

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 2—COMMITTEE  
ON NATURAL RESOURCES

FEBRUARY 9, 2009

Referred to Committee on Natural Resources

SUMMARY—Urges Congress to take certain actions concerning wilderness areas and wilderness study areas. (BDR R-604)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.  
Effect on the State: No.

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EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION—Urging the Nevada Congressional Delegation and Congress to take certain actions concerning wilderness areas and wilderness study areas.

**Legislative Counsel’s Digest:**

1 Federal law provides for the establishment of wilderness areas and wilderness  
2 study areas on public lands. This resolution urges the Nevada Congressional  
3 Delegation and Congress: (1) to comply with the definitions and requirements  
4 found in the Wilderness Act, 16 U.S.C. §§ 1131 et seq., before approving new  
5 wilderness areas; (2) to seek the release of wilderness study areas that have been  
6 determined by the Bureau of Land Management of the United States Department of  
7 the Interior not to meet the requirements for such a designation; and (3) to support  
8 the establishment of a schedule for the timely release of wilderness study areas that  
9 are found unsuitable for designation as wilderness areas.

1 WHEREAS, The provisions of 16 U.S.C. §§ 1131 et seq.,  
2 commonly referred to as the Wilderness Act, establish the National  
3 Wilderness Preservation System, which consists of areas of federal  
4 public lands that are designated by Congress as wilderness areas;  
5 and

6 WHEREAS, The Wilderness Act includes specific definitions and  
7 requirements for designating public lands as wilderness areas; and

8 WHEREAS, The provisions of the Wilderness Act and the  
9 Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. §§



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1 1701 et seq., provide for the study of certain areas of land to  
2 determine whether those areas, commonly known as wilderness  
3 study areas, are suitable for designation as wilderness areas; and

4 WHEREAS, In accordance with the provisions of the Wilderness  
5 Act and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the Bureau  
6 of Land Management of the United States Department of the  
7 Interior, in the late 1970s, conducted an initial inventory of  
8 approximately 49 million acres of public lands in Nevada to  
9 determine the suitability of those lands for designation as wilderness  
10 areas or identification as wilderness study areas and, in 1980,  
11 recommended that approximately 5.1 million acres of those lands be  
12 identified as wilderness study areas; and

13 WHEREAS, Although many of the areas that were not  
14 appropriate for designation as wilderness areas or identification as  
15 wilderness study areas have been released for multiple use under the  
16 Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the Bureau of Land  
17 Management continues to manage approximately 2.55 million acres  
18 of public lands in Nevada identified as wilderness study areas; and

19 WHEREAS, The residents of this State rely on the use of federal  
20 lands for mining, livestock grazing and recreation, and wilderness  
21 designations raise concerns regarding access to and use of public  
22 lands for economic development, fire suppression and recreation;  
23 and

24 WHEREAS, Decisions concerning whether to designate  
25 wilderness study areas as wilderness areas or to release those areas  
26 for multiple use are important and must be made in a timely manner  
27 and without any unnecessary delays so that those lands which are  
28 suitable for designation as wilderness areas may be afforded full  
29 protection as wilderness areas, and those lands which are not  
30 suitable for designation as wilderness areas may be released for use  
31 and management for the public good in accordance with law; now,  
32 therefore, be it

33 RESOLVED BY THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF  
34 NEVADA, JOINTLY, That the members of the Nevada Legislature  
35 urge the Nevada Congressional Delegation and Congress:

36 1. To comply fully with the definitions and requirements found  
37 in the Wilderness Act in determining whether to designate public  
38 lands as wilderness areas or identify public lands as wilderness  
39 study areas;

40 2. To seek the release of wilderness study areas that have been  
41 determined by the Bureau of Land Management not to meet the  
42 requirements for designation as wilderness areas; and

43 3. To support the establishment of a schedule for the timely  
44 release of wilderness study areas that do not meet the requirements  
45 for designation as wilderness areas; and be it further



1       RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate prepare and  
2 transmit a copy of this resolution to the Vice President of the United  
3 States as the presiding officer of the United States Senate, the  
4 Speaker of the House of Representatives and each member of the  
5 Nevada Congressional Delegation; and be it further

6       RESOLVED, That this resolution becomes effective upon  
7 passage.

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