

Senate Bill No. 413—Senators Cannizzaro, Segerblom, Ratti, Ford, Cancela; Atkinson, Denis, Farley, Manendo, Parks, Spearman and Woodhouse

Joint Sponsors: Assemblymen Yeager;
and Benitez-Thompson

CHAPTER.....

AN ACT relating to public lands; establishing the last Saturday in September of each year as “Public Lands Day” in the State of Nevada; authorizing the Governor to issue annually a proclamation encouraging the observance of Public Lands Day; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel’s Digest:

Under existing law, various days and weeks of observance are recognized in this State. (NRS 236.018-236.085) **Section 1** of this bill establishes the last Saturday in September of each year as “Public Lands Day” in the State of Nevada and authorizes the Governor to issue annually a proclamation encouraging the observance of Public Lands Day.

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

WHEREAS, In 1994, National Public Lands Day was established, with 700 volunteers working at three sites and, since then, the activities relating to National Public Lands Day have expanded to include new places, projects and persons; and

WHEREAS, More than 80 percent of the public lands in this State are owned by the people of the United States and are managed by various federal agencies for the benefit of all persons living in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The public lands in this State include national parks, national monuments, national conservation areas, national forests, national wildlife refuges, wilderness areas and public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Forest Service, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service and other federal agencies; and

WHEREAS, All public lands located in this State feature a diverse array of landscapes, from sculpted desert sandstone to dramatic limestone cliffs with caves and fossils, from colorful volcanic ranges to the high peaks with ancient bristlecone pine and lush oases that stand in sharp contrast to open sagebrush valleys; and

WHEREAS, The public lands in this State protect vital pieces of our region’s past and important cultural heritages, including the



remnants of ancient civilizations that once thrived in the region and whose ancestors still protect their legacy, deserted mining settlements where riches were made and lost and contemporary works of art, all waiting to be discovered by current and future generations of Nevadans; and

WHEREAS, The public lands in this State reflect many noble democratic ideals because they are open and accessible to all persons, regardless of whether those persons are rich or poor; and

WHEREAS, The public lands in this State provide many benefits to the residents of this State and support a wide variety of activities, including recreational pursuits and the development of natural resources; and

WHEREAS, Outdoor recreation is dependent on access to public lands and is an essential part of the economy of this State, generating \$14.9 billion in consumer spending, \$1 billion in state and local tax revenue and 148,000 direct Nevada jobs in this State; and

WHEREAS, Large-scale transfers of the federal public lands in this State from the people of the United States into state or private control are contrary to the democratic values of the United States and jeopardize activities such as hiking, camping, hunting, fishing and off-road pursuits; and

WHEREAS, In 1864, Congress enacted a law (13 United States Statutes at Large (1864), pp. 30-32), commonly referred to as the Enabling Act, which authorized the people of the Territory of Nevada to form a constitution and state government, and provided for the admission of the State of Nevada into the Union; and

WHEREAS, As required by the Enabling Act, the Nevada Constitution includes an ordinance, immediately preceding the preamble to the Nevada Constitution, which states, in part, that the “people inhabiting [this State] do agree and declare, that they forever disclaim all right and title to the unappropriated public lands lying within [this State], and that the same shall be and remain at the sole and entire disposition of the United States”; and

WHEREAS, At the general election held in 1996, those provisions of the Nevada Constitution were repealed, effective on the date Congress consents to the amendment or on a legal determination that the consent of Congress is not necessary; and

WHEREAS, The residents of this State support national efforts to promote the stewardship and celebration of all public lands in this State; now therefore,



THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Chapter 236 of NRS is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section to read as follows:

1. The last Saturday in September of each year is established as "Public Lands Day" in the State of Nevada.

2. The Governor may issue annually a proclamation encouraging the observance of Public Lands Day. The proclamation shall, without limitation:

(a) Call upon the news media, state and local officers, private nonprofit groups and foundations, schools, businesses and other public and private entities to bring to the attention of the residents of this State the importance of the public lands in the State of Nevada;

(b) Recognize the economic, scenic, historical, scientific, aesthetic and other values of the public lands in the State of Nevada; and

(c) Encourage the residents of the State of Nevada to engage in volunteer stewardship activities which contribute to the conservation of the unique public lands which are only found in the State of Nevada.

Sec. 2. This act becomes effective on July 1, 2017.



