

Comments on S. 597

“This bill can truly be called a boondoggle, offering little discernible benefit to the American people but a fat opportunity for local developers.”

Chandra Rosenthal, Rocky Mountain Director, Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER), (303) 898-0798, croenthal@peer.org

"The bill proposes to summarily revoke the Ivanpah Area of Critical Environmental Concern. This public land designation was meant to protect Mojave desert tortoise connectivity habitat as well as rare plants such as the imperiled White-margined penstemon. We need a much more publicly transparent process before these deserts are sacrificed for urban sprawl."

Laura Cunningham, a biologist with Western Watersheds Project, (775) 513-1280, lcunningham@westernwatersheds.org

“No more playing politics during an ecological emergency. Remaining wilderness lands on Earth are dipping below 20%, and extinction is occurring at 1,000 times the background rate. Destroying 65 square miles of ecosystems to expand commercial and residential development around Las Vegas in the middle of an extreme drought and a climate crisis is not an acceptable course of action.”

Justin McAffe, Editor of DesertGuardians , (702) 374-6009, DesertGuardians.org

"The Clark County Public Lands Bill pushes a more crowded, smoggy future for Southern Nevada with less open space and biological diversity. More urban sprawl requires more use of limited water resources and will push sensitive species like the desert tortoise closer to extinction. It is time for all of us to admit that the Mojave Desert can no longer sustain unlimited growth at the expense of limited resources."

Kevin Emmerich, Co-Founder, Basin and Range Watch, (775) 553-2806, emailbasinandrange@gmail.com

"Where will the water come from to serve more people? The Bureau of Reclamation predicts that Lake Mead's elevation will be at 1054 feet by September 2022. That's nearly a 150-foot drop from the year 2000 and a 30-foot dive from where we stand today. The water doesn't exist. This bill continues the myopia that perpetuated projects like the Las Vegas Pipeline and will set-up a situation for more big-city water grabs in the future."

Kyle Roerink, Executive Director, Great Basin Water Network, (702)324-9662, kyle4gbwn@gmail.com

“Although these public lands are in southern Nevada, Congress has a duty is to manage them in the best interest of all Americans. In 2021, with the nation just starting to address the looming climate crisis, it’s simply not in Americans’ best interest to privatize 65 square miles of public lands. The American people don’t benefit from more Las Vegas sprawl.”

Chris Krupp of WildEarth Guardians, (206) 417-6363,
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“Sunrise Vegas opposes any unsustainable impacts of the proposed Clark County Lands Bill. Our current reality of environmental crises have intrinsic roots in the irrevocable effects of urban sprawl. Continuing this practice over more sustainable and land-efficient strategies such as infill development is ignorant of the intersectional climate, housing, and transportation injustices that already plague residents of Clark County. The communities of Southern Nevada, many of which are already facing the brunt of a climate crisis, are unprotected, unrepresented, and failed by this bill.”

Dexter Lim, Hub Coordinator, Sunrise Movement Las Vegas. (702) 499-0554,
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“We don’t and won’t have enough water in this hotter, drier climate. Let’s save Sloan Canyon, the McCullough Range and Eldorado Valley from the sprawl machine. The Nevada delegation and US Interior Department should do the right thing to keep public lands in public hands.”

Daniel R. Patterson, a retired US BLM specialist in Boulder City, NV.
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“The bill draft process by our congressional delegation for the southern Nevada public lands bill raises many questions and concerns with the growth of southern Nevada. Where the growth has been largely confined to the Las Vegas valley, within borders defined by the Santini-Burton Act and subsequent southern Nevada public lands bills, this bill accelerates growth outside of those boundaries without comprehensive planning. The Santini-Burton Act of December 23, 1980 provided for the orderly disposal of Federal lands in Clark County, Nevada with a focus being on the acquisition of private, environmentally-sensitive lands from willing sellers. There needs to be a renewed focus on the acquisition of private, environmentally sensitive lands, greater public review and comment on how the money from the sale of public lands is being spent, and more consideration of the unintended consequences and environmental impacts from the sale of additional federal lands outside the Las Vegas valley.”

Jeff van Ee, President of Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association (702) 733-2021,
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