply make small modifications to be inclusive as opposed to the development of a specific program. It would be my interest to see them engage with members of the tribes, such as the Duckwater Shoshone Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute, and the Ely Shoshone Tribe, if they were to develop regulations specific to carry out this program; however, that decision would be left up to the Division.

**Vice Chair Cohen:**

I understand that NDF will be adopting regulations, but when I first read section 1, subsection 3, I was thinking a permit would be granted to promote the health of the trees. It sounds like that is not necessarily the case, and there may be other reasons that a permit would be granted.

**Assemblyman Watts:**

Essentially, this gets back to something I touched on a little bit earlier, which is the difficulty in shared stewardship over natural resources between the state and federal governments. We see this with water, wildlife, and in this case with flora. Since these lands are federally managed, we do not have the ability to 100 percent dictate the land management decisions within that area. We can, by permitting and other things, try to align federal management activities with our state public policy objectives. This is an example of that. We have that for our fully protected species, which is essentially our state endangered species list for plants. We cannot say something that completely forbids the harvesting of those plants on federal lands. We can develop a permitting system to try to manage and adjust any of those proposals so they are more in line with science, or in the case of this bill, public policy objectives. We are using that same permitting process. The permit would be for anyone who intends to destroy any of the swamp cedars specifically within this geographic boundary of the Bahsahwahbee Traditional Cultural Property.

**Assemblywoman Hansen:**

When we talk about the Spring Valley population within the Bahsahwahbee Traditional Cultural Property, how much acreage are we talking about?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

I would like to see if Mr. Sanford has that figure available.

**Monte Sanford:**

There are just barely over 14,100 acres, which is a pretty small fraction of Spring Valley.

**Assemblywoman Hansen:**

The permitting navigates the BLM issues. We discussed at a meeting of the Public Lands Committee in September 2020 whether lands managed by the BLM can be protected under NRS Chapter 527 [Legislative Committee on Public Lands, September 22, 2020]. That is why, on the motion, even though many of us supported this idea, some of us were concerned about how we navigate this. Is this how we are addressing it, in this bill, to take advantage of the permitting process?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

Yes. As you know, and some Committee members are very well aware of some, there are difficulties and conflicts that happen in management of federal lands and there are limitations of the role that the state can play. As I mentioned before, while the lands may be managed by the federal government and they can make more direct decisions about the land use, the state manages things like wildlife, plant life, and water in the public trust. While we do not have absolute say, we do have some influence. When you look at the list of fully protected species, there is a permitting system in place.

We cannot tell the federal government that they absolutely cannot do anything that will harm any of these species, but we can have them engage in the conversation and dialogue with NDF to figure out how those concerns may be mitigated; maybe some additional requirements and considerations can be put in place before anything will be allowed to move forward. Basically, that is the extent that the state plays in providing some protections. We applied that permitting structure, but we took it away from trying to make a scientific determination about it being genetically distinct and tried to address the concerns about providing broad protections for all Rocky Mountain junipers by creating a specific geographic boundary that already exists within that traditional cultural property.

**Assemblyman Ellison:**

I spend a lot of my time in this area on horseback, and I still keep going back to these questions. Are these strictly a juniper tree with another name? Also, what about pruning and removing undergrowth to prevent fires?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

Based on the language of the statute, there would have to be a permitting conversation. I think the distinction between cutting down and killing a tree versus pruning or doing work in the underlying vegetation are very different topics. It depends; if you are talking about undergrowth, we are not actually managing the land, we are trying to protect the trees. Activities that would promote the health of the ecosystem by managing the underbrush—if the trees are not being damaged—is a separate item. As far as pruning, that would be

a conversation with the State Forester to ensure that the pruning is not causing significant damage or harm to the site and its cultural value.

As to your first question, we have not done the research to see if these trees are genetically different. The swamp cedars are culturally significant and completely unique in that they exist on the valley floor. I think in that regard, they certainly are unique as swamp cedars. Whether they are a genetically distinct type of juniper from those that are found in other parts of the state is up in the air. It is my opinion that we should make sure we protect the trees in this area, regardless of where they fall genetically.

**Assemblyman Ellison:**

The BLM is removing a lot of trees in Eureka and White Pine Counties. The reason is because the water table is dropping, and they are trying to save most of the trees by getting rid of some of them. One reason for clearing out the underbrush is due to lightning strikes because when they hit, hundreds of acres are lost by wildland fires. The other reason is to protect sage grouse. I have spent most of my life on a saddle in many of these areas, and I have never heard some of these names. I do not know if this is a tribal thing, or if the tree has some other berries on it that I am not aware of.

**Assemblyman Watts:**

This is certainly an issue that is particularly important to the tribal communities who call this their ancestral home and the current place where they practice their traditions. The process this establishes is a conversation and permitting with NDF. As you know, our State Forester is also our Firewarden. I am confident that any decisions that have an impact on our wildland fire management and mitigation would definitely be taken into consideration if someone had a plan to cut, prune, or in any way address these trees.

**Vice Chair Cohen:**

Are there any more questions? Seeing none, I will open up testimony for those in support.

**Marla McDade Williams, representing Reno-Sparks Indian Colony:**

We want to extend our respects to Ms. Spilsbury and Mr. Steele for their comments and for carrying the Native history to this body. We also want to thank Assemblyman Watts and members of the Legislative Committee on Public Lands for this bill. The Reno-Sparks Indian Colony has members who are Paiute, Shoshone, and Washoe, and their ancestors have been affected by issues like this throughout the history of this country. That said, historical cultural areas of Nevada are important to all of us and we urge your support for A.B. 171.

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

We are in support of A.B. 171. As has been mentioned during the bill presentation, swamp cedars are sacred to indigenous communities and are critical to their spiritual and cultural practices. Swamp cedars are also threatened by climate change, drought, and overpumping of ground water. These trees have cultural, historical, and ecological significance and are deserving of protection under the law. We urge the Committee's support.

**Shania Marques, Private Citizen, Ely, Nevada:**

I am a cultural representative for the Ely Shoshone Tribe. I believe that this bill offers protection to the swamp cedars that they do not currently have and need. Bahsahwahbee is one of the few places left that we can go to connect to our past and honor those who sacrificed all for us to be here today. For those reasons, I support A.B. 171.

**Rick Spilsbury, Private Citizen, McGill, Nevada:**

I am a Tribal Elder of the Ely Shoshone Tribe. I am here to ask you to pass A.B. 171. You can help save a small forest in an age of deforestation. You can help save a historically important memory in an age of distraction. You can help save a culture in an age of cancel culture. This is just the right thing to do. Moreover, you can help our Native people gain faith in the system by showing some worthy respect for the natural things that are so important to us.

My Native ancestors were forcefully taught that Indian ways were primitive and not important. We do have an important message: this is not, in any way, the peak of human civilization. Our Native Great Basin ancestors proved that humans can happily live here, sustainably, for thousands of years. That is what many people do not want to think about. Of course, we cannot go back, but neither should we ignore the wisdom of the ages.

All we are asking is, please do not look the other way and allow someone to kill these trees too. By not allowing the wiping out of the last of what is left of our people in Spring Valley, we might help people think responsibly, because this is not just about saving one of Nevada's last stands of valley forest from a localized extinction event, it is about helping to save the culture of a peaceful people and their sustainable way of thinking. Ultimately, this is about helping to save Nevada's long-term future.

**Kyle Roerink, Executive Director, Great Basin Water Network:**

The Great Basin Water Network supports A.B. 171 and the amendment [[Exhibit C](#)]. Nothing in state law currently protects the swamp cedars in Bahsahwahbee and we hope we can change that. Assembly Bill 171 does not make the swamp cedars a fully protected species under NRS 527.270. This bill gives the swamp cedars the safeguards fully protected species are afforded under NRS 527.050. We are not asking to legislatively make these a genetically distinct species; we are just asking to give these trees the protections of those fully protected species. We do not want to give all Rocky Mountain junipers these protections; we just want to protect a small stand in Spring Valley. We are not trying to undermine precedence; we are merely trying to demand a new precedence for an indigenous sacred site like the swamp cedars. The status quo is not good enough for indigenous communities.

Assembly Bill 171 recognizes a special circumstance with existential considerations. When nongovernment organizations, elected officials, and government institutions talk about environmental justice or historical discrimination, the swamp cedars are a textbook example.

Tonight's hearing and its accompanying legislation offer an opportunity to gain understanding about an idea that may not exist in the frame of reference of nonnative people;

that is the power of the Legislative Branch. You have an opportunity to help build trust, acknowledge the past, and grow understanding among the public with this bill. That is a major milestone. I want to take this opportunity to thank the indigenous leaders and elders for sharing their stories. They are powerful and eloquent, and they are irreplaceable voices in our communities. I also want to thank the Committee and its Chair. Prior to the Public Lands Committee, never before has the Nevada Legislature discussed such important facets of our history. I do not know if this would have been possible without your leadership, but I am grateful for your time.

**Lisa Ortega, Member, Legislative Committee, Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club:**

I am a volunteer member of the Sierra Club's Legislative Committee, Southern Nevada Board Executive Committee member, a master arborist, and tree consultant. On behalf of the Sierra Club and our more than 40,000 members and supporters statewide, I am speaking in support of A.B. 171. The testimony that we heard this evening exemplifies that stands of trees with important historical, cultural, spiritual, and ecological significance deserve the type of protections offered by A.B. 171. The Division of Forestry, through the State Forester Firewarden, has, and should have, the ability to protect forest species of significance. Right now, there are no protections in state law for these unique Spring Valley swamp cedars, *Juniperus scopulorum*. These pockets of trees are not known to exist at the current elevation they stand upon anywhere else, and they deserve their own significant place in our nation's flora history and that of the indigenous peoples of Nevada. They are not a typical piñon juniper stand that are used for fuel and habitat; those are *Juniperus osteosperma*.

We believe that this legislation offers an opportunity for nonnative communities to learn more about the customs and traditions of indigenous peoples in the Great Basin. This is a historic opportunity to build trust and gain new understandings of each other and our history in Nevada while offering protections that preserve places of such historical significance. Assembly Bill 171 will ensure that important protections outlined in NRS 527.050 apply to the swamp cedars. We want to thank the tribal leaders for your conviction and commitment to sharing history through your stories. Your effort to protect this place is inspiring to a new generation of conservation leaders and marks a new inclusive future for Nevada. [A letter was also provided, [Exhibit F](#)].

**John Hadder, Executive Director, Great Basin Resource Watch:**

We are in support of A.B. 171. Our organization works on extraction issues. We have been out to the swamp cedar area; it has a unique cultural importance. It is time that we begin to recognize and protect the cultures and history of Nevada in this way. Again, Great Basin Resource Watch members support A.B. 171.

**Neal Desai, Senior Director, Field Operations, National Parks Conservation Association:**

We support A.B. 171 and ask you to help move it forward, help champion this for all the reasons that the speakers before me have said. I would like to particularly thank Ms. Spilsbury and Mr. Steele for their earlier comments. You spelled out the charge before us and what we all need to be doing to protect these irreplaceable resources and values.

I would like to echo one point that was raised earlier. This bill does not make the swamp cedars a distinct population, it gives them the protections that are necessary. That is what we want to give: protections for a special circumstance and a special place that calls for special considerations that we have available before us.

**Christine Saunders, Policy Director, Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada:**

We are in support of A.B. 171. You have just heard testimony from tribal leaders and elders wanting you to take action. I want to thank those folks for sharing such important stories and providing an opportunity for nonnative people to gain some perspective and understanding. We hope that this effort can be an opportunity to build bridges rather than divide. The Legislature has an unprecedented opportunity to recognize the cultural and spiritual significance of swamp cedars and respect the practices that continue to occur there. The swamp cedars are a place of prayer, and these prayers are part of a necessary healing process for these communities going through ongoing historic trauma.

Although the history of the United States' involvement in the swamp cedars is one of hideous massacres of indigenous peoples, we have an opportunity to start a new story—one where we invest in protecting and enhancing the land and people within Nevada. We hope that members of the Nevada Legislature will see the deep importance of protecting the swamp cedars as a small but important step toward healing the land and the people.

Environmental justice requires us to step outside of past frameworks in order to include those who have historically not been recognized. This legislation does that in a very important way. We urge you to support A.B. 171. [A letter was also provided, [Exhibit G](#).]

**Jaina Moan, External Affairs Director, The Nature Conservancy:**

We are here to testify in support of A.B. 171. The Nature Conservancy recognizes the spiritual and cultural importance of the swamp cedars and we support additional protections for these trees in Spring Valley. With A.B. 171, we have the chance to protect the traditional knowledge that has been shared with us today. Bahsahwahbee is a deeply important cultural landscape. The singular qualities of this place are rooted in a deep relationship that our own human species has developed with this population of trees over countless generations since time immemorial. Recognizing the swamp cedars as protected flora, as A.B. 171 will do, will provide a layer of protection for this culturally significant population of trees. Thank you to the tribal leaders for sharing their history and culture. We urge the members of the Committee to vote yes on A.B. 171. [A letter was also provided, [Exhibit H](#).]

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

I would like to thank the tribal elders and spokespersons earlier who gave such compelling testimony. I would like to say that my organization is in support of A.B. 171. [Unintelligible.]

**Ainslee Archibald, Hub Coordinator, Sunrise Movement Las Vegas:**

I would like to echo the sentiments of those who spoke before me, especially those tribal leaders and elders, and add our support to A.B. 171.

**Teresa Melendez, Vice Chair, Nevada Statewide Native American Caucus:**

I am calling in support of A.B. 171. An important point to make today is to remember that we are living on occupied, stolen, indigenous lands. Today we heard passionately from the original inhabitants who have always lived on these lands in Nevada. Today they spoke up and are asking for help from state representatives to help protect their sacred homelands, their ceremonial lands, and their culturally significant sites. It is times like these that give us the unique and beautiful opportunities, as a previous caller mentioned, to heal our lands, heal our relationships, and heal our communities, and to show that we hear and we see those who have often been left out of the conversations. I want to thank Chair Watts and the Committee for taking time to address this bill and work with indigenous people of the state.

**Vice Chair Cohen:**

Is there anyone else wishing to testify in support of A.B. 171? Hearing no one, we will move on to those in opposition. Hearing no one, we will move on to neutral. Hearing no one, are there any closing remarks?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

In the interest of time, I will waive my closing remarks.

**Vice Chair Cohen:**

With that I will close the hearing on Assembly Bill 171. I will now open the hearing on Assembly Joint Resolution 4.

**Assembly Joint Resolution 4: Urges Congress to designate certain land in Spring Valley as a National Heritage Area. (BDR R-467)**

**Assemblyman Howard Watts, Assembly District No. 15:**

Assembly Joint Resolution 4 urges the federal government to take action to further protect the Bahsahwahbee Traditional Cultural Property, also known as the swamp cedars. While trying to keep these two measures separate, I will indicate that much of what you have already heard today about the swamp cedars—how important they are and the need for additional protection—applies to this measure as it does to the measure we just heard. My intention is to not repeat all of that testimony.

I would like to briefly walk you through the proposed amendment [[Exhibit I](#)]. The proposed amendment is essentially a rewrite of the resolution. They are very similar in terms of content between the amendment and the original draft; however, in consultation with tribal members and elders, we felt, particularly in the description of the massacres and the history of traditional practices of these people, that this language was more appropriate to use.

The whereas statements are rewritten to respect the perspective of the indigenous community in the area. The real change is in the resolution itself. The original resolution called for a designation of a National Heritage Area; however, Bahsahwahbee is already located within the Great Basin National Heritage Area, so this would not provide any additional federal



protection, which was the intent of the Legislative Committee on Public Lands when we were debating this issue in the interim.

The revised language urges Congress and our President "to take action to further protect Bahsahwahbee, including potential designation as a National Monument or expansion of Great Basin National Park." To be clear, there could be an extension of the Area of Critical Environmental Concern. There are other options, but those would ultimately be up to the federal government. The tribes are seeking a National Monument. I want to reiterate that National Monuments can be designated by an act of Congress as well. This is not prescriptive, it is simply asking the federal government, as land managers, to strengthen the protections for this particular area. I would like Mr. Sanford to add additional comments.

**Monte Sanford, Consultant, Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation:**

My comments are regarding the tribes' support for A.J.R. 4. As I said previously, there are land management designations on parts of this sacred area. Land management designations do not necessarily protect or provide legal protection for the area. They can modify management plans and management decisions, but that is very different from having formal legal protection.

I want to reemphasize as well that in Spring Valley, Bahsahwahbee, I just want to nail home the point that there is nothing like this anywhere else in this state, in this country, or perhaps in the world. Indigenous people have been in this area since time immemorial. We have archeological evidence dating back as far as 14,000 years ago of occupancy around swamp cedars. The ceremonial use around swamp cedars, and this long-term time frame of the tribes being with the cedars and their ceremonial use of the site, I think is extremely unique and important. This is not some jungle in South America or in Latin American; this is right here in the state of Nevada. I sometimes feel that we can forget about that, the stuff that we have right here at home; it is right here in front of us. Even though it is not a cathedral or a temple, it is the tribes' temple. I think it is appropriate for this Committee to support this. We need other protection for this site. The Area of Critical Environmental Concern and the Traditional Cultural Property do not provide that sort of protection. On behalf of the tribes, we would sincerely appreciate the Committee supporting this resolution.

**Vice Chair Cohen:**

Due to time constraints, we may not be able to have everyone testify on this resolution, but I would encourage anyone just joining us to review the testimony given for Assembly Bill 171.

**Assemblyman Watts:**

I would like to note that some of the letters of support express support for both measures. Much of the testimony from our original presenters can also apply to this bill as well.

**Vice Chair Cohen:**

Are there questions from the Committee?

**Assemblywoman Titus:**

In the description of the amendment [[Exhibit I](#)], it says that it is already located within the boundaries of the Great Basin National Heritage Area. Just for clarification, it is already somewhat protected. Does Great Basin National Heritage Area offer any protection? Are we trying to receive further protection?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

That is correct, it is located within the Great Basin National Heritage Area; this was part of the discussion in the Public Lands Committee. However, while it is a designation, it may potentially afford some protections, but it does not provide the level of protection that the tribes are seeking. That is the baseline and there is concern that there can still be impacts to the trees and the area. We are seeking additional protection from the federal land managers. I will note that this is already federally managed land.

**Assemblywoman Titus:**

Looking at the amendment for [A.J.R. 4](#), it says, "Whereas, Bahsahwahbee—and the Swamp Cedar trees therein—face threats from climate change, development, and other human-triggered activity from non-native communities." Obviously, with climate change, it may be warming or have a beetle infestation or fires. Can you describe what other activity has been noted to threaten these trees?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

The most notable example would be the proposal by the Southern Nevada Water Authority to build a groundwater development pipeline in eastern Nevada. Spring Valley was one of the primary areas from which water would have been exported. As noted previously, these trees thrive in this area because the water table is essentially at ground level. Very close by there are subirrigated wet meadows, et cetera. This is one example of proposed development or human-triggered activity that could have severely impacted the area.

**Assemblywoman Titus:**

Based on that, if it is all about the water table, this would be a designated area with the swamp cedar trees. Would this possibly affect development, not in the swamp cedar area, but around the area where it might lower the water table?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

The water and effects of drawdown would be considered in these federally managed lands. If it was a project that had an impact, it would trigger the National Environmental Policy Act process and an Environmental Impact Statement. Anything that triggers that process, impacts to the trees would already be considered.

**Assemblywoman Titus:**

This particular water basin is not just within these trees, it is its own unique water basin that also includes the trees and affects potentially a lot of water users within a water basin?

**Assemblyman Watts:**

Yes, it is located within Spring Valley. However, this particular resolution and the measure we discussed previously do not specifically address water basins. These federal protections would be particular land management designations that would provide stronger protections for the trees. As far as protecting the water table itself, those decisions are still within the purview of the State Engineer, and any of those decisions would take into account the drawdown as they did when the Southern Nevada Water Authority proposed its project.

**Assemblywoman Titus:**

Thank you. I always worry about the unintended consequences of well-meaning issues that we bring forward and wanted some clarification.

**Vice Chair Cohen:**

Are there any other questions? Seeing none, we will move on to those wishing to testify in support.

**Delaine Stark Spilsbury, Private Citizen, McGill, Nevada:**

I am in support of Assembly Joint Resolution 4.

**Vice Chair Cohen:**

We will take the next caller in support.

**Jaina Moan, External Affairs Director, The Nature Conservancy:**

I am here in support of A.J.R. 4. We recognize the importance of the Bahsahwahbee for the Native peoples of Nevada and support additional protection for this culturally significant place. The Nature Conservancy would like to share an additional reason for why it is important to conserve Spring Valley.

As indicated in our written testimony [[Exhibit H](#)], The Nature Conservancy has recently mapped landscapes in North America that can provide habitats for species as they migrate or shift locations in response to climate change. Using this data, The Conservancy identified several climate-resilient corridors in Nevada, which are networks of connected lands and waters where nature can thrive in spite of changing conditions. One of those networks, which we call the Monsoon Corridor, named for its location at the western edge of the Baja monsoonal storms, extends along the valleys and ranges in eastern Nevada. Spring Valley is a key node of the Monsoon Corridor. We think it will provide refuge for plants and wildlife from drought and heat. It is a unique ecosystem and microhabitat, and there is no similar place anywhere else. There are many reasons to protect Spring Valley. We urge the members of this Committee to vote yes on A.J.R. 4.

**Neal Desai, Senior Director, Field Operations, National Parks Conservation Association:**

We also strongly support A.J.R. 4 and ask the members of this Committee to move this forward for all the reasons mentioned before.

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

We are in support of A.J.R. 4. We must preserve places with such historic and cultural importance. Assembly Joint Resolution 4 is a step in the right direction to ensuring permanent protection of swamp cedars and the special place where they grow. We urge the Committee's support.

**Christine Saunders, Policy Director, Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada:**

This legislation recognizes that sacred places for indigenous peoples exist outside of the arbitrarily set up reservation boundaries. In this case, they exist on stolen land that has been declared part of the federal government.

For many years, Nevada tribes have valued this area as culturally and traditionally significant and have worked to preserve the swamp cedars for future generations. It is imperative for us to do all we can for a place that holds such significance for the rightful caretakers of these areas. Assembly Joint Resolution 4 is an important step to ensure we are doing all we can. We urge your support. [A letter was also provided, [Exhibit J](#).]

**Teresa Crawford, Member, Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club:**

On behalf of the Sierra Club and our more than 40,000 members and supporters statewide, I am honored to speak in support of A.J.R. 4 as amended. We recognize this area needs much higher federal protection than it has. Whether we encourage our congressional delegation, the U.S. Congress, and the Biden Administration to offer National Monument listing, or an expansion of Great Basin National Park, or a comanaged system between the tribes and federal officials, it cannot be denied that within this area are cultural, historical, spiritual, and natural resources that must be treasured and preserved. The swamp cedars depend on the shallow water table and pumping it could cause their extinction.

Most importantly, this resolution elevates and recognizes this as a sacred place for the Ely Shoshone, Duckwater Shoshone, and Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation. As Mr. Sanford stated, nothing like this has ever been done in Nevada or even the nation. And as Ms. Saunders says, sacred places exist outside the boundaries of the reservations. The Sierra Club is committed to fighting for and recognizing the importance of protecting the spiritual and cultural practices of Native communities. We believe this request to the Nevada congressional delegation is a critical step to ensure lasting protection and peace for the "Sacred Water Valley." [A letter was also provided, [Exhibit K](#).]

**Shania Marques, Private Citizen, Ely, Nevada:**

I am the cultural representative for the Ely Shoshone Tribe, and I support this bill.

**Dominique Etchegoyhen, Deputy Director, State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources:**

The State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) recognizes the historic, sacred, and cultural significance of the swamp cedars. Given that the swamp cedars are on federal land, DCNR supports a federal solution as has been proposed in A.J.R. 4.

I attempted to speak on Assembly Bill 171, but I was unable to due to the phone numbers being mixed up. I will submit written testimony in neutral [[Exhibit L](#)]. There were some questions on how the Division of Forestry (NDF), DCNR, would notify people to protect this species if that bill were to pass. I want to ensure the public and members of the Committee that NDF would work in consultation with the tribes to determine what would be most effective and most culturally appropriate.

**Kyle Roerink, Executive Director, Great Basin Water Network:**

The Great Basin Water Network asks you to support A.J.R. 4. I would like the record to reflect my comments on A.B. 171, and I want to add a few other comments. An Area of Critical Environmental Concern and a Traditional Cultural Property are certainly not strong enough federal designations for such an important place—nor is a heritage area designation, which would warrant the need for this resolution. Special circumstances like what is being proposed are warranted for such outstanding considerations.

I want to leave you with one thing. When Chairman Steele and Ms. Spilsbury and others go to the swamp cedars, they are going there to visit their family. I ask that you think about that when you think about this bill. This legislation is about many things, but principal among them is the connection to family. Both pieces of legislation in tonight's meeting recognize the connection to ancestry as one of the most sacred bonds we have with other humans in this world and in our past. The relation of kinship is immutable and for the descendants of the Newe, the original inhabitants of Nevada, Bahsahwahbee and the swamp cedars is where they go to reflect, heal, pray, learn, mourn, and remember their kin. It is the lens by which the indigenous people see the world past and present. This bill literally means the world to my friends and I ask that you support this bill.

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

We support A.J.R. 4.

**John Hadder, Executive Director, Great Basin Resource Watch:**

We are in support of this resolution for all of the reasons that have already been discussed. It is time we protect and work with the people whom we have inherited this land from. They have been here for many generations, and we appreciate all their hard work in protecting their culture, and it is time that the people and the state of Nevada help to protect their culture. This is so important to the indigenous people's livelihood and way of life. Great Basin Resource Watch supports this resolution.

**Marla McDade Williams, representing Reno-Sparks Indian Colony:**

For all the reasons outlined in our previous testimony, we want to go on record in support of A.J.R. 4.

**Ainslee Archibald, Hub Coordinator, Sunrise Movement Las Vegas:**

We were happy to sign on to the coalition letter supporting both A.J.R. 4 and A.B. 171 [[Exhibit M](#)] and would like to add our support to A.J.R. 4 for the record.

**Rick Spilsbury, Private Citizen, McGill, Nevada:**

I am a Tribal Elder with the Ely Shoshone Tribe, and I am here to ask you to support this resolution. In spite of how vitally important Spring Valley was to my ancestors' survival, Natives do not live in Spring Valley anymore. My people suffered from what is now called ethnic cleansing. This is a memory worth respecting. When our people died in these three massacres, what was once them became food for these trees. Literally, what was once our ancestors are now in those trees. We cannot save those people who were mass murdered, which is why we have to save their memory. Thank you.

**Vice Chair Cohen:**

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

**Assemblyman Watts:**

I believe the testimony in support along with the written testimony is sufficient.

**Vice Chair Cohen:**

I will close the hearing on Assembly Joint Resolution 4. [Also provided but not mentioned are [Exhibit N](#), [Exhibit O](#), and [Exhibit P](#).]

[Assemblyman Watts reassumed the Chair.]

**Chair Watts:**

That brings us to the last item on our agenda today, which is public comment. Is there anyone wishing to provide public comment?

**Cyrus Hojjaty, Private Citizen, Las Vegas, Nevada:**

We always like to talk about environmental protection. I think it is very important. But to truly have pure environmental protection we need to address the elephant in the room and that is our global economic system, the monetary system, whether it is capitalism, socialism, communism, or fascism—they are all garbage systems. We have environmental problems solely because of self-interested people, primarily corporations, who want to profit heavily while at the expense of others. We are not going to have environmental protections in the state of Nevada, truly, if we are going to have a high level of inequality that bribes both parties in order to benefit the few over the many. In order to have true environmental protection, we need to get rid of the monetary system and completely abolish it and implement a resource-based economy. I suggest you google it; it is part of the Zeitgeist Movement, The Venus Project. We need to move on. Our economic system is becoming more dysfunctional as technology is increasingly taking away many jobs in need of labor for income, it is diminishing, and we are moving toward an access-sharing economy, moving away from ownership. You are seeing this with the live scooters, the "uberization," and so forth. It is time to have an overhaul of the global economic system and this will solve many problems around the world. Do what you can. Please open up your minds and understand who is really running the money that explains the root cause of our problems.

**Chair Watts:**

I will move on to the next caller wishing to provide public comment. Hearing no one, thank you to the members for your questions and attention, I appreciate it, and to members of the public for your participation. We always like to hear your perspectives and are glad that you became engaged with this meeting.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, March 17, 2021, at 4 p.m., and this meeting is adjourned [at 6 p.m.].

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

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Nancy Davis  
Committee Secretary

APPROVED BY:

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Assemblyman Howard Watts, Chair

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

## EXHIBITS

[Exhibit A](#) is the Agenda.

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

[Exhibit C](#) is a proposed conceptual amendment to [Assembly Bill 171](#), submitted and presented by Assemblyman Howard Watts, Assembly District No. 15.

[Exhibit D](#) is written testimony submitted and presented by Delaine Stark Spilsbury, Private Citizen, McGill, Nevada, in support of [Assembly Bill 171](#).

[Exhibit E](#) is a letter dated March 14, 2021, submitted by Rupert Steele, Chairman, Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation, in support of [Assembly Bill 171](#).

[Exhibit F](#) is a letter dated March 15, 2021, submitted by Lisa Ortega, Member, Legislative Committee, Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club, in support of [Assembly Bill 171](#).

[Exhibit G](#) is a letter dated March 15, 2021, submitted by Christine Saunders, Policy Director, Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada, in support of [Assembly Bill 171](#).

[Exhibit H](#) is a letter dated March 14, 2021, submitted by Mauricia M.M. Baca, Nevada State Director, The Nature Conservancy, and presented by Jaina Moan, External Affairs Director, The Nature Conservancy, in support of [Assembly Bill 171](#).

[Exhibit I](#) is a proposed amendment to [Assembly Joint Resolution 4](#), submitted and presented by Assemblyman Howard Watts, Assembly District No. 15.

[Exhibit J](#) is a letter dated March 15, 2021, submitted by Christine Saunders, Policy Director, Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada, in support of [Assembly Joint Resolution 4](#).

[Exhibit K](#) is a letter dated March 15, 2021, submitted and presented by Teresa Crawford, Member, Toiyabe Chapter, Sierra Club, in support of [Assembly Joint Resolution 4](#).

[Exhibit L](#) is written testimony submitted by Dominique Etchegoyhen, Deputy Director, State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, in neutral to [Assembly Bill 171](#).

[Exhibit M](#) is a letter dated March 14, 2021, submitted by Center for Biological Diversity, et al, in support of [Assembly Bill 171](#) and [Assembly Joint Resolution 4](#).

[Exhibit N](#) is a letter dated March 14, 2021, submitted by Rupert Steele, Chairman, Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation, in support of [Assembly Joint Resolution 4](#).

[Exhibit O](#) is a letter dated February 8, 2021, submitted by James Woolsey, Superintendent, Great Basin National Park, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior.



[Exhibit P](#) is a letter to Senator David R. Parks, dated January 11, 2021, submitted by Kacey KC, State Forester Firewarden, Division of Forestry; Kristin Szabo, Administrator, Division of Natural Heritage; and Rebecca Palmer, Administrator, Office of Historic Preservation; all within the State Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.