

BRADLEY CROWELL  
*Director*  
Department of Conservation  
and Natural Resources

CHARLES DONOHUE  
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STEVE SISOLAK  
*Governor*



State Land Use Planning Advisory Council  
State Land Use Planning Agency

*Address Reply to*

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STATE OF NEVADA  
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
**State Land Use Planning Advisory Council**

October 15, 2021

Alicia Brown, Director  
National Aeronautics and Space Administration  
Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs  
Washington, DC 20546

**Re: SLUPAC Comments on NASA Request to Withdraw Public Lands in Railroad Valley,  
Nye County, Nevada**

Dear Director Brown:

On behalf of the Nevada State Land Use Planning Advisory Council (SLUPAC) I am writing to comment on the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) request to withdraw public lands in Nevada's Railroad Valley. The proposed withdrawal is to support satellite calibration efforts related to the NASA Orbiting Climate Observatory mission. SLUPAC supports NASA's mission and is proud of Nevada's role over the past several decades to support the nation's satellite calibration efforts. However, SLUPAC believes the proposed withdrawal would conflict with existing approved county comprehensive and land use plans as well as remove public lands from multiple use.

SLUPAC is the only Governor-appointed council that has a county representative from each of Nevada's seventeen counties as well as the Nevada Association of Counties (NACO), the Nevada League of Cities & Municipalities, and the Nevada Indian Commission. SLUPAC provides recommendations and expertise on land use planning and natural resources issues and advises the State Land Use Planning Agency regarding the development of plans and statements of policy.

As currently proposed, existing county comprehensive and land use plans in the Railroad Valley would be directly and adversely affected by NASA's withdrawal. These plans designate the public lands identified for withdrawal by NASA as multiple use areas. The withdrawal would remove lands from multiple use.

Reserving these public lands for multiple use is important to Nevada. They are managed under a Congressionally mandated policy of multiple use to allow for mining, oil and gas development, recreation, and the protection of natural, historic, and cultural resources. Multiple use activities under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act provide economic benefits to Nevada.

These public lands are critical to sustain long-term economic growth and security. The closure of public lands to multiple use activities would also eliminate current revenue sources that are important to local governments.

Cooperation between Federal, State, Tribal, Local Governments and other stakeholders is critical on the proposed withdrawal of any public lands or change in land use. Efforts must be made to coordinate with the agencies listed above to protect and preserve the natural resources of the State while providing for the future needs of its residents. SLUPAC supports Nevada's local governments and Tribal Nations to have active engagement in this process consistent with their local land use plans and policies. We request that NASA engage with the local governments, Tribal Nations, and other affected stakeholders with specialized land use expertise in this area and invite them to become cooperating agencies on this proposal.

To date SLUPAC believes that NASA's level of engagement with local governments and other stakeholders has been lacking with this proposed public land withdrawal. SLUPAC requests that NASA continue to meet with Nye County and other affected stakeholders to discuss the concerns of both parties regarding interests in Railroad Valley. SLUPAC also requests that NASA and the BLM work with Nye County and other affected stakeholders to identify acceptable alternatives or a land management plan that will accommodate multiple uses that will preserve the environment and quality of life in the Railroad Valley while also allowing for the satellite calibration activities to be protected.

SLUPAC appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on NASA's request to withdraw public lands in the Railroad Valley. SLUPAC looks forward to continuing to work with NASA to implement sound land use planning policies and land management activities throughout Nevada.

If you have any questions or would like additional information concerning SLUPAC, please feel free to contact Scott Carey, State Lands Planner at 775-684-2723 or [scarey@lands.nv.gov](mailto:scarey@lands.nv.gov).

Sincerely,



Jake Tibbitts  
Chair  
State Land Use Planning Advisory Council

CC:

Governor Steve Sisolak

Jon Raby, BLM Nevada State Office

Mark Garcia, NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory

Perry Wickham, BLM Tonopah Field Office

Nye County Commission

Lincoln County Commission

White Pine County Commission

Chairman Warren Graham, Duckwater Shoshone Tribe

Senator Catherine Cortez-Masto

Senator Jacky Rosen

Congresswoman Dina Titus

Congressman Mark Amodei

Congresswoman Susie Lee

Congressman Steven Horsford