

January 24, 2020



RE: McKinley Arts & Culture Center – Stakeholder Input

I represent 25 plus ranching families that run Livestock in very Northwestern Washoe County 6 months out of the year. Also, representing the Communities within Surprise Valley, consisting of Eagleville, Cedarville, Lake City and Ft Bidwell. These communities are hosts to many **Travelers, Hunters, Miners, 4-Wheel Drive Recreationalists and Massacre Rim Dark Sky ~ Star Gazers**. As, Surprise Valley is one of the Gate Ways to Northwestern Nevada.

It seems as though you are drastically side-stepping and ignoring the impact issues to surrounding communities when implementing wilderness designations, as there are restrictions that come with designating areas as wilderness. I would like to make these points:

- The restrictions on Wilderness areas would have a negative impact on our already fragile economy and affect the livelihoods of the Ranchers /**Allotment Owners**, who run in these areas and it will reduce tax dollars to our already stressed County of Modoc. Most all travelers to Northwestern Nevada utilize Hotels, Gas Stations, Restaurants and other Merchants in the Surprise Valley and surrounding areas.
- It would affect motorized assisted Hunting, Four Wheel Drive Recreation and Mining. It also limits the Disabled Recreationalists, especially, since the **Dark Sky Sanctuary** has been designated, travel through our community to the Massacre Rim has increased and this would limit travel to the good areas for star gazers.
- All WSA's that are not agreed upon Wilderness on the final maps, need to be released back to **FULL** multiple use. Any area being considered for wilderness needs to be analyzed by the governing BLM office to make sure they have the resources and financial stability to manage the Wilderness area.
- There needs to be language in the Bill to allow **MECHANICAL** means of managing for Sage Grouse, Horse Removal and Fire. See my attached outline. There also needs to be the tool of **Flexibility in your final decision**. There is much uncertainty on this current proposal within the proposed wilderness designations.
- **Lastly, due to time restrictions, I ask you not to forget this very important Fact:** "Grazing rights" have been **property rights** expressly recognized by Congress since the Grazing Rights Act of 1875. The Supreme Court was unanimous in Curtin v Benson, and that case has **NEVER** been overturned. **One last question:** How can the Friends of the Wilderness be allowed to create and add more wilderness which highly affects the livelihood of the ranchers who run on the allotments within the proposed designation, which in turn will also affect the sustainability of the surrounding Communities. What Right do they have?

We feel Wilderness needs to be kept to an **absolute** minimum. Please refer to the **1991 Record of Decision which actually studied what qualified for Wilderness**. We insist on feedback on how our comments are going to be considered and ask that we are kept informed on all future meetings and decisions.

We look forward to helping you pass your Bill as long as these guidelines are followed and implemented in your final decision

Will & Debra Cockrell,

Debra A. Cockrell

Representing: Northern Washoe County Allotment Owners and the Communities within Surprise Valley

From: Permittees of the Northern Washoe WSA:

Sheldon Contiguous (Macy), Massacre Rim & Wall Canyon

In regards to the Nevada Lands Bill and transition of the WSA into Wilderness Areas, we would like to see the following recommendations implemented for current and future grazing permittee owners.

First and foremost we recommend taking all Wilderness Study Areas out of existence and restore them to multiple use management.

We utilize these lands for livestock production. They are a necessary part of our annual production cycle. We live near, work and recreate on Public Lands in the County and adjacent Counties. As operators upon and users of Public Lands within our community, we ask that these lands remain open to full access for sustained livestock and resource management. To help keep our BLM Rangeland viable we need these following points addressed:

- Allow all access necessary for improvement and maintenance of all existing and proposed water sources, including but not limited to use of heavy equipment, trenching, set up of solar and pumping systems and water storage development.
- Allow all road and trail access necessary for fence maintenance and improvement. Also allow all equipment access necessary for fence construction or re- construction.
- All means necessary for Fire Suppression including use of heavy equipment; in addition to post-fire rehabilitation projects and on-going road and trail maintenance.
- To allow full access for wild horse removal with the use of helicopter and motorized vehicle and to allow temporary set-up of traps.
- Allowing all means necessary for Juniper removal and treatment
- Allow for Rangeland Improvements such as: Re-seeding, Sagebrush removal and treatment, new water development, and riparian corridor enhancements as well as noxious weed control.
- Allow full access for grazing management and rangeland science studies and research and implementation of study sites/projects to improve knowledge of livestock and resource management.
- Allow for full implementation of livestock management and resource enhancement projects recommended by the Modoc-Washoe Experimental Stewardship Council, a federally authorized and locally-led, multi-stakeholder collaborative group that has been functioning in the region for over 35 years

Submitted By, Debra Cockrell, 530-640-2209, debcockrell@gmail.com - Stakeholder

Community Impact on back

Community Impact :

You'll find the Communities of Surprise Valley nestled between the Warner Mountain Range in northeastern California and the Hayes Range in Nevada. Approximately 70 miles long and averaging ten miles wide, and is home to four rural, welcoming and historic towns: Cedarville, Eagleville, Fort Bidwell and Lake City.

Visitors: Today, visitors will find no scarcity of recreational opportunities such as camping, fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing, hunting, wind sailing on dry lake beds of both California and Nevada and a variety of other outdoor pursuits awaiting them in any of our four distinct seasons.

Sightseers: Once the snow has melted and back-country roads of Nevada are safe to navigate, first-time visitors with a sense of adventure are urged to pick up a brochure at the BLM office in Cedarville, pack up a picnic lunch, and head off to experience the rugged beauty of the Great Basin Area. Just east of Surprise Valley in Nevada, take the self-guided 93-mile Surprise Valley-Barrel Springs Byway. During your drive, you just might run into a herd of wild mustangs, mule deer, antelope or a cattle drive.

Explorers: Rock hounds, photographers, amateur geologists and sightseers will all delight in the area's impressive rock formations and may discover obsidian deposits, opals, fossils, or preserved signs of the valley's early settlers as they explore the vast stretches of uninhabited Nevada's Back Country. Many Travelers access this popular visiting area such as the Black Rock Desert / High Rock Canyon and Emigrant Trails while staying in our Community.

This is just a very short version of the type of travelers that come to our community and travel into the Nevada areas. The impact to our communities will be devastating if vast lands of Wilderness are permanently put in. The survival of our communities depend on the travelers who utilize these types of businesses: Our Fueling Stations, Lodging / Motels, Grocery Stores, Restaurants, Hardware Store, Hospital, BLM and FS Offices just to name a few as well as 70 miles of multi-generational ranching families who many will be effected by decreased property values when their cattle permits are effected and forced to down size their herds and running capacity.

As a community we are not looking to have any Wilderness Study or Wilderness on our public lands that border us, which include the Sheldon (Macy), Massacre Rim, Wall Canyon. We would like to see you find public land that is not effected by cattle (permittee's), Hunting, Recreation and Mining. Public land and livestock grazing has been a long time and generational part of many ranches across the west. Turning these designated areas into permanent Wilderness would be a deterrent to not only the ranching families but to the abundance of wildlife and to the communities which these ranchers live in. The closure of roads would take away all rights to hunters, recreationalists, handicapped tours and the mining / geologists.

Although we are not Nevada residence, Surprise Valley is the main provider of commerce to many people who live in Vya , Nevada and as I mentioned above to the travelers who utilize the Northern Washoe Nevada area. Many, Many people out of the Reno and surrounding area's utilize our Community while recreating, sight seeing and hunting in these Northern Washoe Areas.

On a personal note we run High Desert Lodging, and have many,many people from Reno and the surrounding area utilize our accommodations while visiting the Northern Washoe Nevada area. Please take into consideration our area when you do your Land Bill finalization. Many ranching families livelihoods are effected by your decisions.

Respectfully submitted,

Will and Debra Cockrell

Cockrell Ranches and High Desert Lodging.

Debra Cockrell

From: Debra Cockrell <debcockrell@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 19, 2020 12:47 PM
To: Debra Cockrell
Subject: Fwd:

Debra Cockrell
Cockrell Ranches &
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C: 530-640-2209
Debcockrell@gmail.com
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Begin forwarded message:

From: Debra Cockrell <debcockrell@gmail.com>
Date: January 19, 2020 at 12:23:15 PM PST
To: Debra Cockrell <debcockrell@gmail.com>

Alright I know i'm going to ruffle feathers, but MSLF is a big part of the problem why ranchers are getting their ALLOTMENTS pulled out from under them. They perpetuate the myth that ALLOTMENTS are "public land" and that ranchers have NO property rights only a "preference" to a "permit". ALLOTMENTS are NOT "public land" they are split estate land where the rancher is the surface owner, and the federal government simply retained the minerals and "commercial timber" for separate disposal. "Grazing rights" have been property rights expressly recognized by Congress Since the Grazing Rights Act of March 3, 1875 (18 Stat 481). Griffith v Gody 1885, and a dozen more SCOTUS decisions down to Curtin v Benson 1911, held "stock ranges" to be property rights that could not be defeated by bureaucrats trying to force the ranch owner to obtain a "permit". It's sad that these people think they don't have ownership of their ALLOTMENT because they had their "cooperative" "permit" cancelled. The Supreme Court was unanimous in Curtin v Benson, and that case has NEVER been overturned. The Range Allotment Owners Association has Attorneys that we work with that know the difference between a "permit to graze on public land" and a "Grazing Allotment". Sadly, its the same with the "Public Land" Council. GRAZING ALLOTMENTS are NOT "Public land", they are split estate land, where ranchers are referred to as the "surface owner" (Kinney Coastal Oil v Kieffer 1928, Watt v Western Nuclear 1983).

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