

Senate Joint Resolution No. 2—Committee  
on Natural Resources

FILE NUMBER.....

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:**

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

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

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

WHEREAS, The provisions of the Wilderness Act and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, 43 U.S.C. §§ 1701 et seq., provide for the study of certain areas of land to determine whether those areas, commonly known as wilderness study areas, are suitable for designation as wilderness areas; and

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

WHEREAS, Although many of the areas that were not appropriate for designation as wilderness areas or identification as wilderness study areas have been released for multiple use under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the Bureau of Land



Management continues to manage approximately 2.55 million acres of public lands in Nevada identified as wilderness study areas; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

RESOLVED, That this resolution becomes effective upon passage.

