



# WASHOE COUNTY

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CM/ACM JS

Finance DN

DA ✓

Risk Mgt. N/A

HR N/A

Comptroller CH

## STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: May 10, 2016

**DATE:** May 4, 2016  
**TO:** Board of County Commissioners  
**FROM:** William H. Whitney, Division Director, Planning and Development  
Community Services Department, 328-3617, [bwhitney@washoecounty.us](mailto:bwhitney@washoecounty.us)  
**THROUGH:** Dave Solaro, Arch., P.E., Director  
Community Services Department, 328-2040, [dsolaro@washoecounty.us](mailto:dsolaro@washoecounty.us)  
**SUBJECT:** Discussion and possible adoption of a Resolution of Support from the Washoe County Commission in support of comprehensive federal public lands legislation in order to support economic development, conservation, and recreation in Washoe County. (All Commission Districts.)

### SUMMARY

The Washoe County Commission has been involved in discussions concerning a potential public lands bill in one form or another for over ten years. During this time the Commission has heard from a broad range of individuals, special interest groups, local jurisdictions and Native American tribes concerning certain federal lands that they feel would be appropriate to leave federal ownership for a diversity of reasons such as economic development, civic purposes and recreational purposes. The Commission has also heard from organizations that have been working towards designating certain federal lands in Washoe County with outstanding natural and scenic qualities as Wilderness.

Washoe County Strategic Objective supported by this item: Stewardship of our Community.

### PREVIOUS ACTION

On December 17, 2013, the Board of County Commissioners (Board) held a discussion and gave direction to staff regarding the identification of federal lands in the County that may have a future public purpose or economic development potential to satisfy requirements of the Nevada Public Land Management Task Force that Washoe County was participating in at that time.

### BACKGROUND

Washoe County's involvement with the concept of a public lands bill for Washoe County began approximately 15 years ago. Then Senator Ensign and Senator Reid were interested in possibly sponsoring a Washoe County bill. Since that time there have been other bill versions and other members of our Congressional delegation that have

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expressed interest in a public lands bill for Washoe County. The one constant theme has been that any Washoe County public lands bill would include both federal lands that were appropriate to transfer out of federal ownership for various economic and civic purposes along with a conservation component that would designate certain lands in the County with special designations such as wilderness.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

No fiscal impact known at this time.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board of County Commissioners discuss and possibly adopt a Resolution of Support from the Washoe County Commission in support of comprehensive federal public lands legislation in order to support economic development, conservation, and recreation in Washoe County, including the following: (1) making federal lands available for economic development opportunities; (2) expanding recreational opportunities in Washoe County by providing land for parks and trails, and by providing land and funding for recreational facilities; (3) preserving opportunities for hiking, hunting, camping, motorized recreation activities, and other recreation on public lands; and (4) furthering conservation by designating new wilderness areas and providing funding for habitat restoration and other conservation efforts.

### **POSSIBLE MOTION**

Should the Board agree with staff's recommendation, a possible motion would be: "Move to adopt a Resolution of Support from the Washoe County Commission in support of comprehensive federal public lands legislation in order to support economic development, conservation, and recreation in Washoe County."

## RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT

WHEREAS, the Washoe County Commission has included “Stewardship of our community” as a strategic objective; and

WHEREAS, the Washoe County Commission has included “Be responsive and proactive to pending economic impacts” as a strategic goal; and

WHEREAS, Washoe County is expected to add over 100,000 new residents by 2030, and these new residents will require housing and employment as well as recreational opportunities; and

WHEREAS, Washoe County contains millions of acres of public lands that provide important recreational opportunities including hiking, camping, horseback riding, off highway vehicle use, hunting, and fishing; and

WHEREAS, comprehensive public lands legislation would improve the Washoe County economy by making available appropriate Federal lands for economic development purposes; and

WHEREAS, comprehensive public lands legislation would expand recreational opportunities in Washoe County by providing land for parks and trails, land and funding for recreational facilities, and preserving opportunities for hiking, hunting, camping, and motorized recreation on public lands; and

WHEREAS, comprehensive public lands legislation would further conservation by designating appropriate wilderness areas and providing funding for habitat restoration and other conservation activities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Washoe County Board of Commissioners supports the development of comprehensive public lands legislation addressing economic development, conservation, and recreation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washoe County Board of Commissioners are committed to partnering with our Nevada Congressional Delegation and other diverse stakeholders to develop a well-balanced approach to comprehensive public land management legislation for Washoe County to facilitate job creation and achieve important conservation goals for Washoe County; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Washoe County Board of Commissioners respectfully requests an expeditious process for the development and introduction of comprehensive public lands legislation for Washoe County in the Congress followed by its successful enactment.

ADOPTED this 10th day of May, 2016.

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Kitty K. Jung, Chair  
Washoe County Commission

ATTEST:

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Nancy Parent, County Clerk