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## Office of the Governor

July 23, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Earlier this year, I wrote to you regarding Nevada's housing crisis and highlighted the compounding challenges Nevada communities face because they are surrounded by federally managed land. The recent Bureau of Land Management (BLM) announcement regarding upcoming land sales in Southern Nevada for affordable housing under the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) is a step in the right direction, but much more needs to be done. Land challenges are intensifying the housing crisis and impacting every corner of the Silver State, not just Southern Nevada. I must reiterate my call on your Administration to cut bureaucratic barriers that are preventing Nevada communities from achieving their housing and economic development goals.

I hear it all the time, "Access to land is only one part of the puzzle to creating accessible housing," but in a state like Nevada, where more than 80 percent of the land is federally managed and there are counties where more than 90 percent of the land is managed by the federal government, that piece of the puzzle is out of our hands. Our communities have to rely on acts of Congress and costly, years-long processes that stand between project conception, land auction, and development in order to implement long-term planning goals and meet rapidly growing population demands. This is unworkable. Hardworking Nevadans should not have to continue to pay the price for federal inefficiencies.

Since receiving the BLM's response to my March letter on your behalf, I have had productive meetings with the Department of the Interior, members of our Nevada congressional delegation, and heard from even more of our urban and rural communities. I am including with this letter, letters from the Nevada Association of Counties (NACO), The Nevada League of Cities, the Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada (EDAWN), the Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance (LVGEA), the Northern Nevada Regional Development Authority (NRRDA), the Lincoln County Regional Development Authority (LCRDA), Nevada 95-80

Regional Development Authority and the Northern Nevada Development Authority (NNDA). We are all in agreement. Nevadans are being strapped by exceedingly high costs and the time to fix the statewide housing crisis is now.

I appreciate that SNPLMA is a tool made available for the disposition of land in Clark County. However, it isn't a statewide solution to address the housing crisis. While the affordable housing section of SNPLMA (Section 7(b)) and the recently implemented memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed between BLM and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) can apply outside of Southern Nevada,<sup>1</sup> SNPLMA's below market value housing development incentives are limited to affordable housing projects as defined by the *Cranston-Gonzalez Act*, which many housing stakeholders have shared is too restrictive. Additionally, SNPLMA does not alleviate the high costs or bureaucratic hurdles that are disincentivizing and delaying median income housing development.

Furthermore, the state is in dire need of updated Resource Management Plans or the completion of a statewide RMP. I, again, urge you to direct the Department of the Interior to complete an RMP for the Silver State, as the average age of RMPs in Nevada exceeds 22 years. Failure to act is failing communities across the state. While I understand updating these plans will take time and resources, doing so is vital to streamlining the current process and reducing project timelines and costs.

Housing developers throughout the state are poised to add to Nevada's housing inventory, but we need a streamlined approach to the disposal of federal lands so they can get to work. I implore you to work with Nevada to create opportunities that address our needs so families can achieve the American dream of homeownership.

Sincerely,



Governor Joe Lombardo

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2023). *Policy and Procedures for Public Land Disposal for Affordable Housing Pursuant to the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (Section 7(b)) Memorandum of Understanding*. Retrieved from: <https://www.doi.gov/sites/doi.gov/files/joint-doi-hud-mou-esb46-011979-public-land-disposal-for-affordable-housing-pursuant-to-snpplma-2023-07-13-signed.pdf>



May 23, 2024

The Honorable Joseph M. Lombardo  
Governor of Nevada  
State Capitol Building  
101 N. Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear Governor Lombardo:

As officers of the Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities (NLC&M), we are writing on behalf of the towns, cities and GIDs that comprise our organization, which was originally incorporated in 1959 and today includes municipalities that are home to more than 1.5 million Nevadans of all ages and backgrounds.

Whether they are located in Nevada's urban centers or the rural portions of the Silver State, a majority of the communities that make up the NLC&M are experiencing issues related to a lack of affordability in housing and limited supplies of available land on which to build new residences of all types.

Among the factors that serve to limit the availability of land for the development of more housing is the high percentage of land in Nevada that is controlled by the federal government. NLC&M member communities share a desire to see the federal government release more acreage that can be used to build housing and the infrastructure needed to support this new development.

One example of the housing challenges communities face because of federal lands is Winnemucca. According to Mayor Rich Stone, over the next five to ten years, Winnemucca is bracing for accelerated population growth tied to the Thacker Pass Lithium Mine, which is expected to bring with it a huge wave of new jobs, including 450 full time employees once the mine is opened. However, available housing inventory in Winnemucca is low, so additional units will need to be built. Contractors are interested in building homes, but developable lots in the city are limited and like other communities around Nevada, Winnemucca is surrounded by federal land, which limits growth options.

This same issue is also impacting urban areas in our state, from Sparks in the north to Henderson in the south. Land has become extremely expensive, making it difficult to reasonably develop affordable housing options. One potential solution to this issue for cities located in Clark County would be passage of legislation like the Southern Nevada Economic Development and Conservation Act (SNEDCA), which proposes more flexibility, an expedited process and land transfer to local governments for affordable housing under the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA). This bill is currently awaiting reintroduction in Congress. Similar lands bills that would transfer federal land and provide for its sale have also been introduced for other portions of the Silver State and are worthy of support.



The NLC&M also encourages the Departments of Interior and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to evaluate and update policy guidelines in the implementation of affordable housing under SNPLMA to allow land sale discounts for up to 100% of average median income. This change will allow a wider range of housing options, including mixed income developments, as Nevada communities face escalating real estate costs and limited inventory of housing options in the workforce price range.

In addition, we urge HUD to remove minimum requirements for federal HOME Investment Partnerships Program funds to Community Housing Development Organizations (CHDOs), as the policy is too limiting in states like Nevada where there are too few qualified non-profit developers.

At the state level, member communities have shared that there is a lack of available and qualified contractors. This has contributed to keeping the housing supply low in many rural areas, which in turn contributes to higher housing costs, which continue to rise. In their experience, the State Contractor's Board makes it very difficult to become licensed and has been lax in regulating their own licensees.

It is also difficult for municipalities in rural areas to construct the needed infrastructure to accommodate more residential housing. The increasingly widespread and stringent requirements of Davis-Bacon wages make it practically prohibitive for rural municipalities to carry on public work projects of any kind. One potential solution would be to advocate for certain exceptions to be made for projects in rural areas under a reasonable limit for local governments.

We look forward to continuing to explore options to address the need for more housing affordability in cities, towns and GIDs and to working in partnership with you on efforts that would make more federal lands available for development in our great state and other potential solutions to this pressing set of issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Sheridan".

John Sheridan  
Chairman, Gardnerville Ranchos GID  
& President, Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Romero".

Michelle Romero  
Mayor, City of Henderson  
& Vice President, Nevada League of Cities and Municipalities



Nevada Association of Counties  
304 South Minnesota Street  
Carson City, NV 89703  
(775) 883-7863  
[www.nvnaco.org](http://www.nvnaco.org)

July 10, 2024

The Honorable Joseph M. Lombardo  
Governor of Nevada  
State Capitol Building  
101 N. Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear Governor Lombardo,

On behalf of the Nevada Association of Counties (NACO), we write to provide feedback on the release of federal lands for housing as well as the advancement of economic and workforce development. As the statewide association representing all 17 of Nevada's Counties, NACO often provides the Collective County perspective on matters of importance in the state.

With the largest percentage of federal lands of any state in the contiguous 48, notably the counties of Nye, Esmeralda, Lander, Lincoln, and White Pine have over 90 percent of their acreage administered by the federal government. This means that Nevada's counties find their local economies, fiscal condition, and quality of life are greatly influenced by federal land management decisions. It is important to recognize the impact of public land use on local economies and ways of life, as well as on demand for county services. Counties provide road maintenance, emergency response, law enforcement and other mandated services on public lands and to public lands users. Counties also manage assets that require federal permits, leases, or easements.

The vast swaths of federal land ownership in Nevada have an effect on both urban and rural counties. As you are keenly aware, multiple counties have federal lands bills either in the process of being introduced as federal legislation or currently being considered by Congress. These lands bills represent a community driven approach and understanding that local governments struggle to provide even basic services for their communities as large federal land ownership restricts available state and local tax revenue needed to fund these services. It forces local governments to function with shoestring budgets, often clobbering together temporary federal grants or one-shot federal funding to offset budget shortfalls.

Every Nevada county has federal land, and every county provides regional services. Services range from roads and infrastructure, administering elections, funding our justice system, funding or delivering child welfare services, to being the provider of services to those most in need and the most vulnerable of our citizens. Severely limiting Counties ability to provide basic economic development and encourage industry to build and create jobs in their communities has a compounding and detrimental effect on the ability to deliver those services. Simply put, most of our counties are land locked, and we believe an orderly release of public lands is in order to remedy this situation.



Nevada Association of Counties  
304 South Minnesota Street  
Carson City, NV 89703  
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In early 2023, the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) Extension Nevada Economic Assessment Project (NEAP) in partnership with Nevada Rural Housing, launched a two-year study to assess housing needs in every Nevada county. Focusing first on the counties of Lincoln and Elko, NEAP has begun to release assessments and gap analysis intended to provide detailed information on household size, percentage of total income spent on housing, senior housing, housing for those with disabilities, and housing for those with low fixed incomes.

Recently the Washoe County Board of Commissioners approved a resolution supporting federal public lands legislation to support conservation, recreation and economic development in Washoe County where 83% of the land is owned and managed by the Federal Government. The Truckee Meadows Public Lands Management Act (TMPLMA/S.3593) represents the collaborative effort of government officials, key stakeholders and significant public input. It is a thoughtful and balanced methodology of land disposal that ensures responsible growth and conservation.

We encourage a closer assessment and consideration of the release of additional federal land in Nevada to accommodate for continued community development. Thank you for allowing us to share the county perspective. In a state with such unique geographic and demographic composition, we appreciate your commitment to our shared constituency and making Nevada the best place to live, work and do business.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Vinson W. Guthreau".

Vinson W. Guthreau  
Executive Director



Northeastern Nevada Regional Development Authority  
1500 College Pkwy, McMullen Hall #103 · Elko, NV 89801  
775-738-2100 · www.nnrda.com

July 10, 2024

The Honorable Joseph M. Lombardo  
Governor of Nevada  
101 N. Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear Governor Lombardo,

We, at the Northeastern Nevada Regional Development Authority (NNRDA), are providing this letter to affirm our position on federal land matters in Nevada and to provide some specific examples that demonstrate how current and previous management and administration of federal lands have stifled growth and development within rural Nevada. It is our hope that these issues may one day be remedied and put Nevada on “Equal Footing” with its sister states.

Due to the nature of this topic, a brief history is warranted, as it carries a great deal of weight when considering the principles of the argument. Federal land discussions began even before the close of the American Revolutionary War. In 1780, Congress passed the “1780 Resolution on Public Lands” which all states agree to cede their “claims” to all western lands to the national government on condition that they timely dispose of the lands to create “distinct republican states with the same rights of sovereignty, freedom and independence as the other states” and to use the proceeds, as there may be, to pay for the Revolutionary War and the resulting national debt. This ensured that the Northeastern “landlocked” states were not subject to a financial disadvantage upon formation of the Union.

After the War, Congress adopted the “Northwest Ordinance” which created a policy that would allow new states to be admitted into the union on “Equal Footing” with the original 13 states. Essentially, that all new states would be afforded the same rights, privileges, and protection as existing states so long as they cede their unappropriated land to the federal government until it can be disposed of in a timely manner. Although not a popular idea today (privatization) – it was simple and effective and ensured that the federal government would not accumulate too much power through land acquisition and ultimately transfer jurisdiction to respective states who could then tax, regulate, and manage those lands to serve in the best interest of their citizens. Renowned Constitutional Scholar and former Law Professor Robert Natelson stated in his book “The Original Constitution: What it actually said and meant” the following,

“Most of the founders would have seen permanent federal land ownership for the enumerated purposes as subversive of the constitutional scheme. This was partly because the government was to enjoy only enumerated powers and partly because extensive federal land ownership would render many people dependent on the government. It also was because the founders constructed the constitution for a country in which land was owned by the common people rather than the nobility or the government. If much of the land was to be government-owned, the document would have been drafted differently.”

With that said, it did not take long for federal land disputes to arise. In the 1820’s, western states at the time (Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama) began pressuring congress because 90% of their landmass had remained in federal control for decades. On February 5<sup>th</sup>, 1828 the Congressional Public Lands Committee reported that if these lands were not transferred in accordance

with the established protocol that they would "...be retarded in endeavors to increase their comfort and wealth... they have not the power... of taxing the soil to pay for the benefits conferred up on its owner by roads and canals." In other words, the federal government's failure to dispose of these lands was stifling growth and development within these states. The report further stated that it "...rested upon the implied engagement of Congress to cause them to be sold, within a reasonable time. No just equivalent has been given those States for a surrender of an attribute of sovereignty so important to their welfare, and to an equal standing with the original states."

As a result, Congress moved forward with disposal protocol per the "Equal Footing" doctrine and the states respective "Enabling Acts". Today, states east of the Mississippi River consist of roughly 5% federal land. Following the American Civil war, the disposal protocol once again came to a grinding halt and Western states saw less and less of their federal land transferred to private citizens and their respective states. Today, over 50% of the Western United States are federally owned and managed.

In 1976, with the advent of the Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA), all disposal protocol associated with the "Equal Footing" doctrine and the states respective "Enabling Acts" became null and void. Further, federal agencies like the Department of Interior (DOI), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and US Forest Service (SFS) took a far more active role in federal land management increasing overall sizes of Nevada field offices and hiring a plethora of new employees. In Nevada, and especially rural Nevada, citizens were outraged as they understood the implications associated with this change. In April of 1979 Senator Norman Glaser of Halleck, Assemblyman Dean Rhodes of Tuscarora, and Assemblyman John Marvel of Battle Mountain introduced the "Ft. Sumter Bill" (SB240/HR413) that stated that as of July 1, 1979 all public lands not "previously appropriated are the exclusive property of the state of Nevada." Glaser addressed the legislature stating "If we don't get the public lands back, then perhaps they didn't settle everything at Appomattox." He added, "If the rebellion is going to start, then let it begin here and let it start now," so began the infamous "Sagebrush Rebellion."

Here we are, 45 years later having the same discussions, making the same arguments, and presenting the same appeal as that of the "Western States" in 1828; federal retainment of land is hindering tax generation, stifling growth, and prohibiting economic development in Nevada. Examples regarding the negative impacts of federal land management in Nevada in the last five decades would fill a library, but for sake of brevity, the following are a few examples experienced in recent years.

In 2020 Amerities, a wood treatment facility, approached NNRDA interested in the industrial park in Wells, NV. The location would provide a strategic location for western operations as it is situated at the crossroads of I-80, US93, and the Union Pacific mainline. Principals from Amerities expressed interest in the purchase of the entire park along with a large section adjacent to the park which is federally owned and under the jurisdiction of the BLM. Because the property in question had been designated for disposal in 1987, stakeholders were confident that the transfer process timeline would be minimal affording the opportunity for this \$33M company who would employ 50 employees and transform the economic environment in this rural Nevada community. NNRDA and Wells city officials met with the Elko district & Tuscarora field offices of the BLM in 2021 and were presented with some disheartening news. First, they could add this project to their "list" but it would fall in line with all other projects and that we could expect a transfer in no less than 10 years. Next, when asking about the 1987 Record of Decision (ROD) regarding disposal of said property, that the 2015 Sage Grouse Management Plan rendered these ROD's null and void and that all Environment Assessments (EA), Environmental Impact Statements (EIS), and cultural studies would have to be completed again in order for said transfer to take place. Needless to say, private business cannot wait a decade in order to deploy their business development plans.

Shortly thereafter and as a result of the COVID pandemic, Elko County set aside \$500K in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding in an effort to promote residential construction in Jackpot, a

community that was devastated by the pandemic. In addition to this funding, Elko County was willing to offer up municipal land to any builder willing to construct units within the community. Stakeholder honed in on an 11-acre parcel on Lady Luck Dr. due to its proximity to the community park, access to utilities, and main thoroughfare. Clayton Homes, a home builder and manufactured home dealer in Elko, jumped on the opportunity and began negotiating details in order to get homes built for residents currently commuting from Southern Idaho. After reviewing title documents, Elko County's building department discovered a major hang-up; essentially, the property had previously been transferred from federal ownership under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (RP&P) and could only be used as a golf course or park, both of which are already staples of the Jackpot community and within a short walking distance of the parcel. Needless to say, the prospect of roughly 40 residential units, in critical demand, vanished when Elko officials were advised that it could take several years to remove this designation from the 11-acre parcel. In addition to this, Jackpot is completely land locked by federal land that was designated for disposal under the 1987 ROD.

More recently, a startup whose desire is to utilize invasive Pinion-Juniper to convert into fertilizer and biochar reached out to NNRDA in order to take advantage of NRS 268.063 (sale, lease, disposal of property for economic development). The client honed in on 40 acres within the White Pine County Industrial park due to its proximity to feedstock (Pinion-Juniper) and relative location to the Nevada Northern Railway, Yelland Air field, and US 93. The property in question had been transferred to White Pine County from the BLM roughly four years ago. Following a meeting with White Pine County officials, it was determined that the land had been transferred under the stipulations of the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) which meant that it could not be sold for anything less than fair market value. This poses two problems, first, it has been our experience at NNRDA that commercial appraisers, often times secured from urban areas of Nevada, tend to inflate the estimated value of industrial park land – likely because their only comparables are found in urban parts of the state. And next, the fact that there is a federal association to the title in question immediately suggests that there will be obstacles and extended time frames. Once again, a project has failed or been diverted because of federal influence – even after a transfer of land has been made complete.

When communities do try to pursue a transfer of federal lands, they cannot only expect a very long and drawn out process but they also find themselves spending hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not millions, in lobbyist and attorney fees. At any given moment it seems there are half a dozen or more lands bills running through the pipeline in Nevada. Each one of these, especially in rural Nevada, can take anywhere from 4 or more congressional sessions before they find themselves on the House floor for a vote. This equates into anywhere from 6 to 10+ years at a cost of a quarter of a million dollars or more a year. The Southern Nevada Economic Development and Conservation Act or the “Clark County Lands Bill” has been in the pipeline since 2018 while the Pershing County Lands Bill has, according to their website, been navigating the federal swells for over a decade. For our smaller communities, the costs associated with these endeavors are either beyond the capacity of the community or severely cut into their budgets which, in turn, affect their ability to adequately fund public works and community enhancement projects.

These, however, are not the only costs associated with federal land transfers. At best, we hope for a close to 1:1 transfer as witnessed in the “Lander County Land Management and Conservation Act” where roughly 21,000 acres were transferred for economic development purposes and 14,000 acres were designated as wilderness areas (removed from multiple use access). On the surface this seems like a solid disparity in favor of development as the “development” to “conservation” numbers arrive at a 3:1 ratio. This pales in comparison, however, to the Defense Authorization Act of FY2023, here the legislation released roughly 44,000 acres for economic and community development but withdrew over 1.1 million acres; a 1:25 ratio. In other words, to secure 1 acre for community and economic development, Nevadans

had to remove 25 from the public domain. Communities know that they cannot request a transfer without offering a ludicrous amount of land in return.

This is further reiterated in proposed bills which include the Northern Nevada Economic and Development Act which is slated to release approximately 40,000 acres for development and tie up over 450,000 acres for conservation projects (1:10.5) and the Southern Nevada Economic Development and Conservation Act which proposes a release of roughly 40,000 acres of land for development in exchange for just under 2 million acres for protected and wilderness areas (1:50). These, coupled with random withdraws for various "cultural" areas and national monuments such as the "Avi Kwa Ame" (506,000 acres) means that Nevada is losing available land at the tune of roughly 180,000 acres each and every year. At what point do was stop being a sovereign state and simply an auxiliary of the federal government; have we crossed that threshold already?

No matter what you plan to do on 61 of the 70.2 million acres that make up Nevada, you will have to ask permission from an absentee landlord in Washington D.C.; many of whom have never been to Nevada nor understand the unique environment for which we live. Nevada can only benefit and generate tax revenue from 13% of its landmass and Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) payments pale in comparison to the amount that could be generated from proposed land transfers. Several studies have been completed and multiple attempts have been made to initiate a broad sweeping transfer of Nevada's federal holdings that generally equate to roughly 3% of the existing federal land within the state. These efforts are always met with a storm of resistance, usually from those outside of Nevada, who call such efforts "Land Grabs" and proclaim that stakeholders are "Trying to Steal our Public Lands." Meanwhile, Nevada communities miss out on tremendous opportunity, tax revenue is stifled, and economic diversification is thwarted.

That fact of the matter is this, there are a great deal of federal land holdings that need to be privatized or transferred to local jurisdictions with no strings attached such as around Wells, Jackpot, and the Railroad Corridor. Further, there are a great deal of federal land holdings that need to be transferred, managed, and held in the public domain by the state of Nevada such as various wilderness, camping, and hunting areas. And finally, there are a great deal of federal land holdings that need to stay right where they are; for example, Native American land, National Parks, and Department of Defense installations. There is absolutely no reason to protect a 40-acre parcel adjacent to the Wells industrial park in the same way you would a similar sized parcel within the Great Basin National Park; unfortunately, many view the two as one in the same.

We encourage you Sir, to consider these issues and publically express your support for broader sweeping legislation that will not only expedite the transfer of lands already designated for disposal but also create a mechanism by which any county, regardless of size, can quickly request and secure ownership and management over desired federal lands within their jurisdiction. In essence, force the federal government to honor the Nevada Enabling Act of 1864. In the words of the great Nevada Statesman, Norman Glaser, "We're tired of being pistol-whipped by the bureaucrats and dry-gulched by federal regulations, nobody can convince me that we could not be better stewards of the land than that perfidious absentee landlord who resides along the Potomac."

Respectfully,



Sheldon Mudd  
Executive Director



Lincoln County  
City of Caliente

July 11, 2024

The Honorable Joseph M. Lombardo  
Governor of Nevada  
State Capitol Building  
101 N. Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear Governor Lombardo:

I am writing on behalf of the Lincoln Regional Development Authority, one of 8 Regional Development Authorities across the state that provide services to aid, promote, and encourage economic development of Nevada.

As you know 98% of the 10,600 square miles in Lincoln County is administered by the federal government. Significantly, only about 2% of all land in the county is owned privately. The State, Lincoln County and City of Caliente own a marginal portion (0.1%).

The quantity of federal land ownership severely hinders economic and community development in Lincoln County which is economically distressed as defined in Title 13 of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, Section 301.3 Part 301 Subpart C.

The Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation and Development Act (LCCRDA) of 2004 (Public Law 108-424) was enacted to designate over 700,000 acres of BLM administered wilderness in Lincoln County; to establish utility corridors across BLM administered land in Lincoln County; to establish the Silver State OHV Trail and to authorize the BLM to sell up to 90,000 acres identified in cooperation with Lincoln County within the Ely Resource Management Plan. Even though Lincoln County initiated the sale process in 2010, less than 500 acres have been disposed of by BLM.

In 2023 LCRDA, Lincoln County and the City of Caliente adopted a Five-Year Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy to diversify economic development, create jobs and career paths, and generate local tax revenues. The 2023-2028 CEDS includes the following two goals that are related to the release of federal lands:

*Goal No. 2: Lincoln County will acquire an additional 20,000 acres of publicly owned land from the United States Bureau of Land Management or other appropriate federal agencies as outlined in Lincoln County Conservation, Recreation and Development Act of 2004 in order to support new residential, commercial, or industrial development by the beginning of 2030.*

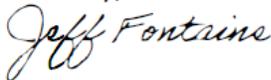
Lincoln County and its various public sector partners have already invested considerable financial resources in significantly improving, expanding, and modernizing existing public infrastructure assets in order to support the eventual development of any federally owned land that is transferred to Lincoln County and, subsequently, to private sector interests. Significant existing demand for additional acres of land to be transferred to Lincoln County already exists in order to support new yet sustainable residential, commercial, and industrial development.

*Goal No. 4: Develop 500 new residential housing units, across a variety of housing types and price points, within and throughout Lincoln County within the next five years or by the end of 2028.*

In order to support the development of 500 new residential housing units, Lincoln County and the City of Caliente will have to acquire additional land currently owned by various federal agencies and regulators through a public lands disposal and transfer process. Similar to the identified needed resources for Goal No. 2, this will require state and federal policymakers and federal regulators to follow through on the existing priority list of identified federal land that Lincoln County would prefer is disposed of and transferred to the county.

We appreciate your efforts and look forward to exploring ways to streamline the current land transfer process in Lincoln County and making more federal lands available in our great state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jeff Fontaine".

Jeff Fontaine  
Executive Director



# NEVADA 95-80

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Humboldt County – Pershing County – City of Lovelock – City of Winnemucca

July 10, 2024

The Honorable Joseph M. Lombardo  
Governor of Nevada  
State Capitol Building  
101 N. Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89703

Re: Federal Land Release and Solutions for Housing & Economic Development

Dear Governor Lombardo,

The Nevada 95-80 Regional Development Authority (Nevada 95-80) is the state-designated Regional Development Authority for the rural counties of Pershing and Humboldt and the cities of Lovelock and Winnemucca. Established in 2021, the organization works with our local government officials and the Nevada Governor's Office of Economic Development to support business development and *community capacity building* for the immense growth that our region is currently experiencing. We advocate for our communities and businesses via federal, state and local resources, as well as through mutually beneficial partnerships with a goal to achieve successful growth and sustainability for our region's economic ecosystem. As such, we are invested in our communities and continue to strongly advocate for well-thought-out solutions that take into consideration local input and needs.

Today, we are asking for increased support in the release of federal lands to our local municipalities to accommodate for the unprecedented growth of our region. Across the state, we have reiterated at every turn the need for additional land for housing, business expansion, and overall infrastructure development. In addition, we would like to engage in creative solutions to resolve our challenges in developing attainable housing in our communities.

As a fifth-generation resident of Humboldt County and the State of Nevada, I can attest to our proven ability to evolve and the determination and goal-orientated decision making that we consistently engage in. We are currently experiencing a remarkable time of growth in both our urban and rural areas that coincides with the federal and world-wide transition to a green energy economy. Nevada is at the forefront of our INNOVATIVE technology boom. Nevada is also rising to the challenge to accommodate and to welcome the opportunities to facilitate and support this transition.

With innovation comes the increase in the critical mineral sector, leading once again to population explosions in our rural communities. Since 1997 the Fraser Institutes "Annual Survey of Mining Companies" ranked Nevada consistently in the top 5 regions in the mining industry for both geologic attractiveness and policy perception. As you know, Nevada remains the #1 gold producer in the US and the 4<sup>th</sup> largest gold producer in the world. And gold is not the only mineral resource we have. The region of Humboldt and Pershing counties is one of the largest critical mineral producers in the state of Nevada, including the production of gold, silver, copper, mercury, and tungsten. Humboldt County, Nevada is home to the largest lithium deposit in the world with a proven deposit of 40 million tons with additional sources being verified. The exploration, extraction, and processing of this critical resource literally lies in our backyard. We are directly affected by the advancement of the lithium industry and the increase in demand for critical resources to power the nation and fuel the future.

**Directors: Michelle Hammond Allen & Heidi Lusby-Angvick**  
**33 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street STE 14 • Winnemucca, NV • 89445**



**Humboldt County – Pershing County – City of Lovelock – City of Winnemucca**

With the of construction of the Lithium Americas’ Thacker Pass Mine, the City of Winnemucca’s population will grow 25% within a few short months. After construction, the mine will have 450 new full-time employees. Our other existing industry partners, including large companies such as Nevada Gold Mines and our federal partner the Bureau of Land Management, struggle to recruit employees to fill vacancies across the region due to the lack of housing. The extension and improvement of housing, critical roadways, railroad lines, and utilities are crucial in supporting these large operations and the required workforce.

In addition to the City of Winnemucca itself, with a current population of just over 8,000 people, the even smaller, rural unincorporated towns of McDermitt and Orovada with only a few hundred residents are immediately adjacent to these larger projects. The small, agricultural communities and the county at large do not have adequate or timely access to land, nor the funding to support the monumental growth that is being projected. Our communities have been diligently working on capacity building with limited resources.

Nevada 95-80 proudly supports and has actively worked with the University of Nevada, Reno to achieve the official Phase I and Phase II designation of the Nevada Lithium Batteries and Other EV Material Loop Tech Hub under the Biden-Harris Administration. Nevada 95-80 is committed to continuing our membership in the consortium and to advancing the efforts of the Nevada Tech Hub. Our RDA also serves as the host for the USDA Nevada 95-80 Rural Partners Network, working to increase investments in infrastructure to support the job growth in our rural communities. Last year, the US Department of Agriculture awarded a USDA ReConnect grant to expand broadband access in Pershing County. Nevada 95-80 also leads and manages a successful US EPA Brownfields Grant for environmental assessment and property revitalization across both Humboldt and Pershing counties. Our track record continues to speak to our willingness to work hard to facilitate and support growth.

To summarize, we support and advocate for a unified effort across the state. We support initiatives such as the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA), in which we participated in developing the policy, in the hope of providing a solution for at least one region that might eventually bolster efforts in other regions. There are several additional land bills being introduced to Congress with this same purpose. Nevada welcomes strategic and thoughtful growth, and we appreciate your leadership and dedication to those efforts. We look forward to continuing solution-orientated conversations. The future is most definitely before us, and to set a true and sure course, we must continue to build cohesion and continuity across the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Hammond Allen', written in a cursive style.

Michelle Hammond Allen  
Co-Director Nevada 95-80 Regional Development Authority

**Directors: Michelle Hammond Allen & Heidi Lusby-Angvick**  
**33 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street STE 14 • Winnemucca, NV • 89445**

July 10, 2024

The Honorable Joseph M. Lombardo  
Governor of Nevada  
State Capitol Building  
101 N. Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701

Dear Governor Lombardo:

As a state recognized Regional Development Authority (RDA), we are writing on behalf of the Cities and Counties we represent and their economic development interests. The Northern Nevada Development Authority (NNDA) was originally established in 1981, and today represents Carson City, Storey County, Lyon County, Douglas County, and Mineral County, home to more than 180,000 Nevadans of all ages and backgrounds.

The communities in our region are experiencing issues related to a lack of affordability in housing and available land on which to build new industrial developments needed for diversification and economic growth. More than 85% of the available land in Nevada is controlled by the federal government, and that puts a significant limitation to the future economic development of our region.

Some of the economic and community development challenges that our region faces due to the direct control of federal lands ownership, is the effect on job creation, workforce opportunities, housing opportunities, and even the ability to enhance energy and transportation system capacities, or other infrastructure improvements within these communities.

For example, the Storey County Commission is working with federal delegates to facilitate the Mark Twain Storey County Lands Bill. If approved by Congress, the bill will allow for the development of upstream stormwater detention as part of the Dayton Valley Area Drainage Master Plan. The master plan and future flood management projects are coordinated through the Carson Water Sub-conservancy District and benefits both Storey and Lyon County communities.

Some issues are also impacting the urban area of Carson City. Carson City has been working with members of Nevada's Congressional Delegation on proposed technical corrections to the Carson City Lands Bill since 2019. The Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (OPLMA) provided for the disposition of more than 8,000 acres of federal lands within Carson City, including the sale of approximately 150 acres of federal land by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Since the land transfers were completed, City staff have identified several desired technical corrections including property the City wishes to acquire, property

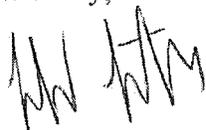
where the City requests the reversionary interests be removed, and property the City suggests should be disposed of for economic development. Land has become extremely important because the lack of available land affects the community, economic development and growth.

More recently, NNDA, in partnership with the Industrial Realty Group (“IRG”), received a \$6.1 million RAISE Grant for “The Port of Nevada – A Sustainable Intermodal Development” project. This project will develop a master plan and complete preliminary design and NEPA to support the approximately 658-acre expansion of the existing 74-acre Western Nevada Transload. The expansion will include approximately 2.8 million square feet of industrial building space, approximately 80 acres of container storage yards, approximately 20,000 lineal feet of new rail, and an approximate 10-acre commercial district to support the on-site workforce. This project is to be in a rural, historically disadvantaged community (HDC) census tract in Lyon and Churchill counties, Nevada. Phase 3 of this project will include acquisition of some 150 acres of federal land.

This project will be important to diversify the economy of the region and support the diversification from traditional industries. To support the significant scale of this project, great efforts will be dedicated to local hiring and skilled workforce development in partnership with Western Nevada College. These port and rail operations will create high quality, high paying union jobs and business opportunities, while mitigating the risk of a regional economic collapse.

We look forward to continuing to be working in partnership with you on efforts that would make more federal lands available for economic and community development and find solutions to support this land transfer.

Sincerely,



Jeff Sutich  
Executive Director,  
Northern Nevada Development Authority



May 23, 2024

The Honorable Joseph M. Lombardo  
Governor of Nevada  
State Capitol Building  
101 N. Carson Street  
Carson City, NV 89701

### **Support of Southern Nevada Economic Development and Conservation Act**

Dear Governor Lombardo:

I am writing on behalf of Las Vegas Global Economic Alliance (LVGEA), Nevada's largest regional economic development authority, to express our support for the Southern Nevada Economic Development and Conservation Act that was introduced last month by U.S. Senator Catherine Cortez Masto (Nev.). While we are always ever hopeful that proposals include added disposal opportunities for our region, knowing Nevada's unique land conveyance landscape, this legislation represents a critical and significant step forward for our region. It strives to balance conservation efforts with strategic economic development initiatives that work to address our community's need for sustainable growth and development.

The amendments made to the affordable housing sections, prioritization, and valuation are also crucial steps forward. These changes will enhance our ability to meet the housing needs of our growing population while maintaining affordability and accessibility.

Moreover, we appreciate the inclusion of additional sections focusing on conveyances requested by local municipalities, particularly those aimed at parks, emergency services, and utilities. These provisions align closely with the infrastructure requirements identified by our community stakeholders and will enable our growing region to grow and enhance services at the speed required.

The incorporation of Horizon Lateral and Apex, as well as the designation of 350 acres for the Sloan Job Creation Zone, reflects the careful consideration given to fostering economic diversification and job creation in Southern Nevada. These measures closely mirror standalone bills advanced by key stakeholders, ensuring broad support and alignment with local development priorities.

LVGEA has advocated for policies that promote balanced management of federal lands to attract new businesses and industries while preserving our region's high quality of life. We firmly believe that the Southern Nevada Economic Development and Conservation Act will play a crucial role in not achieving these goals, but addressing the increasing challenge our region continues to experience in diversifying our economy to provide quality career opportunities for our rapidly growing population.

Over the last two years, as Congress has made great strides in supporting onshoring of domestic manufacturing through its policy work, LVGEA too has worked to focus on attracting advanced manufacturing companies to Southern Nevada to support our regional workforce needs, create diverse careers for our residents, as well as generate tax revenues that support the social welfare of our community. The ability for LVGEA, together with its public and private partners, to be successful in this endeavor relies largely on the availability of large parcels of land.



Last year, Nevada Governor’s Office of Economic Development published an updated report, titled “Policy Brief No. 2: Southern Nevada Employment Land Analysis” (May 2023), that underscored the urgent need for sufficient lands to support economic growth and resilience in our region. To the point, it outlined that unless adequate land is available to support regional growth, our region’s regional growth will be slowed overall. This includes slowed job growth, and reduced wages/salaries due to land constraints.

As an organization directly interfacing with companies looking to expand or relocate to the area, we can affirm that the lack of land directly impacts our region’s ability to create these career opportunities for our workforce.

Currently, within our regional project pipeline, interest in advanced manufacturing continues to grow. Growth in this area can be primarily attributed to Nevada’s business-friendly tax and regulatory environment as well as proximity to Southern California. Additionally, growth in recent years often fall into alignment with federal incentives to support the advanced manufacturing sector and its growth. Approximately 30% of LVGEA’s existing project pipeline is comprised of manufacturing companies. And interest grows. This business vertical typically requires a larger land footprint to operate – a difficult endeavor to support as land options are limited and shrinking by the day. To that end, organizations like ours and others in this space are also reporting an increasingly number of projects that choose to take their jobs to other regions due to land availability.

We urge you to champion this legislation and to work towards its swift passage. Your leadership on this issue is vital to ensuring Southern Nevada remains competitive, vibrant, and sustainable for generations to come.

Thank you for your commitment to our community and for considering our views on this critical matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tina Quigley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tina Quigley  
President and CEO

July 11, 2023

The Honorable Joseph M. Lombardo  
Governor of Nevada  
State Capitol Building  
101 N. Carson St.  
Carson City, Nv 89701

EDAWN supports the release of additional federal lands for housing, economic development and workforce development, which will enable the region to maintain and accelerate the pace of economic development and job creation.

The region is currently lacking sufficient developable land parcels to support the growing Lithium Loop battery technology sector, the interest in the region by hyper-scale Data Center developers, the continued demand for large footprint E-commerce distribution operations, and supportive commercial supply chain services. The reality is that robust opportunities are being lost to Arizona and Texas as well as the Southeastern part of the U.S.

The Tech Hub project, a statewide effort led by the University of Nevada, was recently awarded approximately \$21M to drive innovation and opportunity by the U.S. Economic Development Administration. Per the Secretary of Commerce, "The Nevada Tech Hub based in Reno will help make the region a global lithium leader by bringing together companies, startups, schools, and workforce development organizations – all while boosting economic development and opportunity in Northern Nevada and creating new good-paying jobs." This award will also spur the need for additional land to support the growth and diversification of the economy in Northern Nevada, including the Tribal communities.

A 2021 study indicated that Washoe County is in a land crisis and will run out of the most developable open land by 2027. All available land in the Storey County 107,000-acre Tahoe Reno Industrial Center, (the home of Tesla, Panasonic and other large employers) has been purchased. Planning for a second business park is underway in the region, however the viability of the project is dependent on additional public land being made available in order for expansion to be successful.

With the commercial growth in the region, and the workforce required to support business creation and growth, the lack of housing inventory is driving up the cost of homes, which coupled with inflation, and childcare costs and availability, make it difficult for working families to afford to live and work in the area. The need for an allocation of additional land to support

the availability of affordable and workforce and entry level housing continues to accelerate, coupled with the infrastructure needs to accommodate more residential housing in the region we serve, which includes the Reno/Sparks urban area as well as Storey and Lyon counties.

EDAWN is committed to working with you to advocate for strategies that will enable the release of federal lands available for development in the areas we serve, and throughout Northern Nevada and appreciate your support.

Respectfully,



Taylor Adams  
President and CEO  
Economic Development Authority of Western Nevada