



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE

HEADQUARTERS 99TH AIR BASE WING
NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE, NEVADA

NOV 18 2009

Colonel Howard D. Belote
Commander
4430 Grissom Ave, Suite 101
Nellis AFB, NV 89191

The Honorable Oscar B. Goodman
Mayor of Las Vegas
400 Stewart Avenue
Las Vegas, NV 89101

Dear Mayor Goodman,

On behalf of Team Nellis, which comprises Nellis Air Force Base (AFB), Creech AFB, Tonopah Test Range, and the Nevada Test and Training Range (NTTR), I would like to express our ongoing support for the protection and conservation of the Upper Las Vegas Wash. We believe the various efforts to protect this sensitive region, such as your resolution, are integral to the sustainment of Team Nellis's future. When coupled with easements for military overflight, such efforts protect current and future air and ground military operations throughout the region.

Team Nellis is one of our nation's most valuable military complexes. We conduct approximately 40,000 test and training flights each year. Our missions range from operational testing of new weapons systems and simulated combat during allied Red Flag operations, to ground combat operations and real-time combat missions flown from Creech AFB in Indian Springs. The Nellis Complex is truly a national treasure, and the unmatched testing and training capabilities it provides are critical to our ability to fight and win our nation's wars.

Compatible conservation of the Upper Las Vegas Wash region presents a great opportunity to protect two different national treasures – the Wash and the Nellis Complex. As you know, the wash region contains significant paleontological, botanical, and cultural resources on the ground, which require long term protective measures. In addition, the area also provides critical airspace that supports Team Nellis's air and ground operations. We have crucial low/high-level flight arrival, departure, and training routes throughout the wash region, and the area serves as a gateway to our testing and training ranges. By federally protecting the region with an associated military aviation reservation, we can ensure the sustainment of both critical habitat and military airspace, creating a truly win-win compatible future for Nevada.

Team Nellis remains committed to working with community leaders to develop processes that foster compatible growth solutions to secure Nevada's future. My point of contact for this matter is Ms. Deb MacNeill, Director of Public Partnerships, at (702) 652-7777.

HOWARD D. BELOTE
Colonel, USAF

cc:
DOI/BLM/NPS
NV CODEL
NLV/LV/CC

Enabling America's Combat Edge

Submitted at City Council:

Date

46

Item

11/18/09

America's Newest Fossil Beds National Monument



Tule Springs / Upper Las Vegas Wash

Letters of Endorsement

WHY THE UPPER LAS VEGAS WASH (TULE SPRINGS) SHOULD BE
MANAGED AS A FOSSILS BED NATIONAL MONUMENT,
BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

(In alphabetical order)

Archeo-Nevada Society
Center for Biological Diversity
Desert Wetlands Conservancy
Government Affairs Consultant Thalia Dondero
Las Vegas Ice Age Park Foundation
National Parks Conservation Association
Nevada Friends of Paleontology
Nevada State Assemblyman Harry Mortenson
Nevada State Senator John Lee
Nevada Wilderness Project
Protectors of Tule Springs
Scenic Nevada
Sierra Club (Toiyabe Chapter)
The Coalition of National Park Service Retirees
United States Air Force
University of Nevada Las Vegas-Department of Geosciences
University of Nevada Las Vegas-Office of the President



Fossil Beds National Monument

Submitted at City Council

Date 4/6 Item 11/18/09



Archaeo-Nevada Society

The Oldest Archaeological Organization in Nevada – Established 1966

November 12, 2009

Dr. Kevin Rafferty, President
Archaeo-Nevada Society
C/O Department of Human Behavior
College of Southern Nevada
6375 West Charleston Boulevard
Las Vegas, Nevada 89146

Las Vegas City Council
City Hall
400 Stewart Avenue
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101

Dear Members of the City Council:

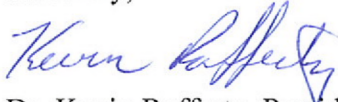
The Archaeo-Nevada Society is the oldest amateur archaeological organization in the State of Nevada, having been founded in 1966. The society is dedicated to the protection of the archaeological heritage of the state. It supports and assists efforts by public agencies and the archaeological community to preserve the past and educate the public regarding the importance of archaeological and historic resources located within the state.

The Upper Las Vegas Wash region contains deposits of data that are important to understanding both the paleontological and archaeological history of southern Nevada and the Mojave Desert. Research conducted both in the 1960s and in the last few years have confirmed that Upper Las Vegas Wash contains unique and irreplaceable concentrations of fossils of Pleistocene Age that would provide invaluable insights into issues such as long-term environmental change and faunal extinctions. Concurrent archaeological research indicates that Native American populations have lived in and exploited the resources of the area in question for at least the last 13,000 years, making the Upper Las Vegas Wash an important natural laboratory to examine and understand the prehistory and history of southern Nevada.

As the Las Vegas metropolitan area has expanded, the Upper Las Vegas Wash and its' trove of scientific data has suffered damage from the effects of housing construction and associated infrastructure, recreational use, and other deleterious impacts. Therefore the Archaeo-Nevada Society fully supports the resolutions being submitted by the Clark County Commission, and the

City Councils of both Las Vegas and North Las Vegas, supporting the designation of the Upper Las Vegas Wash as an Urban National Park Unit to be managed by the National Park Service. The Archaeo-Nevada Society believes that management of the Upper Las Vegas Wash by the National Park Service is the optimal solution to provide the necessary protection for the precious and invaluable resources contained within the area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin Rafferty". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Kevin" being more prominent than the last name "Rafferty".

Dr. Kevin Rafferty, President
Archaeo-Nevada Society



November 11, 2009

RE: National Monument Status for the Upper Las Vegas Wash

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Center for Biological Diversity and its 225,000 members and on-line activists in Nevada and across the nation, I am writing to urge you to consider and support the establishment of a national monument to protect the paleontological, biological and cultural treasures of the upper Las Vegas Wash. Such a monument should cover the full extent of the largely intact Wash, from the Nellis Range at the north to the Clark County 215 highway at the southern end.

This area represents the last great opportunity for conservation in the Las Vegas Valley and would correct a grievous mistake made when it was designated for disposal under the Clark County Conservation of Public Land and Natural Resources Act of 2002 ("Clark County Lands Act").

The area is tremendously rich in paleontological resources, not only from the last ice age, but from a previous ice age over 170,000 years ago. As such it is tremendously important for advancing the understanding of how ecosystems responded to periods of global warming, and is very important for informing the science regarding the current warming.

The proposed area is also home to the Threatened desert tortoise, a species whose recovery, while mandated by the Endangered Species Act ("ESA") is in serious jeopardy. Prior to the Clark County Lands Act, this area was designated as an area to be "intensely managed" for conservation under the Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and Incidental Take Permit. The Wash is also home to rare plant species such as the Las Vegas bearpoppy, Merriam's bearpoppy, and the Las Vegas buckwheat, a species the Center has petitioned for listing under the ESA and which was found to be warranted for listing but currently precluded due to other priority species' needs.

The upper Las Vegas Wash serves as a vital segment for the Las Vegas Valley trail system, largely funded through Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act monies, connecting the Las Vegas Wetlands Park to BLM and National Forest lands to the north.

With regards to the federal agency most suited to provide the needed protection and management, we feel the National Park Service is best suited due to its organic act and mission, expertise with urban and urban-wildland situations and its established funding mechanisms.

Sincerely yours in conservation,

Rob Mrowka
Ecologist and Nevada Conservation Advocate



DESERT WETLANDS CONSERVANCY

November 12, 2009

Las Vegas City Council
City Hall
400 Stewart Avenue
Las Vegas, NV 89101

RE: Joint Resolution 09-1117-1118

Dear Mayor Goodman and Las Vegas City Council Members:

The Desert Wetlands Conservancy (DWC) has played an active role in the development of the Clark County Wetlands Park since 1995 and has recently widened its focus to include the health of the entire Las Vegas Valley watershed, including the Upper Las Vegas Wash. Our hundreds of members and volunteers take part in regular clean-ups and green-ups and also pay close attention to policy developments that affect the health of the Las Vegas Wash.

That is why the DWC Board of Trustees is delighted to provide our organization's strong endorsement and support for Joint Resolution 09-1117-1118 of the Clark County Commission, the Las Vegas City Council, and the North Las Vegas City Council. Your passage of the Joint Resolution will be an historic move forward in the planning for an Urban National Park Unit that will protect, preserve, and ultimately interpret the important paleontological and archaeological resources found in the Upper Las Vegas Wash.

Thank you for your visionary support of this Joint Resolution, which will protect the natural and cultural resources of the Upper Las Vegas Wash and provide a unique learning opportunity for present and future generations of local residents and tourists.

Sincerely,

Arthur H. Wolf
Chairman, Board of Trustees

702.592.1387

artwolf53@cox.net

THALIA DONDERO
Governmental Affairs Consultant

November 12, 2009

Las Vegas City Council
City Hall
400 Stewart Avenue
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101

Re: Support letter for Joint Resolution 09-1117-1118

I, Thalia Dondero totally support a resolution supporting the designation of an area known as the upper Las Vegas Wash as an urban National Park unit managed by the National Park Service.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Thalia M. Dondero". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Thalia Dondero



Las Vegas Ice Age Park Foundation

www.iceagepark.com

Board Members

President: Helen Mortenson
Vice Pres: Thalia Dondero
Secretary: Stephen Rowland, PhD
Treasurer: Jackson Ramsey
Assemblyman: Harry Mortenson
Founder POTS: Jill DeStefano
Site Steward Mgr: Sali Underwood
Liaison UNLV: Bill Wood
Public Relations: Sandy Croteau

Thursday, November 12, 2009

Las Vegas City Council
City Hall
400 Stewart Avenue
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101

Subject: Clark County Joint Resolution 09-1117-1118

Dear Council Members:

Nevada State Legislative unanimously passed AB 469 of the 74 session. This bill set aside 315 acres of state land in the upper Las Vegas wash and mandated a study to be conducted *to consider the feasibility of establishing and developing a park...including...without limitation...a museum and a live dig site that is available for the public to visit.*

The Las Vegas Ice Age Park Foundation was formed to raise funds for the feasibility study. The vision of the Foundation is to create a world class facility in the park. It would include a research center, a repository for fossil materials, curation laboratories, a paleontology library, and provide the public with access to the unique paleontology of 200,000 years that exists in the Upper Las Vegas Wash.

The Las Vegas Ice Age Park Foundation fully supports Joint Resolution 09-1117-1118 and welcomes this opportunity to become part of this scientific, educational and recreational project.

Sincerely

Helen Mortenson—President

Las Vegas Ice Age Park Foundation

3930 El Camino Road
Las Vegas, NV 89103-2221
iceagepark@gmail.com



National Parks Conservation Association®
Protecting Our National Parks for Future Generations®

Nevada Field Office
10161 Park Run
Suite 150-227
Las Vegas, NV 89145
702 318 6524
www.npca.org

Date: 17 November 2009

To: Nevada's Congressional Delegation, State and Local Elected Leaders

Re: Designation of The Upper Las Vegas Wash as a New National Park Unit

"America's national parks are the touchstones of our shared history and culture. In some ways, they represent the soul of the nation. They represent our hopes, our dreams, our struggles. They are our absolute best places."

- Tom Kiernan, NPCA President

The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) believes that America's national parks and historic sites embody the American spirit. National parks are windows to our past, home to some of our rarest plants and animals, and places where Americans and international visitors, alike, may find inspiration, peace and open space.

NPCA is honored to assist in developing a new national park unit in Southern Nevada, in the Upper Las Vegas Wash, an area known as Tule Springs.

The National Park Service is responsible for carefully screening proposals for new park units to assure that only the most outstanding resources are added to the National Park System. Once rigorous criteria - national significance, suitability and feasibility - is met, it's up to elected and community leaders to work together to develop a national park unit. This process represents the highest ideals and the founding principles of our country.

On behalf of more than 325,000 members throughout the world, NPCA applauds demonstrated leadership in the process of designating the Upper Las Vegas Wash / Tule Springs a new national park unit that will be enjoyed for generations to come. We thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Lynn Davis, Nevada Program Manager

Nevada Friends of Paleontology

President: Aubrey Shirk
Vice President: Josh Bonde
Secretary: Dave Eisenstein
Treasurer: Steve Rowland



November 13, 2009

To whom it may concern:

The mission of Nevada Friends of Paleontology, established May 2007, is to promote the scientific and educational value of Nevada's fossil record as well as enhance the knowledge of paleontology amongst the public and amateur, student, and professional paleontologists. In this, we share new discoveries and knowledge with the scientific community and general public for the advancement of paleontology within the state and promote the protection and ethical study of Nevada's paleontological resources.

The Upper Las Vegas Wash supplies a perfect example of the Nevada Friends of Paleontology's mission. The abundant and unique fossils located throughout the wash provides an invaluable resource for paleontology research and public education to Las Vegas inhabitants and visitors. The organisms preserved within the sediments of the wash lived during a unique interval of time in which global climate was warming and new organisms were immigrating from Asia, including humans, mammoths, and bison. The wash gives us a unique opportunity to see how ecosystems within southern Nevada responded to these drastic changes.

Therefore, the Nevada Friends of Paleontology supports Joint Resolution 09-1117-1118 concerning the designation of a national monument managed by the National Park Service in the Upper Las Vegas Wash.

Sincerely,

Aubrey Shirk
President, Nevada Friends of Paleontology

c/o Aubrey Shirk
Department of Geoscience
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
4505 S. Maryland Parkway
Las Vegas, NV 89154-4010

Phone: (702)895-3262

Fax: (702)895-4064

Email: nevadafriendsofpaleo@gmail.com

Webpage: <http://complabs.nevada.edu/~shirka2/>

HARRY MORTENSON
ASSEMBLYMAN
Clark No. 42



DISTRICT OFFICE:
3930 El Camino Road
Las Vegas, Nevada 89103-2221
Office: (702) 876-6944
Fax No.: (702) 252-7384
E-mail: asm@harrymortenson.com

LEGISLATIVE BUILDING:
401 South Carson Street
Carson City, Nevada 89701-4747
Office: (775) 684-8803
Fax No.: (775) 684-8533
www.leg.state.nv.us
E-mail: hmortenson@asm.state.nv.us

COMMITTEES:
Chairman
Constitutional Amendments

Vice Chair
Elections, Procedures, and Ethics

Member
Corrections, Parole, and Probation
Judiciary
Taxation

State of Nevada
Assembly
Seventy-Fifth Session

Monday, November 09, 2009

North Las Vegas City Council
2200 Civic Center Drive
North Las Vegas, Nevada 89030

Subject: Clark County Joint Resolution 09-1117-1118

Dear Council Member:

It is my understanding that the Clark County Commission will—on November 17—consider the subject resolution—which urges the United States Congress, the U.S. Department of the Interior, and the National Park Service to make a land management designation to protect the non-renewable resources in the Upper Las Vegas Wash; and further urges those entities to fully fund and develop the scientific, educational and recreational potential of the area.

I fully support the subject resolution and commend the commissioners for their forethought in considering same.

This area of the Las Vegas Valley contains world-class, non-renewable scientific resources. To not-protect these resources would be an enormous loss, not only to Nevada, but to the entire scientific world.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Harry Mortenson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Harry" being more prominent than the last name "Mortenson".

Harry Mortenson

JOHN J. LEE

SENATOR

Clark No. 1



DISTRICT OFFICE:

3216 Villa Pisani Court
North Las Vegas, Nevada 89031-7267
Office: (702) 647-3550
Fax No.: (702) 647-0951

COMMITTEES:

Chair

Government Affairs

Member

Energy, Infrastructure and Transportation
Legislative Operations and Elections

LEGISLATIVE BUILDING:

401 S. Carson Street
Carson City, Nevada 89701-4747
Office: (775) 684-1424 or
(775) 684-1401
Fax No.: (775) 684-6522
www.leg.state.nv.us

State of Nevada Senate

Seventy-fifth Session

Nov. 13, 2009

Las Vegas City Council
City Hall
400 Stewart Avenue
Las Vegas, NV 89101

Re: Joint Resolution 09-1117-1118

Dear Council Members,

As a Nevada State Senator and Chairman of the Clark County Shooting Park Citizens Advisory Committee, I would like to express my complete support for the Bureau of Land Management owned portions of the Upper Las Vegas Wash to be designated a National Park. Many important discoveries have been made during research here and are now known as a major significant paleontology site. It is my desire to protect and share this valuable, Nevada natural resource with the scientific community and with local residents and visitors that come to our state. Properly maintained and protected, this area will continue to offer insights into our past and create opportunities for scientists to work alongside local students and educators, to actively research and study the sites. Being a National Park will also enhance the area while continuing to monitor traffic and activities in a safe and reasonable manner for the purpose of making it a great location for all to enjoy and learn about its interesting past, hopefully preserving a bright and useful future for this valuable area! Please join me in this support!

Regards,

John Lee

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "John Lee", written over the printed name.



November 17, 2009

To Senator Reid, Senator Ensign, Congresswoman Berkley, Congresswoman Titus, and Congressman Heller. To the Clark County Commission, City of North Las Vegas, and the City of Las Vegas.

The Protectors of Tule Springs, a citizens group formed in Sun City Aliante in 2006, support the resolution brought before the County Commission and City Councils calling for the protection of the Upper Las Vegas Wash as a National Park unit managed by the National Park service. We urge our Congressional representatives to take immediate steps to protect this area from further damage to the ice age fossils and endangered plants. Only with federal protection will this area be available to today's citizens and the generations to come.

The scientific and educational value of the Upper Las Vegas Wash is just beginning to be realized. Scientists from around the World will be attracted to our valley to study the unparalleled ice age fossil record. As a National Park unit, visitors will be likely to stay in the Las Vegas Valley for a longer period of time as they visit our National Park.

We thank Clark County and the Cities of North Las Vegas and Las Vegas for realizing the potential of the Tule Springs area and look forward to working these entities as stewards of our new National Park unit.

Sincerely,

Jill K. DeStefano

Protectors of Tule Springs

www.tulespringslv.com

702 807-9402



To: Clark County Commission

From: Nevada Wilderness Project

Re: Support for National Park Unit Designation of Las Vegas Wash

November 12, 2009

The Nevada Wilderness Project supports the designation of Las Vegas Wash as a national park unit. Our organization is proud to work in concert with many national and Nevada groups to see this area protected.

The cultural and biological aspects of the area are globally unique. In addition, the Las Vegas Wash contains historic wildlife corridors that connect the Desert National Wildlife Refuge with the Spring Mountains. We believe that the conservation, scientific, educational and community stewardship opportunities are outstanding. We look forward to working with Clark County on this worthy effort.

Sincerely,

John Wallin
Director
Nevada Wilderness Project
775-250-1635
www.wildnevada.org



The Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club
732 S. 6th St., Suite 200-B, Las Vegas, NV 89101

November 18, 2009

Las Vegas City Council
City Hall
400 Stewart Avenue
Las Vegas, Nevada 89101

Dear Council Members,

On behalf of the Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club and its 16,500 members and supporters in Nevada and the Eastern Sierra, we urge you to support the designation of the Upper Las Vegas Wash/Tule Springs area as a National Monument.

We are proud and honored to support this effort to protect the natural resources of the Upper Las Vegas Wash along with a diverse coalition of organizations and entities such as the Protectors of Tule Springs, the Ice Age Park Foundation, the National Park Conservation Association, Nellis Air Force Base, the Las Vegas Paiute Tribe and the Public Lands Institute at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

The area, located just a stone's throw away from the Las Vegas metropolitan area and the foothills of the beautiful Sheep and Las Vegas Mountain Ranges, is scientifically noted as one of the largest and most significant late Pleistocene paleontological sites in the American Southwest. Thousands of Ice Age mammalian fossils identified at more than 400 points within the site include the Colombian Mammoth, Ground Sloth, American Lion, Camelops, Bison and ancient species of Horse.

In addition to the paleontological treasures, the Upper Las Vegas Wash area provides a habitat for rare plants and animals, many of them listed as sensitive by the State of Nevada; their survival and welfare is highly dependent on the protection of fragile but already fragmented desert terrain in the Las Vegas Valley. These sensitive species include the Las Vegas Bearpoppy, Merriam's Bearpoppy, Las Vegas Buckwheat, kit fox and many others. The desert tortoise, Nevada's State Reptile and currently a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act, is also found in this location.

The Upper Las Vegas Wash with soft, highly-compactible sediments is the only part of the large Las Vegas Wash system that is not already completely channelized and manipulated. While the Wash carries surface water only intermittently in a dry desert ecosystem, it is still operating as a natural wash system and providing water, the most precious commodity in the desert, to help sustain the biodiversity of the region. The protection must be broad and deep enough to ensure that major aspects of the Wash can continue to exist as a living, healthy hydrological feature.

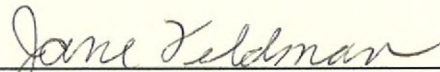
As a new national monument that would be located solely within the State of Nevada for the first time since 1922, the designation can engender community pride and assist in developing a greater sense of purpose. As a world-renowned fossil beds field study area that contains the longest continuous section of Pleistocene strata spanning an important global and regional climate cooling and warming episode, this exceptional resource can attract local, national and international scholars seeking academic and scientific research opportunities. It also can provide much needed firsthand interpretive, scientific and educational programs for local students at the elementary, secondary and post-secondary levels studying natural history, past ecologies, and climate change.

Unfortunately, the fossil beds and surrounding fragile desert ecosystem are facing challenges posed by urban encroachment, freeway development, ongoing or increased illicit recreation demand and the illegal dumping of residential and industrial waste. Moreover, this unique area with a significant educational and scientific value is also facing ongoing vandalism and possible looting of irreplaceable paleontological resources. Therefore, it is crucial that we move swiftly to ensure the permanent protection of the Upper Las Vegas Wash/Tule Springs area. Designation as a National Monument and careful management of this cherished part of Nevada's and America's heritage would ensure that we will pass this magnificent place and its natural resources to future generations unimpaired.

Sincerely,



Yuki Takagi
Southern Nevada Public Lands Representative
The Toiyabe Chapter of the Sierra Club



Jane Feldman
Conservation Chair
The Southern Nevada Group of the Sierra Club



Scenic Nevada

P.O. Box 32 • Reno, NV 89504 • www.scenicnevada.org
phone: (775) 378-1694 • fax: (775) 348-4728

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November 12, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

Scenic Nevada would like you to consider supporting the resolution for the Upper Las Vegas Wash. Scenic Nevada is a 501 (c) non-profit, non-partisan, conservation organization that works to preserve, protect, and enhance the scenic beauty of Nevada.

Our principal activity is to educate the general public on the economic, social, and cultural benefits of scenic preservation by means of encouraging billboard and sign control, protecting and supporting scenic byways, promoting sound-wall alternatives, supporting open space and green-way plans, minimizing the impact of cell towers, preserving hillsides and drainage ways.

A Nevada *LAST CHANCE* Scenic Places is our publication which illustrates Nevada's treasured landscapes and describes both pending environmental threats as well as their potential solutions. Scenic Nevada, in 2007, designated the upper Las Vegas Wash (Tule Springs) as one of Nevada's thirteen *LAST CHANCE* Scenic Places. Scenic Nevada requests that you support the resolution presented before you to protect the Upper Las Vegas Wash.

Sincerely,

Doug Smith,
Board of Director's Scenic Nevada;
Member of the Scenic Nevada Board of Directors

Executive Council:

- Robert Arnberger
- Phil Brueck
- Don Castleberry
- Maureen Finnerty
- Jake Hoogland
- Becky Mills
- Doug Morris
- J. T. Reynolds
- Pat Tiller
- Bill Wade



**THE COALITION OF
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
RETIREES**

Voices of Experience – Advocating Protection of America's National Parks

November 10, 2009

To: United States Congressional Delegation from Nevada
To: Nevada State and Local Elected Officials

From: J. W. "Bill" Wade, Chair, Executive Council, Coalition of National Park Service Retirees

Subject: Endorsement of Resolution

We hereby offer our very strong endorsement of the resolution presented by the Clark County Board of County Commissioners supporting appropriate study and designation of the area known as the Upper Las Vegas Wash as a unit of the National Park System.

We also offer whatever assistance we might provide to make this initiative a reality.

Very Sincerely,

ABOUT CNPSR

The 735 members of the Coalition of National Park Service Retirees are all former employees of the National Park Service with a combined 22,000 years of stewardship of America's most precious natural and cultural resources. In their personal lives, CNPSR members reflect the broad spectrum of political affiliations. CNPSR members now strive to apply their credibility and integrity as they speak out for national park solutions that uphold law and apply sound science. The Coalition counts among its members: former national park directors and deputy directors, regional directors, superintendents, rangers and other career professionals who devoted an average of nearly 30 years each to protecting and interpreting America's national parks on behalf of the public. For more information, visit the CNPSR Web site at <http://www.npsretirees.org>.

5625 North Wilmot Road, Tucson, Arizona 85750-1216

Phone: 520-615-9417; FAX: 520-615-9474

EMAIL: bill_wade@npsretirees.org

WEBSITE: www.npsretirees.org



12 November 2009

Las Vegas City Council
City Hall
Las Vegas, NV 89101

Dear Members of the Las Vegas City Council:

I fully support the designation of an urban national park unit in the Upper Las Vegas Wash. I am a paleontologist who has been conducting research in the Upper Las Vegas Wash for several years. The area has enormous scientific and educational potential, and it has the potential to attract a different type of tourist than we presently attract to Las Vegas.

I urge you to approve the resolution in support of this new urban national park or monument .

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Stephen M. Rowland". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Stephen M. Rowland
Professor of Geology



November 10, 2009

To whom it may concern:

This letter is to express the support of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas for the conservation and preservation of the Upper Las Vegas Wash (Tule Springs) area with the creation of the Fossils Bed National Monument. The university has long-term plans to create a North Las Vegas Campus east of the proposed site and adjacent to the southern border of the Desert National Wildlife Refuge. Our plans for a campus focused on sustainability principles are enhanced by the potential monument, which would offer myriad opportunities for education, research, recreation, and partnerships.

We initially envisioned higher education programs at the North Las Vegas Campus focusing on technology, business management, and elementary education, while our research interests included transportation and wind/solar energy. With the addition of the monument, we have the possibility of creating unparalleled science education and research in the areas of paleontology, conservation biology, vegetation and wildlife ecology, health, outdoor education, and recreation management.

UNLV's plans will co-exist with the future plans of the cities, county, tribe, and federal agencies. Each entity will see plans bolstered by a seamless collaborative network of education, research, and recreation endeavors.

We are hopeful the proposed monument will be given strong consideration.

Sincerely,


Neal J. Smatresk
President

Office of the President
4505 Maryland Parkway · Box 451001 · Las Vegas NV 89154-1001
Phone 702-895-3201 · Fax 702-895-5955

**FACTS SHEET:
WHY THE UPPER LAS VEGAS WASH (TULE SPRINGS) SHOULD BE
MANAGED AS A FOSSIL BED NATIONAL MONUMENT,
BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**

FOSSIL SIGNIFICANCE

The Upper Las Vegas Wash has been confirmed by scientists to have significant paleontological fossils demonstrative of the Pleistocene Ice Age.

Fossil findings at the site appear to contain the longest continuous section of Pleistocene strata, spanning multiple important global climate cooling and warming episodes in the desert Southwest.

The area contains the single largest assemblage of Ice Age fossils in the Southwest, spanning geologic history from 7,000 to 200,000 years before present.

Fossil findings of plant spores along with vertebrate and invertebrate animal remains within the Upper Las Vegas Wash provide study opportunities uncommon in most fossil localities, and are expected to attract international scientific interest and onsite research.

CONFIRMATION OF THE AREA'S SIGNIFICANCE

A four-month intensive study of the area in 1962, chronicled by *National Geographic*, catalogued thousands of Ice Age mammal fossils including Columbian mammoth, ground sloth, American lion, Camelops, bison and ancient species of horse.

The significance of the Upper Las Vegas Wash area was re-confirmed in the past few years with the scientifically documented removal of thousands of fossils. The San Bernardino County Museum currently holds thousands of fossils from this site in its repository facility.

Recent paleontology studies and inventory contracted by the Bureau of Land Management and a 2009 site-survey of the area commissioned by the National Park Service for the Department of Interior confirm the area's significance and draw attention to the area's increasing degradation.



Fossil Beds National Monument

ENDANGERED PLANTS AND AREA WILDLIFE

The Upper Las Vegas Wash supports four unique and imperiled plants. The Las Vegas buckwheat in the area is a species that has been petitioned for listing under the Endangered Species Act. The Nevada Natural Heritage Program has also identified three additional plant species in the area - Merriam's bear poppy, the Las Vegas bearpoppy, and the halfring milkvetch - as imperiled. The area also supports Joshua trees and several species of cacti.

The Upper Las Vegas Wash provides important habitat for the threatened desert tortoise, burrowing owls, kit foxes and several other wildlife species that are recognized for protection under the Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan.

Four species of raptors utilize the Wash for meeting their habitat needs - kestrels, barn owls, burrowing owls, and great horned owls.

The red-tailed blazing star bee, a little known or described species, is found in the Wash ecosystem and is considered as imperiled due to its rarity.

Proposed boundaries for the new fossil beds national monument about the Desert Wildlife Refuge, home to more than fifty-two species of mammals, including desert bighorn sheep, and thirty-one species of reptiles and amphibians

The springs at the Corn Creek headquarters of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, immediately adjacent to proposed boundaries for the fossil beds national monument, have refugia for the Pahrump poolfish, a species protected as Endangered under the Endangered Species Act, as well as the Corn Creek springsnail, a species recognized as critically imperiled due to extreme rarity and immediate threats to its existence.

WILDLIFE CORRIDORS AND OPEN SPACE

Proposed boundaries of the new fossil beds national monument would connect four federal designations - moving from east to west, the Desert Wildlife Refuge (US Fish and Wildlife Service), the new fossil beds national monument (managed by the National Park Service), Red Rock National Conservation Area (Bureau of Land Management), and Spring Mountain National Recreation Area (US Forest Service).



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Important wildlife and recreation corridors would be maintained and preserved. Wildlife movement between the Spring and Desert Ranges would be protected from impeding urbanization.

The proposed monument will become an integral component of the regional trail and open space system of local governments, facilitating the connection of the urban core with the natural federal lands surrounding the Las Vegas Valley.

Plans for the regional trail system would extend from Lake Mead National Recreation Area, through the County's Wetlands Park, continuing along developed components of the Wash's flood control system to the monument and then on to more primitive trails leading to and within Red Rock, the Spring Mountains, and the Desert Wildlife Refuge.

ACTIVE WATERSHED

The Las Vegas Wash is the only drainage system in the Las Vegas Hydrologic Basin. All waters in the Basin eventually flow to the Wash and then on into Lake Mead and the Colorado River. Ninety percent of the drinking water for the Las Vegas Valley comes from Lake Mead, thus the protection and preservation of the Upper Las Vegas Wash, as an active watershed, is critically important.

Preservation of the Upper Wash would help satisfy water quality and water resource goals outlined through several commissioned studies and defined by Southern Nevada Water Authority, the Las Vegas Valley Watershed Advisory Committee, and the recently approved Clark County Las Vegas Valley Water Quality Management Plan.

The Upper Las Vegas Wash carries water only intermittently, which is not unusual for a desert wash. As a body of water in a desert ecosystem, the biodiversity of the region is sustained and concentrated within the Wash. This makes the Wash and its functioning as a healthy hydrological feature critical to protect and preserve all the native plants and animals that it supports.



THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE IS THE APPROPRIATE MANAGING AGENCY

While the area is currently under the responsibility of the Bureau of Land Management, differences in the enabling legislation, expertise and mission suggests that the National Park Service is best suited to be the managing agency for the proposed national monument.

The National Park Organic Act of 1916, which created the National Park system, states:

“...the fundamental purpose of the said parks, monuments, and reservations, which purpose is to conserve the scenery and natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

The American people have entrusted the National Park Service for nearly a century with the care of our most special places and treasures, and have recognized that creating national parks preserves special places for generations to come.

While the Bureau of Land Management currently manages fifteen national monuments as part of the National Landscape Conservation System, the majority - if not all - are located in wildland, not urban settings. The National Park Service, on the other hand, has a long and distinguished history of managing and interpreting American's natural, cultural and historic landscapes in urban settings.

The Upper Las Vegas Wash satisfies rigorous criteria and is deemed worthy of national park status. It is a privilege for Nevada to add a new park designation to 392 units within the National Park Service.

Nevada's fossil sit deserves inclusion in the National Park System. Other fossil sites in the national park system include Dinosaur national Monument in Utah, John Day Fossil Beds National Monument in Oregon, Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument in Colorado, Agate Fossil Beds National Monument in Nebraska, Hagerman Fossil Beds National Monument in Idaho, and Fossil Butte National Monument in Wyoming.



Fossil Beds National Monument

COMMUNITY BUILDING AND OUR FUTURE GENERATIONS

As a new national monument located solely within the State of Nevada, for the first time since 1922, the Upper Las Vegas Wash is expected to engender community pride and assist in developing a greater sense of community.

The area is part of an open space plan of coordinated trails that will eventually ring the Las Vegas Valley, providing opportunities for local families to spend time together in a natural, outdoor setting.

The Upper Las Vegas Wash can provide educational opportunities, especially first-hand experience of several sciences, for our school children. The area also is supported by state higher education institutions and is expected to be a significant educational resource for the northern campus of University of Nevada Las Vegas.

URGENCY

The area and its ecosystem are facing threats posed by urban encroachment, ongoing or increased recreation demand and the illegal dumping of residential and industrial waste. Vandalism and looting of the irreplaceable paleontological resources is occurring now.

