

**Gene & Wynarda Erquiaga
Erquiaga Ranch
1720 County Road 30
Cedarville, California 96104**

February 11, 2020

Jamie Rodriguez
Government Affairs Manager
Washoe County Manager's Office
1001 E 9th Street
Reno, NV 89512

Re: Truckee Meadows Public Lands Management Act/Washoe County Lands Bill Comment

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I am having a hard time understanding why you want to draw attention to these lands. They are public lands and have been open to the public for over a hundred years. The time that they would have been getting the most use has come and gone. There are a few that continue to use this area but those numbers will continue to go down as less people hunt. Most people that enjoy the outdoors don't head for the high desert but head to the mountains, water and trees. By putting these designations on these areas you are putting a neon sign on them. Look at the areas that have been designated as National Parks, ACEC's, National Monuments. The use has increased and now they have problems with litter, human waste, vandalism and people issues and you want us to be excited about this. Our quiet way of life would be gone forever and you get to go home to your life, job and the way you want to live but you have changed ours forever with no thought of consequences.

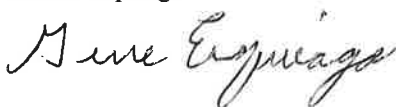
You say cattle damage the land but don't you really need to sit and think about what people do. Cattle have used these areas since the area was settled. Cattle don't chip at, spray paint or shoot petroglyphs, they don't leave trash and human waste behind, yet we are encouraging people to come who do irreversible damage to the area. What cattle use is renewable resources and will grow back, whereas, we have to be careful what we do for people because once it's been changed we can never go back. In the last 50+ years, the land has not changed just the government management designations.

If this area is turned into a Wilderness Area it would mean a great deal of extra time spent to take care of the allotment. Everything used to be done on horseback, repairing fence, checking springs and other water improvements. Putting out salt would become a huge endeavor. Replacing water troughs would be near impossible as well as repairing reservoirs. On this proposed wilderness area, there are three windmills, three developed springs with troughs (that don't last forever), ten pit reservoirs that need maintaining, approximately 18 miles of fence, not to mention the added time for the Bureau to do the range evaluation. This would no doubt hamper any future horse gathers and removal of excess horses. Extraction of Federal employees, general public and permittees would be an issue in accident situations. Fire suppression would be a nightmare and cost taxpayers more money.

It's easy for you to sit and place designations that change a way of live but you don't have to live with it on a daily basis. Your way of life won't be changed, your job won't be lost, you don't have to think about uprooting your family. This is our life, been our lives for generations. Thank you for letting us comment.

Sincerely,

Gene Erquiaga



Wynarda Erquiaga

