



WASHOE COUNTY

Integrity Communication Service

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STAFF REPORT

BOARD MEETING DATE: SEPTEMBER 19, 2023

DATE: September 6, 2023

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Kate Thomas, Assistant County Manager
KAThomas@washoecounty.gov

THROUGH: Eric P. Brown, County Manager

SUBJECT: Recommendation to approve a resolution supporting the Truckee Meadows Public Lands Management Act and to request Nevada's federal congressional delegation to advance this federal public lands legislation to support conservation, recreation, and economic development in the Truckee Meadows region. Generally speaking and if ultimately passed by Congress and signed into law by the President, the Act allows for federal land to be made eligible for disposal/sale (anticipated 14,606 acres), creates permanent land conservation areas (anticipated 719,687 acres), conveys federal land to local government entities for recreation and public purposes (anticipated 4,701 acres), transfers additional federal land into trust for local tribes (anticipated 22,415 acres), and helps to fund additional land preservation and conservation projects statewide. Manager's Office. (All Commission Districts.)

SUMMARY

Following nearly a year of stakeholder meetings, on April 7, 2023, U.S. Senator Jacky Rosen released a working draft of the Truckee Meadows Public Lands Management Act. This legislation is intended to expand economic and housing development opportunities, support local Tribes, promote conservation, and improve public lands management in Washoe County. A two-month public feedback period followed release of the draft. Comments from the public were received through an online platform and gathered at in-person meetings.

The attached resolution for consideration by the Washoe County Board of Commissioners indicates the County's support for the draft legislation. The City of Sparks approved a similar resolution at their July 24, 2023, City Council meeting. The legislation is slated to be introduced in the 118th Congress by Senator Rosen.

PREVIOUS ACTION

No previous action related to the current draft legislation.

AGENDA ITEM # _____

BACKGROUND

The discussion draft of the Truckee Meadows Public Lands Management Act sets forth legislation that will:

- Promote sustainable growth and economic development
 - Protect and preserve public lands
 - Designate hundreds of thousands of acres of wilderness, hundreds of thousands of acres of national conservation areas, and tens of thousands of acres of special management areas
- Support local Tribal communities
 - Expand land held in trust for the Reno-Sparks Indian Colony, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, and Washoe Tribe
 - Establish a Cultural Heritage Area to permanently protect thousands of acres in the Pah Rah mountain range to be co-managed by local Tribes and BLM
- Provide local governments with lands for public purposes
 - Conveys thousands of acres for recreation and public purposes to local governmental entities in Washoe County, including: Washoe County, City of Reno, City of Sparks, Incline Village General Improvement District, Nevada Department of Wildlife, Nevada Division of State Lands, Truckee River Flood Management Authority, Washoe County School District, University of Nevada Reno

The draft proposal makes specific parcels of federal land eligible for sale and subsequent development, as appropriate, to support sustainable growth in the region. The draft proposal includes 14,606 acres that would be eligible to be nominated for sale and lists the parcels.

All lands that would be eligible for sale would first need to be nominated and undergo an environmental review by the Federal agency that manages that land to determine if sale of the parcel is appropriate. Under the current proposal, if the federal land manager determines sale to be appropriate, Washoe County would also need to give their approval before development can occur. The land would be sold for no less than fair market value. The development of the land would also need to comply with all current zoning and planning requirements, including review by the Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency and the jurisdiction that the land is being developed in.

Revenue from the sale of these federal lands would be divided between the State of Nevada General Education Fund (5%), Truckee River conservation projects (10%), and a special account available to the Secretary of the Treasury (85%). This means that the proceeds from the sale of land in Washoe County will stay in Washoe County to benefit the residents here, rather than those funds going back to the U.S. Treasury.

The special account can be used for things such as parks, trails, and open space, hazardous fuels reduction and wildfire prevention, and conservation initiatives such as acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands.

Beginning in January 2021, Senator Rosen and staff convened hundreds of meetings with a wide array of stakeholders to develop the working draft language and maps that were shared broadly with the Northern Nevada community in spring of 2023. They are continuing to meet with stakeholders and members of the public. Stakeholder meetings included groups such as:

1. Washoe Tribe
2. Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe
3. Reno Sparks Indian Colony
4. Washoe County
5. City of Sparks
6. City of Reno
7. Friends of Nevada Wilderness
8. Wilderness Society
9. Nevada Conservation League
10. Conservation Lands Foundation
11. Sierra Club
12. Center for Biological Diversity
13. Great Basin Water Network
14. Progressive Leadership Alliance of Nevada (PLAN)
15. Friends of the Black Rock
16. Nevada Land Trust
17. The Nature Conservancy
18. Pew Charitable Trusts
19. Nevada Outdoor Business Coalition
20. Patagonia
21. REI
22. Sierra Trail Works
23. Tahoe Rim Trail
24. Trails Network
25. Grazing Permit Holders
26. Nevada Farm Bureau
27. Nevada Cattlemen's Association
28. Vya Conservation District
29. Coalition for Nevada's Wildlife
30. Nevada Bighorn Unlimited
31. Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership
32. National Wildlife Federation
33. Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
34. Recreation Users (Off Highway Vehicles/OHV)
35. Nevada Mining Association
36. Mineral Exploration Coalition
37. Burning Man
38. Gerlach GID
39. The Reno Sparks Chamber of Commerce
40. Reno Sparks Realtors Association
41. Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN)
42. Nevada Home Builders Association

43. Individual Developers
44. Storey County
45. Nevada Association of Counties (NACO)
46. Truckee Meadows Regional Planning Agency
47. Nevada Department of Wildlife
48. Nevada Division of State Lands
49. Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)
50. Nevada Division of Outdoor Recreation
51. Governor Lombardo's Office
52. University of Nevada
53. Nevada Department of Agriculture
54. U.S. Forest Service
55. Bureau of Land Management
56. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
57. Reno-Tahoe Airport Authority (RTAA)
58. Regional Transportation Commission (RTC)
59. Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT)
60. Community Foundation of Northern Nevada
61. Incline Village General Improvement District (IVGID)
62. Truckee River Flood Management Authority
63. Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA)
64. Modoc County, CA
65. Muscle Powered
66. Sagebrush Habitat Conservation Fund
67. Snowlands Network
68. Builders Association of Northern Nevada

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact to Washoe County as a result of the Commission's support of the resolution.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the Board approve Resolution No. _____, requesting Nevada's federal congressional delegation to advance federal public lands legislation to support conservation, recreation, and economic development in the Truckee Meadows region. Generally speaking and if ultimately passed by Congress and signed into law by the President, the Act allows for federal land to be made eligible for disposal/sale (anticipated 14,606 acres), creates permanent land conservation areas (anticipated 719,687 acres), conveys federal land to local government entities for recreation and public purposes (anticipated 4,701 acres), transfers additional federal land into trust for local tribes (anticipated 22,415 acres), and helps to fund additional land preservation and conservation projects statewide.

POSSIBLE MOTION

Should the Board agree with this recommendation, a possible motion would be: *"I move to approve Resolution No. _____, requesting Nevada's federal congressional delegation*

to advance federal public lands legislation to support conservation, recreation, and economic development in the Truckee Meadows region. Generally speaking and if ultimately passed by Congress and signed into law by the President, the Act allows for federal land to be made eligible for disposal/sale (anticipated 14,606 acres), creates permanent land conservation areas (anticipated 719,687 acres), conveys federal land to local government entities for recreation and public purposes (anticipated 4,701 acres), transfers additional federal land into trust for local tribes (anticipated 22,415 acres), and helps to fund additional land preservation and conservation projects statewide. ”